



“The Tolerance Limit”

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PRIMARY SCRIPTURE

“To the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze. 19 I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first. 20 Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. 21 I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. 22 So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. 23 I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. 24 Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan’s so-called deep secrets, ‘I will not impose any other burden on you, 25 except to hold on to what you have until I come.’ 26 To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations— 27 that one ‘will rule them with an iron scepter and will dash them to pieces like pottery’—just as I have received authority from my Father. 28 I will also give that one the morning star. 29 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Revelation 2:18-29

SUMMARY

Thyatira was a small community with a big problem in the church. The church leaders had become tolerant of false teaching and practices that were coming from within the church, right under their noses. Christ delivered a warning of severe judgment against this influencer/false teacher, the church leaders allowing this, and all those who were putting the false ideas into practice. Yet, some remained faithful, and there is a reward guaranteed for those found faithful within the limits of what God will tolerate.

Red Rules

Blue Rules

Marooned

Passage Outline

Christ's Commendation

Christ's Complaint

Christ's Command

Passage Principle

God does not tolerate false teaching and sin among His people.

18 And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze. 19 I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first.

Revelation 2:18-19 ESV

20 But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. 21 I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality.

Revelation 2:19-21 ESV

The First Tolerance Limit: Limit our tolerance of false teaching.

Antinomianism - the belief that Christians do not need to follow God's moral law.

Why must we hold to sound doctrine?

22 Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, 23 and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works.

Revelation 2:22-23 ESV

The Second Tolerance Limit: Limit our tolerance of sinful ways.

“Love wasn’t their problem; they had love. Faith wasn’t their problem. Ministry wasn’t their problem. Endurance wasn’t their problem. Their problem was that they were tolerating sin.”

John MacArthur, https://www.masters.edu/thinking_blog/thyatira-a-severe-warning/

18 And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature I want to do what is right, but I can’t. 19 I want to do what is good, but I don’t. I don’t want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.

Romans 7:18-19 NLT

What are the sins we are committing?

What is the good we are omitting?

24 But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. 25 Only hold fast what you have until I come.

Revelation 2:24-25 ESV

19 I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first.

Revelation 2:19 ESV

26 The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, 27 and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star. 29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Revelation 2:26-29 ESV

Hold fast to what has no limit.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23 ESV

How can we confidently receive Christ’s reward?

Hold fast to what has no limit.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. As a teenager, what person or group influenced you the most? How?
2. What are the strengths of this church? Its weaknesses?
3. What does the symbolic name “Jezebel” reveal about the woman in this church?
4. How does Jesus describe Himself? How do you interpret this description? What is He saying about Himself? Why is this appropriate for the church at Thyatira?
5. How is the nature and source of the temptation in Thyatira like (and unlike) that in Pergamum?
6. What do you think Jesus’ promise in verses 26-27 means?
7. Which of the qualities in verse 19 apply to you this week? Why?
8. Who or what has played a role similar to Jezebel in your life (names aren’t necessary)? How? How did the Lord free you from that influence?
9. What do you appreciate most about the promise to overcomers in this section? Why?
10. What is your take away from this week’s passage?