



“Returning to our First Love”

FMCIC WEEK OF PRAYER & FASTING 2025

REVELATION 2:18-29

Church of Thyatira: Growing but Tolerating Sin

JAN 26 – FEB 2, 2025

“To the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire, whose feet are like burnished bronze: I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service, and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.

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. I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling... I am he who searches hearts and minds and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.

Now I say to the rest of 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, except to hold on to what you have until I come.’

To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations... Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (NIV)

How we all enjoy hearing positive feedback. This church received a list of glowing recommendations, one that any of us would love to hear! Yet there was a complaint. They let people be drawn away by false teachings.

Today, the world abounds in knowledge that seems to lead to wealth, prosperity, good health, or good fortune. Not all are bad but anything that doesn’t point us back to Jesus is a counterfeit, a distraction, a stumbling block, or even a false god. In Galatians 1:8 Paul warns *“But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse!”* Even the teachings of leaders need to be examined. Do they point back to Jesus, or to one’s higher self, to enlightenment, or detachment, to something that is palatable to the world, or simply personal fulfillment? Although we should continue to grow in our understanding of God and all He is, any new revelations still need to be compared to His word. It’s the weapon given to us to fight against the enemy.

At the beginning of this letter, Jesus is described as fire and bronze: two materials used in temple rituals for refining, cleansing and purifying. Receiving criticism is much more difficult than hearing praise but it’s vital to our sanctification. We need to let Jesus refine our hearts. Despite all their good deeds the church of Thyatira still had impurities that needed refinement. How easy it is to be doing all the outward things yet inwardly we’ve allowed other beliefs to creep in and muddy the purity of the Gospel in our own hearts and minds. How easy it is to hear false beliefs yet say nothing because ‘we each need to walk our own path’.

Thankfully God is just and merciful. He gives everyone a chance to repent. Failure to self-examine and change course leads to sickness and death. *“The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, Jesus comes to give life to the full.”* The victorious will be those who hold firm to the faith. Is our trust in Jesus our firm foundation?

I encourage each of us to take a moment to consider if we’ve allowed a belief that contradicts God’s word to take root in our hearts or minds. Are we hedging our bets by following Jesus AND another philosophy? Have the world’s ideas become so appealing that we are beginning to trade in God’s wisdom for the cleverness of human minds? Whose teachings do we spend most of our time listening to: the world, or God and His word? Are we staying silent when we should be encouraging someone toward Jesus? Are we willing to surrender to the refinement of the Holy Spirit and repent instead of making excuses? Will we stand firm in God’s truth and not be swayed? Spend time in God’s word today and pause to imagine yourself fully believing what it says. Ask God to search your heart and reveal any false beliefs or practices that need to go.