

ACTNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Cell Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Cell Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

The Seven Churches of Revelation: Thyatira

Revelation 2:18-29

Mr Daniel Lee

SERMON SYNOPSIS

- Thyatira was a middle-to-upper class merchant city. The main export was the priced commodity of purple dye or fabric. Trade guilds often held lavish banquets to pay homage to the city gods, where debauchery took place. A church emerged in Thyatira and the Christians there constantly faced alluring temptations.
- Jesus had both commendation and rebuke for Thyatira. Christians were vulnerable to persecution by Roman officials and pagan worshippers. They could not worship freely and met in homes to share meals and partake Holy Communion. They accepted and received one another into fellowship, took in the poor and destitute, and offered hospitality to strangers and travellers. Christ commended that they did well in works, love, faith, service, and patient endurance and continued to be better in them (Revelation 2:19). However, Jesus rebuked them for tolerating Jezebel (either an individual or a metaphorical representation of a group) on false teachings of fornication and consumption of food offered to idols (Revelation 2:20). Such practices were connected to banquets held by trade associations.
- Jesus' call to this church was for them to stay true and not compromise on:
 - *Holiness* by rejecting sin. Fornication, idolatry and lust of the eyes come subtly with the age of the internet. Idolatry refers to anything replacing the rightful place of God, including Christian works, ministries or families.
 - *Sound teaching* by knowing Scripture well. We are called to hold fast to what was done right, and be faithful to the right teachings by investing time to know Scripture well.
 - *Good works* by persevering to do them well. Those who conquer, and continue to do His works to the end will receive authority over the nations and Christ the morning star will be with them (Revelation 2:28-29).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever been in a situation where your Christian values and beliefs were challenged or you were tempted to compromise? How did you manage that situation?
[Children's Activity: Divide the children into two groups Give one group a deck of playing cards and another group a box of building blocks. Ask each group to build as high a tower they can with their material, one that will stand firm. After the task, explain that Jesus calls us to stand firm in this world. We need to stand firm using the Word of God, prayer and faith (represented by the building blocks when we face challenges or temptations, otherwise, we will fall easily (represented by the deck of cards). You can ask the children what kind of challenges or temptations they face.]

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2. The words "the rest" in Revelation 2:24 "But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira..." suggests that a minority were not practicing the false teachings. False teachings have been spreading widely in different forms today in subtle ways. How would you recognise and guard yourself against false teaching?

[Verses to help us go deeper: Matthew 7:15-20; Jude 4; 1 Timothy 6:3-6; 1 Timothy 1:5]

3. What is Jesus' expectation of a true disciple to do works that are described in Revelation 2:19? "I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance and that your deeds of late are greater than at first."

[Verses to help us go deeper: Matthew 25:34-40; Hebrews 13:2; Matthew 9:10; Galatians 5:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12]

PRAYER POINTERS

- Pray for God's help to pursue His holiness by rejecting sin.
- Pray for God's wisdom to study the scripture to hold fast to what is right.
- Pray for God's perseverance to do the good works to glorify Him.

MEMORY VERSE

"He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations." [Revelation 2:26, NASB]

PRACTICAL HANDLE

You can participate in a ministry in TPMC to do good works for Christ. Consider helping out with the Outreach and Social Concerns ministry (OSC) to visit the poor and needy. OSC provides financial assistance and advise to needy families in Toa Payoh.