

# The Seven Church Attitudes Revealed By Christ in the Book of Revelation

## Part 4

**Revelation 2:18** [NIV] *“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.”*

**Jesus Christ introduces Himself to this church in His glorified state.**

First let us read the message given to this church, then meditate on what was said and consider the action that needs to be taken by such a Christian or Church.

**Revelation 2:19-29** [NIV] *“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 prophetess. **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. 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. 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. 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): Only hold on to what you have until I come. To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations, **‘He will rule them with an iron sceptre; he will dash them to pieces like pottery’**, just as I have received authority from my Father. **I will also give him the morning star.** He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*

**The longest of the seven messages was written to the least important of the seven cities.**

**The problem and danger that threatened Thyatira was a universal problem.**

Thyatira was a great commercial centre, specially a centre of the dyeing industry and the trade in woollen goods.

From inscriptions which have been discovered we learn that Thyatira had a very large number of trade guilds.

**To refuse to join one of these trade guilds was much the same as not to join a trade union today.**

For a Christian not to join one of these guilds was to give up all hope of commercial prosperity.

**Why, then, should a Christian not join one of these guilds?**

1 **The guild members had common meals, very often held in a temple to a Pagan god, or at least the meal began and ended with a formal sacrifice to a Pagan god.**

The meat eaten at these meals would have already been offered to idols.

2 **Often these communal meals were occasions of drunkenness and slack morality.**

No Christian could enter into a social occasion like that.

In Thyatira there was a strong movement, led by a woman addressed as Jezebel, which taught compromise with the world and the world's standards in the interests of business and commercial prosperity.

**This problem still meets Christians today.**

**How far, if at all, as a Christian, may we compromise with the world's standards, to prosper in this life?**

The message to Thyatira opens with praise for love, loyalty, service and steadfast endurance.

**A church which is crowded with people and which is a hive of energy and dynamic activity is not necessarily a real church of Jesus Christ.**

It is possible for a church to be crowded, because its people come to be entertained and comforted by a common purpose in life. Just like the common meals of the many guilds in Thyatira.

People may have just left one "guild" for another.

**A church may be a highly successful Christian club, rather than a place of instruction in righteousness and Christian living.**

The source of the trouble in Thyatira centres around a woman who is called Jezebel. A woman in the church who was teaching that immorality was **not** a serious matter for believers.

**This woman's character and her influence is based on the original Jezebel, the wife of Ahab.**

**1 Kings 16:29-33** [NIV] *"In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel for twenty-two years. Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him. **He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than did all the kings of Israel before him.**"*

**Jezebel did not want to banish the worship of Jehovah but influence her husband King Ahab, to add the acceptance of Baal worship to the worship of the God of Israel.**

**The Jezebel of Thyatira was a seductive influence on the purity of life and worship of the Christian church.**

**Jezebel of Thyatira introduced new practices which were destructive of faith.**

**Jezebel of Thyatira was one of those people who wished to alter Christianity to suit their own lifestyle, who think they can improve upon the teaching of Jesus Christ.**

This was the presumptuous sins mentioned in Psalms.

**Psalms 19:12-14** [King James] *"Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults. **Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.**"*

**All Christians are warned against allowing people who set themselves up as leaders but preach a different message than that given to us through Jesus Christ and the apostles.**

**Galatians 1:6-10** [NIV] *"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel, which is really no gospel at all.*

*Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.”*

**Jezebel of Thyatira was preaching a false gospel to find favour in the eyes of those who had sexual problems, by giving them an excuse to follow their wrong desires.**

**Why is sexual immorality so serious in God’s eyes?**

**Sex outside of marriage always hurts someone.**

**It hurts God because it shows that we prefer to satisfy our natural desires in our own way instead of according to His Word, or to satisfy them now instead of waiting for His timing.**

**Sex outside of marriage hurts others because it violates the commitment so necessary to a relationship.**

**Sex outside of marriage hurts us because it often brings disease to our bodies and adversely affects our personalities.**

**Sexual immorality has tremendous power to destroy families and church communities because it destroys the integrity on which these relationships are built.**

**Sex outside marriage relationship dishonours the spiritual union it represents, the spiritual marriage of the Church and Jesus Christ.**

**Revelation 19:7-8 [NIV]** *“Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! **For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.”** (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of **the saints.**)”*

**Ephesians 5:22-33 [NIV]** *“Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no-one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church, for we are members of his body. “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” **This is a profound mystery, but I am talking about Christ and the church.** However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.”*

**God wants to protect us from hurting ourselves and others.**

**Therefore we are to have no part in sexual immorality, even if our culture accepts it.**

**“Eating food given to idols” – eating meat offered to idols was not wrong in itself, it was not physically tainted.**

**But eating such meat could violate the principle of sensitivity towards weaker Christian brothers and sisters who would be bothered by it.**

**1 Corinthians 8:4-13 [NIV]** *“So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: **We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one.** For even if there are so-called gods,*

whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. **But not everyone knows this. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled.** But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. **Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling-block to the weak.** For if anyone with a weak conscience sees you who have this knowledge eating in an idol’s temple, won’t he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols? So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.”

**Romans 14:1-8 [NIV]** “Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. One man’s faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.”

**Jezebel of Thyatira was obviously more concerned about her own selfish pleasure and freedom than about the needs and concerns of fellow Christians.**

Jezebel was unwilling to repent, to change her mind and direction from following her own way to God’s way. Change from sin and its disastrous consequences to God and eternal life in His mercy.

**God gives us all time to decide to faithfully follow Him, only our stubborn wilfulness stands in the way.**

**Jezebel was urging Christians to believe that there was no need to cut themselves off from society. No reason for a man to commit commercial suicide because he had become a Christian and resigned from the guilds.**

Jezebel insisted that there was **no** harm at all in accepting the world’s customs and ways.

In reality, Jezebel was simply trying to protect her own business interests, and like Satan wanted others to join her in her rebellion.

**Jezebel of Thyatira was in effect saying that if the standards of the church and business interests clashed, then the standards of the church must be abandoned.**

Do our claims of commercial success speak more loudly than the claims of Jesus Christ.

“I [Jesus Christ] am He who searches hearts and minds.”

**We cannot hide from Jesus Christ, He knows what is in our hearts and minds.**

All sins, even the ones we try to hide from ourselves need to be confessed and repented of.

“Satan’s so-called deep secrets” – **advocated by heretics, these are false teaching that causes us to doubt the word of God.**

Or secret insights by so-called believers “guaranteed” to promote a “deeper spiritual life.”

**We all need to hold tightly to the basics of our Christian faith and view with caution and counsel any “new teaching” that turns us away from the Christian Bible, the fellowship of our Christian Church, or our basic confession of faith based on God’s promises.**

What are our rewards if we avoid this deception of Jezebel of Thyatira type of teaching and remain faithful to Jesus Christ?

“*Authority to rule over nations*” – in the future.

**Revelation 1:4-6** [NIV] *“John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father, to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.”*

A kingdom of priests, that is teachers.

**Revelation 5:10** [NIV] *“You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”*

**Our place of rulership and teaching will be on this earth.**

**1 Corinthians 6:2-3** [NIV] *“Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!”*

**We have already been given this future power in measure, to reconcile differences.**

**2 Corinthians 5:17-19** [NIV] *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.”*

**We are to practice this future rulership under Jesus Christ right now by preaching reconciliation between humans and God, and humans with one another.**

**“Iron sceptre”** – the sceptre is the symbol of our authority under Jesus Christ, being made of iron shows that there is **“no bending of the rules”** no compromising.

The broken pottery is referring back to the physical example of all clay pots being broken if they were polluted by certain diseases under the Old Covenant, broken and discarded.

**“The morning star”** what do these words imply?

- a **They can be a poetic way of referring to a Christians resurrection to eternal life after a night of death.**
- b **They could be referring to the end of Satan’s rule.**

**Satan was originally called Lucifer [the light bringer] but because of his rebellion he was disqualified from this office, and now it is given to Christ and the Christian Church.**

**Isaiah 14:12-14** [NIV] *“How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, “I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.”*

This role is now headed by Jesus Christ.

**Revelation 22:16** [NIV] *“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.”*

**We will be working with Jesus Christ in the future to bring light [understanding] to those who have been blinded by Satan, the deposed “Lucifer”.**

**Revelation 1:5-6** [NIV] *“and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father, to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.”*

*“... and has made us [faithful Christians] to be a kingdom [family] of priests [teachers] to serve His God and Father.”*

**Don’t jeopardise the glorious future that can be ours by allowing modern-day “Jezebels” to deceive us into compromising our Christian faith, by being too close to this world and its standards.**