



**BELIEVERS CHAPEL**

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Revelation 2: 18-29

Fall 2025

"Vice Among Virtue"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth, and good morning to you all.

Well, our text today is a lengthy one...Revelation chapter 2, verses 18 through 29;

<sup>18</sup> "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:

<sup>19</sup> 'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. <sup>20</sup> But I have *this* against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit *acts of* immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. <sup>21</sup> I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality. <sup>22</sup> Behold, I will throw her on a *bed of sickness*, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. <sup>23</sup> And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. <sup>24</sup> But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you. <sup>25</sup> Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. (*Speaker's comment: "He's speaking of His second coming,*

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what we will read about in Chapter 19...and that's clear from what He says in verses 26&27 where He quotes Psalm 2, (which is about that great event.) <sup>26</sup> He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; <sup>27</sup> AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received *authority* from My Father; <sup>28</sup> and I will give him the morning star. <sup>29</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Revelation 2: 18-29

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word and bless our time of study in it together. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, what a privilege it is to be here on a Sunday morning, and that is so with every Sunday morning, to be with Your people and to enjoy the fellowship with them—fellowship that we enjoy in this service of reading the Scriptures together, singing hymns together, praying together. It's particularly enjoyable at this time of the year, as we reflect upon our Lord's birth and the reason He came—and that was to save His people from their sins, as the angel announced to Joseph in Matthew chapter 1, verse 21, to "...save His people from their sins." And we're reminded, LORD, that we are a people of sins...Even when we're regenerated and justified, we are a people that have feet of clay, unlike Your Son who has feet of "burnished bronze". (Rev 1:14). We are weak, and we tend to drift and fall into sin.

But we're reminded in this text of the importance of being vigilant, the importance of guarding our hearts and guarding our lives against all the temptations that are around us...and they often come in the most unusual places and unusual ways, as we see in the church of Thyatira. LORD, give us a sense of the need of vigilance in the Christian life, and to recall what we are as saints: We are holy people; we are set apart—and You are jealous for that...that we be committed to You and that we honor You in our thoughts and deeds.

So, LORD, we pray that You would impress upon us these things as we study this morning, and we look at these texts, and these verses—and that You would sanctify us, give us wisdom, give us diligence and vigilance.

LORD, bless us now as we continue our service. Bless us as we sing hymns of praise to You and prepare our hearts for this time of study and worship together.

We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.

*(Message)* We have in our back yard a garden, and it's a garden of Texas sage, which I'm sure many of you have. It's a beautiful plant. It blooms periodically, and sometimes, to my experience, surprisingly, there are all these magnificent, purple blossoms that I didn't see a few days before.

It's a beautiful garden, but we also have in that garden, vines...insidious vines that have deep roots and attach themselves to the Texas sage. They wind around the base, and then they grow up into the branches and wind around those branches. And they would cover the entire plant if they're not removed.

Well, every garden has weeds and vines that will consume the flowers unless they are eradicated—and it is the same in the church, which we could call...

**'God's Garden'.**

In Matthew 13, Jesus told the 'Parable of the Tares in the Wheat.' A man sowed good seed in the field, but at night while he slept, an enemy sowed tares among the wheat. That's the work of the devil.

Every genuine church where the Word of God is taught and God's people gather, every church such as that is exposed to that very thing, 'tares among wheat', "*Vice Among Virtue*". It's not the fault of the church, it's the work of our enemy.

The fault of the church is when it tolerates the tares and sin—and that was the problem that is exposed in this next letter to the church in Thyatira: 'Tolerance'.

This is the longest of the seven letters...which is interesting. R.H. Charles pointed out that, "The longest letter is addressed to the least important of the seven cities."

Thyatira was located about 40 miles southeast of Pergamum, so the postman delivering these letters begins to make his circle as he heads south to deliver this fourth letter. It was a commercial city, a city of merchants and craftsmen, which had a lot of trade guilds. There were a lot of those in the Middle Ages, and a lot of them in the early days of the church...which were very much like fraternities or unions.

Sir William Ramsay, in his book on the seven churches of Asia Minor, wrote, "More trade guilds are known in Thyatira than any other Asian city." Inscriptions have been found there of guilds of wool workers, linen workers, makers of outer garments, dyers, leather workers, tanners, potters, bakers, slave dealers, bronzesmiths." The guild for *dyers* is particularly interesting, or important, to us because Lydia may have been, at one time, a member of it.

Lydia was from Thyatira, and she was the first European convert under Paul's ministry. Lydia was in Philippi with a group of women down by the riverside when Paul came and began to preach to them. Luke wrote in Acts chapter 16, verse 14, that, "...the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul."

What a great verse that is..."God opened her heart"...otherwise she never would have understood or believed. And that's true of you and me, God opens hearts in His grace.

And He did it with this wonderful woman. We're told she was "a seller of purple fabrics." (ibid.). She was a successful businesswoman and may have been instrumental in establishing the church in her hometown of Thyatira.

By the end of the 1st century, Thyatira had a vibrant church, though probably a small church in the smallest and least important of the seven cities. And yet, small though it was, the Lord speaks to it in the warmest words in His longest letter, which shows that God's values are different from man's. —No one is small or unimportant to Him. After all, He builds the church...and He builds it to the size and the character that

He desires. And here, He gives the most attention to those who are the least significant by the world's standards.

The length of the letter makes it unique of the seven, and so does the title the Lord uses...this is the only place in the Book of Revelation where Christ is called, "the Son of God". (vs18). Now, I find that very interesting because this was written by John, and John wrote the fourth Gospel...and the purpose of that was, as he said, "...that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." (Jhn 20:31).

And yet we had this mentioned only once; but in that, we have 'the fingerprints', as it were, of John on this book. John says that, He has eyes like "a flame of fire", and His feet are, "like burnished bronze." (Rev 1:14-15). [In other words, 'feet that can crush all opposition'—and the sense of that, I think, is, 'Beware—don't offend this One!']

And then His eyes...could see into the most distant places, "eyes...like a flame of fire." Dark and distant places, He sees it all.

John puts it in simpler language, clearer language that is not figurative, in John chapter 2, verses 24 and 25, "Many believed in His name, but Jesus on His part was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men."

He knows everything, and everyone—and knows all of it and knows all of us completely. He knows who is genuine, and who is not genuine. He sees behind masks ...and He sees into hearts.

The eyes of Jesus', I think, must have been very special. There are texts that suggest that when, for example in Mark 3, He is about to heal a man, and He sees around in that synagogue, men who think that that shouldn't be done on the Sabbath. It says, 'He looked around at the synagogue, and He was grieved at the people's hardness of heart.' (Mark 3:1-5).

And they must have felt that in the gaze of our Lord as He looked at them, just as the disciples must have felt the warmth of our Lord in His gaze at them that's mentioned later in the Book of Mark in chapter 10, (vs27), where it says, 'He looked at them...',

and then He gave them great, encouraging words...He spoke encouraging words about their lives and what would come. So those eyes, I think, must have been very impressive to those who saw them. Here, "like a flame of fire", (*Rev 1:14*), they see with penetrating insight and in perfect justice. And He saw what was happening in Thyatira—and what the church was doing.

Now, it was doing a lot of good things. He commends the church in verse 19 where He praises them for their, "love, faith, service, and perseverance", four virtues. The first two, 'love and faith', give the *motivation* for Christian activity. The second two, 'service and perseverance', are *the results that follow*...and He adds that their, "deeds of late are greater than the first." (vs19b).

Well, this was a small church but it understood that the Christian life is a life of growth—and that we are either advancing in the faith, or we are retreating. The church in Thyatira was progressing. As love for the Lord increases, faith increases—and as love increases, deeds of service increase...just as a growing faith produces endurance in the Christian life. That was Thyatira. The great church of Ephesus was backsliding, while the small church at Thyatira was moving forward. Ephesus left love...while Thyatira increased in its works of love.

A great church, but there was a problem...there was, 'a fly in the ointment', or, 'a weed in the garden'\*—and the Lord, who sees everything, saw it. There was 'vice among the virtues' ...and it was a terrible vice.

A woman, a self-styled prophetess, was in the congregation exerting unusual influence over some there. The Lord calls her, "Jezebel", because she resembled Ahab's wicked queen.

(\*Note: This 'picture' refers back to Dan's first three paragraphs of this message.)

Jezebel in the Old Testament sponsored Baal worship, and led Israel into apostasy. King Ahab was a weak man; he lacked the moral conviction and strength to oppose her. So she only increased in strength and influence to become the spiritual guide of the northern nation and led it into idolatry by combining the worship of Baal with the worship of Yahweh, (with Baal as the chief god).

Something very similar was happening in Thyatira, where this woman, (evidently a woman of great charm), was leading some into compromise with the world. Now, not all were following her; most were growing. In verse 24, the Lord commends those, "who did not know the deep things of Satan", which is a description of her teaching...they had not followed that.

But the church was tolerating her and not exercising discipline. They were as weak and spineless toward this new Jezebel as Ahab had been toward the old Jezebel. As a result, many were being led away into sin. The Lord describes how, "...she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit *acts of* immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols." (v20b).

Now, this is probably to be understood historically in connection with the many trade guilds in the city which required participation in pagan religious practices for membership. What these usually involved was a banquet dedicated to some pagan deity which, by the end of the evening, often degenerated into a bacchanal.

Christians, of course, could not participate in any of that. They couldn't toast a false god...even if the practice was a mere formality and not taken seriously. They couldn't engage in that—and they couldn't engage in immorality.

Now that was very clear, but still it presented a big test for these saints because membership in a guild was necessary in order for a person to practice his trade. So they faced a choice: 'Be loyal to the Lord', (which would result in being out of a job), or 'Accommodate the world...compromise', and keep your job.

It is similar, I would imagine, (now, I'm not a businessman, but I would assume), this is very similar to what businessmen face when they're tempted to compromise their

principles to make a deal. And maybe one that they really shouldn't make...but then they're in particular need to pay the bills and support the family. We are always being tempted...always being tempted to accommodate ourselves to the world in a variety of ways and in numerous ways.

The only way to guard against that is to know Christ—and I mean as a believer, to know Him and increase in our knowledge of Him, and His *greatness*, and His *goodness*, and His *faithfulness*. The only way to counter that temptation to compromise is to listen to His Word, follow it and obey it.

It was difficult in Thyatira; a person's livelihood was at stake—that's the challenge. A man had to feed his family, and that was a great responsibility that he had, (just as we have). A man had to feed his family, it was a matter of life and death.

But they were listening to a different voice from the Lord's voice. A “Jezebel”, (*vs20*), in the church began to offer advice and give her counsel, and maybe, and I suspect this is the case, she supported her counsel from the Bible, and cited text like 1 Corinthians chapter 8, verse 4, (<sup>4</sup>Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one.). They had all the writings of Paul by this time, (this was late in the 1st century), and she might have quoted that verse where Paul said, ‘An idol is nothing at all’. And from that, she reasoned that;

‘It wasn't necessary to lose a job over this. ‘Idols are nothing!’...Paul said that. We can salute Apollo as lord because we know he is really nothing. It's all a myth...and the party that followed in this banquet that would be thrown, won't hurt an individual if you participate in that because, after all, we are justified and we're free! So go on with the guild, go along with it—practice its idolatry, and keep your job!’

That's the kind of counsel that someone would want to hear. She was teaching Christians to compromise, and assuring them that, ‘It was no compromise’...and that,

'They could sin with impunity!' (That, 'They could take fire to their chest and not be burned').

And evidently, she was justifying all of this, as I said, from the Bible. She claimed to be "a prophetess". (vs22). She claimed to speak God's words; she called them 'deep things', (that's how they are described in verse 24). But the Lord gives the true description of them by calling them, "The deep things of Satan." (vs24).

I'm sure Jezebel didn't call them that, she probably referred to them as, 'Deep doctrines of God for the mature.' But Christ branded them as being "of Satan".

Well, this is how Satan attacks the church. He applies pressure from without—from the hostility of the world, as he did in Smyrna, and as he did in Pergamum when Antipas was martyred for his faith. That's pressure from the world, 'pressure from without'.

But if that fails, he works from within by sowing seeds of error. And here, the teaching of Jezebel allowed people to rationalize their behavior and compromise their faith in order to avoid hard decisions and sacrifices.

And you can just imagine how people justified their actions. They took Bible verses out of context, and they argued from the tortured reasonings of Jezebel's teachings...and then said something like, 'Well anyway, a man has got to provide for his family. That's my main responsibility as the head of the home—and a man has to eat, I have to live.'

But the answer to that is, 'No, you don't have to eat, and you don't have to live; you have to obey.' If you are a saint, then you are holy; and you will live a holy life. ..you will.

Many in Thyatira did. Not everyone fell...but 'everyone' let it happen. They tolerated it and didn't exercise church discipline, and as a result the problem continued and it would only spread. So, the Lord would deal with it—not hastily, the Lord is never impulsive in His judgment. He is long-suffering, He is patient...and He was with the Jezebel of Thyatira.

We see that throughout these seven letters. He gave wise counsel to all of them, all of the churches to whom these letters were written. He warned those churches, and told them to *"repent"*. His desire was to restore them, not destroy them.

And you see that here; the Lord said in verse 21, "I gave her time to repent...". He was patient with Jezebel; He gave her wise counsel through, (evidently), members there in the church, and this opportunity to, 'turn from, and disavow, her false teaching, and error, and immorality'—but she wouldn't.

As I said, someone had clearly rebuked her in the past, but she would not listen. Proverbs tell us that, "Fools despise instruction." (*Pro 1:7*). It is foolish to presume upon the patience of God...because it will eventually pass and punishment will certainly follow.

It did for Jezebel. The opportunity for repentance ended, and the moment of retribution arrived, (in verse 22), 'She would be thrown on a bed.' Now, in the Greek text the word *"bed"* is mentioned and that's all...but it is the idea of, 'a bed of sickness and pain', (and probably with the implied contrast to a bed of adultery). She had refused to repent, and continued in fornication and adultery...so, 'the bed of sin' would be exchanged for a *"bed of sickness."* (*ibid.*). You come to the end of the Book of Hebrews, in chapter 13, verse 4, the author makes special mention of fornication and adultery—and he says, "...God will judge."

And we see that here. "...God is not mocked...", Paul says, "...for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap." (*Gal 6:7*). And immorality often reaps a lot of sickness—physical disease as well as mental anguish.

Sin is always tempting, always appealing...and never worth it. It comes with a heavy cost. We're all vulnerable to it and often we, God's saints, learn the hard way.

Still, the Lord holds out mercy to the others in this congregation because the verse ends, "...unless they repent of her deeds." (*vs23c*). In other words, 'She is going to be punished...and so will the rest who are following her, unless they repent.' He is 'long-

suffering'. (*Gal 5:22, 'patient'*). 'The Lord is slow to anger; He loves to show mercy.' (*Psa 145:8*). [In fact, discipline is, in many ways, designed to bring a person to repentance.]

But, when there is a refusal to respond, discipline only becomes more intense. In verse 23, the Lord warns of worse things to come for Jezebel's children. (Now, I don't think these are to be understood as her natural children, or actual physical children—but her *spiritual* offspring...those who have followed her in her lawless teaching.) "I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds." (vs23).

So just like the sons of Ahab and Jezebel, (who were killed in a great purge by Jehu), these people were doomed to death if they did not repent. And if they didn't, they would be made an example to the churches—to remind Christians that Christ requires holiness from His saints...and that, **He knows**.

He knows where we are, what we're doing, what we're thinking—because He sees everything. His eyes are "like a flame of fire", (vs18b); they see into the most distant, dark places—and just as fire *refines*, and *separates* the gold and silver from the dross, so too His eyes see, and separate, and distinguish between truth and error. He sees it all, and He sees it clearly. He searches the heart; He knows our thoughts and He knows our motives, as well as our deeds, (vs23b)—and He expects us to live righteously, not like the world...even if it means making hard sacrifices.

The Lord can provide for us in those difficult times—we face them. That's part of the Christian life; we will face challenges, and we must know the character and the ability of the Lord. He can provide, and He will. You go back to the Old Testament, [and I'm reminded as I read through these letters and through the Book of Revelation, how important the Old Testament is to all the things that John wrote here in this last book of the Bible]...but you go back to the Old Testament, and you see great examples of faith and illustrations of it. And you'll remember how Sarah was 90 years old and without a

child, (*Gen 17:16f*), and then she hears the Lord promising that He is going to give her a child, 'They would have a child by the next year...when He returned.' She hears this, and what did she do? She laughed at it, the idea seemed preposterous to her. And the Lord heard her. She denied that she laughed—but she had and He exposed that. He said to her, "Is anything too difficult for the LORD?" (*Gen 18:14*). So, we must walk by faith, be obedient, and trust in Him...Nothing is too difficult for Him.

Now, that's hard to do. That's challenging, I confess. I have not been placed in this kind of a situation and faced that kind of a challenge, (and I don't suppose most of you have). In fact, we live in a day and age when it's not so much a challenge to, 'Conform or you'll be put to death!' The challenge is just being ignored. People are indifferent to the things we believe...and that can be a temptation in itself; to drift into other things as well.

But what we see here is *Christians*...these are "His bond-servants", He says. (*vs20*)...they sometimes fail—and as we see, some did in Thyatira. "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak", (*Mar 14:38*), that is true of all of us. So there is also what is incumbent upon us, a sense of humility because we're no better...and we can all fail.

But Christians, God's children, live holy lives. John tells us that in 1 John chapter 5, verse 18; "We know...", he says, "...that no one born of God sins...". Now, what a statement that is!... And then you wonder, 'Wait a minute. Didn't he say at the beginning, (at the end of chapter 1, *verse 8*), "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us"?' Then he goes on to talk about the "Advocate" that we have when we do sin, in the next chapter, (*1Jhn 2:8*). So what does he mean, "...no one born of God sins..."?

Well, what he means is 'No one born of God **goes on** sinning'. No, we sin and we're sinners, **but** that's *not the bent of the life* of a Christian...and it's not the perspective and the desire of a Christian.

Certainly Christians fail, we sin every day—in thought and deed. And genuine Christians can fall into terrible sins, (and even persist in it for a time), *but* there will be

repentance in a true child of God, and *the bent* of our behavior will be toward obedience. That's what characterizes a Christian, a saint who is a holy one, a sanctified one—and we will live a holy life even unto sacrifice.

And history is filled with people who remain faithful in trying times and suffered for their faith. There were many, we would assume, in Thyatira who did—and the Lord encourages them in verse 24, "But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you."

The promise of putting "no other burden" on them raises the question, 'Other than what?' Probably it means, 'No burden besides the one of Christian service already on them'. The wording here is very similar to that of Acts 15, verses 28 and 29, where the apostles gave instruction to Gentile Christians, which included prohibitions on eating meat offered to idols and immorality. So, that's probably the meaning here; the Lord was saying, 'I'm not going to lay extra rules on you.' We tend to do that to ourselves, but He is not doing that. He is saying, 'Just stay faithful to the instruction given in the New Testament.'

The Lord doesn't weigh us down with rules and regulations. In Matthew chapter 11, verse 30, He promised to give us *a yoke*...that all who come to Him will be given, 'a yoke that is easy and light.'

Now, it is a yoke—and there are principles of conduct...but it is *light* for those who are motivated by *love* for Him—and love gives joy in obedience. And the Holy Spirit gives the power to each and every one of us to do it...and that makes it easy.

So, that is not to say that living a disciplined life is not involved here...certainly there is. Paul says, 'I buffet my body and make it my slave...', (1Cor 9:27), and we're to do that. So, we can do that because the Spirit of God is in us to enable us...along with the motivation of love—for when it is love for the Lord, it's a joy to do that.

So here, He doesn't lay excessive burdens on His people. He encourages faithfulness in the way already laid out in Scripture; we don't need to add anything more to what the apostles have written. He reinforces that, in verse 25, by exhorting them to continue in faithfulness to Him...to His Word and rejection of any tolerance of sin. 'Get out there and pull weeds in God's garden', He said. "Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come." He said. (vs25).

And those who do, who "overcome", are given great promises in the last verses. First, in verses 26 and 27, where Christ quotes Psalm 2, and the promise of ruling the nations: Verse 26, "He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS;...". So He is talking here about what is future, what is coming, (and what we will see at the end of the book). "I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS" ...this is what God promised to Christ, His Son, in Psalm 2.

Verse 27, "AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received *authority* from My Father;".

The saints will share in the Lord's Messianic rule in the Millennial Kingdom at the end of the age. Christ promised His disciples in Matthew chapter 5, verse 5, that it is "the meek", (or "*the gentle*"), who would "inherit the earth"—where the kingdom will be established between the Lord's return and 'the new heavens and a new earth.' (2Pe 3:13). In Matthew chapter 19, verse 28, He promised in that future age, ("in the regeneration" as He called it...or 'In the age when the earth will be renewed and glorified, there will be no more weeds out there'), that they would rule with Him.

And that same promise is given in Luke chapter 22, verse 30...His disciples would, 'eat and drink at His table', (at the Messianic banquet), and "...sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (*Mat 19:28b*). In 1 Corinthians chapter 6, verse 2, Paul wrote that, "the saints will judge the world". All of that is a promise of the kingdom to come.

And that's the promise given here, and it runs all through the Book of Revelation. In chapter 5, verse 10, John says that the saints, "...will reign upon the earth." And in chapter 20, verse 4, he writes they will, "reign with Christ for a thousand years." Now, put that together, 'They will reign with Christ for a thousand years on the earth.'

The Oxford commentator, G.B. Caird, points out that, "This can only mean that they will reign over a population other than themselves... 'the saints' will rule over the nations."

That's the promise given to the Messiah in Psalm 2, verses 8 and 9—and here Christ promises that we will share in that glorious reign. So whatever we go through in this life will not compare to what is yet to come and what we will enjoy.

And He adds a second promise in verse 28, "...and I will give him", (*the overcomer*), "the morning star."

The 'morning star' is Venus. In ancient times, Venus was a symbol of *sovereignty*. Roman generals owed their loyalty to her; the Roman legions carried signs of Venus on their standards. So, many commentators feel this image was borrowed from that, 'to signify...', (by what was a very common symbol of power in that day), '...that power over the nations will be given to the faithful'. —And that is true, that is what this means.

But "the morning star" may not necessarily be Venus. In fact, "the morning star" represents Christ. And in Revelation 22, verse 16, Jesus said, "I am...the morning star." So *in this second promise of verse 28*, He may be giving the promise that those who resist the entanglements of the flesh, ("the deep things of Satan"), will have, 'the deep things of the Son' ... 'the Star'—Christ Himself. And they will share in His authority over the nations, and rule with Him with complete fellowship in His bright light, and holiness, and love.

All of that will certainly be true: we will rule the nations *with Christ*. [And I would add...it is that phrase, '*with Christ*', that is the greatest part of the blessing. We will see Him and be with Him and serve with Him, as He graciously allows us to do that.]

Well, that is the promise given to the faithful of Thyatira, the smallest of the churches, from the least significant of the seven cities of Asia: 'You may be small, your work may not measure up to the greatness, as the world counts greatness...but don't despair...don't despise the day of small things. Be faithful where you are and with what you have. Live obediently, for there is no small service to the Lord; the small shall be great, and 'the last shall be first.' (*Mar 10:31*). That is God's way...that is the way His grace works.'

So, may God help us to be strong—and not be tolerant of that which is wrong or indifferent toward sin...and not conform to the world and its standards. But, 'Be saints'... Be what we are, separate from this world, and separate unto holiness...and live that way.

But if you're here without Christ, we give you that invitation, (as ambassadors of Christ, we are able to do that). These are great promises, (promises of eternal life and glorious activity, reigning as kings on the earth)—but they are promises for those who believe.

If you long for eternal life, believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He is the Son of God, who became a man and died for sinners. Are you a sinner in need of salvation? Of course you are, we all are. He paid for it all, for all who believe in Him. There is nothing more to do but believe—receive the gift of life.

May God help you to do that.

*(Closing prayer)* Father, what a great truth to be able to sing; 'We confess our sins, they are many'...but Hallelujah!, 'Your mercy is more.'

Every one of us who have put our faith in Your Son is a testimony to that.

We thank You for that great truth.

Now,

The LORD bless you and keep you;

The LORD make His face shine on you,

And be gracious to you;

The LORD lift up His countenance on you,

And give you Shalom, peace.

In Christ's name. Amen.

*(End of Audio)*