

Compromise which led to corruption. A tolerance of slavery in the form of sin. These words describe both the churches of Pergamum and Thyatira, where there were people enticing and tempting the Body to sin. While there are many notable things about the church of Thyatira, such as their works, love, faith, service, patient endurance, and their growth, Jesus was harsh on “that woman Jezebel” (v.19) for leading His children astray. He had given her time to repent, and would now leave her to suffer the consequences of her sin. If her followers failed to repent of their ways, they, too, would suffer the same fate.

We see in the churches of Pergamum and Thyatira the dangers of compromise and compartmentalization: how easy it is for us to justify things for our own means and ends. How easy it is to become desensitized to things that are not of God’s Holy Spirit, to reason our own thoughts and actions away when we find ourselves slipping and doing the same. Oftentimes in the Christian life, we take on the perspective of “sin management”, but the love that Jesus has for us is so much more than that. He wants us to conquer and to keep His works until the end, because He knows that the consequences of sin are too much to bear. Every time we give in, we compromise, or we compartmentalize our faith from the secular, it doesn’t get better. It only becomes worse.

But let us find encouragement in knowing that Jesus is the Morning Star. He comes during the darkest time of the night to usher in the light. He gives to the one who conquers Himself, and in doing so He reminds us—the battle is already won. Let us remember this: Jesus wins.

1. Although the first three chapters comprise of Jesus’ message to the seven churches of Asia Minor, the book of Revelation is primarily about Jesus. What are some characteristics or qualities of Jesus that you have learnt from His letters to the church of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, and Thyatira so far?
2. While love, patience, and gentleness are fruits of the Spirit, tolerance is not. Are there any modern-day equivalents to the teachings of Jezebel that you see around you? How are you challenged to respond in a manner that reflects Christ, but does not stand for tolerance?
3. While Jesus is harsh against “Jezebel” and her followers for their sin, He commends the church in Thyatira for their works, love, faith, service, and patient endurance, which leads ultimately to their growth.

Is there any “battle” that you are facing in these five areas of your life? Or is there any area that you think you could grow in?

If you are facing challenges / obstacles / “battles” in a particular area, what does it look like for you to conquer and to keep the works of Jesus until the very end? How does the reminder of Jesus’ victory over all impact those “battles” that you are facing, or how does it challenge, convict, or empower you to grow?