

## The church in Thyatira

(Revelation 2:18) "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, 'These things says the Son of God, **who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:**

The self-description is "God, the Judge".

(Revelation 2:19) "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, **the last are more than the first.**

Service = same word used for deaconesses and deacons

Patience = cheerful endurance

(Revelation 2:20) Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you **allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.**

Allow = permit or even "left alone to do what she desires".

Jezebel = The word is used in modern English to mean a violent, overbearing, turbulent, brawling, quarrelsome woman; a shrew or vixen. In the past, the word could be applied to any person or thing personified, not just a woman

Anyone calling him or herself a prophet without God's calling, is taking their life in their own hands; Jezebel calls herself a prophetess. Some might say "so what, let her call herself whatever she wants...no big deal!" But it is big deal! A prophet speaks the very words of God with an anointing and with authority given by God Himself.

She was the daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre/Sidon and priest of **the cult of Baal; this false god's worshippers were heavily involved with sexual degradation and other ungodly behaviors.**

**Think of this for a moment: the sin-nature the human race has created "gods" that are anthesis of the True and Living God. These imaginary gods behave exactly how their believers want to behave themselves. Therefore, so called belief in these non-gods gives them a false legitimacy for their vile, evil and unrestrained behavior...**

**If Ba'al was a sexual monster (so to speak), it's adherents were also...and thought that they were ok in their belief.**

**So, her comes Jezebel:** She was a seductress! She used her sexuality to have power and influence over those who were in leadership.

King Ahab of the Northern tribes (aka, Israel) married this priestess and instituted idolatry into the people of Israel the likes of which had not been seen before. All of the kings before him did evil in the sight of the LORD but the evil was based on a perversion of their religion...thru Jezebel, Ba'al worship was introduced.

**1Ki 16:29-33** In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. **(30) Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD,**

**more than all who *were* before him. (31) And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. (32) Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. (33) And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.**

Jezebel had an obsessive passion for domineering and controlling others, especially in the spiritual realm. When she became queen, she began a relentless campaign to rid Israel of all evidences of the worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

1Ki 18:4 For so it was, while Jezebel massacred the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah had taken one hundred prophets and hidden them, fifty to a cave, and had fed them with bread and water.)

She also had a single-mindedness about her such that she would ALWAYS try to get her way, no matter who was destroyed in the process: For example, Ahab wanted a vineyard owned by Naboth but he refused to sell it or give it to the King. After ridiculing the king for his apparent weakness, she wrote a letter using the King's name to first honor a man named Naboth who owned a vineyard that the King wanted. Naboth refused to give it or sell it to him because it was his son's inheritance. Then, during the celebration, Jezebel had men stand up and accuse Naboth of blasphemy. He was then stoned to death. His sons also. Therefore, Ahab, the whiner would have his vineyard thru the treachery of his wife.

(1 Kings 21).

God spoke about Ahab and Jezebel to the Prophet Elijah (her greatest enemy!). Elijah came to Ahab and spoke God's judgement on him and his despicable wife:

1Ki 21:21-24 'Behold, I will bring calamity on you. I will take away your posterity and will cut off from Ahab every male in Israel, both bond and free. (22) I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked *Me* to anger and made Israel sin.' (23) **And concerning Jezebel the LORD also spoke, saying, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.'** (24) **The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field."**

This prophecy was fulfilled and you can read about it in 2 Kings 9:36-37

2Ki 9:36-37 Therefore they came back and told him. And he said, "This *is* the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'On the plot *of ground* at Jezreel dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; (37) and the corpse of Jezebel shall be as refuse on the surface of the field, in the plot at Jezreel, so that they shall not say, "Here *lies* Jezebel." ' "

So, all this to say, there may be women and men in the church who exhibit these same characteristics:

1. Power-hungry and controlling
2. Will use whatever means to get their way
3. Seducing men or women into sexual sin
4. Leading men and women into idolatry – creating idols in their hearts such as money, sex, power, material things – all designed to replace God!

Pastor Stu, why do you include men and women in this description?

1. There's no mention of a "spirit of Jezebel" in the scriptures.
2. What I described can be seen by the behavior and attitudes of men and women.

**(Revelation 2:21) And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.**

This is one of the most difficult and scary concepts because it goes against our notions of 'eternal security'.

What if I sin and do not repent right away and then I die? Do I lose my salvation and end up in hell for one lapse of repentance?

God knows your heart! Sometimes our resistance to repentance has to do with messed up stuff in our hearts that the LORD needs to work on; As a true believer, I don't believe you can do anything sinful without feeling the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Feeling that conviction is the first step! Obeying it is the next step! Sometimes, as with me, there's lapse between acknowledging it and repenting. Repentance is a verb, not a feeling. Crying out "Oh God, forgive me!" leads towards a change in behavior.

Let's not put God in a box; let God be God – merciful, gracious, wanting the best for us – even if that includes a good dose of confession and turning.

**(Revelation 2:22) Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. (Revelation 2:23) I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.**

But, what else can the God of all Righteousness do if we, in our stubborn pride refuse to humble ourselves before His Face? Refusing to repent is the epitome of pride!

**(Revelation 2:24) "Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden.**

"to you I say" must be directed to ME, the pastor! I am responsible for the spiritual health of the flock – at least, I am responsible for feeding, teaching, loving and leading as Jesus feeds, leads, teaches and loves me!

But you're not off the hook! If you see this "spirit" at work in the body, you are responsible to **resist** it, come against it with all of the humility and love that the Spirit has!

But Jesus also says to this church – I will put on you no other burden! Those to **resist** the devil so that he flees; those who do NOT succumb to any of Satan’s doctrines or schemes...you are overcomers!

I say “resist”...I do not say “reason with him” or “talk with him” or confront him – resist him – send him on his way with any rebuke the Holy Spirit gives you!

**So Jesus says:**

(Revelation 2:25) **But hold fast what you have till I come.**

(Revelation 2:26) **And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— (27) 'HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON; THEY SHALL BE DASHED TO PIECES LIKE THE POTTER'S VESSELS'—** as I also have received from My Father;

We are called to “good works” – so do them! Don’t know what they may be? Start with prayer, enter into worship and meditate on His Word...Pray that the Holy Spirit reveals these things to you...and please don’t say “nah, I don’t want to do that...”

Verse 27 is taken from Psalm 2:

**Psa 2:1-12** Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? (2) The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying*, (3) "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." (4) He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision. (5) Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: (6) "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." (7) "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You *are* My Son, Today I have begotten You. (8) **Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. (9) You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'**" (10) Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. (11) Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. (12) Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish *in* the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all those who put their trust in Him.

(Revelation 2:28) **and I will give him the morning star.**

And, what DO YOU GET FOR YOUR EFFORTS? **NOTHING!** That’s right: You get no thing but you do get one thing – Jesus who is the morning star:

**Revelation 22:16** "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

**Matthew 2:2** saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."

**Psa 23:1-6 A Psalm of David.** The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want. (2) He

makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. (3) He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. (4) Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You *are* with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. (5) You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. (6) Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

(Revelation 2:29) "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the **churches.**" '