

## 7 CHURCHES IN REVELATION

Ephesus  
 Smyrna  
 Pergamum  
 Thyatira ✓  
 Sardis  
 Philadelphia  
 Laodicea

## Let's Review...

	Ephesus 2:1-7	Smyrna 2:8-11	Pergamum 2:12-17
Commendation (I know your...)	Good works, labor, patience	Works, tribulation, poverty	Hold firmly to My name, did not deny My faith
Condemnation	You have left your first love	No condemnation	Hold the teaching of Balaam and Nicolaitans
Counsel	Remember from where you are fallen and repent	Fear not. Be faithful.	Repent or I will wage war
Challenge	Will give to eat of the tree of life	Will not be hurt by the second death	Will give some hidden manna and a white stone



## Thyatira (Akhisar)

- The longest letter to the smallest of the seven churches (229 words) with more words of correction than the other six.
- Thyatira is only mentioned once specifically elsewhere in the Bible- Acts 16:14- *“A woman named Lydia was listening; she was a seller of purple fabrics from the city of Thyatira, and a worshiper of God.”* Lydia was the first convert in Europe on Paul’s second missionary journey (Macedonian call).
- Today has population of 50,000- much smaller than first three church cities.
- City was known for its purple dye (today called Turkish Red).

## Thyatira (Akhisar)

- More commercial guilds than in any other city of its time (e.g. dyers, bakers, painters, tanners, tailors, potters, and workers in wool, linen, and metal (chiefly copper)).
- Was a military garrison when Alexander the Great was king.
- City’s prior purpose was to act as a first line of defense against attackers but now in the *Pax Romana* (Augustus through Marcus Aurelius- 27 B.C. – 180 A.D.) it prospered.
- In the guilds’ fellowship meals, food was first sacrificed to idols (the twins Apollo and Artemis), and after the meals, immorality was rampant.

## Thyatira (Akhisar)

- Even though the Christian and secular lifestyles were totally incompatible, “Jezebel” devised a compromise between the two.

Verse 18- *“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and feet like burnished bronze, says this:*

- *angel*- probably the pastor of the church
- *Son of God*- occurs 49 times in the New Testament. This is the only occurrence in the letters to the seven churches or in the book of Revelation. Elsewhere He is the “Son of Man.” Why? Jesus is the true Son of God, not Apollo, their patron of the guilds.

Verse 18- *“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and feet like burnished bronze, says this:*

- *flame of fire and burnished bronze-* repeating the vision of chapter 1:14-15. Jesus, the Son of God, has come to judge! He is omniscient (eyes) and omnipotent (feet).

Verse 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.*

- *Deeds, love, faith, service, perseverance-* The Christians at Thyatira are growing in their walk with the Lord.
- *Love produces patience*
- *Faith produces perseverance*

Verse 20- *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 sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.*

- The pastor is allowing this woman to lead his congregation astray.
- *Jezebel* – (1 Kgs. 16:31–21:25; 2 Kgs. 9) was the wife of Ahab, the worst king of Israel (...who “did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any king of Israel before him,” 1 Kings 16:30).

Verse 20- *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 sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.*

- This is a pseudonym for a female in the church who is leading people astray.
- Jezebel’s father was Ethbaal (“with Baal” who was a priest of Astarte, the Greek form of the moon goddess Ashtoreth).

Verse 20- *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 sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.*

- She led the Israelites to worship Baal and Asherah (1 Kings 16:31-32). She was a prostitute and a witch (2 Kings 9:22).
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- Elisha commanded Jehu to kill her. She was thrown from a window by her eunuchs.
- She had such an evil mind and her hands had done so much wickedness, even the dogs wouldn't eat them. As prophesied by Elijah, her body ended up as dog dung (*"refuse on the surface of the field"* 2 Kings 9:37).

Verse 20- *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 sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.*

- She called herself a prophetess (a spokesperson for God) to gullible Christians.
- She established a reputation for teaching believers (v. 24).
- She deliberately led Christians into sexual immorality.

Verse 20- *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 sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.*

- She encouraged violation of conscience regarding food sacrificed to idols.
- She violated two of the four-fold decree of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:29): abstain from (1) **food sacrificed to idols**, (2) blood, (3) the meat of strangled animals and (4) **sexual immorality**.

## Two Views of Gender Roles in the Church

Egalitarian - The position that there are no biblical gender-based restrictions on ministry in the church.

*Galatians 3:28 - There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

## Two Views of Gender Roles in the Church

Complementarian - The position that God intends for only men to serve in formal church leadership roles. They should be the only ones who teach or assume authority over men (1 Timothy 2:12) and should also be the only ones who are pastors/elders/bishops (1 Timothy 3:2), and deacons (1 Timothy 3:12).

Paul calls women in the church “fellow-workers” to serve in equally important, but complementary roles (Philippians 4:2-3).

## Two Views of Gender Roles in the Church

Written about 30 years before the Book of Revelation

**1 Timothy 2:12-** *But I do not allow a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.*

**1 Timothy 3:2-** *An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, skillful in teaching...*

**1 Timothy 3:12-** *Deacons must be husbands of one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.*

Written about 40 years before the Book of Revelation

**Philippians 4:2-3-** *I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. Indeed, true companion, I ask you also, help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement as well as the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.*

**Verse 21-** *I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her sexual immorality.*

*time to repent* – suggests that “Jezebel” has been in the congregation for some time.

There are no more chances for this woman. Judgment has been pronounced.

*Verse 22- 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.*

Pergamum was given a warning (“otherwise”), but for Thyatira the coming judgment is announced as a fact.

*bed of sickness-* She is not given a chance to repent this time because she refused to listen before, but misguided believers who have followed her have a chance to repent.

1 Corinthians 11:29-30- *For the one who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not properly recognize the body. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number are asleep.*

*Verse 23- And I will kill her children with plague, 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.*

*There are three groups in these verses:*

- *Jezebel*
- *Misguided Christians trapped in immorality (chance to repent)*
- *Second-generation false believers (her children)*

Verse 23- *And I will kill her children with plague, 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.*

- This is the only verse to acknowledge all other six churches.
- This reminds us of the first Jezebel's false prophets of Baal who were killed with a sword by Elijah.
- 1 Kings 18:40- *"Then Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal; do not let one of them escape." So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slaughtered them there.*

Verse 23- *And I will kill her children with plague, 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.*

- *kill her children*- Possibly her biological children as with the first Jezebel (2 Kings 10) after she was killed (2 Kings 9). Probably false believers who have believed her lies and are following her. This is in line with a Hebrew idea that children suffer for the sins of their parents.
- *plague (death)*- Their death will be due directly from their actions.

Verse 23- *And I will kill her children with plague, 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.*

- *churches*- the only time all seven churches are mentioned in the seven letters.
- *minds and hearts*- literally, the “kidneys (*nephrous*) and hearts (*cardia*).” Our feeling and emotions came from our kidneys and our decisions came from our heart. The Lord sees our hearts and minds (motives) clearly, even when we can’t.

Verse 23- *And I will kill her children with plague, 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.*

- *according to your deeds*- those at this church will be judged for what they do and don’t do and why they did or didn’t do it. His “*eyes like a flame*” see perfectly.

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 rest-* There are some Christians in the church not following “Jezebel.”
- *deep things of Satan-* Possibly mocking Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:10- “*But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*” KJV

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.*

- Possibly referring to things that are supposedly “higher or hidden.” (Gnostic)
- *as they call them-* The Lord is not calling these beliefs deep.
- *I place no other burden on you-* Believers in the church who are not involved in immorality will not be held accountable for the actions of others.

Verse 25- *Nevertheless what you have, hold firmly until I come.*

- *hold firmly*- Literally, “keep on holding on”

Verse 26- *The one who overcomes, and the one who keeps My deeds until the end, I will give him authority over the nations;*

- *one who overcomes*- those who are truly saved
- *authority over the nations*- ruling in the millennial kingdom.
- ***Amillennialism***- no millennial kingdom- The reign of Christ with His saints is either the reign of Christ manifested in history through His church, or the spiritual reign of believers with Christ “in the heavenly places.”

Verse 26- *The one who overcomes, and the one who keeps My deeds until the end, I will give him authority over the nations;*

- *one who overcomes*- those who are truly saved
- *authority over the nations*- ruling in the millennial kingdom.
- **Postmillennialism**- Christ will return after the church institutes a thousand year reign- (“darkness shall turn to the dawning”)

Verse 26- *The one who overcomes, and the one who keeps My deeds until the end, I will give him authority over the nations;*

- **Premillennialism**- The coming of Christ will be followed by a binding of Satan and the resurrection of the saints who will join him in a temporal kingdom when he reigns over the earth.

Verse 27- *and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are shattered, as I also have received authority from My Father;*

- *he shall rule them- shepherd them*
- *rod of iron- With Christ the believer who overcomes will have the authority to rule, to discipline, and to judge.*

1 Corinthians 6:2- *Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? If the world is judged by you, are you not competent to form the smallest law courts?*

Verse 28- *and I will give him the morning star.*

*morning star-* the planet Venus is called the morning star because it is the last star visible before the sun rises. Jesus will call Himself the “morning star” later in 22:16-

*“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you of these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”*

This is the second promise to the believers. Jesus will be seen just before “daybreak.” Our current period, between the ascension of Christ and His Second Coming, is the “night.”

*Biblical Model for Conflict Resolution*

Matthew 18:15 – 17

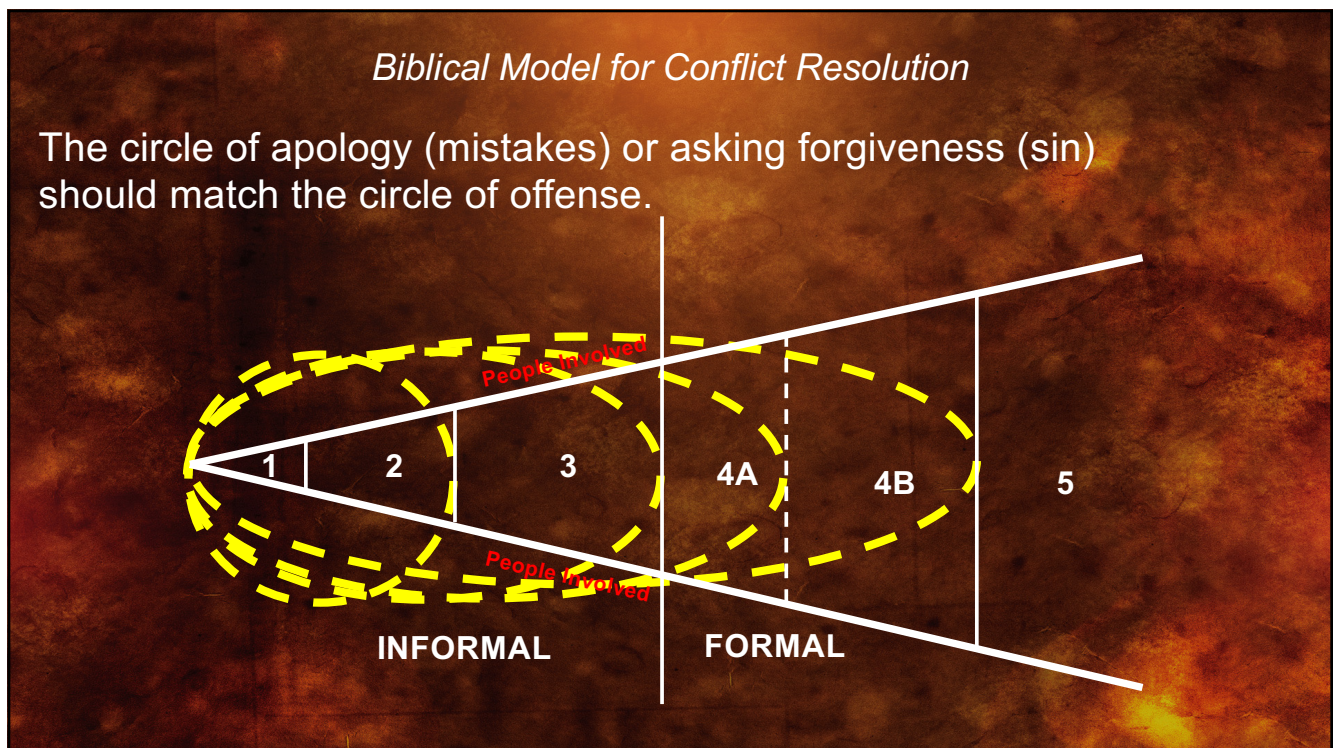
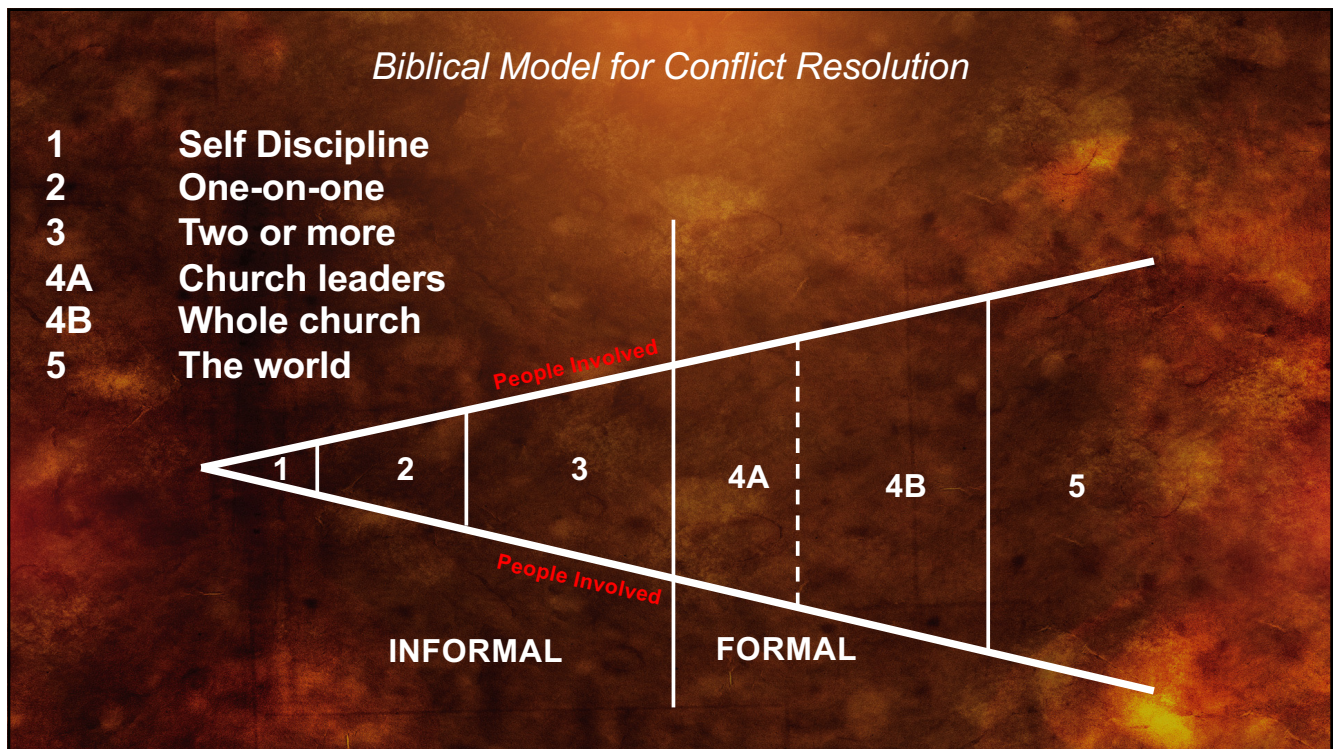
15 *“Now if your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have gained your brother.*

16 *But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that on the testimony of two or three witnesses every matter may be confirmed.*

17 *And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, he is to be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”*

Verse 29- *The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’*

- *Jezebel and her followers (2:20–21) would not heed the Spirit's message, but the faithful remnant would hear and obey it.*



**Next week...**

Continue Chapter 3 -  
The Message to Sardis

