

(P) Sept. 26, 71 P.M. WYRI

THE CHURCH AT THYATIRA

Rev. 2:18-29

This is a most interesting church. We do not have a direct account of the origin of this church in the small city of Asia Minor. It may have been one of Paul's disciples from Ephesus by Lydia. A native of this place, who was converted at Philippi - or by some unknown Christian representative.

It was a small city, an important trading point, and it could have had easy connections with Pergamos and Ephesus. And the heresy that appears in the last church is also found in this church.

Now in order that you might remember this message - I would suggest you note these four statements in the way of an outline.

- ✓ 1. A Wise Witness - V. 18
- ✓ 2. Wonderful Workers - V. 19
3. A Wicked Woman - V. 20-23
4. Worthy Wages - V. 24-29

I. A Wise Witness - V. 18

To the angel of the church in Thyatira - to the pastor he writes.

And then he declares who is speaking - who the witness is. And he says first of all the witness is the son of God. And then he describes this witness by saying that he has eyes like a flame of fire and feet like fine brass. And the church is challenged to hear him.

This is the estimate which Christ gives as he describes himself. You remember on another occasion he said he was the one that held the seven stars, the ministers. On another occasion he said he was the first and the last - was

dead and is alive. And to the church last week he said, he was the sharp sword with two edges. Now here he says, he is the son of God. He speaks with authority - equal with God. He claims to be the only begotten son of God. Who came forth from the Father. It was because of this claim that the Jews insisted on having him crucified. They said it was blasphemy. We therefore, mistake our Lord, if we fail to consider him as God, with authority over his church. Against his power, no opposition can stand.

Eyes like unto flames of fire - there is nothing more piercing than flaming fire. It penetrates all things and mows down all obstructions. It looks through everything - it goes through a mask of covering. It searches out the most remote recesses. The hidden things of the soul.

Hagar, in her grief exclaimed, thou God seeth me--so the son of God sees everything that is going on in the church. And he sees us. He reads our thoughts. When we think of our faults and our failures, things which are not to our credit - it is a most impressive reflection that it is all naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Now we speak sometimes of secret thoughts, hidden feelings, that live buried in our souls. He sees all of this.

Some people even religious works use the guard of piety to hide what God condemns. Modern society is full of hypocrisy and the people of God in the church are not always free from it. It is one of the arts of our day to cover guilt with smiles, iniquity with fair sounding words, and bad morals with fascinating manners. The piercing eye, the flames go right through that which is false. It may not be in the gaze of man but they cannot impose on Christ. He sees the covetness, the pride, the ambition, the impurity, the malice - all this lies in the secret of man's

soul. These secret sins and deeds of darkness - Christ sees and knows.

How dark must the earth appear to the bright burning penetrating eye of Jesus, to whom all the hidden sins and false things in your life - what a spectacle this will be in the day of judgement when revealed. When all that is in people's hearts will be layed there and everyone will be seen as he is.

Now this should trouble the make believers, the shams, the half ways.

His feet are of fine brass. Now brass tells of strength. Now this means that he is going to be strong. This is a vivid picture, of the mighty strength of Christ to tread down whatever is opposed to him. His eyes of flame will see - his feet of brass will tread down in judgement all that is unholy and impure. The hypocrites and non-believers are all known to him.

Now this brass must have been a product that was produced there in that part of the country. And they knew what he was talking about. He was going to trample that which was unclean.

II. Wonderful Workers - V. 19

I know first your works and deeds or doings. Your love and charity. Third, your faith, Fourth, your patience or endurance. Fifth, that you are working harder now than you did at the first. He tells them there is much good even in the worst of the churches. Jesus found something good there to talk about. They were not totally apostate or corrupt. There were some that really loved and served Christ.

Sodom had a lot. And the snow covered mountains have their humble flowers. So we may count that there are some good in believing people in every respective