

Sermon Series: “You’ve Got Mail!”—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN— 9/28/08
Title: “Jezebel in the Church”
Text: Revelation 2: 18-29
Intro.: *Illus.: Keeping the colors pure*
Theme: Purity in thought, conduct, and devotion mark the life of believers who understand what has been gained in Christ and what can be lost through lapses in diligence to all aspects of our walk of faith.

Grace-filled approaches to tough issues (Revelation 2: 18-25)

- Notice the flow of assumed grace in Jesus’ approach precedes the call to repentance
 1. When another sins, we often barge in with a barrage of words verging on bullying because we are impacted
 2. Jesus does not begin with scorching judgment but affirms positive faith that has grown (*vs. 19*)
- Specific correction, consequences for choices, but always points to the way out because of a relationship
 1. **Illus.: The difference between a fire alarm and an exit sign**
 2. Jesus calls the sin a sin (20-22), calls for repentance lest consequences result (22), and points the way out (25)
 3. Dealing w/wayward child/spouse, reaching believer crashing, a unchurched friend in destructive lifestyle
 4. **2 Timothy 2: 24-26**

Confronting the cancer of “live for today”

- The problem at Thyatira – playing with deadly sin
 1. Tolerance of a “false voice” within their midst
 - a. Use of name Jezebel(20) rings with all the evil of the O. T. namesake who was anti-God influence in Israel
 - b. “*Learned Satan so-called deep secrets*”(immorality, dark arts, idolatrous, world views) with clocked/misapplied God’s word — “*Did God really say . . . ?*” (*Gen 3: 1*)
 2. Compromise to the peer pressures around
 - a. Thyatira commerce center of many trade-guilds which could give you business or lock you out
 - b. Pressure on early Christians to practice in festivals to false gods (*food sacrificed to idols*) in order to “fit in”
 - c. A witness to one-God in Christ destroyed – *For if someone sees you, who have knowledge, dining in an idol’s temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols? 1 Cor. 8:10*
- The problem today — believers not taking Satan’s and sin’s reach seriously
 1. We tolerate the new age voices of false prophets to commingle our life in Christ with worship of self
 2. We are too quick to compromise and dumb down sin, unbelief, and the need for a Savior
 - a. **Ills.: Conversation this week: Soften words like “unbeliever, unchurched” in a pluralistic world**
 3. Condoning immorality’s encroachment in our midst
 - a. Teens peer pressure to try out sex and drugs leading to self-destructing behavior
 - b. Business pressure to move up the ladder through affairs, ethical blind eyes leading to destroyed homes/careers
 - c. Pre-marital living together for economic reasons leading to a “rip-cord” left open as an option to a tough relationship diminishing the future value of a marriage commitment
 4. *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. Jn10:10*

The life of victory– living as if we have a tomorrow (Rev. 2: 25-28)

- Redeemed to rule
 1. Jesus points to the fact that when we remain faithful, we are *more than conquerors (Rom. 8:37)*
 - a. *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession.” 1 Pet 2:9*
 - b. Overcome world threats, blustering, slashing wounds and are promised victory even in the darkest of time
 - c. *“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom. Luke 12:32*
 2. Jesus has chosen to rule over sin in our life now
 - a. Jesus continues to call me back to victory (repentance)
 - b. Jesus washes my morally stained garments with his whitening forgiveness (*scarlet...snow Isaiah 1: 18*)
 - c. Jesus gives me his power to choose to “*present my body as an instrument of righteousness.*” *Rom 6:13*
- Anticipating the dawn of Jesus’ delivering appearance
 1. *“I will give you the morning star” vs. 28*
 2. *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Phil 3:20*
 3. **Illus.: In the world but not of the world — spider in a bubble**

Keeping the Colors Pure

A visitor going into the studio of a local painter/artist found on his easel some very fine gems, brilliant and sparking in their vast array of colors. Asked why he kept them there, the painter replied: "I keep them there to tone up my eyes. When I am working in pigments, insensibly the sense of color become weakened. By having these pure colors before me to refresh my eyes the sense of color is brought up again just as the musician by his tuning-fork brings his string up to the concert pitch.

In the world but not of the world

In South America is a curious little spider which has its home under the water. It forms a bubble about itself in which like a diving bell, it sinks to the bottom of a pond or river. It will remain there for hours, living below, and yet breathing the air from above. When it returns to the surface it is found to be perfectly dry. Not the slightest moisture will have penetrated its capsule. It is in the water and yet separate from it, maintained by contact with the beyond.

Rev. 2:18-29

¹⁸"To the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze. ¹⁹I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.

²⁰ Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. ²¹I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. ²²So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. ²³I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. ²⁴Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan's so-called deep secrets (I will not impose any other burden on you):

²⁵Only hold on to what you have until I come. ²⁶ To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations— ²⁷He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery'--just as I have received authority from my Father. ²⁸I will also give him the morning star. ²⁹He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. [NIV]

2 Timothy 2: 24-26

The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

2 Tim. 2:24-26