

Don't Call What is Unholy, Holy - Revelation 2:18-29

Any volunteers want to preach this sermon this morning?

Thankfully, preaching is simply proclaiming the truth of God from His Word!

These are **"The words of the Son of God"** – These aren't my words, my ideas, my beliefs, these are the very words of Jesus – God in the flesh!

He is the One with **"eyes like a flame of fire, & whose feet are like burnished bronze."** He sees beyond what we can see & is holier than we can comprehend!

When He speaks, it would be wise for us to listen, for we'll all stand before Him one day & give an account of not only what we believed, but also how we lived!

By His grace, He allows us a glimpse of what that day will be like prior to it's coming, so that we can be prepared for it. That's the purpose of these letters!

What an advantage He gives us by revealing the outcome before it happens!

To the church in Thyatira, Jesus says there is both good & bad in them. **"I know your works, your love and faith and service & patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first..."** Who wouldn't like to hear these words?

But how many churches/Christians try to stop right there & say, "See we're/I'm doing well. Look at the fruit that is being produced for the Kingdom of God!"

But Jesus doesn't stop there. He sees beyond what we want Him to see, to the things we want to hide! His eyes of fire & feet of bronze won't allow Him to overlook the very things that we hold onto that keep us separated from Him!

Jesus is holy, & His desire is to make us holy! But for Him to do that, His consuming fire needs to burn clean that which He sees in us that is not of Him.

In vs. 20, Jesus reveals what needed to be purified in this church in Thyatira.

They were allowing that which was unholy, to be called holy, in the church!

Jezebel was corrupting the very thing Jesus Himself died to make holy – His bride! This was a different kind of threat to the Church, a threat from within!

There is much in this world that is not of God that we may not like, but it should not surprise us b/c the ways of the world are in opposition to the things of God!

Examples: _____

But what should surprise us, is when the church begins to embrace & advocate for the ways of the world, at the expense of forsaking the ways of God!

Examples: _____

This is what vs. 24 refers to as **"the deep things of Satan"** – calling what God has declared unholy, holy! Remember, deception is Satan's most powerful weapon!

The Bible tells us that for those in the church who won't repent of such things, we are to remove them from the church and treat them as unbelievers!

Now timing is important here! The Biblical steps of confronting sin in the church must be applied, and time for repentance needs to be offered. (Jezebel)

We must also be careful that if it gets to the point of removal, Jesus' response to unbelievers & tax collectors must inform how we respond to them! He sought them out, met with them & invited them to follow Him. (Matthew & Zacchaeus)

But those like Jezebel, who refuse to repent, we are to remove them from the church, or Jesus will do far worse to them for corrupting His bride - vs. 22-23!

Some will say, "But what about grace and forgiveness?" It's very clear from this passage that Jesus gave Jezebel, & those with her, plenty of time to repent!

Judgment fell upon Jezebel, but the doorway of repentance was still open to those who were falling prey to her corruption. God is incredibly gracious!

The fact that we are all standing here today, with our own sin, is a testimony to the grace of God. Jesus would be just to come against us in judgment as well!

We must not take sin lightly, and we must not be partners with those who call holy what God has clearly called unholy! It makes a mockery of Jesus!

Jesus bore the weight of our sin upon Himself, & it killed Him. **"For the wages of sin is death."** But He did it, in our place, so that we wouldn't be enslaved to sin. Let us not put the shackles of sin back on by being partners with it in this world!

I believe there is still hope for our world. Things can change for the good b/c Jesus is still at work here and His Church is still present amidst the darkness.

But we must be a light in this world, a "morning star", that exposes the darkness. Some, like Jezebel, will not come into the light. Jesus will deal with the Jezebel's of this world, but we need to protect the bride of Christ from her descendants! It's for this reason that we come to the Lord's table today.

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