

Thyatira: Questions to ask when Facing Temptations
“There is Something Fishy Here!”
Revelation 2: 18-29

Our daughter works for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the US. She is trained to smell bad meat, especially fish. She knows literally when “something smells fishy”. As we walk with the Lord, we need to have our senses trained to discern between good and evil (Hebrews 5;13-14)

What questions should I ask when facing ethical and moral decisions at work and in my personal life? The church in Thyatira faced challenging temptations and the letter written to them by Jesus provided essential help for them...and us!

Thyatira was a union town.

- Most cities in the Greco-Roman world centered on the guilds, but in Thyatira, they were prominent (some inscriptions noted the shoemakers, the makers and **sellors of dyed cloth**, and the bronze smiths).
- Lydia, a wealthy woman in the Bible and a '**seller of purple**' was a founding member of the church in Philippi (Acts 16:12-15) and came from Thyatira.
- Furthermore, each guild had its patron god/goddess, and the frequent feasts of the guilds were religious and often decidedly immoral. These feasts formed the heart of the social (and commercial) life of the city. To fit in you participated in these events.
- To refuse to participate meant the loss of both friends and funds (Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, BECNT, 153-54).

This is Christianity for the Marketplace...your place in the market and the need to guard our ethical principles. Your work life matters to God.

Jesus commends them for their work of devotion and love

- They are commended for both their attitudes (love and faith) and their actual deeds...service and perseverance..
- And they were growing in faith and ministry
- Caring for the needy and sharing in the work of the ministry
- What more can we ask of them...
- I am constantly thankful for these traits in Powers Creek

But He is concerned about some old temptations that never change!

- Seem strange to us...we buy our meat at the store, but for them at the Temple and devoted to the gods. The income went to immoral lifestyle. The meat had social implications in that worshipped the idol and then led to immorality...
- Immorality and worship of other idols and gods...the meat offered to idols was regular meat but dedicated to an idol...To eat this meat was to buy into the devotion to the idols and the imaginary gods.
- It was more than a meal it was a sign of commitment to the social values and the inherent behaviors: drunkenness sexual immorality and self-destructive decisions
- Two kinds of sin...**one social** and the **other personal** but connected... A desire to fit in with the group and feel good

Learning to “Smell” Bad Decisions:

Who Will Know About My Actions? Vs 18

- His All-seeing Purity...eyes of fire and sees. Jesus will know what I am doing...
- He knows our hearts and minds...vs 23
- God's word is alive and working and sharper than a two-edged sword...*Nothing in all the world can be hidden from God.* Everything is clear and lies open before Him. **Jeremiah 16:17**...*I see everything they do. They cannot hide from me the sins they do*
- Everywhere I go, Jesus comes along...
- Secular worldview...its none of your business...This is my private life stay out of my life!

Who Wants to Influence My Decisions? 20-

- What voices do I hear around me?
- What do my advisors and mentors say? John writes to people he knows...Who are the Apostle Johns in your life?
- Jezebel was a powerful Old Testament woman who controlled her husband and manipulated her nation...they offered to BAAL the god of prosperity and pleasure
 - Read 1 Kings 16: 29-34 then 1 Kings 21:24-26
- The Jezebel in Thyatira claimed prophetic authority through her teaching in the church. She had a powerful and influential voice
- Who are the voices in my life that desire to shape me? Actual people or voices I hear in my world?
- Positive voices: You know those from whom you learned 2 Timothy 3: 13-14; Proverbs 27:6
- You are not your own but are bought with a price therefore glorify God in your body...the devotion was ultimately to an idol and enslaved to it

Who Will Truly Care About My Decisions? Vs. 21

- His Enduring Stability...feet of bronze...He is stable and not going away
- His Patient Mercy.... I have given her (yes even Jezebel!) time...He is waiting patiently for you to wake up and return
- “God is not willing that anyone should perish”
- The father waited for the prodigal son to come home
- Such tempting people promise freedom but deliver slavery (2 Peter 2:19)
- Secular response: Its my life... I live with the consequences and I live for NOW. Even if suffering its my own decision...

What is the Long-term Effect of my Decisions 22 and 26-27

- Stores use what we call a “loss leader”....Losing relationships and even revenue is a short-term loss for a long term gain
- Shared Blessing and Reward for Faithfulness
- Jesus promises we will share in the kingdom and even destroy the idols of this world

How will my Decisions impact others? 22-23

- Her children were dragged down...biological or spiritual...
- The consequences of sin become an example to others.
- My actions influence others
- Secular response: I have no responsibility to care for others...I live my life and you live yours
- 2 Timothy 4...you know those from whom you learned it
- Story of Wayne and Grandma Gardiner...never made the drink again

Will my decision advance the kingdom and my own growth? So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

[\(1 Corinthians 10:31\)](#)