



Thyatira: The Tolerant Church

Week 5 | October 8th, 2023
Community Group Discussion Guide

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hall Family Farm Day

October 21, Lancaster, SC

On Saturday, October 21, we'll host a kids & families meet-up at Hall Family Farm in Lancaster, just outside of Charlotte. Hall Family Farm is a fall Saturday dream, complete with corn maze, hayrides, pumpkin patch, petting zoo, and more. Admission is free, and we'll be covering a 'Fun Pass' for each kid to enjoy pedal cars, a jungle gym, and a corn silo.

This event is designed to allow the families of Citizens an opportunity to connect with one another and have fun together.

[MORE INFO + REGISTRATION](#)

Family Vacation

November 10-12, Black Mountain, NC

Registration for this year's Family Vacation is now open! We value the chance to get away, retreat, rest, and spend time together as a church family, and we'd love for you to join us this year! On November 10-12, we are heading to the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in Black Mountain, NC.

Family vacation is open to all Citizens Church members, members-in-progress (have taken membership class), and children of current members. The cost of the trip is \$100/adult and \$25/child. Scholarships are available if needed, but please talk to Dan about that sooner rather than later.

If you're planning to attend, please register ASAP. The earlier you register, the easier it is for us to plan for the weekend. You can register and get more details by clicking the graphic below.

[MORE INFO + REGISTRATION](#)

REVIEW THE MISSION

Take some time to review who various people are building relationships with and seeking to share the gospel with.

Pray for these individuals - that God would open their eyes to the good news of the gospel.

PRAYER + SCRIPTURE

Open with a brief word of prayer: “God, we thank you for this time together. We open our hearts to how you might want to meet with us. Allow us to hear your voice and experience your work among us. Come Holy Spirit.”

1-2 minutes of silent reflection.

Read Revelation 2:18-29

18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: ‘The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze. 19 “I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. 20 But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. 21 I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. 22 Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, 23 and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works. 24 But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. 25 Only hold fast what you have until I come. 26 The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, 27 and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star. 29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

1-2 minutes of silent reflection.

Close with this short prayer: “Lord, we pray for your help to see where we teach and believe what is false. We pray for your kindness and strength to not tolerate false teaching in and among us. Help us to lovingly address what is untrue in our body for the sake of your glory and the purity of your church. We ask these things in the name of Jesus and by the power of the Spirit, amen.”

As you reflect on Revelation 2:18-29, what is the Holy Spirit showing or teaching you?

SERMON DISCUSSION

TOLERANCE

Throughout church history, many groups have tried to introduce false teaching into the church. In Thyatira, the church was tolerating what Jesus calls “the teachings of Jezebel.” Some in the church were teaching, believing, and living as if they could follow Jesus and live outside of His design for sex and sexuality. The problem Jesus addresses in Thyatira, is that even those in the church who do not hold to this teaching are tolerating it and leaving it unaddressed.

Where do you see false teaching going undealt with within the broader American Church today? Why do you think that it is and what do you think Jesus would say about this?

HOW TO HANDLE FALSE TEACHING

Have some volunteers read the following passages:

- *2 Timothy 2:16-18*
- *2 John 10-11*
- *Ephesians 5:11*

We are supposed to address and remove false teaching from within the church. However, we often do not do this due to one of three reasons:

1. We lack discernment of what is right and wrong
2. We think judging is bad, even though Scripture explicitly says to judge those inside the church (1 Cor 5).
3. We tolerate our own sin of needing others to like us.

Which of these reasons do you see in yourself that keeps you from addressing something unBiblical either in yourself or in others? What is one step you could take to push back against this reason this week?

JESUS OFFERS HIMSELF TO THOSE WHO CONQUER

Have a volunteer read the following verses:

- *Revelation 2:26-29*
- *Numbers 24:17*

To those in Thyatira who no longer tolerate false teaching, Jesus says they will receive the morning star. We see in Numbers 24:17 – that the morning star is Jesus Himself. To those willing to put their reputation and the approval of others on the line to defend Biblical truth, Jesus offers them His full approval for all eternity.

How does the offer of Jesus’ approval, available to us in the gospel, help you fight against your need for approval for others that may keep you from addressing their sin and false beliefs?

SERIES PRACTICES

One of our key discipleship values as a church is that of practice. Moving forward, we are going to begin emphasizing various spiritual practices during each sermon series. These practices are meant to coincide with the theme of the series, and something we invite our church to practice as a part of their spiritual formation.

PRACTICE #1 - FASTING

In its most basic form, Biblical fasting is the intentional abstaining from food for a spiritual purpose. As Christians, we intentionally face the pain of hunger and lack to direct our hearts towards God.

For resources on fasting, check out:

- www.rhythmsandformation.com
- <https://citychurchknox.com/sermons/formation-v-fasting-rethinking-our-relationship-with-food>

For this series, we are encouraging individuals to fast from all food and non-water beverages from dinner Wednesday through dinner Thursday, as a means of focusing our attention on God and asking Him to deepen our love for Him. Although there is freedom to adjust this to fit your various circumstances or season.

PRACTICE #2 - WORSHIP THROUGH SONG

The second practice we are inviting our church family to participate in is that of worship through song. Singing is a great way to help connect what we believe in our minds to what we experience in our hearts.

To that end, our worship team has put together a playlist to help guide this practice for us, that you can sing along with in your car, in your home, on a run, or anywhere else that seems appropriate.

You can find the playlist here:



Take some time now before you close discussing plans for fasting and worship during the next 8 weeks as a group.

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray over what was shared in the discussion, for your group to be united in the gospel, and for help from the Holy Spirit to be shaped to be more like Jesus as we put God's ways into practice.