

02-09-11a Revelation

Let's begin our study of the Word of God this evening by taking a few moments at the outset. Probably take more than two, but we need a few moments to clear our minds and prepare our hearts and seek the ministry of God the Holy Spirit. Shall we pray? Father, we thank you for the privilege of studying your Word together this evening.

We ask your blessing on us as we study. We pray that we will come to a right understanding of the passages that we investigate. We pray that having understood them, that knowledge will be a resource in our souls that God the Holy Spirit can use to condition our thinking, to lead us and to guide us and to transform us so that we more closely resemble our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We pray it in His name. Amen. Well, we pick up tonight.

This is a modified schedule night to accommodate all of our various activities. And so we're here on a Wednesday night. And the subject of our study this evening from Revelation chapter 2, beginning at verse 13 in the letter to Thyatira, the body of the letter to Thyatira, begins in verse 13.

But the subject here is complete obedience, complete dedication. I had a talk not long ago with my daughters, a little pep talk. You know, from time to time you have these father-child diatribes that take place where something happens that inspires you to launch a little mini-sermon.

And this was on the idea of pushing through and finishing what you start. If you are given the chore or the task of cleaning up the living room, you can do a good job of 90% of it or 95% of it. But if you don't push through and do the last 5%, it is the shortfall that's noticeable.

You can have done a lot of really great work, but it's the 5% you left out. I will never forget, and I know Lori remembers, that as a midshipman for room inspections, you've got a shower, you have a sink, you know, the plumbing is in each room. And it's one thing to get the deck clear and the racks made and the clothing folded in the lockers and closets and get your books all dressed and covered and everything.

But when the inspector comes in, the thing that was always most difficult was the shower and the plumbing area because you've got soap film and there's just a million places where you can fail to get every last little particle clean. And so you have to strive. The bulk of what you do gets you to the 90% or 95% mark.

But what really distinguishes the person that has completed the task is getting that last 5%, completing fully what you have started. You can vacuum a huge carpet. You know, these solid color carpets just show everything in the world.

That's why we don't have one because we don't even want to try for that standard. But people

who have a solid color carpet, you could spill a bunch of chocolate sprinkles out there and then you could get a vacuum cleaner and vacuum up almost all of them. So the vacuum cleaner salesman, have you ever had one of those guys come over and they dump dirt in your carpet and they say, now you get your vacuum cleaner and you go and you vacuum and vacuum and vacuum.

He says, now I'm going to show you the Wonder Vac. And he brings it out and puts a black bag inside where the normal paper bag would go and he goes over with his Wonder Vac and then he opens it up and shows you everything that your vacuum cleaner missed. And you realize, well, what I thought was a good job didn't turn out to be such a good job.

That's one of the main things that's going on here in the church at Thyatira. We've seen the way Jesus begins. He says, I know your works.

I know that you are full of love and faith and service and perseverance. These are wonderful attributes. When you look at the epistles of Paul and the epistles of John, what did Jesus say? By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, that you love one another.

And here Jesus is saying, I know your love. He says, I know your faith. Wouldn't that be a wonderful thing to go to the judgment seat of Christ and Christ will look you in the eye and say, I know about your faith.

Pisteia. I know your service. Diakonia.

Which, by the way, is the only place in Revelation you find this word. Diakonia. I know your service.

And I know your perseverance. Your steadfastness. As we see it translated sometimes.

Your hupomone. Menno, to remain. Hupa, under.

You remain under. You bear up under adversity. This is a tremendous commendation.

And I know that your eschatos deeds are greater than your protos deeds. You would think, well, wouldn't this be a great place for Jesus to introduce himself as the first and the last. But we've seen the significance of that in the previous letter.

Here he says, I am the one who has eyes like a flame of fire and feet like burnished brass. Like fine brass. Your last deeds are greater than the first.

You're not tailing off. You're not losing your first love. You're doing great.

But, I have a small thing against you. And this doesn't really come out too well in the English because verse 20 says, but I have against you that. That's what it literally says.

Alla echo kata su. Alla means but. Echo.

I have. Kata su. Against you.

Su, of course, is the singular because he's speaking to the pastor who is standing on the painted yellow footprints there. He's standing on the mark. He's at attention.

And he's getting the word from the Lord. Representing his church. Responsible for his church.

This is what I have against you. That, afes ten gunica yesabel. You tolerate.

The word tolerate, afes, has the same root as, it's from afiemi, which is the word that means to forgive. Afiemi in Greek is our classic word for forgiveness. If you look it up in the lexicon, it tells you that it means to release, to send off, to let be, to pardon.

And when you go and do your classic theological passages in Paul and in John talking about forgiveness, this is the word that is used. So he says you're forgiving. You're releasing.

You're pardoning. You're turning a blind eye to Jezebel. You're forgiving her.

Now this is an important concept. Some of us here in Dallas have lived through circumstances where there was a big question about someone that malfunctioned in a church. The pastor malfunctioned in a church.

And part of the people said, where is your forgiveness? Let him that is without sin cast the first stone. And you have the idea that everybody messes up. Everybody fails.

And you have another group that says, well, but what about the qualifications of an elder? What about the qualifications of a pastor? And if someone breaches those, how do you reconcile the teaching of the word of God on forgiveness and the teaching of the word of God on holding those who exercise leadership to a set of biblical standards and removing them when they breach those standards in the same way that if a biblical priest lopped off his little finger doing the sacrifice one day, the Levites would remove him from priestly service because the law of God said you must be physically whole. You must be physically perfect. No blemish, no scar, no missing digits.

Because you symbolize something. You represent something. You're in front of the people.

And you're an object lesson. And the object lesson doesn't work if you're incomplete. Because the priest reflects the work of Jesus Christ.

And Jesus Christ was perfect. And so the picture is supposed to communicate wholeness and perfection. So nothing wrong with a nine-fingered man.

The nine-fingered man taught me everything I knew about math and science from the 7th grade until I graduated. One guy, John Busby, taught all of the math and all of the science at my junior

high and high school. I mean every single class.

I can't count the number of classes I had with him, but every math and science class you take from 7th through the 12th grade, I had from one guy. And when I graduated, I knew just as much as he did and no more. Which made it interesting when I went to college.

But he was and is a wonderful guy. His mother is in my parents' church up there in Claremore. And they're a great family.

And I owe him a great debt. He was a great teacher. He was excited.

He was inspired. He only had nine fingers. It didn't slow him down from being a great teacher.

But if he'd been a Levite and he'd been in the nation of Israel, he would have been disqualified. Not because he wasn't a wonderful man. Not because he wasn't knowledgeable and willing and enthusiastic.

But because through circumstances beyond his control, he lost a finger. Well, the same thing pertains. How do we reconcile doctrines of forgiveness versus doctrines that say you have to meet a certain standard to fulfill a certain function? And really there's no conflict.

If a pastor fouls up, everyone can and should forgive him. But you can forgive him and also say, I'm sorry, but you can't function in that capacity anymore in our church. We do forgive you.

We love you. We pray for you. We will fellowship with you if you have a change of mind and acknowledge in the same way that public malfunction requires public acknowledgement.

Private malfunction requires private acknowledgement. If you sin in private, you confess it in private. If you sin against others, then you have to go to those others and make it right.

And if you malfunction in public, you may be disciplined in public. But that's a little bit off our subject. However, the word *aphiemi* here is quite significant because this was a misapplication of the doctrine of forgiveness in Thyatira.

This woman Jezebel was promulgating the doctrines of Balaam. The very same things we studied in the last letter as far as Balaam teaching Balak how to put a stumbling block in front of Israel and leading them into the Scylla and Charybdis. On the one hand, you have licentiousness.

On the other hand, you have legalism. The doctrine of Balaam was primarily dragging them away into pornoosai, into disloyalty to God and joining themselves to Baal, to Baal of Peor, and to eating things offered to idols, which was a part of this. It was a compromise.

Paul tells us that there is nothing intrinsically wrong with eating the meat offered to idols, but if it is inextricably linked in people's minds to the worship of those idols and to the culture and to the fellowship around those idols, even if it's not the idol worship itself, it's fellowship with people who

do. It's compromising your standards and associating and being dragged into. Like Paul says, the proverb is true, bad company corrupts good morals.

There's nothing intrinsically wrong with eating the meat, but when it is inextricably linked to fellowship with those who are dragging you away from the faith, dragging you into pornoosai, then eating meat offered to idols becomes something that cannot be tolerated, cannot be allowed, cannot be permitted, cannot be countenanced, cannot be forgiven. If people think that it's okay, I'll give you a real easy example of this by way of illustration. Suppose that someone came into our church, into our fellowship.

Might be a relative, might not be. Might be a close friend, might be a co-worker, might not be. But somebody comes in and they seem to really be excited about the fellowship that we have and learning the word of God and having enthusiasm for the things of God.

The only wrinkle is that after they've been here a few weeks, we find out that they're homosexual and they're actively practicing that lifestyle. And so we have the opportunity to say, well, you know, the Bible that you are excited about here and the God that we worship here does not countenance that lifestyle. Did you know that? Let me show you in the word of God where he says that it's outside the bounds of nature, it's outside his design.

In Israel's day, it was called an abomination and it was punishable by death. Do you understand that? Well, I see that, but, you know, I just really don't agree with that and I really don't want to change. I have too much invested in my relationship, etc., whatever they may say.

But after speaking the truth in love to these people and they say, I really don't want to change my mind. I'm comfortable with this and I don't see the Bible the way you see it. I don't think that that is an issue for me and I'm going to continue down this road.

We would have to ask that person to not come back. We would have to separate. However nice they might be, however closely related, however much of a co-worker they might be, whatever, we would have to ask them to not come back.

Why? Because of exactly what's going on here in Thyatira. You cannot affirm behavior that the Bible proscribes, that the Bible prohibits. We speak the truth in love.

We wouldn't be nasty about it. We wouldn't be ugly about it. We wouldn't shun them and cold shoulder them and treat them as though they were dead.

You can speak to people. You want to always, here's a good rule of thumb. This is my personal rule of thumb.

If you have to separate from someone, you should endeavor to do it without acrimony in such a way that if this person ever did have a change of mind, they would feel comfortable and confident

coming back to you. That you don't leave them with a sense of personal rejection and of a judgmental, harsh, critical, inflexible attitude. We don't have to apologize for our standards or apologize for our faith, but we don't have to beat people over the head with our faith either.

It's an issue between them and the Lord just as it is between us and the Lord. Our separation from them is not primarily an issue between us and them. It's our fellowship with the Lord.

To maintain fellowship with God and to be pleasing in His sight, there are certain things we cannot do. We cannot countenance knowing and conscious practice of evil. We just can't do it.

We can be heartbroken over a separation. Any time that we separate, what did Jesus tell the disciples? Treat them like a heathen and a tax collector. What was Israel supposed to do with regard to the heathens? How was Israel supposed to treat a tax collector? Were they supposed to get high and mighty and be arrogant about it and say, well, they're fair game, they're a legitimate target.

I can be as spiteful and as hateful and as vindictive and as bitter and as nasty and ugly as I want to be, because God says they're not in the fellowship of the saints of Israel. Is that God's attitude? Does God ever sponsor bitterness and vindictiveness and spitefulness and meanness and ugliness? He never does. How was Israel to treat heathens and tax collectors? God told Abraham, your seed is going to be a light to the Gentiles.

You're supposed to shine a light in a dark place. You're supposed to be like lights shining in the world. You put your light up on a lamp stand so that it will shine and illuminate.

And we have to place some distance between ourselves. Paul says there are certain people. He said people who are indigent, who are not willing to work and earn their own keep, who want to freeload and want to sponge and want to mooch and want to take advantage of your charity and your generosity.

He said separate from them. He said put some distance. He that does not work does not eat.

He meant don't include them in your fellowship meals if they're indigent and apathetic and indifferent about trying to find a way to support themselves. That's not the biblical model, but you don't have to be ugly about it. You just have to gently include them out.

And Paul said hopefully you will shame them into doing what they're supposed to. You're supposed to shame them, but not in an ugly way. We sometimes have to shame your children.

When I was little and I would do something I knew I shouldn't have done, my mother would say shame on you. Shame on you. You know better than that.

And I did feel ashamed because I did know better. And there is a sort of, I don't know if you want to call it godly sorrow, but there is a certain amount of shame that we ought to have when we

willingly malfunction and we knew better. And that's the thing that excluding someone from fellowship should do.

Well, all of those doctrines, and we don't have time to go into them in detail, but most of us I think are pretty familiar with those teachings and those concepts. Just keep in mind that's what happened here in Thyatira. What spoiled their record? What kept them from hitting 100% in Thyatira? They are pegging the meter in love.

They are pegging the meter in faith. They are maximizing their service. They are maximizing their hupomone.

All of these things are linked to inheritance. All of these things are linked to reward. But something is spoiling their record.

And what is it? I have this against you. That you forgive, you tolerate, you pardon the woman Jezebel who calls herself a prophetess. She calls herself a prophetess and you do not contradict her.

You don't call her on it. You don't point out to the congregation that she's not a prophetess and can't be a prophetess. She teaches and leads my douloi, my bond slaves, into pornousai.

She teaches them to engage in pornaia, in disloyalty. And remember, as much baggage as pornos carries in English with pornography and its translated sexual immorality, and it does carry that meaning because the fundamental issue in sexual immorality is disloyalty. You know, the physical act.

If you think about two people who get together and commit this physical act, you think, well, under other circumstances those people could have been married and the very same act would be perfectly legitimate and lovely and wonderful. There's nothing intrinsically damaging or sinful about the act in and of itself. It's the context of the act.

It's the thinking around the act. It is the disregard for the standards of God. It's like the nine-fingered priest saying, I can offer sacrifices any time I want.

It's like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Go back and read the rebellion where he says, Hath not God said we are all priests? We'll bring this strange fire before the Lord. We can operate as priests.

Who said Moses and Aaron have to be the only leaders in Israel? We're men. We're intelligent. We're talented.

We can do anything they can do. And there was nothing magical about the Levites. They were just men, but they were designated men.

They operated within the bounds of God's design. And when people willfully disregard God's

design, that calls for an accounting. That's what Jezebel is teaching.

She says, no, what these apostles have taught, what John has said in his circuit preaching through the region, and what Polycarp and the other pastors who were in the first and second generations after the apostles, what they're teaching, that Jesus taught, and that the original twelve taught, that's not quite right. I'm a prophetess. I have some authority from God.

And I'm going to show you a different way. I'm going to show you something that's a little more harmonious. Something that's more politically correct.

Something that doesn't create so much confusion and frustration and doesn't force you to have animosity with your neighbors. We can live here in Thyatira with the idol-making guilds and with the metal workers, and we can all be in harmony. We'll invite them over to our feasts, and we'll go over to their feasts.

We'll invite them in to share our Lord's table, and then we'll go over and share their Zeus table or their Ascleptos table or whatever. Let's all just get along. We can harmonize.

It was syncretism. It was compromise, and it was the doctrine of Balaam. It led them to disloyalty.

It led them to add to the word of God, to compromise the word of God. And notice, this church is not accused of having done so. He doesn't say, you've let yourself be led astray.

What does he say? You're pardoning the woman who is leading my servants astray. You're tolerating her. You're not calling her on the carpet.

You're not confronting her. There are people who are so afraid of confrontation, they do not want to stand up for a standard. Isn't there a way that we can just avoid this whole thing? There are times when there is an absolute standard, and we have to stand up for it absolutely.

I told you the story of Polycarp, who was the pastor in Smyrna. And all he had to do was say two words, kurios kaisar. That's all in the world he had to do.

Romans had him there. He had his hands bound. They said, look, Polycarp, we know who you are.

We know what you teach. We just want to know one thing. Will you say, kurios kaisar, Caesar is Lord? He said, I'm sorry, but I can't say that.

All I can say is, kurios Iesu, Jesus is Lord. And over those two words, they bound him to a pole, and they burned him to death. For those two words, he stood up for a standard, and he did not compromise.

And that was right there in Smyrna. Within living memory of the delivery of this letter, he lived in the early 100s, and pastored there in Smyrna. The ink was hardly dry on these letters when that

happened with Polycarp.

He was a disciple of the Apostle John, sat at John's feet, learned directly from the Apostle John. I have this against you. You afiemi, you pardon.

Tolerate is really not the best word here. That would almost be like bear up with or put up with. This is the same word that is used of God forgiving our sins.

You overlook. You ignore. You do away with any bad feeling about this woman Jezebel.

You forgive her. You pardon her. Who calls herself a prophetess.

The implication is she is not. There were prophetesses in the first generation of the church that are mentioned, but she is not one. She teaches and she leads my bondservant astray.

Notice this is not the emotional appeal. She doesn't whip them into a frenzy. She doesn't dress seductively and lure them out of the church and do some kind of a sexy dance down the street and take them to some pagan temple.

How does she lead them astray? Through teaching. She teaches an alternate truth. She incorporates.

I'm sure she quoted scripture. I'm sure that she used the name of God. I'm sure that she wrapped it in a nice candy wrapper.

And that's what happens today. Look around and see how people mention the name of God, mention the word of God, will quote verses right and left. And when you get all finished and you walk away, what you have is psychology.

What you have is human viewpoint. What you have is compromise and employing of human marketing techniques and human pyramid scheme techniques and ways of pressuring people into conforming and using human energy and human concepts and human ideas, things that work in the human realm. What works in the human realm? What works in business for raising money? Pyramid scheme.

That's why Amway is still around after all these years. Look at Avon and Mary Kay and a lot of these others. What do they do? You start and you get busy and you get the products and then you get other people to do the products and pretty soon you can sit back and let all the other people do the products.

And some people have turned Christianity into a pyramid scheme. Well, I got saved and now I've evangelized you five people. Now I want you to go out and you get people saved.

And then if I witness to five people and each of them gets saved and they witness to five people

and each of them gets saved, why, we'll have the entire world saved by the year 2000. They used to say this back in the 80s. We can win the world for Christ by the year 2000.

And it became kind of like a game. It was like a challenge. How many silhouettes can we paint on our fuselage? How many scalps can we hang on our belt? How many crosshatches can I put on my tote board? How many people can we get to walk the aisle? We'll say whatever we have to say.

We'll play the music. We'll use pressure. We'll scare them with fire and brimstone.

We'll woo them with promises of prosperity and forgiveness and peace and fellowship. We'll create an environment in our church that they just can't resist. There are churches here in Dallas that have got skating rinks and bowling alleys and everything for your kid.

Just bring your child down here and we've got McDonald's, Playland, we've got everything you could possibly want down here. Why do they do that? Because the gospel by itself, the teaching of the word of God by itself, does not attract sufficient numbers. So they've got to be attracted with something else.

And it's the old bait and switch. Well, if I attract them with a nice clean environment for their children, if I provide programs, if I provide support and encouragement and love and fellowship, and it's backwards. All of these things are wonderful.

It's great if you can have Christian fellowship. It's great if you have support and encouragement. That's what believers are supposed to do.

But that's not the means to holiness. That's not the means to spiritual life. It's a result.

And that's not what is supposed to draw you into the faith. It's what's supposed to emanate forth from the faith. But it's seductive.

It's attractive. And it's like Jezebel. Through teaching, through promulgating concepts, through convincing, and making a case, and sounding good.

People have itching ears and you know just how to scratch them. She teaches and leads my bondservants astray. Circle the word teaches.

Because it's easy to spot somebody that's just flimflam and get somebody caught on a wave of emotion or rebound from something else. But so much of what passes for Christianity today is false teaching. It is aberrant teaching.

Didaskele. Didaske is what it says here. And they lead my servants to pornousai and to eat idol food.

Idolothuta. Notice, she evidently is a believer. He says, I gave her time to change her mind.

This is grace before judgment. And this may have been a form of self-deception. And God, the Lord Jesus has already confronted her.

He could have sent another letter from John. Could have been someone inside the church who was knowledgeable. Some of these faithful and might have even been this pastor who went and confronted Jezebel and said, you know, this is really compromise.

This is not right. You're leading people away from the faith. You're weakening their resolve.

You're softening their heart. You're softening their commitment. You're leading them away from the Lord.

You're doing just what Balak did to the Israelites, what the Midianite women did to the Israelites and the Moabite women back in the Old Testament. She was given time to repent and she hasn't. This is what I was talking about earlier.

If you have someone in your periphery that's practicing a form of evil, we don't just cut them off and say, you evil, reprobate person, get the hints, get behind me and cut them off. We speak the truth in love. Our goal is not to find how many people we can alienate and drive away.

Our goal is unity. Our goal is fellowship. Our goal is being built up as one in the body of Christ.

And so we speak the truth to one another in love. We pray for one another. We hope that there can be change of mind.

But if there is not, he says, I gave her time to repent and she does not want to repent of her immorality. I gave her time, gave her chronon, that's where we get the word chronometer and chronology. I gave her time in order to metanoeo, but she did not will.

Phthalo is the word that is used for willing or choosing, deciding, in a calculated way. Phthalo is used of the will of God. She did not will to change her mind.

From her pornias, from her disloyalties. Now see, this lady's problem, this is one of the ways you know what pornia is, because he doesn't say, this lady is seducing male members of the congregation, does he? She is using teaching to lead them astray. I gave her time to change her mind, but she chooses not.

She does not want to change her mind about her disloyalty. Therefore, what's going to happen in verse 22, he says, look. And you know, behold gets used in the Bible, we kind of just go right by it, but idu in Greek is the imperative that we translate behold, and it's up in Oklahoma, they say, looky here.

Or a real emphatic, look, pay attention, look at this. And Jesus never wastes a word. When he

says, he says, this is going to be an example.

I want you to look at this, because this is just like the Old Testament Scriptures. They've been left to you as an example. We saw that last time.

All these things were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Well, guess what? When he says here, look, he says, I'm going to make an example out of her for the rest of you. Look, I will cast her, BALLO, B-A-L-L-O, I will throw her on a bed.

And it says, of sickness, just cross it out. This is not a sick bed. This is clinae.

We talked about it last time. This is just a bed. What does a promiscuous woman do in bed? Well, that's why Christ is throwing her into the bed.

He says, she's not going to change her mind. What does it say in Romans chapter 1? When they knew him as God, they did not glorify him as God. They were not thankful.

They became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. So God gave them over. And like three successive times, in Romans chapter 1, it says, and when they still did not change their mind, he gave them over.

She chooses pornous eye. She chooses disloyalty. She chooses compromise.

And figuratively speaking, spiritually speaking, getting in bed with these false religions. Guess what? I'm going to throw her in a bed. She's going to be in it up to her neck.

She won't be able to get out of it. That's all she'll be able to do. I'm going to give her over to what she has chosen.

I gave her time to repent, and she didn't. I gave her time to change her mind, and she did not. So I'm going to give her over.

Have you ever seen people that are trapped in something that they can't escape? An addiction that they can't break? A lifestyle that they can't shake free of? I wouldn't say in every case, and often it is not for us to judge, but there are cases, and this is one of them, where someone has been given the opportunity and chose not to change their mind, and now they have painted themselves in a corner. There is a point of no return, and this lady has just passed it. Jesus said, I gave her time to change her mind.

She didn't. Do you think if Jesus Christ throws this woman into this figurative bed that she's going to be able to rise up and get out of it? No, she's not. She had her chance.

Literally, she's made her bed, and she's going to have to lie in it. And you know what's going to happen in that bed? Look at the next phrase. Those who commit adultery with her are going to go into great philipsis, great tribulation.

He told the people up in Smyrna, he said, the devil is going to throw some of you into prison, and you'll have tribulation ten days. Well, the devil doesn't have a monopoly on philipsis. God can allow anyone he wants to undergo tribulation.

And you can have suffering for blessing. You can have trial and testing for blessing. As they will in Smyrna.

Or you can have trial and tribulation for discipline. And God will make an example of you for others. And that's what's happening here.

Same word. It is allowed or brought about by the very same God, but two entirely different purposes. That tribulation, that philipsis for the church at Smyrna is going to give them the opportunity to wear the crown of life.

A terrific privilege. An incalculable blessing. And they're given that opportunity.

He says, be faithful as long as you live, and I will give you the crown of life. These people, their philipsis is going to do nothing but be painful. They do have a choice, though.

It's not too late for them, unless they change their mind about their deeds. It says her deeds in the New American Standard. It says their deeds in the New King James.

There's a 50-50 split. But theology helps you out here. You cannot repent for someone else's deeds.

We change our mind about our own deeds. So the translation here should be their deeds. He says, I will kill her children with death.

And what does this mean? Remember, we're in the figurative realm here. This is not literal fornication. This is not literal adultery.

It's not going to bring about literal offspring. But what would the children be? Children are the descendancy, the hope of a future for this movement. And Jesus says, this is not going to be an enduring cult.

This cancer is going to be killed in one generation. When it tries to spawn offspring, when it tries to grow and sustain itself, I'm going to cut it off. I will kill her children with death.

And it also talks about the people who decide not to change their minds and who become the children. You are of your father the devil, Jesus told the Pharisees. He was a liar from the beginning.

People who follow, who love and practice a lie, are sons of the devil, sons of Belial, sons of emptiness. And to be a child of something, he said the Pharisees canvassed the earth to make a

proselyte. And when they do, they make them twofold the child of hell that they are.

What does it mean to be a child of hell? It means you resemble it. You are just as fruitless and as destructive as hell. James says the tongue is set on fire by hell.

Well, here the children are the ones who make the choice to continue down this road that she has blazed the trail for. I will kill them with death. And through this, all the churches shall know that I am he who searches the minds and hearts.

It is an example. This is September 11th of 2002. The press has been saturated this week and particularly today with memories of what happened a year ago.

I'll just mention one thing in that regard. One of the ways that the passengers on the airplanes that were crashed into the Twin Towers and into the Pentagon were kept quiet is that those hijackers stood up in front of the plane and grabbed the nearest stewardess and slit her throat with a packing knife and arterial bleeding began. And it so shocked everyone that it paralyzed them into immobility because they knew these men were serious and would kill at the drop of a hat.

We know from what happened in the Pennsylvania plane that it was possible for those hijackers to be overcome, but people were paralyzed by the example. An example can be a powerful inducement either for good or for ill. The example of that stewardess losing her life right before their eyes, and you know that we're not very accustomed to real life violence in this country, stunned and shocked people into inactivity.

They couldn't organize their thoughts. They were immediately afraid and that's exactly what that example was designed to do. This church is made an example.

God will make an example and has made an example and left it for us in his word of people who tolerate, who compromise, who forgive what should not be forgiven, who tolerate what should not be tolerated, who pardon what should not be pardoned. And this church is held accountable not because they were led astray, but because they failed to purge out someone who was leading others astray. And we are responsible, we're accountable for what we tolerate and what we permit.

And there is a time to stand up and say, I will not permit this behavior in my presence. I will not permit this standard to be breached. And that's just the way it is.

We can do it gently, we can do it firmly, we can do it in love, but you have to stand up and say, that is not pardonable. That is not something I can tolerate. And I'm going to have to ask you to not be here anymore.

I'm going to have to ask you to either cease and have a change of mind or we're going to have to

have a parting of the ways. And it's an unhappy truth for many people, but that's just the way it is. And this church serves as a warning.

I will kill her children with death. All the churches shall know I am He who searches the minds and the hearts. He's not talking about physical actions here.

He's talking about spiritual standards. And you can see churches that have tried to tolerate malfunctioning pastors, tried to go the forgiveness route, and they lose everything. But we need to pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we're going to take a look at the next phrase and what follows. I will give to each one of you according to your works. Then he's going to go back and talk about the deep things of Satan.

So we'll see what that is when we return.