

Becoming a Church that
Pleases Jesus
(Jesus' Report Card)

Revelation 2-3

Introduction

1. Jesus has amazing plans and expectations for His church. The people of God have incredible potential made available by the death and resurrection of Jesus, the truth of God's Word, and the power of His Spirit.
2. He has designed us to advance His kingdom on the earth and has prophesied that the gates of hell will not be able to stop us! (Matthew 16:18-19)
3. We want to be this kind of church! We want to walk in all that Jesus has made available for us. We want to be a pleasure to our Lord and serve Him effectively.

Introduction

1. In the 2nd and 3rd chapters of Revelation, we are blessed to witness Jesus' evaluation of the New Testament church. Basically Jesus gives the church a report card, declaring many things that they are doing well and correcting some things that need to be changed.
2. For the next several weeks, we will be reading Jesus' words about the church - His Bride that He loves. This will be a great opportunity to encourage ourselves to continue in the things He commended and repent of the things that He corrected. In doing so, we will become a church that pleases Him and serves Him well.

Revelation 2:1-7

Review

1. “I know your deeds” - We cannot earn salvation by works but in response to our salvation, Jesus has commanded us to do good works. Faith without works is dead.
2. “Your hard work” - To genuinely live like Christ in a self-pleasing world is hard work. Jesus commands it, acknowledges it, and rewards it.
3. “Your perseverance” - God is desiring a church that is faithful to serve Him no matter the circumstance or the cost. He desires that we keep on keeping on to the very end.

1. “Cannot Tolerate Wicked Men”

1. Jesus' Body - the church - is called to be a place of grace; a spiritual hospital for the sick, broken, hurt and rejected. (Mark 2:17) It is a family that bears with each other's weaknesses (Col 3:13-14), restores the wayward (Gal 6:1-2), and helps people overcome their sins and experience freedom. (2 Tim 2:20-26)
2. At the same time, the church is commanded to be holy (1 Pet 1:13-16), to flee from sin (2 Tim 2:22), and to be a pure light in a dark world. We are commanded not to settle for impure lives (Eph 4:20-32), hold each other accountable to the Christ life, and dismiss those who continue in rebellion towards God. (1 Cor 5, Matt 18:15-17) **How can we do both?**

1. “Cannot Tolerate Wicked Men”

1. If we are the body of Christ, then let's look to our Head - Jesus. He compassionately received anyone who was broken, sinned in ignorance, or was willing to repent and be changed. However, He was harsh and rejected those who knew the truth of God and hypocritically rejected His ways.
2. This is who we are called to be! May we always receive with open arms the broken, the struggling, and the repentant hearts. And may we be people who pursue purity in our lives and have the proper love to correct and restore those who are in sin. And may we have the fortitude to dismiss those who refuse to repent.

1. “Cannot Tolerate Wicked Men”

1. The word “tolerate” literally means, “to lift up, to endure, to carry, to take up.” (Strong’s) And the word “wicked” is translated from a word that means, “depraved, injurious, noisome, evil.” (Strong’s)
2. As Jesus’ church, we are required to lovingly restore those who are in sin, no matter how deep. And we are required not to tolerate those who refuse to repent.
3. *“Be merciful to those who doubt; snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy mixed with fear - hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.”* Jude 1:22-23

2. Test False Apostles

1. Since creation, satan has always tried to twist, pervert, and duplicate what God has created in order to lead His people away from a relationship with Him. This plan is at work among church leaders as well.
2. Let's read what Jesus had to say about false prophets in Matthew 7:15-23 and 24:4-14.
3. Jesus clearly taught that false prophets will come. it's not if, but when. So how do we effectively test false apostles, prophets, and teachers? How do we protect the church from wolves that want to hurt the sheep?

2. Test False Apostles

1. Test the fruit. What is being produced from their lives? Is it the fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control? Is it the fruit of repentance and righteousness? Are they producing disciples as Jesus commanded? How are they stewarding their family and money?
2. Know the Word. If we are continually ingesting God's Word, then the Spirit will warn us when false things are being taught. If we aren't reading it for ourselves, than any one with eloquence and earthly wisdom can peddle us a false gospel. We have a responsibility to know the Bible for ourselves and to test everything that is taught by it's everlasting truth.

3. Enduring Hardship for my Name

1. “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.” John 15:18-19
2. “Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs - he wants to please his commanding officer.” 2 Timothy 2:3-4
3. “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

3. Enduring Hardship for my Name

1. Jesus taught that if we are truly following Him in a broken and sinful world, there will be a cost to pay. Hardship, persecution, and friction are inevitable. So how do we practically endure hardship well?
 1. Understand that this world is not our home
 2. Realize that only one person will be our judge
 3. Spend time with God daily and fellowship with the Spirit
 4. Choose to praise Him in the midst of hardship
 5. Prepare your family to endure hardship.