

Lessons for Everyday from the Saints of Thyatira

Revelation 2:18-29

¹⁸And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;

¹⁹I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.

²⁰Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

²¹And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

²²Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

²³And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

²⁴But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

²⁵But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.

²⁶And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

²⁷And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

²⁸And I will give him the morning star.

²⁹He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

The age and its messenger

One of the criticisms levelled against Bro. Branham's teaching on the church ages is that he dates the Thyatiran age from 606 to 1520, yet the man he highlights as the messenger died in 597, *nine years before the beginning of "his age."*

This is a fair question, and as I try to answer it I'd like to consider two things. **First, an age lasting 900 years—almost a millennium—and encompassing the entire period of the Dark Ages, is exceptional.** If we were to go 900 years back from 2023, to the year 1100, we'd be in the time period of the First Crusades! It is truly an extraordinary man who can be said to influence an entire millennium!

Second, a man's influence certainly extends far beyond his lifetime (and this is certainly true of Columba).

And what a tumultuous time it was. In 410, Germanic tribes' invasion of the Roman empire reached a climax as they sacked Rome. The illiterate barbarians had no value for the libraries of the Roman empire, and books were burned all over Europe.

From Thomas Cahill's, *How the Irish Saved Civilization* (pp. 12-13). Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.

And yet ... Ireland, a little island at the edge of Europe that has known neither Renaissance nor Enlightenment—in some ways, a Third World country with, as John Betjeman claimed, a Stone Age culture—had one moment of unblemished glory. For, as the Roman Empire fell, as all through Europe matted, unwashed barbarians descended on the Roman cities, looting artifacts and burning books, the Irish, who were just learning to read and write, took up the great labor of copying all of western literature—everything they could lay their hands on. These scribes then served as conduits through which the Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian cultures were transmitted to the tribes of Europe, newly settled amid the rubble and ruined vineyards of the civilization they had overwhelmed. **Without this Service of the Scribes, everything that happened subsequently would have been unthinkable. Without the Mission of the Irish Monks, who single-handedly refounded European civilization throughout the continent in the bays and valleys of their exile, the world that came after them would have been an entirely different one—a world without books.** And our own world would never have come to be (12-13)."

"It never occurred to [the Roman elites] that the building blocks of their world would be saved by outlandish oddities from a land so marginal that the Romans had not bothered to conquer it, by men so strange they lived in little huts on rocky outcrops and shaved half their heads and tortured themselves with fasts and chills and nettle baths. As Kenneth Clark said, "Looking back from the great civilizations of twelfth-century France or seventeenth-century Rome, it is hard to believe that

for quite a long time—almost a hundred years—western Christianity survived by clinging to places like Skellig Michael, a pinnacle of rock eighteen miles from the Irish coast, rising seven hundred feet out of the sea (13)”

I Corinthians 1:27

²⁷But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

Columba’s life and work left an enduring impact on the Dark Ages.

Columba was a prince of his clan, but he gave up royalty to become a monk. However, after he helped his kinsmen take up arms against a rival clan, he was excommunicated and as penance was exiled from island. He left Ireland—a journey “which would forever change the course of western history”—and settled on the island of Iona, off the coast of Scotland (Cahill 154).

How Columba did his mission work, from “The Thyatiran Church Age,” Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, p.242.

“The pure Gospel that was preached by Columba and his fellow workers spread over the whole of Scotland, turning it to God. It also overflowed into Ireland and over Northern Europe. His means of spreading the Gospel was one wherein perhaps twelve men under a leader would go into a new area and literally build a Gospel-- centered town. Amongst these twelve men would be carpenters, teachers, preachers, etc., all wonderfully versed in the Word and holy living. This little colony was enclosed by a wall. Soon this enclosure would be surrounded by students and their families in their own homes, learning the Word and preparing to go out and serve the Lord as missionaries, leaders, and preachers. The men were free to marry though many did not, in order to serve God the better. They remained free from state help, and thereby steered clear of politics. Instead of ever attacking other religions they taught the truth for they believed that the truth was weapon enough to accomplish the ends that God had in mind for them. They were absolutely independent of Rome.

Saint Columba was the founder of a great Bible school on the island of Hy (off the S.W. coast of Scotland). When he went there the island was so barren and rocky that it could not bear enough food for them all. But Columba planted seed with one hand while he held the other aloft in prayer. Today the island is one of the most fertile in the world. From this Bible-centered island went forth mighty scholars endowed with wisdom and the power of God.

When I read the history of this great servant of God and the wonderful work he did, it saddened my heart to find that the papal power, lusting to bring all men into its grasp, came and eventually defiled these mission fields and destroyed the truth as it was taught by Columba.”



Irish Mission Impact in Medieval Period

Long-term impact of Columba (Columcille in Celtic)

“This warrior-monk, this homme de fer, as the French monastic historian Jean Decarreaux has called him, had created by his singular determination a literate, Christian society among the Scots and Picts of northern Britain; and now, after his death, a fresh wave of his stout-hearted sons began to effect the same transformation among the pagan Angles of Northumbria from their new (but soon to be fabulous) island monastery of Lindisfarne, under the direction of Columcille’s greatest spiritual heir, Aidan. As Columcille had baptized Scotland—and taught it to read—Aidan would do the same for all of northern England. And just as the unyielding warrior Cuchulainn had served as the model of prehistoric Irish manhood, Columcille now became the model for all who would earn the ultimate victory. Monks began to set off in every direction, bent on glorious and heroic exile for the sake of Christ. They were warrior-monks, of course, and certainly not afraid of whatever monsters they might meet.

Some went north, like Columcille. Others went northwest, like Brendan the Navigator, visiting Iceland, Greenland, and North America, and supping on the back of a whale in mid-ocean. Some set out in boats without oars, putting their destination completely in the hands of God. Many of the exiles found their way to continental Europe, where they were more than a match for the barbarians they met. They, whom the Romans had never conquered (and evangelized only, as it were, by accident in the person of Patrick, the imperfect Roman), fearlessly brought the ancient civilization back to its ancient home” (Cahill, 169-170).

“The last thing ... British Celts would have considered was to bring the Gospel to such beasts [pagan Germanic adventurers settling in the British Isles]. The Irish Celts, who had not suffered at Anglo-Saxon hands, had no such inhibitions. Just as the new English invaded the old Celtic territories, the Irish monks launched a spiritual invasion of England from their island monastery of Lindisfarne in the northeast corner of Northumbria, establishing new monasteries in brisk succession. On account of this activity, Aidan, Columcille’s beloved disciple and first abbot of Lindisfarne, has far better claim than Augustine of Canterbury to the title Apostle of England, for, as the Scottish historian James Bulloch has remarked, “All England north of the Thames was indebted to the Celtic mission for its conversion” (Cahill 180-181).

Revelation 2:19

¹⁹I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.

225-1 THYATIREAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.6

It was the age when the light glowed ever so faintly, yet the few believers labored more fervently as the darkness increased until toward the end of the age many arose attempting reforms. Their labors were so fervent that they paved the way for the oncoming reformation. Therefore as the Word says concerning that age, "your last (end of the age) works are more than the first".

Last works of Thyatira—especially Wycliffe and Hus—laid groundwork for restoration God would begin through Luther

In the final centuries of the Thyatiran age, the true church’s works were even greater than the works of Columba’s Irish believers. In the 1300’s, John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English, against the orders of the Catholic Church. Wycliffe taught at Oxford University until the Church finally forced the university to suspend him. He returned to his parish church, where he not only translated but also trained younger men (called Lollards or *Bible-men*) to evangelize throughout England. Wycliffe was so hated by the Catholic Church that forty years after his death, his bones were dug up and burned in 1428, in punishment of his heresy. While teaching at Oxford, Wycliffe had students from Bohemia, who took his teachings back to Jan Hus, another Bible teacher against the Catholic Church. A century before Luther, Hus would be burned at the stake for his heresy. In the Thyatiran age, much work was done, much groundwork laid, for the oncoming work of restoration.

Lessons from the saints of Thyatira

“I KNOW” – God doesn’t miss any service we might do for Him (Rev. 2:19)

“I know your works, your charity, your service, and faith, and patience, and works....” This sounds like a mom’s day ... and sometimes as parents we feel like we’re laboring through the dark ages. And as a mom there’s nothing worse than expending all your effort, and no one even notices. However, God states clearly in Revelation 2:19 that He knows what you go through. He sees. He understands the frustrations. He misses nothing.

In the Book of Nehemiah, we see a beautiful example of the God Who sees. Nehemiah 3 contains one of those seemingly mundane lists that can be easily skipped in our Bible reading. But here we see a clear illustration that God sees each person’s labors for His kingdom. God keeps good records and He is faithful to reward!

SMYRNAEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.4

All too little time is spent on laboring for the eternal rewards of God. The recompense of God is too lightly esteemed. If we believe in the reality of the resurrection of the body, and an eternal kingdom of substance, then we ought to lay up in heaven those good treasures that are available to the faithful saints.

THYATIREAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.6, p.246

I want to give a warning right here. It says concerning the last days that because of abounding iniquity the love of many will wax cold. In the Laodicean, or last age, self love, and love for material things will take the place of the true love of God. We need to guard against the power of sin in these last days. So many are getting so hard because they haven't realized the effect of this last day spirit. It is time to draw nigh to God and let him fill our lives with His love, or we will feel the coldness of the last day church, and reject the truth of God which alone is able to help us.

224-2 THYATIREAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.6

"I know thy works; and the last to be more than the first."

This is certainly remarkable. As the darkness of the age increased; as the honor roll of the martyrs grew lengthier day by day, they worked all the harder, they served all the more, and their faith increased. How tragic it was that in the Ephesian Age love waned. And truly nothing is said of the increased labor of love in the other ages; but in this age, in the darkest of all ages, they served Him even more. What a lesson that is. There is no ceasing of this gracious service of love unto the Lord, but rather an increasing of it. That is the secret. Let the enemy attempt to thwart our service to the Lord--our reply is increased service. When the faint are crying in fear, that is the time to shout the victory.

We are created in Christ Jesus *unto good works*. We are His workmanship. We aren't saved by works, but God created us so that He can work through us (Eph. 2:8-10). What we do for Christ, and for Christ for others, are expressions of our love for Him.

Psalm 92:4

For thou, LORD, hast made me glad *through thy work*: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

"I WILL PUT UPON YOU NO OTHER BURDEN"

We can trust God that He knows what we can and can't handle. The burden we're bearing is specially designed for *us*. We couldn't bear anyone else's burden. God gives us grace to bear what He puts upon us.

239-2 THYATIREAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.6

"I will put upon you none other burden."

The word for burden is weight or pressure. The pressure of the Dark Ages was either bend, or be broken. Bow or die. It was the inquisition, the power of the empire backing up Satanic worship. Be organized or pay with your life. Each age had its pressures. **For example a great burden of the last age is the pressure of riches, soft living and nervous tensions in a complex age that we seem unfitted to live in.** This fourth age seems to have had a clear cut burden. It was to defy Rome, stand up for the Word even unto death.

I Corinthians 10:13

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear [endure] it.

Hold fast till I come.

God will never abandon us.

"THE MORNING STAR"

II Peter 1:19

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Revelation 22:16

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

In the darkness of early morning, we see Venus most clearly. But Venus is so bright, that it remains visible even after the sun has crested the horizon. Venus seems to carry the light of the sun behind it. The morning star brings the promise that morning is coming. It is a herald of hope.

God always comes on the scene at the precise moment when we need Him most. **But we don't know what that time is;** we don't know the limits of His strength within us. We go through some very dark and difficult times, and we are sometimes tempted to give

up because we know we can't go on much longer, but it seems that we'll have to go on a lot longer, and that all by ourselves. **If we can only remember that we serve a God who is the Morning Star. He shines in the brightest night, and heralds the coming of a new day. As the Evening Star, He shines just as the night begins to come, and He continues to shine through the night. We are not alone.**

THYATIREAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK CPT.6, p.268.

This is the Dark Ages. It is especially dark for the Word of the Lord is almost entirely hidden from the people. Knowledge of the Most High has almost ceased. Death has overcome vast numbers of the believers until their ranks are decimated. The things of God are at the lowest ebb to this date, and it seemed that Satan would surely conquer God's people.

If ever a people needed a promise embracing the land where there is no night, it was the people of the Dark Ages. And that is why the Spirit is promising them the morning star. He is telling them that the Chief Star, even Jesus, Who dwelleth in Light unto which no man can approach, will in the future kingdom illuminate them by His own personal presence. He will not be using the stars (messengers) to give light in darkness any longer. It will be Jesus, Himself, speaking to them face to face as He shares His kingdom with them.

It is the morning star that is visible when the light of the sun commences to shine. When our Sun, (Jesus) comes, there will be no further need of messengers; He will bring us His message of cheer Himself; and as He rules His kingdom, and we live in His presence, the light of the Word will become brighter and brighter in our perfect day.

What else could we desire above Jesus Himself? Is He not everything, even Perfect Everything?

He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. Amen. Even so, Lord God, by Thy Spirit, let us hear Thy truth.

GOD'S.PROVIDED.WAY.OF.DEALING.WITH.SIN_ PHOENIX.AZ FRIDAY_ 54-0305

E-18 And if you notice, the very teaching of nature... Watch nature if you want to see God. God in His great nature. You watch, just before the sun come up of the morning... Isaiah, I believe it was the prophet one time; he said, "Watchmen, what of the night?" He said, "The--the night cometh, and the morning cometh, and the night also."

If you notice he was just Scripturally in order. Watch. The first thing come, before the night come... Always before the--the daylight it's the darkest. It's always darkest just before the break of day. It's because the light is a pressing, and condensing the darkness. And that is at that time that the morning star comes out.

It's only the early risers that ever sees the morning star. And I think in this great hour of darkness just before the break of day, the Morning Star has shined again, spreading forth itself. **The early risers who are rising, not setting back, "I'll get saved next year. I'll get saved next week."**

Them who rises and comes out sees the morning star, rising out of your stoop and sleep of this modern world, theology, and moving into the powers of the Holy Ghost, the unchangeable riches of God spread forth in our heart, showing signs and wonders. Why, sure we rise and give Him glory. The great morning star, I think of that. And then when He comes, then we shall see Him as He is, have a body like His, be free from sickness, and all guilt, and be with Him forever.

ACTS.OF.THE.HOLY.SPIRIT_ JEFF.IN V-26 N-10 SUNDAY_ 54-1219E

152 Forty years has broke me to pieces. Eighty years maybe has broke you to pieces. Maybe thirty years has made a different person out of you, just a little snap of time like that.

But did you ever look out at the morning star when she rises in the morning? Did you ever rise up early and look at it hanging yonder in the skies, when she's a glistening and a shouting, and rejoicing in the sky? She's never lost one speck of its beauty. It's just as bright and pretty as it was the day He hung it, God hung it in its orbit. It's never lost any of its time. And it's been there through thousands times thousands of years, and it's never lost its beauty.

And the Bible says, "They that turn many to righteousness shall outshine the stars forever and ever." Hallelujah. Brother, it's a good thing to be a preacher after all. Isn't it? Yes, it is. It's a good thing to be a Christian.

155 Times may be hard. God has not promised a flower bed of ease, but He's promised grace sufficient for every trial that can hit you. [II Cor. 12:9] That's right. Yes indeed, grace is sufficient. Not he's on a flower, flower bed of ease, but He's promised grace to overcome in every temptation. When a cross gets heavy, Christ promised to be with you. Yes, sir.

Some glorious day, when it's all over, we'll meet Him in peace. God, grant that every one of you will receive the same thing.