

Revelation 2:8-29

He Who has an Ear, Let Him Hear What the Spirit Says to the Churches

Main theme of Revelation- The church is engaged in a war. This war is between the one triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and His church against satan and his demons. The church has already won because Jesus died for our sins and was resurrected, but satan and the demons fight to hurt the church.

Satan's (the dragon) tools against the church are....

1. **Persecution**
2. **False teaching (faith in Christ is the only way to heaven)**
3. **Allure of material affluence (idolatry and immorality)**
4. **Cultural approval (spiritual complacency)**

We, as Christians, are called to be faithful to God in the middle of this war and we know that Christ will be victorious in the end. **We must stay with Him!**

As Christians we should live our life in such a way that we are keeping Jesus in mind. He saved us. He is coming back for us. We are in a battle now. Jesus will win and so will His people.

WE ARE JESUS REPRESENTATIVES.

What would Jesus say about Oak Hill Baptist Church? I wonder?!

1. **They have fed and loved on the needy for over 20 years.**
2. **They fight for the unborn.**
3. **They support Gospel sharing around the world.**
4. **Their faith in Christ is strong.**
5. **They have stayed faithful to the reading and teaching of God's word.**
6. **In my opinion.... They love everyone, but sometimes they are not as bold in sharing Jesus with others in their day-to-day life that they need to be. The church is called to make disciples of Christ and that is done Monday through Saturday. Are you showing Christ in your life and are you telling about Christ?**

Jesus knows you and He knows the good and bad you do. Jesus knows the church's good and bad. Jesus knows everything about us and He LOVES US AND HIS CHURCH!

Vs 8-11 The church in Smyrna receives no rebuke! WOW! OHBC should strive toward no rebuke.

Here is how we strive toward this:

1. **Expositional preaching (we strive to teach the scripture in the right context of the book)**

God encourages them to endure persecution.

2. **We use Biblical theology (our study of God comes from scripture)**
3. **We give a Biblical understanding of the good news of Jesus (faith in Jesus saves)**
4. **Biblical view of conversion (forgiveness of sins comes through repentance and faith in Jesus).**

5. We strive towards a Biblical view of evangelism (we share Christ, God draws, people can repent and believe).
6. We strive toward a Biblical view of church membership (confess Christ as Lord, believers' baptism, repentant).
7. We follow a Biblical view of church discipline.
8. We strive to follow a Biblical view of church discipleship and growth.
9. We strive to follow the Biblical plan for church leadership selection and operation.

Matthew 10: 16 *"Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. 17 Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, 18 and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. 19 When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. 20 For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. 21 Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, 22 and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved."*

Christians will be hated and persecuted. Jesus was, Paul was, the apostles were. We should expect to be persecuted, but that should not distract us from our goal. We are to make disciples of Christ. We are called to keep proclaiming and teaching and walking through life with others teaching and living out the word no matter how hard things get.

God's plan is to use that. When we act differently and live differently while we are under attack it shows Jesus in our words and actions.

Tribulation is something we, as followers of Christ, will all go through in life, but there will also be a tribulation time when Christians will suffer and we must stay focused on Jesus and not give up.

If we endure persecution for Christ, we get heaven and we get heavenly rewards!

Christians have a 2nd birth and a 2nd death that leads to life. Death to sin and death of the flesh.

Revelation 20:4-6 *Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.*

Vs 12-17 The church's failure to expose and discipline false teachers will prompt God to intervene.

This church was in a very pagan environment. They trusted in Christ and held to that and did not deny Jesus, but they did not correct false teaching. God warns if the church does not repent He will come and take care of it Himself.

God helps us in life and in church. We must correct any teaching that would lead people astray.

When we are around certain things, they can permeate or assimilate into our lives. As Christians we must see what the government or culture is pushing toward and we must contrast that with the word of God. We must guard our hearts and lives against anything that pushes against God and His word.

In Pergamum there were temples and laws to worship the emperor. It is wrong to worship any leader as God, but worldly leaders will punish others when they don't. This caused stress for the church.

Vs 18-29 The church of Thyatira served the Lord, had faith which drove them to love God and others, and they endured in waiting for the second coming of Christ.

The church must not tolerate heresy.

God gives the church and this woman leading others to sexual sin and eating impure food time to repent, but God clearly cares if someone is leading others in church away from Him. If there is no repentance, there is just punishment of sickness and death. The Lord is patient, but He knows that if false teaching continues people will go to hell. And.... This lady is using His church as a platform to lead people into sin and away from Christ.

There is a self-proclaimed prophetess in the church. She is endorsing and enticing people in the church toward idolatry, immortality, and she seduces through pleasure and luxury.

God encourages those in the church that are not caught up in sin to fight, hold fast, and endure in Christ until the end and then they will be victorious in Jesus and receive heaven.

1 Chronicles 28:9 *And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever.*

Romans 8:27 *And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.*

Church-

1. **Live for Jesus until the end.**
2. **Watch out and expose false teaching.**
3. **Do not lose your love and passion for Christ, serving Him, and loving others.**
4. **Endure persecution and stand strong knowing that heaven and eternity with Jesus is your reward.**
5. **Flee from idolatry, sexual sin, and eating anything sacrificed to false idols.**

In my humble opinion I feel that we are doing these things, but I feel that we need to not grow weary or tired and we need to faithfully tell others that faith in Jesus saves!