***~ INTRO ~***

NOTE TAKERS…

* I’ve titled today’s message…
  + *“Letters To the Church” (Pt. 2)*

A FEW WEEKS AGO…

* I bought one of those plastic sheds from Costco…
  + But my backyard is small and slops downhill…
    - Where I wanted to set it up.

JOSHUA & I SPENT HOURS DIGGING IT OUT & GETTING IT LEVEL…

* But after all that effort… I realized I hadn’t measured it right!
  + - Where I had leveled it…
      * The **shed doors** wouldn’t even open.

IT WAS SO FRUSTRATING!

* We had worked hard but we didn’t work smart.
  + I skipped a few checks early on
    - And the whole thing ended up being off.

THAT’S EXACTLY WHAT JESUS IS ADDRESSING…

* In these three churches in (Revelation 2).
  + *Smyrna* was under pressure…
    - Would they stay faithful under pressure or fall apart?
  + *Pergamos* had compromise creeping in…
    - Things that looked small…
      * But were slowly shifting the foundation.
  + *Thyatira* had grown careless…
    - And their leadership let things slide
      * That should’ve been dealt with.

SOMETIMES IT’S NOT…

* The big things that mess us up…
  + It can be what we failed to check at the start!

***~ REVIEW ~***

LAST WEEK…

* We began this study by giving simple understanding …
  + Regarding the Book of Revelation…
    - John is writing from Exile in Patmos
    - It reveals Jesus Christ in His glory
    - (V. 1:9) The past / present / future
      * Applied:
        + Literally
        + Historically
        + Locally
        + Individually

***~ STUDY ~***

TODAY WE’RE PICKING UP…

* In the middle of (Chapter 2)…
  + Covering three churches…
    - Smyrna (2nd), Pergamos (3rd), and Thyatira (4th).

**~ IDEA 1 – Getting Crushed (2:8-11) ~**

(v. 8)

JESUS EMPHASIZES HIS CHARACTER…

* Being the first & the last…
  + Once dead but now alive.
* What a reminder for the Christians then & now…
  + He was there before our trials & after our trials…
    - Tasting & experiencing separation from God at death…
      * So we don’t have to!

(v. 9)

**#1 YOU’RE RICH IN CHRIST (COMMENDATION)**

SMYRNA WAS A CHURCH…

* Located about 35-miles north of Ephesus…
  + With a population of about 100,000 people.
* It’s name comes from the Greek word for Myrrh…
  + Which has a beautiful aroma when it’s crushed!
* The city led the way in emperor worship in the 1st century…
  + Requiring citizens to pledge allegiance to Cesar each year…
    - To receive a license to do business in the city.

JUDISM WAS A ROMAN-STATE RECOGNIZED RELIGION…

* Which meant that they were exempt from this practice…
  + But Christianity was not!
* To make things worse…
  + The Jews hated the Christian’s…
    - And would attack at every given opportunity.

**#2 NO CORRECTION NEEDED (CORRECTION)**

THIS IS ONLY ONE OF TWO CHURCHES…

* That received no correction from Jesus!

(vv. 10-11)

**#3 KEEP HOLDING ON (COUNSEL)**

TO THIS CHURCH THAT IS BEING PERSECUTED…

* Was given strength to move forward…
  + With the promise of a coming reward!

THIS IS REAL FOR SOME IN THE CHURCH…

* Because you’ve been going thru intense trials…
  + For choosing to stand with Christ.
    - Attack from friends or family members…
    - Giving up something that appears good…
      * But has been hurting your family…
    - Overlooked for promotions…
    - Being hurt by those who should be helping you.

WHEN WE’RE FEELING CRUSHED…

* The Lord has given encouragement to strengthen us…
  + (James 1:2-3, 12) NLT

THIS WEEK…

* We’ve been preparing for Bailey’s graduation…
  + Planning / pictures / party prep
    - Also just found out she will be awarded **Salutatorian**!

AS A DAD…

* I’ve watched her work so hard…
  + This moment of recognition comes
    - After years of perseverance!

SO TOO… OUR FATHER KNOWS…

* And there’s a reward coming (not for our glory – but His!) …
  + For those who keep holding on!

**~ IDEA 2 – Compromise In My Life (2:12-17) ~**

(vv. 12-13)

JESUS INTRODUCES HIMSELF TO THIS CHURCH…

* As the Living Word of God…
  + Which emphasized His executive power (authority)
    - And uncompromising truth (direction)

**#1 COMMITTED TO CHRIST (Commendation)**

THIS CHURCH WAS LOCATED…

* In a very desirable place to live…
  + Known for its obsession with academia…
    - A library with over 200,000 books
  + Idolatrous healing practices
    - Temple with snakes.

YET… THE CHRISTIANS…

* We’re commended because they held fast to Jesus…
  + Even when some were martyred!

(vv. 14-15)

**#2 COMPROMISE REVEALED (Correction)**

ALTHOUGH THEY REMAINED COMMITTED TO CHRIST…

* He reveals to the pastor…
  + Two areas where compromise has crept in.
    - These are the very things the church taught to avoid!
      * (Acts 15:28-29) NLT

(vv. 16-17)

**#3 HANDLE THE CORROSION (Counsel)**

JESUS TELLS THE PASTOR TO REPENT…

* For the sin that has been revealed within his church…
  + And instructs him to deal with it rapidly…
    - Or Jesus himself would fight against the people…
      * With His Word.

HERE’S THE KEY…

* Compromise without repentance leads to corruption…
  + And God has given the church Pastors to lead the sheep…
    - So they don’t get caught in the storms of correction!
      * (Hebrews 13:17) NLT

*In 2018, the Morandi Bridge in Genoa, Italy collapsed during a thunderstorm, killing 43 people. The bridge had stood for over 50 years — but investigations later revealed that engineers had been warning for years about corrosion in the support cables. The danger wasn’t sudden — it was slow, unseen compromise that no one dealt with.*

*The result? A total collapse. Tragic loss. Devastation that could’ve been avoided.*

BEFORE WE MOVE ON…

* Let me ask if there’s anything in your life…
  + That you’ve been taught is wrong /out of line…
    - But your ignoring?

**~ IDEA 3 – Carelessness In My Walk (2:18-28) ~**

(vv. 18-19)

WHEN COMPROMISE ISN’T DEALT WITH…

* It leads to corruption within the church…
  + Which is the testimony of Thyatira

JESUS WRITES THE LONGEST LETTER TO THIS CHURCH…

* Introducing Himself as the Son of God…
  + Reminding them of His diety & authority…
* Showing His eyes like fire & feet like brass
  + Which burns away the dross of sin
    - Through judgement & punishment.

**#1 YOU’VE GOT THE LOVE (Commendation)**

THIS CHURCH WAS KNOWN…

* For their works of love & service…
  + Perseverance & growth over time!
* Ephesus had truth without love (good doctrine)…
  + But Thyatira had love without truth!

(vv. 20-22)

**#2 YOU ALLOWED CORRUPTION (Correction)**

JESUS QUICKLY POINTS OUT THEIR ERROR…

* Of **knowingly** allowing a self-proclaimed prophetess…
  + To speak false doctrine in the Church…
    - And pull away the faithful followers.
      * (Possibly symbolic name for pastors wife?)

THIS CHURCH…

* Was rotting from the inside out…
  + And Jesus had to step in to deal with the rebellion…
    - Because the leaders didn’t!

JEZEBEL POINTS US BACK TO THE O.T.

* When King Arab married the king of Sidon’s daughter…
  + To create a political alliance with an enemy of God.
* She ruled over her weak husband…
  + And led the nation into gross idolatry…
    - When God finally stepped in with Elijah to bring a drought
      * And have a showdown with the prophets of Baal
        + (1 Kings 18).

(vv. 24-29)

**#3 DON’T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU (Counsel)**

GOD WAS DECLARING JUDGEMENT…

* Upon this woman & her followers.

BUT HE TOLD THE FAITHFUL IN THE CHURCH…

* To stay steadfast in their uncompromising walk…
  + With no additional counsel given.

THE PROMISE TO THE ONES…

* Who could overcome the temptation within this city & church…
  + Was opportunity to rule & reign with Christ in His kingdom…
    - Because they couldn’t be influenced into corruption!

*“A ruler with no understanding will oppress his people, but one who hates corruption will have a long life.” (Pro 28:16 NLT)*

THE BEAUTIFUL THING WITH THIS CHURCH…

* Is the grace that God has shown to them…
  + By still giving them “time for repentance”

THE CHURCH IN THYATIRA WAS CARELESS…

* By allowing sin to linger instead of confronting it…
  + And Jesus held them accountable for it.

PAUL GIVES THE SAME WARNING…

* To the church in (1 Corinthians 11) …
  + Approaching the communion table carelessly…
    - Without examining their hearts…
      * (1 Cor. 11:27-31) NLT

***~ IN CLOSING (CALL WORSHIP TEAM) ~***

AS WE CLOSE OUR SERVICE TODAY…

* We have the chance to examine ourselves before the Lord…
  + To see if any of these things are true in our lives.
* Let’s ask if there’s compromise in my life
  + If there’s unconfessed sin I’m tolerating…
    - Come back in a place of sincerity before the Lord.

***~ COMMUNION ~***

(1 Corinthians 11:23-26) NLT