

📖 **Thyatiran troubles** Revelation 2:18-25

“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: I know your works and love and service and faith and your patience” (Verse 19).

What a wonderful testimony to receive from the Lord regarding the motives behind the work that was being done. They were rich in love for God and for one another. Their faith or fidelity showed, they were dependable, reliable and consistent believers.

From this love and faith, grew acts of service and perseverance. God's love in them manifested itself in doing good to others, and their steadfastness was demonstrated by their perseverance in their faith.

These believers were growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, maturing in their Christian lives and advancing the cause of Christ.

However, at the same time, in the same church, existed another group who actively worked against the true believers. Their greatest opposition was not external opposition but internal.

“But I have a few things against you because you allow that woman Jezebel to teach” (vs. 20).

Whether Jezebel was a real prophetess at this time, or this is a reference to Jezebel the wife of Ahab no one knows for sure. What is known is the influence that she exerted over the church at Thyatira.

In 1 Kings Chapters 16-21, we read of the influence Jezebel had not only over Ahab the King of Israel, but over Israel itself. And she was not just a worshipper of idols but a militant promoter of Baal worship. Jezebel opposed the people of God with violence and attempted to replace the word of God with the philosophies of man.

There are some who exert great influence over the church and individuals today, often peddling their own philosophies for their own profit. In vs. 24, we are told about these teaching *“as many as do not have this doctrine, and who have not known the depths of Satan”*. These philosophies do not come from God, but from the depths of Satan. Many are deceived by such doctrines and, instead of living lives that glorify God, they are satisfying the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.

To the true believers who had not experienced the supposed “deeper knowledge” (depths of Satan) Christ says *“I will put on you no other burden. But that which you have, hold fast until I come.”* The burden of false teachers, false converts, of bringing Christ's Name into disrepute, the immoral living and the persecution for not participating, having to stand firm against these things and hold fast to the promises of God is burden enough.

Christ commands true believers to “hold fast until I come”. Christ does not say that it will be easy, but He does promises

MEET OUR NEW TEAM MEMBER

JOHN PALANDRI, Incoming Missions Director

I was born in Perth to Catholic parents who had the good sense to introduce me to God, but encouraged a very “Catholic” view of a relationship with God. I found myself in the position where I knew of God but did not know Him personally.

I enjoyed a happy and robust family life and if I could single out one highlight, it was how my parents encouraged us to learn as much as we could.

In July of 1980 I joined the R&I Bank. This proved to be a “watershed” moment for me as there I met a young lady, who in the first instance was my teacher at the bank and later, became my wife.

This young lady “Jenny” shared the gospel with me in late 1980 and in January of 1981, I gave my heart to the Lord. One year and one week later in 1982, Jenny and I were married.

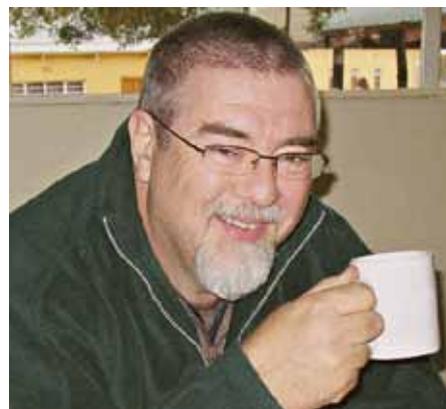
We have two beautiful daughters who are baptised believers and are

walking with the Lord and serving Him in their respective areas of work. Jenny has been a wonderful mother, wife and Christian example to all of us and I thank God daily for her.

My early Christian discipleship was under Jenny's father, Keith Robins, and this I count as one of the enormous blessing of my life as Keith has become a lifelong mentor and friend as well as being a mighty fine father in law!! Arthur Payne encouraged us to move north to experience “faith on the edge” if you like. That was certainly the case, as there was no church as such in Goldsworthy, only a couple of Christians with whom we met from time to time for Bible study. We later moved to Port Hedland.

We returned to Perth in December 2000 and it would be fair to say at that time I was a beaten, disillusioned man, burnt out if you like. My walk with the Lord was quite stagnant, yet He was very gracious and guided us as a family to Craigie Baptist. Pastor Keith Hall has been an enormous blessing and he has encouraged us both to think beyond the “safe square” of life and to look outwards instead of inwards. Jenny has become a primary school chaplain because of this outlook. I, however, became increasingly “introspective” about life and paid only “lip service” to my walk with the Lord.

In 2007, Fay Christian went on the Impact Africa trip with Challenge and although at the time, “it was not for me”, the Lord had other ideas. Fay's story has been one of great inspiration to me. After listening to her sharing about her journey, not just to



John Palandri during Impact Africa 2009

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Address: PO Box 978, Cloverdale WA 6985,
Phone (08) 9453 3311 or Fax (08) 9453 3006
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Devotion continued

that “He will come” and that we are to eagerly await that day, in fact we are to look forward to and long for that day and to encourage one another with these words. Even so come Lord Jesus.

POINTS TO PONDER

Prayer Points:

- The greatest single issue that Challenge is facing is the ability to be able to fund the current work and the expansion of the paper globally.
- India: 100,000 English language papers, plus starting 100,000 Hindi language in April. Budget has had to double to meet existing needs and to fund more staff.
- South Africa: Need to increase print run and the increase in the budget to meet staff needs. We are also planning for a special edition for the Soccer World Cup of around 500,000 papers minimum in English and some 50,000 in Spanish.
- African Prison Edition: Need to increase print run to meet the increased need to access more prisons.
- Nigeria: Commence first edition but at this stage we have no funds for a budget and we also need to find a reliable printer who prints at a reasonable price. The quote we have received so far is way out of the ball park.
- New Zealand: Our Partner organisation is struggling to do the necessary promotion for the paper to develop a growing quarterly print run. Again we need to have the funding to do the job.
- Australia: We aim to distribute 75,000 papers on a monthly basis. Please pray for promotion in New South Wales in February and March and for funding to maintain the needs of the home office. Pray for our new staff member, John Palandri, coming on board in April. Pray as he seeks to raise his personal support and as he takes on the responsibility of heading up our Impact Africa mission work as well as other promotion and administration work.
- Special Easter edition will be produced again this year so please pray for much interest in the edition as we look to promote it to churches and different ministry organisations. We would love to see another 100,000 papers go out sowing the seed of the gospel into communities around the nation.

Praise Points:

- The very generous donations/ ongoing support.
- Responses received from around the world.

John Palandri – continued

Africa, I found “life” beginning to stir again. Keith Hall must have recognised this and “tapped” me on the shoulder and advised me that I was going the following year. I finally submitted to God’s call on my life after hearing South African Pastor Willie Dengler preach at Woodvale Baptist Church in November 2007. Africa here I come!

In hindsight, 2008 was a “watershed” year for me. I like to call it the year of my true conversion. There is no doubt that the whole idea of doing a Mission trip was scary enough, however what the Lord had in store for me was much more profound. To cut a long story short, I found myself in a small room in Johannesburg, far away from all

that I knew and the Lord had tipped me upside down and emptied all of the “junk” of the previous 27 years out of me, so I would be ready to serve Him. The empowering of the Holy Spirit was



Jessica and father John Palandri during Impact Africa 2009

revealed to me in an amazing way and I can only thank the Lord for the course of events that He put in place that led me to that point. As Carl Carmody has said: “On a short term trip like this, it’s not what we will do for the Lord, it’s what the Lord will do for us.” And Impact Africa has certainly caused my life to be “impacted” forever. I just had to go again in 2009.

To be sitting at my desk knowing that the Lord has led me to work with Challenge is truly exciting. The sign posts have been very clear over the past 18 months that I should be considering leaving my secular work and seeking some kind of full time Christian service. On 26 July 2009, the weekend after we came back from Africa, Keith Hall preached about facing our Giants. The message went something like this: The soldiers gasped, Saul sighed, Goliath jeered, David swung and God made His point; “Anyone who underestimates the ordinary has rocks in his head”!! It wasn’t David who was under resourced, it was Goliath, and frankly that’s how I see life for me now. I am abundantly resourced, excited about sharing that resource and I am deeply convinced the Lord has found somewhere I can put all of that into His Service, and that is with Challenge!!

Please pray with our family as we begin this next chapter of our lives in full time service for Him.



MY RESPONSE

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with God’s help I would like to be a partner in supporting the ministry at Challenge in the following way(s):

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