

The first letter from Jesus was to Ephesus, a church that was busy with works but had forgotten the love they had when they were born-again (2:4<sup>i</sup>). Fifty miles down the road was another port city, Smyrna. The church of that city had endured through trying times and it was about to have even greater testing (2:10<sup>ii</sup>). Another fifty miles further was the capital city of Asia Pergamum. Pergamum was fifteen miles from the coast and said to be the greatest city of Asia. It was built on a conical hill that overlooked the plain. There were four notable temples to Greek gods, and three to Roman emperors who were worshiped as gods. We have no record as to how the church was founded in Pergamum, but we may surmise that it was probably an offshoot of Paul's time in Ephesus (Acts 19:10<sup>iii</sup>).

I want to remind everyone that if your Bible has the words of Jesus in red, each of these letters to the churches is entirely red. They are the words of Jesus dictated to John (1:11<sup>iv</sup>). We are promised a blessing if we hear and keep these words. We are commanded to hear and keep all the letters Jesus dictated to the churches (3:22<sup>v</sup>).

<sup>12</sup> *“And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: ‘The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.’* Revelation 2:12 Each letter has an introduction taken from the description of Jesus in chapter one. The choice of the particular part of the description has something to do with Jesus' message to that church. The sharp two-edged sword is mentioned later in this book to describe Jesus' weapon against His enemies (19:15<sup>vi</sup>). In verse 16 Jesus declares that it will be used to fight against them if they do not repent. The author of Hebrews tells us the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. It cuts both ways. It discerns between soul and spirit, in other words, what is of our self and what is of God. It discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4:12<sup>vii</sup>). Like the previous church, we may be going through the motions of doing good things, but God's word discerns our motivations, whether they are selfish or out of love for God and our neighbor. That passage goes on to say that nothing is hidden from His eyes, those flames of fire. Everything is laid bare before Him (Hebrews 4:13<sup>viii</sup>). The introductory description of Jesus must have been chilling to those first listeners. It should be to us as well.

<sup>13</sup> *“I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.”* Revelation 2:13 There are various theories as to what is meant by the place where Satan dwells and where his throne is. It was the first city to build a temple for the worship of Augustus Caesar. It could have been any of the temples to the Greek gods or emperors or perhaps all of them considered together. Tourists think of our town as the place Satan dwells when they see all the New Age shops and hear about the various cults. Some commentators think Satan's throne was the temple of Asclepius because of the snakes that writhed on that temple floor. One of the emblems of the city was the serpent god Asclepius. The sick would lay on the temple floor hoping one of them would touch and heal them. They thought that represented the healing touch of that god. Several Christian stone masons were martyred there for refusing to cut images of snakes.

Others believe it was the altar to Zeus at the top of the acropolis. Edwin Yamauchi describes it as follows: “The word *altar* is somewhat misleading. The structure is a monumental colonnaded court in the form of a horseshoe, 120 by 112 feet. The podium of the altar was nearly 18 feet high. The great frieze, which ran at the base of the structure for

446 feet, depicted a gigantomachy, that is, a battle of the gods and the giants. It was one of the greatest works of Hellenistic art.”<sup>ix</sup> We do not need to know which of these temples are referred to as Satan’s throne. The important thing was that it was a city where it was difficult to be a Christian.

Jesus said that in the face of that they *held fast* to His name. We increasingly see the same kind of resistance to the name of Jesus in our culture. His name divides (John 7:43<sup>x</sup>). Some want to claim to believe in Jesus but change His biblical identity into a god of their own design. Hold fast His name! His name is the sum of His attributes, and His attributes shine through these letters. He is uncompromising with evil (Psalm 119:104<sup>xi</sup>), but He also graciously offers forgiveness to those who repent.

Even when one in their midst was martyred, they refused to deny their faith in Jesus. “Deny my faith” might better be translated “deny faith in me.” Once every year in Roman cities, all citizens were required to sacrifice to the emperor. That was a dangerous time for followers of Jesus. In Pergamum that could happen any day of the year as it was the center of emperor worship. While the emperor worship may have been the reason for martyrdom, it was Satan who is the instigator. That may be the reason for the additional mention of Satan dwelling there. As the center of emperor worship in Asia Minor, refusal to worship the emperor would have been especially egregious to its citizens. The sword from Jesus’ mouth is meant to warn the apostates within the church, but also to warn the government that abuses its power (Revelation 19:15, 21).

We cannot be sure of the facts surrounding Antipas’ death. The only thing we have was written around 1000 A.D. by the Eastern Orthodox Church. The tradition claimed that Antipas was roasted alive in a bronze bull during the persecution by the emperor Domitian. Jesus called Antipas His *faithful witness*. What an honor, as that was the title Jesus used for Himself in 1:5<sup>xii</sup>! It is most likely also referring to Isaiah 43:10<sup>xiii</sup> in which God refers to Jesus as His witness. As Jesus is God’s faithful witness, so Antipas is described as Jesus’ faithful witness.

Imagine the intimidation that the church felt in that city. See the glowing hot bronze bull, Roman soldiers dressed for battle, and hear the order by the governor, “Sacrifice to Domitian as Lord or be thrown into the glowing hot bull!” Antipas was probably one of the elders and chosen as an example to others. The church must have watched and prayed asking God for a merciful and quick death for Antipas. Still, they did not budge. They held fast to their faith in Jesus as Lord of all. After witnessing that, would we do the same?

It is fascinating to see how persecution wins the genuine seeker to the Lord. They see the example of total conviction even unto death. It strengthens the believers and convicts those who are half-hearted. At times it even encourages conversions. I am not saying that it is easy or that there are not fears that must be dealt with. However, it certainly does not have the effect that one would imagine in the natural ways of man. When fear of a torturous death was not sufficient to move the believers, the rulers must have backed off on the demand, for no other martyr is mentioned with Antipas. Paul had something to say about this kind of bold witness. <sup>28</sup> *and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.* Philippians 1:28

But all is not well in the church of Pergamum. <sup>14</sup> *But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and*

*practice sexual immorality.* Revelation 2:14 We went over the teaching of Balaam in the sermon on the letter to the Ephesians. Some of you asked where you could find the Balaam account in Scripture. It is really a combination of passages. Numbers 25 tells of the Midianite women using sexual seduction to draw the men of Israel to worship other gods. Numbers 31:16<sup>xiv</sup> tells us that this was on the advice of Balaam. He could not prophesy against them, so he earned his fee from King Balak by suggesting a way to get them to compromise and thereby turn the Lord against them. It worked in a sense, as 24,000 did die by a plague (Numbers 25:7-9<sup>xv</sup>). Balaam did not enjoy his reward, for he died when Israel battled Balak's forces (Numbers 31:8<sup>xvi</sup>).

The early church had the same temptations because of several factors in the culture around them. For the most part, meat could only be obtained after it was sacrificed to an idol. The temples would have great feasts after the sacrifices. The problem for Christians was that the worship involved temple prostitutes. Most of those in the church of Pergamum held to the Jerusalem council's decision to abstain from eating meat sacrificed to idols (Acts 15:20<sup>xvii</sup>). The temptations involved were just too dangerous. Even if you could keep yourself above it all, it may stumble a weaker brother who could not resist (Romans 14:15<sup>xviii</sup>). The best way to deal with temptation is to stay away from it. But some in the church taught that they had the freedom to not only eat the meat but to also participate in the temple practices.

We do not know their reasoning behind this compromise, perhaps it was an abuse of grace (Romans 6:1<sup>xix</sup>), but it is enough to know we can justify any sin in our mind. It may make no sense at all, but if we want to do something, we can talk ourselves into it being alright, at least for us. I would suggest this general rule to go by. If you need to hide something from fellow believers, it may not be sin, but why take the chance? The disciples lived with Jesus day in and day out and saw all of His life in every situation. A godly person will desire to live such an open example (1 Corinthians 10:32<sup>xx</sup>).

<sup>15</sup> *So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.* Revelation 2:15 "So also" should probably be taken to mean that the teaching of Balaam was an example of what the Nicolaitans were teaching. They took Christian liberty and the freedom from the Law to teach that you could do whatever you like with your body as long as your spirit belonged to Jesus (Romans 6:1,2<sup>xxi</sup>). They probably rationalized it by saying that in their hearts they did not believe in the god that was being celebrated but were doing their civic duty. In this strong church that stood in the face of death threats, there was a faction that compromised with the world, which may have also helped them avoid persecution. Participating in idolatry and sexual immorality misrepresented what it meant to be a Christian. Idolatry and sexual immorality are paired in a number verses in Scripture (Acts 15:29<sup>xxii</sup>; 21:25<sup>xxiii</sup>; Rev. 9:20,21<sup>xxiv</sup>). There is no new thing under the sun. The form this temptation takes today is pornography. It is idolatry of the human form that promises satisfaction but instead destroys marriages and relationships and leads to sexual immorality. Similar justifications are used. "I am not harming anyone. "This is not spiritual but merely physical," they argue (Isaiah 47:10<sup>xxv</sup>). Both are a lie. The warning in this passage is to us all.

But the real problem was that the church of Pergamum tolerated it. Gentleness and kindness were put above truth and justice. I want to be very careful to distinguish the responsibility of the church. If some blatant sin is generally known to all the church, then there must be discipline by the church. To tolerate clearly sinful activity is to sanction it.

We must especially confront false teaching that would encourage compromise in our Christian testimony. On the other hand, we must avoid the temptation to gossip and speculate. It is not our job to go nosing around into other's affairs and make assumptions. We almost had a family leave because of suggestions that were unfounded, purely in the minds of busy bodies (1 Thessalonians 5:13<sup>xxvi</sup>).

The blatant incest in Corinth was known by the whole church and tolerated. (1 Corinthians 5:1,2<sup>xxvii</sup>). The teaching of the Nicolaitans was not something one person was dabbling in. It was a faction of false teaching in the church causing some to compromise with idolatry and fornication (sometimes meant in a spiritual sense). No matter how loving and gentle we are, we should not tolerate anything that stumbles weaker believers. Neither should we do as some would like and gather around our weak and wounded and attack them (Galatians 6:1<sup>xxviii</sup>). Everything must be done in love, with understanding, and with an effort to restore, yet without compromise.

If someone confides in you about a sin in their life, do not bring it to the elders unless a life is in danger or others are being influenced to do the same. That person has trusted you to give them advice and pray for them while providing accountability (Proverbs 11:13<sup>xxix</sup>). If they do not receive your godly instruction, the Great Shepherd will deal with them. Your elders are not going to hunt for sin in your lives. Of course, we want you to live lives of holiness, but it is the Holy Spirit's job to convict of sin (John 16:7-9<sup>xxx</sup>). We will address any issue tolerated by a faction in the church or sin that is blatant and known to all, or damaging others' lives. That is the job of the elders as shepherds protecting the flock (1 Peter 5:1,2<sup>xxxi</sup>).

*<sup>16</sup> Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth.* Revelation 2:16 Regarding the repeated warning of the sword, Beale writes, *It is especially intriguing that Balaam was threatened with being "killed by the sword" of "the angel of the Lord" if he continued to oppose Israel (Num. 22:23<sup>xxxii</sup>, 31<sup>xxxiii</sup>). And when he did not heed the warning, he was "killed by the sword," which sealed his destiny of not entering into the life of the "world to come"<sup>xxxiv</sup>*

This warning is written for the whole church. They held on to their faith in Jesus and did not deny His name, but they tolerated sinful compromise which was harming the testimony of Jesus in the city. Jesus is not going to only war against those who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans but the church as a whole for allowing the false teaching to continue. The church needed to repent, to turn around their thinking on tolerating this compromise. They may have thought it kept them from the Roman sword, but we must be more concerned about the sword of the Lord (Matthew 10:28<sup>xxxv</sup>).

Tolerance is the attribute our society lauds today, but it is increasingly asking us to tolerate evil. Jesus says He will personally fight against the church that tolerates evil with the sword of His mouth! We have witnessed the demise of denominations that compromise the clear instruction of Scripture.

It has been asked, "Where is the line that must be drawn as to what we confront as false teaching and what we tolerate as a difference of opinion." There is not an easy answer. Of course, what is obviously unbiblical doctrine or that which denies who Christ is and what He has done for us must be confronted. The council in Jerusalem had already told them not to compromise in eating food offered to idols and sexual sin. Defiance of church authority must also be confronted so that factions are not formed within the church



(Hebrews 13:17<sup>xxxvi</sup>). Peter and Jude clearly laid out the marks of false teachers: which are sensuality, greed, and pride (Jude 10,11<sup>xxxvii</sup>; 2 Peter 2:14<sup>xxxviii</sup>). They are the same today.

*17a He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.* Revelation 2:17a This is for all whom God has enabled to hear His encouragement and warnings. At the end of each letter, we must ask if we are willing to hear what Jesus personally dictated to us, His body, the church (Ephesians 5:23<sup>xxxix</sup>).

*17b To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.* Revelation 2:17b The conqueror or overcomer, the meanings are the same, is the one who will hear and obey what the Spirit says. We yield to the conviction of the Holy Spirit and change our ways. We persist in what has been commended. When we refuse to hear, it is rebellion against our Creator and Sustainer. That is to declare our self to be Lord. It is the pride that caused Lucifer to fall (Isaiah 14:13<sup>xl</sup>). It ensures that God will resist you, for He resists the proud and gives grace to the humble (James 4:6<sup>xli</sup>).

John wrote in his first letter, *4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world -our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?* 1 John 5:4,5 If you are born of God, if you believe and receive Jesus as the Son of God who died for your sins, you will overcome. You will endure. Jesus' reward for a life surrendered to His lordship is Himself. He is the hidden manna. It is contrasted with the pagan feasts. How much greater is it to enjoy the bread that came down from heaven (John 6:48-51<sup>xlii</sup>)! There could be no greater reward (Hebrews 13:5<sup>xliii</sup>).

When I first taught on Pergamum here at Wayside about two decades ago, I came home one day to find a small white stone on a table in the middle of my bedroom. My wife did not know where it came from. We never figured it out. It was mysterious because I had been wondering about the significance of this phrase. Maybe the Lord was just encouraging me to persevere through a difficult time, for since that time we have seen amazing fruit that the Lord has wrought through the church. All glory to Him.

John MacArthur explains that victors of the athletic games were sometimes given a small white stone with their name engraved on it. It was their ticket to an awards celebration.<sup>xliv</sup> Fellow victors in Christ Jesus, our award celebration is our marriage feast with the King of kings (19:9<sup>xlv</sup>). The victory is ours in Christ Jesus who won the victory for us (1 Corinthians 15:57<sup>xlvi</sup>).

I do not know the significance of the new name, but we see something similar in the Old Testament at important turning points in the lives of the patriarchs Abram and Jacob (Genesis 17:5<sup>xlvii</sup>; 32:28<sup>xlviii</sup>). Their new name spoke of the destiny God had planned for them. The word for "new" in this case, *kainos*, is not just new in time, but new in nature. We are not getting merely a different name, but a name that is of the new creation (Isaiah 62:2<sup>xlix</sup>). I imagine it to be the essence of who He made you to be in Him. What a reward that would be! Or it may be Jesus' new name as mentioned in 3:12<sup>l</sup>. Either way, if only you and Jesus know it, it will be a name of intimacy with Jesus. I pray that we have an ear to hear the encouragement, the warning, and the promises to the church of Pergamum.

Questions: 1 Describe Pergamum. 2 What would the intro of the sword bring to mind? 3 What might Satan's throne imply? 4 What were they commended for doing?

5 Who was Antipas? 6 What were they rebuked for doing? 7 What was the core of the false doctrine? 8 What is false teaching? 9 Who conquers and how? 10 What do they receive? 11 Do you have an ear to hear?

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<sup>i</sup> **Revelation 2:4 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.

<sup>ii</sup> **Revelation 2:10 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

<sup>iii</sup> **Acts 19:10 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

<sup>iv</sup> **Revelation 1:11 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

<sup>v</sup> **Revelation 3:22 (ESV)**

<sup>22</sup> He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

<sup>vi</sup> **Revelation 19:15 (ESV)**

<sup>15</sup> From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

<sup>vii</sup> **Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

<sup>viii</sup> **Hebrews 4:13 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

<sup>ix</sup> *New Testament Cities in Western Asia Minor* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980], 35-36

<sup>x</sup> **John 7:43 (ESV)**

<sup>43</sup> So there was a division among the people over him.

<sup>xi</sup> **Psalms 119:104 (ESV)**

<sup>104</sup> Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

<sup>xii</sup> **Psalms 119:104 (ESV)**

<sup>104</sup> Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

<sup>xiii</sup> **Isaiah 43:10 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> "You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.

<sup>xiv</sup> **Numbers 31:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> Behold, these, on Balaam's advice, caused the people of Israel to act treacherously against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and so the plague came among the congregation of the LORD.

<sup>xv</sup> **Numbers 25:7-9 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> When Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose and left the congregation and took a spear in his hand <sup>8</sup> and went after the man of Israel into the chamber and pierced both of them, the man of Israel and the woman through her belly. Thus the plague on the people of Israel was stopped. <sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand.

<sup>xvi</sup> **Numbers 31:8 (ESV)**

<sup>8</sup> They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of their slain, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. And they also killed Balaam the son of Beor with the sword.

<sup>xvii</sup> **Acts 15:20 (ESV)**

<sup>20</sup> but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood.

<sup>xviii</sup> **Romans 14:15 (ESV)**

<sup>15</sup> For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died.

<sup>xix</sup> **Romans 6:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?

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<sup>xx</sup> **1 Corinthians 10:32 (ESV)**

<sup>32</sup> Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God,

<sup>xxi</sup> **Romans 6:1-2 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

<sup>xxii</sup> **Acts 15:29 (ESV)**

<sup>29</sup> that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”

<sup>xxiii</sup> **Acts 21:25 (ESV)**

<sup>25</sup> But as for the Gentiles who have believed, we have sent a letter with our judgment that they should abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality.”

<sup>xxiv</sup> **Revelation 9:20-21 (ESV)**

<sup>20</sup> The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk,  
<sup>21</sup> nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

<sup>xxv</sup> **Isaiah 47:10 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> You felt secure in your wickedness, you said, “No one sees me”; your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray, and you said in your heart, “I am, and there is no one besides me.”

<sup>xxvi</sup> **1 Thessalonians 5:13 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.

<sup>xxvii</sup> **1 Corinthians 5:1-2 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father’s wife. <sup>2</sup> And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.

<sup>xxviii</sup> **Galatians 6:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

<sup>xxix</sup> **Proverbs 11:13 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a thing covered.

<sup>xxx</sup> **John 16:7-9 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> concerning sin, because they do not believe in me;

<sup>xxxi</sup> **1 Peter 5:1-2 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: <sup>2</sup> shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly;

<sup>xxxii</sup> **Numbers 22:23 (ESV)**

<sup>23</sup> And the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand. And the donkey turned aside out of the road and went into the field. And Balaam struck the donkey, to turn her into the road.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> **Numbers 22:31 (ESV)**

<sup>31</sup> Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 250–251.

<sup>xxxv</sup>

<sup>xxxvi</sup> **Hebrews 13:17 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> **Jude 1:10-11 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively. <sup>11</sup> Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam’s error and perished in Korah’s rebellion.

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xxxviii **2 Peter 2:14 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!

xxxix **Ephesians 5:23 (ESV)**

<sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.

xi **Isaiah 14:13 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;

xli **James 4:6 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

xlii **John 6:48-51 (ESV)**

<sup>48</sup> I am the bread of life. <sup>49</sup> Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. <sup>50</sup> This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. <sup>51</sup> I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

xliii **Hebrews 13:5 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

xliv MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Revelation 2

xlv **Revelation 19:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."

xlvi **1 Corinthians 15:57 (ESV)**

<sup>57</sup> But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

xlvii **Genesis 17:5 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.

xlviii **Genesis 32:28 (ESV)**

<sup>28</sup> Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed."

xlix **Isaiah 62:2 (ESV)**

<sup>2</sup> The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give.

l **Revelation 3:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.