

Our passage today covers the letter to the fourth church in the Asia circuit. The first was Ephesus, the church that left its first love. (2:4<sup>i</sup>) Next was Smyrna the first church in Asia without fault. They were persecuted and in poverty, but they were spiritually rich. (2:9<sup>ii</sup>) Third was Pergamum, a church that stood up under persecution, but tolerated the morally compromised teaching of Balaam and the Nicolaitans. (2:14,15<sup>iii</sup>) Now Jesus addresses the church in the smallest of the seven cities, Thyatira, but it is the longest letter. The condition of the church is more important than the size of the city. Thyatira was a city with many trade guilds. Since it was on a trade route it offered the opportunity to sell the goods produced there to trade caravans. Lydia, dealer in purple cloth whom Paul met in Philippi was from this town (Acts 16:14<sup>iv</sup>).

As in each letter, Jesus first gives the description of Himself that corresponds to the message He is about to speak. <sup>18</sup> *“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: ‘The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.’* Revelation 2:18 Fire and bronze are symbols of judgment and purification. The description warns of what is coming. First, we should note Jesus is the Son of God. This is the only place in the book we see this title, though it is probably taken from 1:13 title son of man.<sup>v</sup> It is a title of authority. In Psalm chapter 2 the Son of the King is prophesied to bring judgment to the earth (Psalm 2:9-12<sup>vi</sup>). We will see this again at the end of the letter as Jesus quotes part of that Psalm. The title Son of God, the eyes of fire, the burnished bronze feet all bring to mind the fiery furnace of Daniel 3 and judgment.

His eyes are like a flame of fire. After describing the powerful penetrating force of the Word of God, the author of Hebrews continues, <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.* Hebrews 4:13 He sees right into the very thoughts and intentions of our hearts (Hebrews 4:12<sup>vii</sup>). Thyatira and churches of our day may look like they are full of upright and sacrificial lovers of God and His goodness, but Jesus sees past the surface. He looks right into the very motivations behind our actions. He sees what each person is truly desiring. He knows what they would do if they thought they could get away with it. We should always think of Jesus as having eyes like flames of fire and remember that He can see our very thoughts.

His feet are like burnished bronze. Bronze is the material of judgment. Remember that the snake on the pole in the wilderness was made of bronze (Numbers 21:9<sup>viii</sup>). Jesus told Nicodemus it was a foreshadow of Jesus on the cross, bearing God’s judgment upon the sins of the world (John 3:14,15<sup>ix</sup>). The great altar and the laver (Sea) outside the Tabernacle were made of bronze (Exodus 30:18<sup>x</sup>; 39:39<sup>xi</sup>). The altar was where sacrifices for sin were offered to the Lord by the priests. The picture was of the animal taking our punishment, the death that we deserve because of sin. It was pointing to the Lamb of God, Jesus, who would give Himself as a sacrifice in our place. The laver was for the cleansing of the priests from impurities before they entered the Holy Place. So we see bronze used to deal with sin. The title Son of God, the eyes like a flame of fire, and the feet like burnished bronze all warned of the judgment on sin that was coming.

<sup>19</sup> *“I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first.* Revelation 2:19 Jesus begins with a commendation. He is looking for what is good in the church. He is searching for those whose hearts are fully committed to Him. Just as with the church of Ephesus, Jesus declares He knows their

works (2:2<sup>xii</sup>). We know that works do not earn our salvation, but as James taught, our faith is made evident by our works (James 2:18<sup>xiii</sup>). There were those in the church who were faithful servants of the Lord.

Jesus elaborates on the type of works they had love, faith, service, and patient endurance. That is exactly the type of works that Jesus expects when His presence is directing our lives. The Great Command is first to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Matthew 22:37<sup>xiv</sup>). They had works of love, without which the works would be meaningless (1 Corinthians 13:3<sup>xv</sup>). They had works of faithfulness. They did not give in to pressure to sacrifice to the guild gods just to keep their jobs. And they were not self-serving but followed Jesus' example in serving others (Matthew 20:28<sup>xvi</sup>). To top it all off, they had to suffer for their faith like the other churches, and they were patiently enduring. They were not complaining about their difficulties, but instead were patiently bearing up under the threats and mistreatment (Titus 3:14<sup>xvii</sup>).

That is a pretty amazing description of a church, but the most impressive part of all is that, unlike Ephesus, their works of love, faith, service and patient endurance were increasing (2 Peter 1:8<sup>xviii</sup>). They obviously had not left their first love but were growing in love and faith that resulted in those increased works. Works are mentioned five times in the letter contrasting the good with the evil. Like Pergamum, they refused to confront evil.

*<sup>20</sup> But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.* Revelation 2:20 There was a woman in their midst who gave herself the title of prophetess. Jesus calls her Jezebel because of her similarity to Jezebel of the Old Testament. The wife of King Ahab led people in worshipping Baal, which involved cultic orgies (1 Kings 18:19<sup>xix</sup>). She was teaching and seducing Jesus' servants to practice immorality. We have previously talked about the immorality of some of the Roman temples. Apparently, she was teaching that, contrary to the Apostles' council in Jerusalem (Acts 15:29<sup>xx</sup>), it was fine to participate in the feasts of these temples that devolved into immorality as part of their worship. In fact, she even seduced them into doing so probably by the means of her so-called prophecies. If someone claims to be speaking for God, their words should never contradict Scripture. If they do, it is a clear sign that they are a false prophet. She may have reasoned that the idols are nothing but metal and stone and therefore bowing before them or lighting incense would mean nothing. It would have been easy to hear as they might keep their jobs in the guilds and have meat to eat from the sacrifices. But the sin was in giving the wrong message to those who knew they professed Christ and the debauchery that often followed.

Why would the elders of the church of Thyatira allow this to go on? She must have been quite an influential person with a large following. They may have been worried about people leaving the church if they denounced her. They may have felt compassion for those who would lose their income if they would not sacrifice. The passage does not tell us why, but it definitely leaves us with the impression that something should have been done. The shepherds of this fold, for one reason or another, would not confront this evil that was leading their sheep astray. It was not only spiritually damaging to those who listened to her, it probably took its toll on their marriages, the witness of the church in the community, and on their physical well-being. The elders were failing the Lord and their flock by tolerating this evil in their midst (Acts 20:29-31<sup>xxi</sup>). Paul taught that when someone gives a prophecy, others should judge it (1 Corinthians 14:29<sup>xxii</sup>). They should see if it lines up with the Word. They elders were not doing that with this woman.

We have the same type of thing in the church at large today. People take on the title of prophet as if they were in the office of the Old Testament prophet (Luke 16:16<sup>xxiii</sup>). They claim authority over the local church elders. When they are allowed to teach false doctrine, it is the elders who are responsible (1 Peter 5:2<sup>xxiv</sup>). **They should take a stand and tell why the prophecy contradicts the Word of God.** I know that sometimes when they do so they are the ones who end up being expelled from the church, but that does not change their responsibility before God. We do not serve the Lord only if things turn out as we would like. We serve because Jesus is our Lord and Master.

*<sup>21</sup> I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality.* Revelation 2:21 The Lord brought conviction to her, but she would not listen. She refused to repent. She hardened her heart and decided that she was going to continue in her ways regardless of God's warnings to her. Her teaching of compromising with the flesh gave her power over others and she was not willing to let that go. It became her god.

This is the pattern of every backsliding soul. Something in the old nature finds a foothold (Ephesians 4:27<sup>xxv</sup>). Then they justify the sin. Then it is even glorified as something beneficial. The Spirit of God brings warnings. We see the consequences that this sin produces. Then we must choose whether we will go on serving sin or have a change of mind about its nature and the effects in our life. We turn back to God, or we make the sin our new god. The power she derived from her teaching became her new god.

Though the local shepherds would not act, the Great Shepherd will! *<sup>22</sup> Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, <sup>23</sup> and I will strike her children dead.*

Revelation 2:22 God's next action to save the church of Thyatira was to bring physical affliction. When those she had misled see it, they will have a chance to repent. The spiritual children who were born of her seductive teaching would die like the child of David and Bathsheba if they refused to repent (2 Samuel 12:14<sup>xxvi</sup>). In that age, they understood that sickness was often a warning or judgment from God. The Greek text does not mention sickness and is added to explain the word "bed." *Farrer comments, 'The punishment fits the crime—she who profaned the bed of love is pinned to the bed of sickness.' This is probably the way to take it, though some have thought that the klinē was the couch on which she reclined at a meal (she would be smitten as she engaged in idol worship), and others that it is a funeral bier.*<sup>xxvii</sup> Today we consider ourselves much too sophisticated to think illness is God dealing with us. I have seen sickness as spiritual discipline to turn people from sinful choices. I know some illnesses were the hand of God on the rebellious. That is not always the case, but it does happen. In one case, the timing was so obvious that everyone but the afflicted person could see it. Their heart was too hardened to even consider it.

God does not always judge in this life. That was one of the quandaries of the psalmist. Why do the wicked seem to prosper and the godly are often afflicted or struggling to survive? He says that it was not until he entered the sanctuary of God and considered their end that he understood (Psalm 73:16-19<sup>xxviii</sup>). God will balance the books. Sometimes He does it in this life so that others can be warned. The judgment on this woman was to cause those servants of Jesus who had followed her teaching to repent and see the truth.

*<sup>22b</sup> And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works.* Revelation 2:22b This judgment was to wake up the other churches that were compromising with immorality. It was to make the

body of Christ in Asia Minor aware that Jesus searches our minds and hearts (Jeremiah 17:10<sup>xxix</sup>). Jesus is identifying Himself with the God of the Old Testament who is called the One who searches hearts and minds (1 Chronicles 28:9<sup>xxx</sup>; Psalm 7:9<sup>xxxi</sup>). That is what is implied by those eyes like a flame of fire. He knows what is behind our actions. He knows what is really the god of our lives. He knows what we dedicate our thought life to. He knows what our heart longs for. He is just! He will give us according to our works because our works flow from our hearts (Matthew 19:27). If they were good works and from a heart filled with Jesus and love for Him, then He will reward us beyond our imagination. If our heart was dedicated to the things He created and we worshiped and worked for selfishness, then He will reward us with judgment for rebellion against our Maker (Romans 1:21-23<sup>xxxii</sup>). Putting loving gifts more than the Giver is evil. Every time I hear the expression, "It would mean the world to me!" I cringe. It is like saying, "It would mean everything to me." It is a declaration that we put the created things above the Creator. Everyone who does that eventually ends up empty and disappointed because created things will never fill the hole in our hearts. Only God is big enough! Only His love brings the satisfaction we were created to long for.

*<sup>24</sup> But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden.* Revelation 2:24 Jesus taught that there would be tares among the wheat (Matthew 13:30<sup>xxxiii</sup>). The church will always have in our midst those who serve other gods. We are told not to try to remove them. We cannot see their hearts. Of course, this does not apply to the false teachers. We are instructed to confront them. We are told not to tolerate evil, but in most cases, we cannot tell what is really in the heart. Only God can see that. And so, we have our imperfect church that is waiting for the day of our perfection when the tares are pulled and the wheat is fully ripe (1 John 3:2<sup>xxxiv</sup>).

There were those in this tolerant church who were faithful to the Spirit of God. They refused to compromise. Their increasing works of love, faith, and service were a sign of their true hearts' condition, people who loved Jesus with their all. They refused the temptation to learn the secrets of the deep things of Satan (1 Corinthians 14:20<sup>xxxv</sup>). The teacher may have been calling this the deep things of God, but Jesus calls it the deep things of Satan. They rejected the enticement of power, choosing rather to be satisfied with their Savior. Jesus did not need to add any other burden to them. They are yoked to Him, and their burden is light (Matthew 11:29,30<sup>xxxvi</sup>). He may have been referring to the expression in Acts that relayed the Apostles decision to put no other burden on the Gentile converts but to abstain from meat offered to idols and fornication (Acts 15:28,29<sup>xxxvii</sup>).

They only need to do one more thing, the thing we all need to do. *<sup>25</sup> Only hold fast what you have until I come.* Revelation 2:25 Hold tight to your faith and love for God and His glorious Son Jesus. Never give up or give in. Persevere! If the Lord had given that woman time to repent, she may have been a believer. But she did not hold fast to the end. The seduction of evil enticed her old nature, and she gave herself over to her desires. Desire conceived sin and when sin was full grown it gave birth to death (James 1:15<sup>xxxviii</sup>). Watch your heart (1 Timothy 4:16<sup>xxxix</sup>). Sin is seductive. It often comes in the wake of dissatisfaction with how things turned out and entices you to accept a compromise. One compromise leads to another. We justify it and make it out to be something spiritual, but in fact, we have talked ourselves out of the true faith because we did not get what our flesh desired (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12<sup>xl</sup>).

There is a parallel with Jezebel and Babylon in chapter 18. Both lead people spiritually astray with the motive of financial gain. Both are said to be immoral and guilty of fornication. Both are facing great tribulation and utter destruction. Both are given time to repent. And in both cases believers are called to separate themselves from them. Both are judged according to their works.

Jesus closes each letter with a promise to the conquerors, to the ones who do hold fast till His return. <sup>26</sup> *The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations,* Revelation 2:26 Remember when Jesus was tempted by Satan? One of the temptations was authority over the nations (Matthew 4:8,9<sup>xlii</sup>) It was not God's time or God's way, but Jesus will ultimately end up with authority over all nations. We are back to Psalm 2. In that psalm, God promises the Son the gift of all nations. <sup>8</sup> *Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.* Psalm 2:8 Jesus promises to give that authority to the conquerors who keep His works until the end as opposed to those who do her works (verse 22). His work is to believe on the Son (John 6:29<sup>xliii</sup>). His work is letting yourself be yoked to Jesus. His work is daily obedience to the Holy Spirit. Then, as the body of Christ, you will have authority over the nations of this world. The disciples were rebuked for fighting over that authority before Jesus was arrested (Luke 22:24<sup>xliiii</sup>). All we need to do is keep clinging to Him until the end. But that requires a daily fueling of the flame, a life lived in communion with Him. Brothers and sisters, this verse promises that if you endure, you will rule the nations.

<sup>27</sup> *and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father.* Revelation 2:27 The quote from Psalm 2 continues, but Jesus applies it to us as the body of Christ. <sup>9</sup> *You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.* Psalm 2:9 Jesus was given this authority at the resurrection (Matthew 28:18<sup>xliv</sup>). He will assign it to the conquerors. I believe that this refers to ruling over nations during the Millennial Kingdom. The meek will inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5<sup>xlv</sup>). But there is more.

<sup>28</sup> *And I will give him the morning star.* Revelation 2:28 It would be enough to be rewarded with authority over nations, but what is this that Jesus is promising? It is the same thing that He has promised the other church overcomers: Himself. In 22:16<sup>xlvi</sup>, Jesus calls Himself the morning star.<sup>xlvii</sup> At the end of each letter, He promises the ultimate gift of all. If we could grasp this, to know Him as we are known, undisturbed fellowship with the One who loved us to the point of death, we would be so fixated on living for Him each and every moment that there would be no need to ask us to hold fast till He comes. We would be clinging ever tighter.

<sup>29</sup> *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.* Revelation 2:29 Sadly this church in Pergamum did not have an ear to hear. During the second century another false prophet led the church into the heresy of continued revelation that eventually destroyed the church. It is a heresy that is rampant today, prophets claiming to speak for God without submitting to the judgment of the elders (1 Corinthians 14:29<sup>xlviii</sup>).

Blessed are those who hear. Do we hear the call to refuse to tolerate evil that leads others astray in our church? Do we hear the Spirit telling us to persevere in works that flow from the Spirit and to let them increase as time passes? Do we hear the Spirit tell us to hold fast till He comes? And do we hear Jesus' promise that if we do, we will rule nations and receive the ultimate prize of all, the glorious presence of Jesus, the bright Morning Star? May God give us grace to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches!

## Questions:

- 1 Go over the main point from the previous churches.
- 2 What is the sense from Jesus' description of Himself?
- 3 What were the good qualities of this church?
- 4 Why did Jesus use the name Jezebel?
- 5 Who should have confronted her? 6 Why may they not have done so?
- 7 Why wouldn't she repent? 8 What was going to happen to her? Why?
- 9 What did Jesus say to the believers that did not follow her?
- 10 What is the promise to the conquerors?

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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 2:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> "I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

### <sup>iii</sup> **Revelation 2:14-15 (ESV)**

<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. <sup>15</sup> So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

### <sup>iv</sup> **Acts 16:14 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.

<sup>v</sup> Jewish and Christian tradition equate the two titles as Son of God in Daniel 3 is Son of Man in Daniel 7.

### <sup>vi</sup> **Psalms 2:9-12 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." <sup>10</sup> Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. <sup>11</sup> Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. <sup>12</sup> Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

### <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> **Numbers 21:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

### <sup>ix</sup> **John 3:14-15 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

### <sup>x</sup> **Exodus 30:18 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> "You shall also make a basin of bronze, with its stand of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it,

### <sup>xi</sup> **Exodus 39:39 (ESV)**

<sup>39</sup> the bronze altar, and its grating of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils; the basin and its stand;

### <sup>xii</sup> **Revelation 2:2 (ESV)**

<sup>2</sup> "I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false.

### <sup>xiii</sup> **James 2:18 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

### <sup>xiv</sup> **Matthew 22:37 (ESV)**

<sup>37</sup> And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

### <sup>xv</sup> **1 Corinthians 13:3 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

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xvi **Matthew 20:28 (ESV)**

28 even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

xvii **Titus 3:14 (ESV)**

14 And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful.

xviii **2 Peter 1:8 (ESV)**

8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

xix **1 Kings 18:19 (ESV)**

19 Now therefore send and gather all Israel to me at Mount Carmel, and the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”

xx **Acts 15:29 (ESV)**

29 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.”

xxi **Acts 20:29-31 (ESV)**

29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; <sup>30</sup> and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.

xxii **1 Corinthians 14:29 (ESV)**

29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said.

xxiii **Luke 16:16 (ESV)**

16 “The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it.

xxiv **1 Peter 5:2 (ESV)**

2 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;

xxv **Ephesians 4:27 (ESV)**

27 and give no opportunity to the devil.

xxvi **2 Samuel 12:14 (ESV)**

14 Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child who is born to you shall die.”

xxvii Leon Morris, *Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 20, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1987), 75.

xxviii **Psalms 73:16-19 (ESV)**

16 But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, <sup>17</sup> until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end. <sup>18</sup> Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. <sup>19</sup> How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors!

xxix **Jeremiah 17:10 (ESV)**

10 “I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.”

xxx **1 Chronicles 28:9 (ESV)**

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.

xxxi **Psalms 7:9 (ESV)**

9 Oh, let the evil of the wicked come to an end, and may you establish the righteous— you who test the minds and hearts, O righteous God!

xxxii **Romans 1:21-23 (ESV)**

21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

xxxiii **Matthew 13:30 (ESV)**

30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.”

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xxxiv **1 John 3:2 (ESV)**

<sup>2</sup> Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

xxxv **1 Corinthians 14:20 (ESV)**

<sup>20</sup> Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature.

xxxvi **Matthew 11:29-30 (ESV)**

<sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

xxxvii **Acts 15:28-29 (ESV)**

<sup>28</sup> For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: <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."

xxxviii **James 1:15 (ESV)**

<sup>15</sup> Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

xxxix **1 Timothy 4:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

xl **2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. <sup>11</sup> Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, <sup>12</sup> in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

xli **Matthew 4:8-9 (ESV)**

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. <sup>9</sup> And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

xlii **John 6:29 (ESV)**

<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."

xliii **Luke 22:24 (ESV)**

<sup>24</sup> A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest.

xliv **Matthew 28:18 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

xlv **Matthew 5:5 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

xlvi **Revelation 22:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

xlvii It is interesting that in these letters there are parts of the Balaam story. Balaam predicted Jesus coming when he prophesied that a star would come from Jacob (Numbers 24:14-20).

xlviii **1 Corinthians 14:29 (ESV)**

<sup>29</sup> Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said.