

M O R E T H A N
CONQUERORS
A STUDY OF REVELATION

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT
BIBLE STUDY**

August 28, 2024

First Baptist Church ~ Covington, Louisiana

Waylon Bailey, Pastor

Revelation 1:8-11 RSV *The Church in Smyrna*

[8] "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life.

Smyrna was a rival of Ephesus on an arm of the Aegean Sea.

The church was possibly founded by Paul on his third missionary journey 53-56AD

Acts 19:10 This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

Polycarp, a disciple of John, may have been the pastor/bishop of the church at this time. (95AD). He was faithful unto death. He was burned at the stake 155AD. He refused to say "Ceasar is Lord."

Polycarp refused to reject Christ. He said, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he never did me any injury; how then can I blaspheme my King and my Savior."

[9] "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.

v.9 Extreme poverty. Christians were poor anyway, but becoming a Christian in Smyrna meant poverty, hunger, imprisonment and often death by wild beasts.

They were rich in spiritual possessions.

[10] 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.

v. 10 The devil's plan was to "tempt" the saints but the Lord's plan would be proving/trying them. Ten days is a definite full, but brief period. Be faithful even though you die.

[11] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who conquers shall not be hurt by the second death.'

v. 11 Even though believers may be put to death (the first death) they will not be hurt by the second death, meaning to be cast into the lake of fire when Christ returns. (Revelation 20:14)

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REVELATION 2:12-17 RSV *The Church in Pergamum*

[12] "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: 'The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.

[13] "'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; you hold fast my name and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

v.13 Center of emperor worship. Pergamum had a temple to Asclepius, symbolized by a snake – they thought of as Satan "Satan had free reign"

Antipas may have been the first Christian martyr in Asia. Jesus is also called "The faithful witness."

[14] 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, that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice immorality.

v.14 Balaam is found in Numbers Chapters 22-24

Jewish belief emphasized Balaam's teaching of immorality.

Like Balaam, the Nicolaitans were teaching the people to eat food sacrificed to idols and to commit immorality. Acts 15:20 shows these problems among the Gentiles.

[15] So you also have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

v.15 The Nicolaitans may have been prophet-teachers who were urging compromise with Roman values and Roman religion to gain social acceptance, a problem we face as well.

[16] Repent then. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth.

[17] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him 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 which no one knows except him who receives it.'

v. 17 White stones were greatly prized, emphasizing victorious living "white." Often contained the name of a deity.

These victorious ones would receive a new name written on the white stone.

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Revelation 2:18-29 RSV *The Church at Thyatira*

[18] "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.

v.18 Another church that "needs a house cleaning." Thyatira connected two valleys and had no natural defense. The Romans had a garrison there – It was a trading city.

[19] "'I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first.

[20] But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and beguiling my servants to practice immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.

v.20 Gentile practices included gross perversion of natural morality. This was common in the Gentile world. The apostles in Acts 15 asked the Gentiles to shun immorality.

*Jezebel was probably not the woman's actual name, but a figurative way of saying that they have a woman teacher as destructive as Jezebel had been in leading Israel astray.
(1 Kings 18:13,19; 21:1-16)*

Since this was a trading city, they had guilds of workers – wool, hides, potters, etc. Each guild had its god. To get ahead in the guild, the worker had to worship its god.

The prophetess (Jezebel) pretended to know the answer to the problem – to conquer Satan, you must know him. "The deep things of Satan." She, therefore, encouraged the worship and immorality of the guilds.

[21] I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her immorality.

[22] Behold, I will throw her on a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her doings;

[23] and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches shall know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve.

[24] 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 upon you any other burden;

[25] only hold fast what you have, until I come.

[26] He who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, I will give him power over the nations,

[27] and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received power from my Father;

[28] and I will give him the morning star.

v.28 The morning star was a gift suggesting freshness and purity – a gift the church desperately needed. In Revelation 22:16 Jesus is called the “morning star.”

[29] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'