

Rev 25-10-26a

Good morning, welcome to the Sunday morning services at Grace and Truth Bible Church. This is the 26th of October, 2025. We continue our study in the book of Revelation.

We are looking at the seven churches. We have come to the center of the chiasm at Thyatira. We will pick up there and move forward this morning.

Let's ask God's blessing on our time of fellowship and study, and we'll begin. Father, it is a wonderful assurance we have from you that it is not by our might or power but by your spirit that we accomplish the challenges and opportunities successfully through your word. And we are grateful for the example of the Lord Jesus Christ who has shown us the way to be faithful and obedient in the face of pressures and persecutions and hardships, difficulties.

We are grateful for this time of fellowship and encouragement. We thank you for each one who has taken time to fellowship with us and to share their enthusiasm for a relationship with you and a celebration of the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that as we look at this portion of your word together that God the Holy Spirit will bless it to each of our hearts, help us to see clearly its pertinence and application in our own circumstances so that we can think and speak and act in a way that pleases you, that glorifies the Lord Jesus, and that reflects godly service and function now and in the ages to come.

We ask it in Jesus' name, amen. As I said, we have been perusing these wonderful letters from the Lord Jesus to us, the servants of Christ, to show us things that will take place shortly. And in so doing, looking at these letters to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, and to Thyatira, we have seen an increasing reference to Satan and to those who do Satan's work.

So you will remember the synagogue of Satan in Smyrna. We already saw the deeds of the Nicolaitans in the Ephesian letter. When you come to Pergamos, we have seen the doctrine of Balaam, and we were looking at the doctrine of Balaam, and as we get into Thyatira, looking at that woman Jezebel and what she teaches, and it is the teaching that is at the core.

I cannot emphasize enough our responsibility to curate what we listen to and what we believe. If you are acquainted with, if you are related to, if you have converse and contact with believers in the United States of America in the present day, you know that persuasions can arise, convictions are formed, opinions are developed and expressed based on what people hear. And you can tell when someone is getting a one-sided presentation from a variety of different points of view.

It is not safe in this day if you want to analyze what's going on in the world, if you want to think a little bit about the alignment of current events with biblical prophecy and to do so in a balanced and intelligent way, do so in a way that doesn't reflect hilarity or undue excitement or that distracts from our personal responsibilities on a daily basis to operate in faith and hope and love, to not let our excitement carry us away and take time away from analyzing how we

should think, how we should speak and how we should act. We have to canvas the available information. It is dangerous, and let me repeat it for a third time, it is dangerous to let only one source be your information.

It is one thing in the realm of Bible teaching to have a messenger in a church. This is the Bible model as we've seen. The Lord Jesus holds those messengers in his hand.

That is not true of the news networks. That is not true of podcasts and videos and whatever other forms of input we may get. You can barely escape the news if you try to do anything online.

Somebody is throwing slanted news at you. If you use Microsoft products, you get the MSNBC slant when they try to put click bait news stories on your screen. You try to go do some work and here's somebody with a provocative headline.

You click it and you get spun news, heavily spun, filtered news. If you use Google and you want to Google the news, the algorithms at Google are not objective. You will not get a fair representation.

You will get what people with lots and lots of money who are interested in national elections and so on. Their spin gets reflected. The fix is in at Google.

My suggestion is find other search engines that you can complement or supplement. Again, most of us, we work, we have families, we have responsibilities, and we are to be moderate. We are to be balanced.

We're not to be driven by what's going on in the news. You don't want to be binge watching anything, whether it's entertainment, news, sports. We are not to be dominated.

Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess. Wine represents anything that can take us over and influence our judgment. There is wine in the news.

There's wine online. What is trending? What's going viral on one or another of the social media services? We are not to be controlled by anything. We saw this in Paul just within the last week.

I will not be dominated. I will not be controlled. All things are lawful, but not all things are edifying.

I will not be overcome by anything. And in this day and age with the rapidity with which news is reported from all over the world, it is easy to have our peace of mind affected, to have our priorities. We ought to be focused and concentrating.

We ought to be thinking about what God has put in our path by way of expression of the various spheres of love. I have one another love, first and foremost. I have neighbor love.

I have the general public love, and I have enemy love. They are different. They require thought.

They require prayer. They require the recycling of what we know from Scripture in our souls so that we live a life that pleases God and holds up at the judgment. What are these letters in Revelation emphasizing? I am walking among your lampstands.

I know your works. I know what you tolerate and what you don't. I know what you listen to and what you don't allow in your group.

I know your works, Jesus says. Every single church, I know your works. That should be a sobering reminder to us when we get up in the morning, when we stop in the middle of the day.

It's at a minimum we should do evening and morning and at noon. I will pray and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice. Psalm 55, 17, Daniel prayed three times a day.

Think about the milieu in which Daniel existed and the pressures and the challenges, the temptations, the persecutions that fell on him. Similar things are happening in these churches, and we should be diligent to be people of prayer. Pray without ceasing.

Cast your cares upon him. He is the Lord. He is the Lord.

He cares for you. In everything, by prayer and supplication, make your requests known to God, and the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Prayer, people of prayer.

There is no mention of prayer in these letters because it should already be known. The people in Ephesus, the apostle Paul, helped to found and establish that group. Timothy preached to that group under Paul's tutelage and direction.

The apostle John has labored in Ephesus. These people already know their basic Christian life skills. They are measured by their fruit.

How are they acting? So we've come now, and it's fascinating to me to look at the references, Old Testament references. These churches are not in Israel. This is not the Jerusalem church.

They're nowhere near Israel. They're not in Antioch or any place near. They're way up in Asia Minor, what is now Turkey.

Anatolia it was at one time. They're Gentile with a sprinkling of Jewish converts to Christianity. But Jesus refers to the Old Testament because the New Testament church is supposed to be familiar with the Old Testament scriptures.

Their messengers, their angels, their pastors are to be preaching the whole counsel of God. And at this time, the New Testament is still being formed and collected and recognized and disseminated. They don't have the printing press.

They can't go to their local bookstore and find a copy of the scriptures. So synagogues have the

great scrolls and there are those who read the law of Moses. Keep your finger of revelation.

Turn back to Acts chapter 15. This is very pertinent. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, right about in the middle, Acts chapter 15.

We've reviewed this in preceding weeks because it pertains to both Balaam and Jezebel. You remember that men came from Judea in the beginning of the chapter and taught the brethren, unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved. You cannot be a Christian.

Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them. Now this is a good and healthy and godly dispute. If someone is preaching a gospel that differs from the gospel delivered by the Lord Jesus and communicated through the apostle of the mystery, which is Paul, he is the apostle to the Gentiles.

The mystery that the Gentiles are going to be included, that there's going to be a new dispensation, that comes from Paul exclusively. He claims it. We've studied that when we were doing the books of Timothy.

So Paul says, you guys are wrong and there's no small dispute and dissension about it. This is healthy. Let's go to the scriptures, search them, see if these things are so.

So they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question. Here's a question for you. What is Paul's office? What is his authority? He is an apostle of Jesus Christ, right? How many apostles does it take to communicate a true doctrine that's been delivered by the Lord Jesus? Just one.

What's the problem with these certain men who come from Judea up into the Gentile regions where Paul and Barnabas have been laboring? You look in the preceding chapter 14, he's in Iconium, he's in Lystra, he's in Derbe and Antioch strengthening the souls of the disciples in verse 22, exhorting them to continue in the faith and saying, we must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God. They appointed elders in every church, prayed with fasting, commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. They passed through Pisidia, verse 24, they came to Pamphylia, they preached the word in Perga, went down to Atalia, from there they sailed to Antioch where they'd commended to the grace of God for the work which they'd completed and so on.

But men from Judea come. It doesn't say apostles, these are men from Judea. Now who has the authority to determine what is and isn't Bible truth? This is important because this is something we have to think about in our current day.

Who has the authority to say this is what should go on in the church? This is how we are going to strengthen the churches. This is how we are going to appoint elders who will faithfully reflect these truths, these teachings. They prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Notice, they prayed with fasting, they concentrated on the teaching and prayer to the exclusion of consuming regular meals. And they told them, we must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God. This isn't a path to a flowery bed of ease.

This is not a rose petal strewn path. Jesus said in this world you'll have tribulation. Paul and Barnabas tell the churches, there are going to be many tribulations.

Tribulation is kind of a main theme in Revelation, isn't it? Don't we think that it largely deals with a great tribulation, the great tribulation? Jesus is telling the people in Thyatira, when it comes to Jezebel, she's going to be cast into a sick bed and those who continue to commit fornication as she commits fornication are going to be cast into great tribulation. There is tribulation that improves, that takes the dross away from the silver, that allows impurities to be identified and removed. There is also tribulation that functions as discipline and judgment and is sent by God in an effort to cause repentance, change of mind, reverse course, reshuffle priorities.

But in chapter 15, men from Judea claim that Paul is doing it wrong. Paul is an apostle. These men are not apostles.

They may claim that they have come from Jerusalem, but who's running the Jerusalem church? James, the half-brother of the Lord. Is James, the half-brother of the Lord, an apostle? No, he is not. There are apostles present.

We're going to see that Peter is going to speak in Jerusalem, but how did this happen that James is speaking on behalf of the Jerusalem church as sort of an early version of a pope? This is the beginning of sorrows, if you will. So, they came to Jerusalem in verse 4, chapter 15 of Acts. They were received by the church and the apostles and the elders.

Notice, the church, secondly the apostles, then the elders. So the church has already come first instead of the apostles. So, they came to Jerusalem and they reported all the things God had done, but some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed these are Pharisees like Paul.

And they say, well, you know, Paul is doing this, but he's a Pharisee. Look, I'm a Pharisee and I say Paul's wrong. So now you've got another form of fallacy.

This is the credentialism that, you know, I've got a credential. I have a certificate. I've been through a training program, so therefore I am qualified to speak.

That is not God's program for authentication. There is a kind of anointing. There is a calling.

The kings in the Old Testament, the priests in the Old Testament were anointed by God. Apostles, the 12 genuine functioning apostles were called and commissioned by Jesus Christ Himself personally. Only 12, Judas of course having dropped out, Paul having come in, and so interesting the 12, 13, we've talked about this before.

You look at Israel and we say the 12 tribes, but there's actually 13 tribes because of the division of Joseph and you have Dan being left out by the time you get to our later passages of Revelation. There's going to be 12,000 from each tribe and both of the Joseph tribes are mentioned and Dan is left out, much like Judas ends up being left out and Paul ends up taking his place. Be that as it may, in verse 6 the apostles and the elders came together to consider the matter and you know this story.

Peter speaks up. He says, I was the one that God commissioned to first speak to the Gentiles and Simon has declared in verse 14 how God at first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name and so on. Peter rose up in verse 7. Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.

So God who knows the heart acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit just as to us, made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Good job Peter. Why aren't you overseeing the church in Jerusalem is my question.

Instead of being the Pope of Rome, which Peter never was by the way, he could have made a better start by ensuring that the church in Jerusalem didn't go astray, which it did. We believe through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they. The multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles.

God's authenticating miracles demonstrating the authority of the message just as so many biblical examples. When God gives a message, delivering my people out of Egypt, there are authenticating miracles. Moses, put your hand in your robe, pull it out, it's leprous.

Put it in again, it's whole. Water to blood and so on. These are authentications that the message is from God and is authoritative.

The men from Judea had no miraculous authority. They had no apostolic authority. There are already two strikes against them to begin with.

So, they end up saying, Peter says in verse 19, I judge we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, sexual immorality, things strangled, and from blood. All three of these things are specifically tied to the idolatry. Notice the order.

You've got four things mentioned here, right? Pay attention. Four is an important number in what we're looking at. We will write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols.

And you could almost put an EG here, for example. EG is the Latin abbreviation for I'm going to give you an example. Abstain from things polluted by idols.

What are things polluted by idols? Sexual immorality. This is the proper function of physical

intimacy in marriage that is polluted because of idolatry. Fornication, adultery, temple prostitution among the pagans and so on.

Sexual immorality, things strangled. This is food. It isn't saying don't strangle anything.

It's saying don't eat what has been strangled. And from blood, don't eat the meat with blood. This goes all the way back well before the law, back to what God says to Noah after the flood.

So, Moses has through many generations those who preach him in every city, verse 21. Moses, this is put for the law and the law is put for the entire Old Testament. The synagogues have got all of the Old Testament.

This is what is already being preached and is available in Gentile circles. So, when you get down to the letter that the Jerusalem church sends out, they're sending chosen men of their company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. So, they send Barsabbas and they send Silas.

And they wrote this letter, the apostles, the elders, and the brethren, to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. We've heard someone out from us troubled you with words unsettling your souls. You must be circumcised and keep the law.

We gave no such commandment. It seemed good to us being assembled with one accord to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have, therefore, sent Judas and Silas, that's Barsabbas and Silas, who also report the same things by word of mouth.

Seem good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things. This is what Jesus is emphasizing in Pergamos and in Thyatira. Abstain from things offered to idols.

And notice, that is first in both lists. It's first in verse 29, it is first in verse 20. But, the next three are now reversed.

So, James is speaking, starting in verse 13, and he says, I judge we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles. Write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols. Then he lists sexual immorality, things strangled, and from blood.

You get to verse 29, in the letter it says, abstain from things offered to idols, blood, things strangled, sexual immorality. So, you have a mirror image there, but the heading is, things associated with idolatry. So, we have to be careful.

That is the key to understanding these particular things. They don't talk about circumcision. They don't talk about the rest of the law of Moses.

They're not saying you don't have to worry about the Ten Commandments. Feel free to murder, and you know, covet, and take the name in vain, and fail to honor your parents, or any of the rest of that. What they say is, your problem, and this is what Jesus is doing in our letters, isn't it?

Your problem, specifically, is the incursion of your pagan past, and the idolatry that characterizes the Gentile world.

This is what you have to resist. This is what we are naming for you as your biggest threat. This is not the definition of spirituality.

This is what you've got to watch out for, or you're going to be overcome. You cannot be an overcomer if you don't identify and separate from these things associated with idolatry. Idolatry is the problem in Antioch.

Idolatry is the problem in Cilicia. Idolatry is the problem throughout the Gentile world. This is the big change.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me, speaks for the whole Ten Commandment list. And we've seen in these letters that what Jesus identifies in the churches speaks for a whole lot more. Back to Revelation chapter 2. In Pergamos, verse 14 of chapter 2, Jesus says, I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols.

The problem in the land to which Israel is going, and the lands through which they pass to get there, Moab and Midian and Edom and the rest, is idolatry. This is the threat. And this is what is going to undercut them.

Balaam stands and blesses them four times. He gives a total of seven oracles. Four of them are blessing on Israel.

Three of them are curses on their enemies. But it changes at the fourth oracle. Turn back to Numbers chapter 24.

The oracles began in the preceding chapter. And we saw that story. I'm not going to review it.

And the third oracle begins in verse 27 of that chapter. And you've got the seven bulls, the seven rams offered on the seven altars. And then in chapter 24, Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, so he did not go as at other times to seek to use sorcery.

He set his face toward the wilderness. Balaam raised his eyes, saw Israel encamped according to their tribes. The Spirit of God came upon him.

He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says. To Israel here, as well as to Balak, the king of the Moabites, you, I think, would be as interested as I in finding out how did these words that were spoken, apparently only in the hearing of Balak, the king of Moab, by Balaam, how did they end up in Moses' hands to include in the Scriptures? Somehow, somehow, there were scribes present. Maybe Balak brought somebody and wanted them to record the curses so that he could take them back and smile over them as Israel withered away in the wilderness.

Somebody wrote Balaam's words down. My guess, my speculation is, it's somebody from the

court of Balak who accompanied the king. He's not coming up there all by himself.

And he wants a record. He's paid a lot of money for these curses, and he wants them written down. And somehow, this Moabite record of Balaam's words finds its way into Moses' hands and becomes a part of the inspired Scriptures.

But, this is what the Spirit of God says. The utterance of Balaam, and it goes on, How lovely are your tents, O Jacob. This is the third oracle.

Blessed is he who blesses you, in verse 9. Cursed is he who curses you. And blessing and cursing is the whole issue in the Balaam story. The Balaam story is blessing and cursing.

Balaam is going to pronounce blessings from God on the mountain, but he's going to give the word to Balak on how to subvert, undermine, pollute, corrupt, defile Israel so that they are ineligible for the promises of blessing down in the valley. So, beginning with the fourth oracle down in verse 15, Balaam takes up his oracle. These are not accompanied by altars and rams and bullocks.

Beginning with Balaam's fourth oracle. If Balak, in verse 13, were to give me his house full of gold and silver, I couldn't go beyond the word of the Lord. Now, indeed, I'm going to go to my people.

Come, I will advise you what this people will do to your people in the latter days. Notice the change after the first three oracles. Starting with oracle number four.

Numbers are important in Scripture. This whole book is called Numbers. He took up his oracle and said, The utterance of Balaam, the son of Baor.

This is the fourth. He hears the words of God and has knowledge of the Most High. Sees the vision of the Almighty, who falls down with eyes wide open.

What a wonderful prophecy here, the fourth. No altars, no bullocks, no rams. I see him, but not now.

I behold him, but not near. A star shall come out of Jacob. A scepter shall rise out of Israel, batter the brow of Moab, and destroy the sons of Tumat.

Edom shall be a possession. Seir also, his enemy, shall be a possession, while Israel does valiantly. Out of Jacob one shall have dominion and destroy the remains of the city.

Messianic prophecy centered in number four. The star that comes out of Jacob. A unique individual of history is going to come, characterized by a star.

He is going to have dominion and he is going to destroy things that need destroying. Then you have oracle number five, beginning in verse twenty. You have oracle number six in verse twenty-one.

You have oracle number seven in verse twenty-three. When we do a detailed study of numbers one of these days, we'll flesh those out. I particularly have a lot to say about the seventh oracle, because I think it's been misunderstood.

But I don't have time to do that this morning. Back to Revelation. Looking at the letters to the seven churches, one thing you will notice, take a look at the first two epithets.

We've noted this before. The overcomer promise in verse seven is right at the end. The exhortation, he that has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Then you have the overcomer promise. Eat from the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God. You go to Smyrna.

Verse eleven, he that has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Very last thing to Smyrna, he who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death. Notice, he that has an ear, then the overcomer promise.

In the third, Pergamos. Verse seventeen, he that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches, to him that overcomes. The overcomer promise comes after the exhortation to listen to what the Spirit says.

Give him some of the hidden manna to eat. Give him white stone, on the stone a new name. When you get to Thyatira, there is a change.

Remember how Balaam's fourth oracle changes. Notice at the beginning, this is the only time in the entire book of Revelation that Jesus is referred to. He refers to himself as the Son of God.

That's how it begins. This says he, the Son of God, eyes like a flame of fire, feet like fine brass. Remember in the fourth oracle, he is going to come.

He is associated with a star that is going to smite the brow of Moab. He is going to destroy what needs destroying. Look at the end of this longest of the letters.

Verse twenty-five says, Hold fast what you have until I come. He who overcomes and keeps my works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations, rule with a rod of iron. They will be dashed in pieces like potter's vessels, as I have received from my Father.

I will give him the morning star. And then you have he who has an ear, let him hear. There is a change in the fourth oracle at the end of all the remaining letters you are going to get the overcomer promise, then the exhortation to listen.

Things change at the middle. Son of God, morning star, he is the lily of the valley, the bright and morning star, the fairest of ten thousand to my soul. This is a song I'm quoting lyrics from.

Interestingly, Dr. Criswell's devotional for today was about the Lord's promise to the nations. It was about the names of God. For its graphic, I posted one of those lists that shows all the

different names of God.

I Am, the Lord of Hosts, Yahweh's Sabaoth, and so on. It was all about names. But here, this name that Jesus chooses for himself is the Son of God.

And one of his names is the bright and morning star. And the other name is the morning star. When the morning star rises in our hearts, and so on.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. What is the application of this? I give you three points. Number one, do not neglect your Old Testament review.

God built the New Testament on the foundation of the Old. The New Covenant is built on the foundation of the Old. The Lord Jesus came in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, Old Testament promise.

He is the hope of Israel. He is the anointed one, the Messiah to Israel. You cannot understand the Lord Jesus in fullness without the Old Testament.

There is a widespread and growing neglect of Old Testament in the post-modern church today, in the cultural church that surrounds us. Read your Old Testament. Know your Old Testament.

The Lord Jesus is referencing the Old Testament in these final words to the church. You cannot understand it if you do not know who Balaam is. You cannot understand it if you do not know who Jezebel is.

You cannot understand it if you do not know what idolatry entailed in the Old Testament and why it was prohibited, why it is the first two commandments in the Ten. Two of the Ten Commandments are no other gods, no graven images. It is the point of the spear of God's will and God's word for all of His people, Old Testament and New, Old Covenant and New.

Don't neglect your Old Testament. Secondly, translate, decode this language because obviously it is about more than physical idolatry, physical sexual immorality, the physical eating of things that are offered to idols. We have got to look at our lives.

What is it I am consuming that is associated with satanic sources, with worldly viewpoint, with that which pulls at my old and fallen nature and seduces me into disloyalty? Seduces me into distraction and defection, apathy and indifference to that which should be first in my life. If it is the TV, discipline your time or unplug the thing. If it is the Internet, discipline your time or unplug it.

If it is excess in any area and our mind runs on it, our cravings drive us toward it, if people are preaching compromise with the world, that needs to be dealt with. You remember, and we emphasized this last time, it is the doctrine of Balaam, it is Jezebel's teaching and those who hold it. Purge people who speak satanic lies into the conversation.

Purge it out. Do not tolerate those who hold these doctrines. Do not allow this woman who

should not be a teacher in the first place, calls herself a prophetess.

No authority. Remember in Acts 15, they should not have even had to go back to Jerusalem. Paul is an apostle.

What Paul says goes. Paul should be able to say to these men from Judea, I've got apostolic authority and I'm telling you this is the message of the Lord Jesus. Read it and weep.

I don't need to go back and have a guy that is not an apostle write a letter. I can tell these people directly, I have a word from the Lord. We have a word from the Lord.

That is the authority in our lives. Not people saying countenance, sexual immorality. We will talk about that in the second session a little bit as we move forward.

But that's the second point. Number one, don't forget your Old Testament. Number two, identify that which Jesus is calling out in Pergamos and Thyatira especially.

We've already looked at ourselves in terms of Ephesus. We're already equipping ourselves to endure as they are to do in Smyrna. But Pergamos and Thyatira, it's the teaching.

It is the shifted view of what's good and bad, what's right and wrong, what's healthy and unhealthy that is accepted and tolerated in their midst. Got to cut that out. And thirdly, the motivation is the promise.

We want to be those who overcome. We want to be those who have the white stone and the new name written upon it. We want to receive the opportunity to serve and function in the future government that the Lord Jesus is going to head and to rule with Him, to be a part of it, to be useful.

He died to save us, not just to give us a good life, but so that we can serve and function now and in the kingdoms to come in a way that pleases His Father and glorifies the Lord Jesus. There is no other reason to be alive. There is no other objective to have.

All other objectives are to serve the goal of being body of Christ, reflecting Him, loving Him, appreciating Him, and listening to what He has to say. And this is what He has to say. I want to bless you, Balaam on the mountain.

I do not want to have to judge you and send a plague. Israel in the valley, Baal of Peor, women of Moab, doctrine of Balaam, we choose every hour of every day, am I qualifying myself and driving myself in the direction of receiving the promised blessings of God or am I being seduced, deceived, deflected, and persuaded away into divine judgment. Revelation is a book of judgment.

There is no getting around it. But it begins with the opportunity for blessing and here is where you are weak. Here is where you need to fix it.

That should be our goal. Let's pause here and take a break. When we come back we are going to move forward.

We have some amazing things to see as we move through Pergamos and Thyatira and get ready to look at Sardis.