

**SERMON:**

# **Revelation 3:1-13**

**The Letters to the Churches**

**Part 4**

# **SUMMARY STATEMENT**

**The Revelation of John is a Christocentric book that shows us the pattern of this world from Christ's first coming to His second coming.**

**John wants us to see the spiritual realities around us, to recognize the dangers that face us, and to know that God is going to win.**

**Revelation calls us, then, to wisdom, to perseverance, and to worship.**

## **REVELATION 3:14-22**

*<sup>14</sup>"And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation. <sup>15</sup>"I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! <sup>16</sup>So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. <sup>17</sup>For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.*

## **REVELATION 3:14-22**

*<sup>18</sup>I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. <sup>19</sup>Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. <sup>20</sup>Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. <sup>21</sup>The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. <sup>22</sup>He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"*

**Proposition:** The letters to the seven churches call us to see the dangers in the world around us, to embrace Christ, and to follow His command, loving His promise.

# THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS

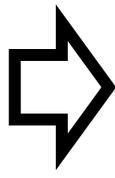
The Danger



Christ's Character



Christ's Command



Christ's Promise

Ephesus

Loving doctrine, not Christ

Christ, the lover and protector of the Church

Go back and remember Christ

Loving me will lead to eternal reward

Smyrna

Falling away during persecution

Christ, sovereign over life and death

Be faithful to Christ even to death

Faithfulness will lead to eternal life

# THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS

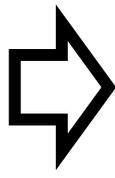
The Danger



Christ's Character



Christ's Command



Christ's Promise

Pergamum

Desiring to "fit in" with the world

Christ, the holy one

Repent and return to Christ

Endurance will lead to eternal joy

Thyatira

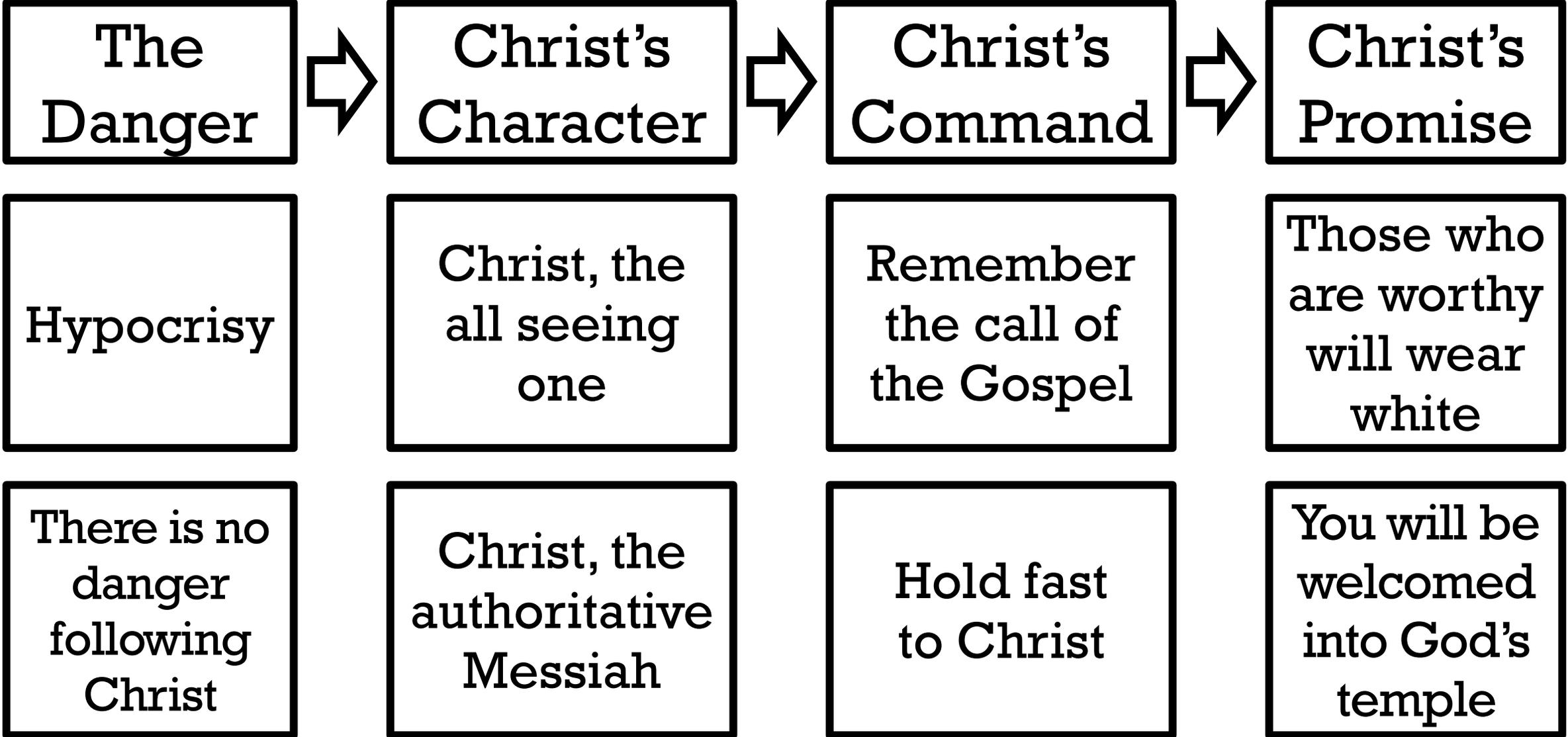
"Love" becoming tolerance for evil.

Christ, the purifier of the church

Rejoin love and holiness

You will reign with Christ

# THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



**Proposition:** The letters to the seven churches call us to see the dangers in the world around us, to embrace Christ, and to follow His command, loving His promise.

A. To the Church in Laodicea:  
the danger of plenty

B. To the Church at Gloria Deo:  
how do we face these dangers?

C. Summary and Review  
what do the seven letters teach us?

**TO THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA**

The Danger of Plenty

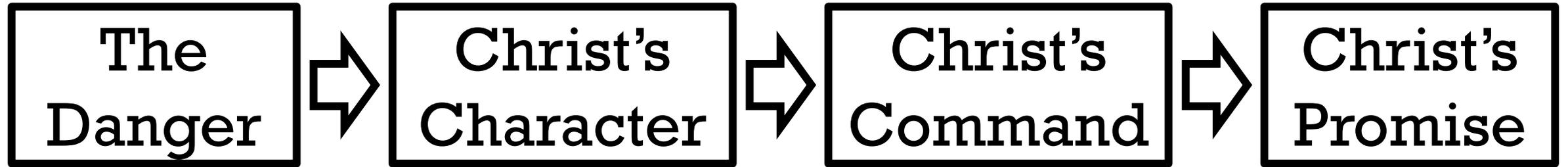
## **REVELATION 3:14-22**

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# **THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS**



They had become tepid and complacent

## REVELATION 3:14-16

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## **MATTHEW 5:13-16**

*<sup>13</sup>"You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.*

*<sup>14</sup>"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

## REVELATION 3:17-20

They loved the world and that love had pushed out love for Christ

*17 For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.*

*18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. 19 Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*

# I JOHN 2:15-17

*<sup>15</sup>Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup>For all that is in the world---the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions---is not from the Father but is from the world. <sup>17</sup>And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.*

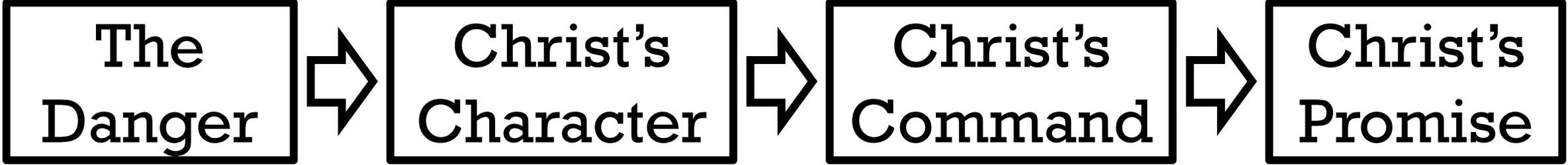
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They had lost the flavor of Christ and had become useless,  
soon to be spat out

# THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



Laodicea

Loving the wealth of this world excluded love for Christ

## REVELATION 3:14

*<sup>14</sup>And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.*

The beginning of God's re-creation

## REVELATION 1:4-5

*Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.*

**COLOSSIANS 1:15-20** **The beginning of God's creation:  
Christ is the undisputable ultimate good!**

*<sup>15</sup>He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.*

*<sup>16</sup>For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities---all things were created through him and for him.*

*<sup>17</sup>And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

*<sup>18</sup>And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be*

*preeminent. <sup>19</sup>For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to*

*dwell, <sup>20</sup>and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*

# **JOHN 17:13**

The faithful and true witness:

Jesus came to show us ultimate joy in Him!

*<sup>13</sup>But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*

## II CORINTHIANS 1:18-20

*<sup>18</sup>As surely as God is faithful, our word to you has not been Yes and No. <sup>19</sup>For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No, but in him it is always Yes. <sup>20</sup>For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.*

The Amen:

Jesus came to fulfil all of God's promise!

# REVELATION 3:14

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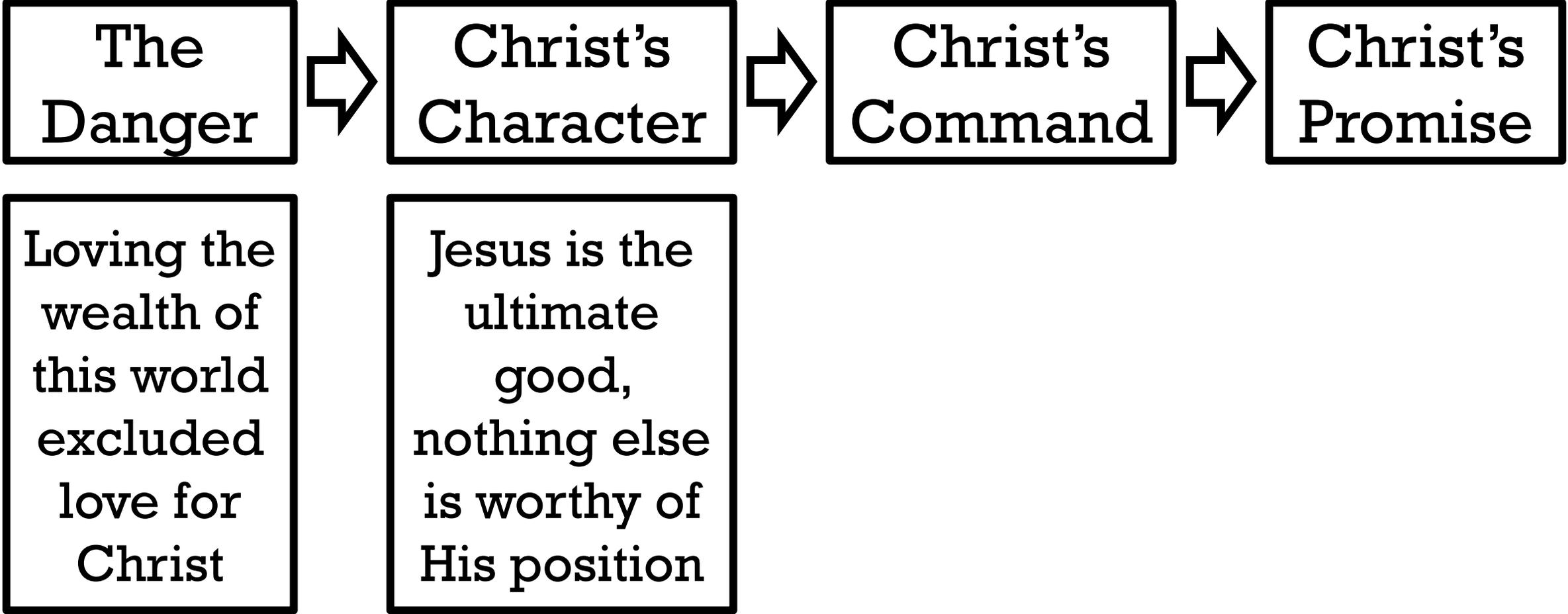
Jesus is the ultimate good and came to give us ultimate good

Only a fool would trade the joys of Christ for the futile, fleeting pleasures of this world

## **HEBREWS 12:23-26**

*<sup>23</sup>By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. <sup>24</sup>By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, <sup>25</sup>choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. <sup>26</sup>He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.*

# THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



Laodicea

Loving the wealth of this world excluded love for Christ

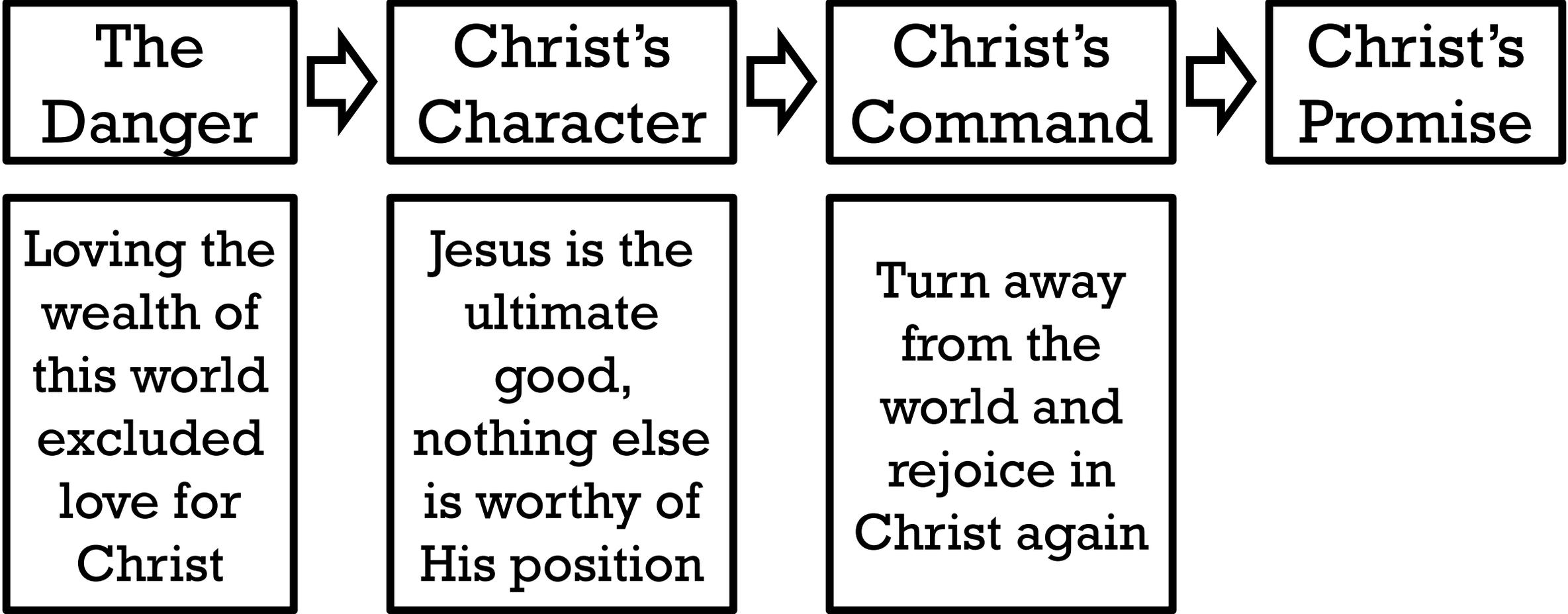
Jesus is the ultimate good, nothing else is worthy of His position

## REVELATION 3:18-20

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1. Recognize that I have riches
2. Repent of seeking other things
3. Welcome Jesus again

# THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



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# **JESUS' PROMISES:**

1. Jesus has what you need and what will satisfy you

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# **JESUS' PROMISES:**

- 1. Jesus has what you need and what will satisfy you**
- 2. Jesus won't let those who are truly His finally love the things of this world**

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- 3. Jesus will never disappoint those who make Him their joy**

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# **JESUS' PROMISES:**

- 1. Jesus has what you need and what will satisfy you**
- 2. Jesus won't let those who are truly His finally love the things of this world**
- 3. Jesus will never disappoint those who make Him their joy**
- 4. Jesus turned away from the base promises of this world and inherited an immeasurable reward, and He promises to share that with those who follow Him**

# THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS

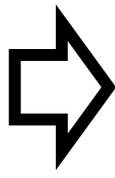
The Danger



Christ's Character



Christ's Command



Christ's Promise

Laodicea

Loving the wealth of this world excluded love for Christ

Jesus is the ultimate good, nothing else is worthy of His position

Turn away from the world and rejoice in Christ again

If you come back to me, I will be your joy

## **MATTHEW 4:1-11**

*<sup>1</sup>Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup>And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. <sup>3</sup>And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread."  
<sup>4</sup>But he answered, "It is written, ""Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."" <sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple <sup>6</sup>and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you," and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'"*

## **MATTHEW 4:1-11**

*<sup>7</sup>Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" <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." <sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'" <sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.*

**TO THE CHURCH AT GLORIA DEO**

How do we face these dangers?

# **LOVING THE THINGS OF THE WORLD**

- A danger that occurs when we have plenty of the world's goods, when life is easy and things are plentiful
  - A danger that Americans should take very seriously – the American Dream is the epitome of this danger

## **MATTHEW 19:23-24**

*<sup>23</sup>And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>24</sup>Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."*

# **LOVING THE THINGS OF THE WORLD**

- A danger that occurs when we have plenty of the world's goods, when life is easy and things are plentiful
  - A danger that Americans should take very seriously – the American Dream is the epitome of this danger
- A danger that could look like:
  - Liking the things of this world too much
  - Letting our love for the things of this world cloud or distract our hope and desire for the things of heaven
  - Being afraid to lose the things we have acquired in this world
  - Finding our pride and joy in our worldly possessions

# **LOVING THE THINGS OF THE WORLD**

- How do we guard ourselves from this?
  - Focus on Christ → He is worth infinitely more than all this world combined

## COLOSSIANS 3:1-4

*<sup>1</sup>If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup>For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

# LOVING THE THINGS OF THE WORLD

- How do we guard ourselves from this?
  - Focus on Christ → He is worth infinitely more than all this world combined
  - Rejoice in heavenly wealth → our desire should be for the riches of heaven, not the riches of earth

## **MATTHEW 13:44-46**

*44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

*45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, <sup>46</sup>who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*

# LOVING THE THINGS OF THE WORLD

- How do we guard ourselves from this?
  - Focus on Christ → He is worth infinitely more than all this world combined
  - Rejoice in heavenly wealth → our desire should be for the riches of heaven, not the riches of earth
  - Don't build kingdoms in this world → storing up treasure in this world is simply dangerous, it will always tempt you to love it

## **MATTHEW 6:19-21**

*<sup>19</sup>"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, <sup>20</sup>but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

# LOVING THE THINGS OF THE WORLD

- How do we guard ourselves from this?
  - Focus on Christ → He is worth infinitely more than all this world combined
  - Rejoice in heavenly wealth → our desire should be for the riches of heaven, not the riches of earth
  - Don't build kingdoms in this world → storing up treasure in this world is simply dangerous, it will always tempt you to love it
  - Be radically generous → divest yourself of this world by investing in the kingdom of God

## I TIMOTHY 6:17-19

*<sup>17</sup>As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. <sup>18</sup>They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, <sup>19</sup>thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.*

## **MATTHEW 19:21**

*<sup>21</sup>Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."*

## **LUKE 12:32-34**

*<sup>32</sup>"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup>Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. <sup>34</sup>For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

## **SUMMARY AND REVIEW**

What do the seven letters teach us?

# THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS

The Danger



Christ's Character



Christ's Command



Christ's Promise

Ephesus

Loving doctrine, not Christ

Christ, the lover and protector of the Church

Go back and remember Christ

Loving me will lead to eternal reward

Smyrna

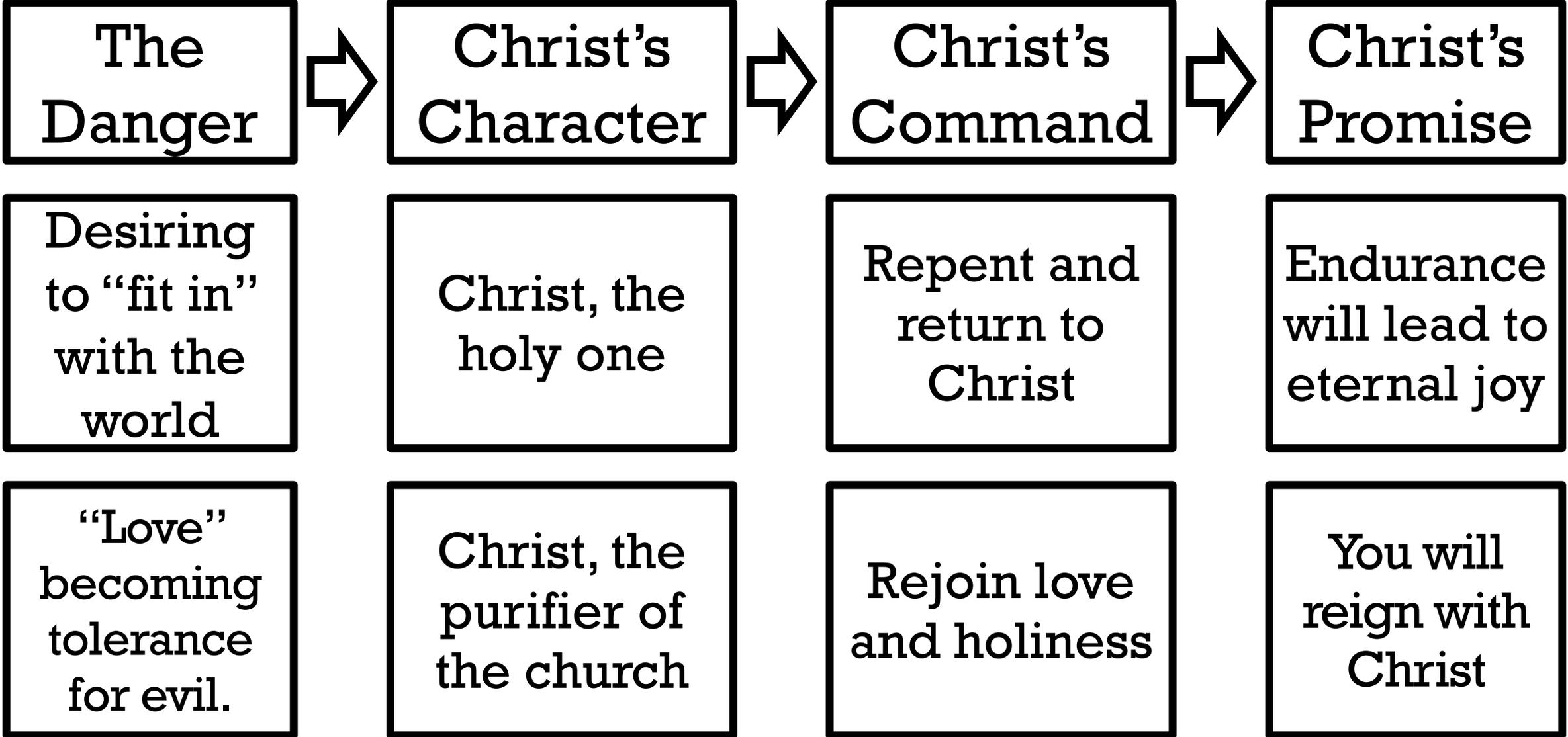
Falling away during persecution

Christ, sovereign over life and death

Be faithful to Christ even to death

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# THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



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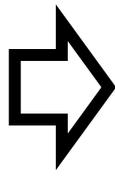
The Danger



Christ's Character



Christ's Command



Christ's Promise

Sardis

Hypocrisy

Christ, the all seeing one

Remember the call of the Gospel

Those who are worthy will wear white

Philadelphia

There is no danger following Christ

Christ, the authoritative Messiah

Hold fast to Christ

You will be welcomed into God's temple

# THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS

The Danger



Christ's Character



Christ's Command



Christ's Promise

Laodicea

Loving the wealth of this world excluded love for Christ

Jesus is the ultimate good, nothing else is worthy of His position

Turn away from the world and rejoice in Christ again

If you come back to me, I will be your joy

# THE MAIN POINT OF THE SEVEN LETTERS

Thyatira underemphasize doctrine



Ephesus overemphasize doctrine



Ephesus forgetting to love



Thyatira overemphasize "love"



Ephesus **THE WORLD** focus on defeating the world



Thyatira **THE WORLD** give up and join the world



Smyrna fearing persecution



Laodicea avoiding persecution



T  
R  
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L  
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Thyatira  
Ephesus  
Ephesus  
Smyrna

Ephesus  
Thyatira  
Laodicea

# THE MAIN POINT OF THE SEVEN LETTERS

Thyatira underemphasize doctrine



Ephesus overemphasize doctrine



Ephesus forgetting to love



Thyatira overemphasize "love"



**THE WORLD** focus on defeating the world



**THE WORLD** give up and join the world



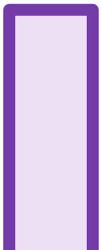
Smyrna fearing persecution



Laodicea avoiding persecution



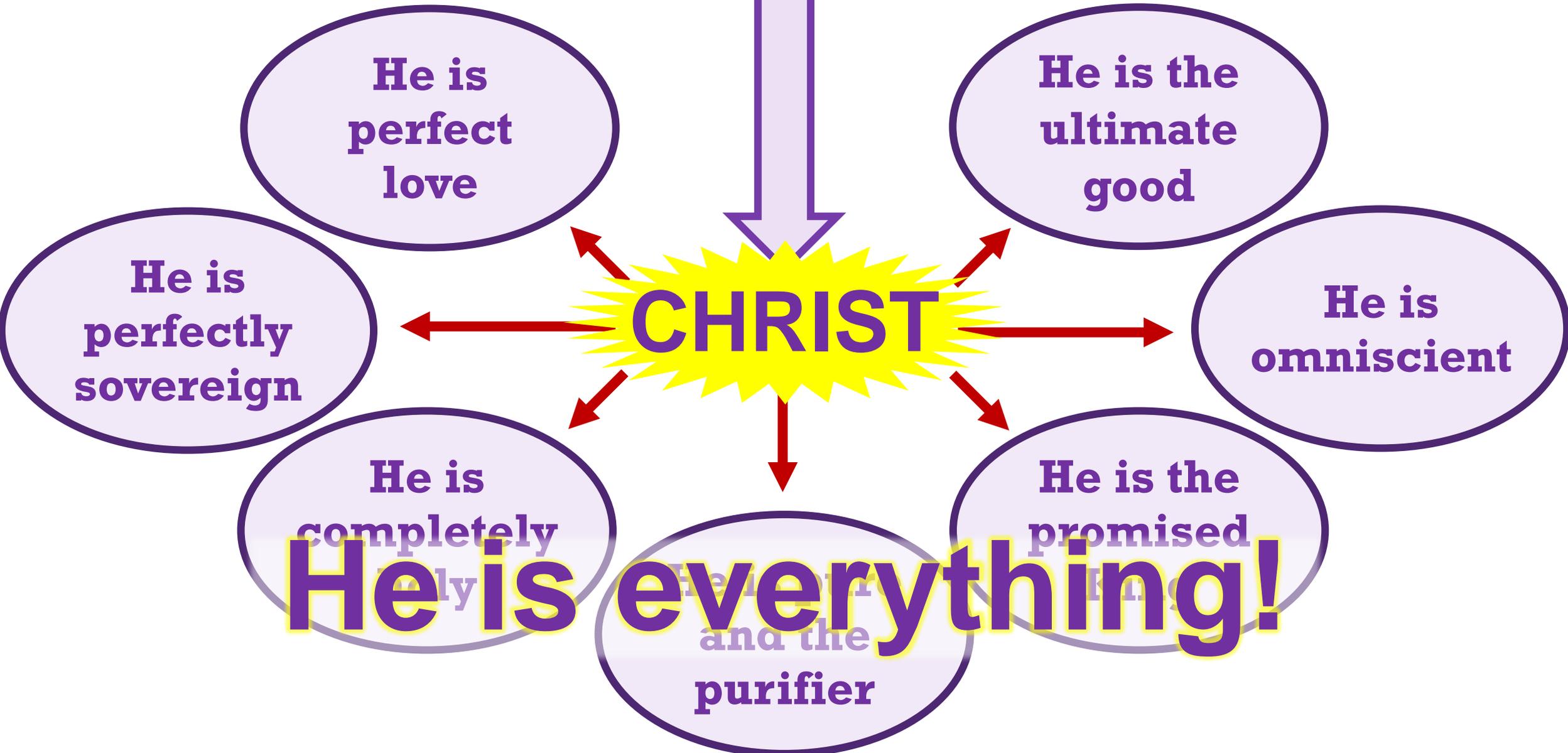
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Thyatira  
Ephesus  
Ephesus  
Smyrna

Ephesus  
Thyatira  
Laodicea

# THE MAIN POINT OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



**KIDS' QUESTION:**

**HOW DO WE DEFEAT THE  
DANGERS OF THIS WORLD?**

**By keeping our eyes on Christ,**  
following His command and loving His promise.