

SERMON:

Revelation 2:12-29

The Letters to the Churches

Part 2

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 2:12-29

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REVELATION 2:12-29

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REVELATION 2:12-29

²²Behold, 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, ²³and I will strike her children dead. 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.

²⁴But 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. ²⁵Only hold fast what you have until I come.

REVELATION 2:12-29

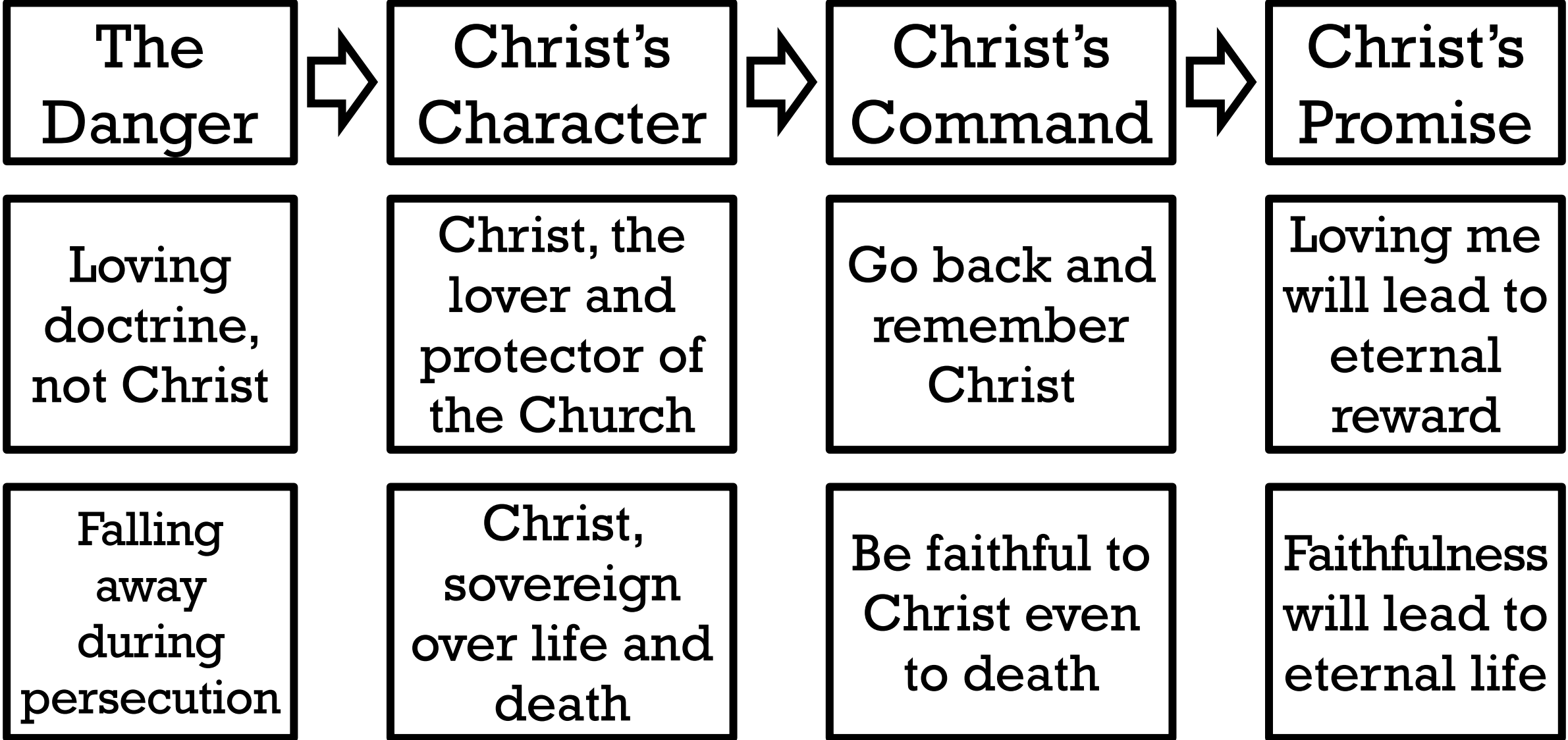
²⁶The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, ²⁷and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. ²⁸And I will give him the morning star. ²⁹He who 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

- An introduction that highlights an aspect of Christ from chapter 1
- A warning about a danger that the church is going to face, something that could draw them away from Christ
- A command from Christ to resist the world's call
- A promise from Christ to those who overcome

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 Pergamum:
the danger of “fitting in” (syncretism)
- B. To the Church in Thyatira:
the danger of unguarded love
- C. To the Church at Gloria Deo:
how do we face these dangers?

TO THE CHURCH IN PERGAMUM

The Danger of “Fitting In”

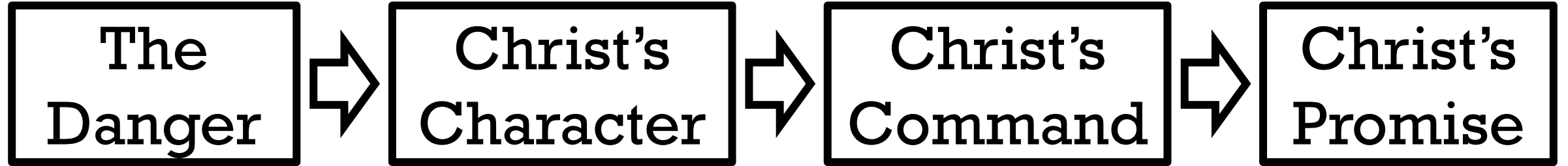
REVELATION 2:12-17

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THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



REVELATION 2:12-15

What is the teaching of Balaam?

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NUMBERS 31:13-16

What was Balaam's advice?

¹³Moses and Eleazar the priest and all the chiefs of the congregation went to meet them outside the camp. ¹⁴And Moses was angry with the officers of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, who had come from service in the war. ¹⁵Moses said to them, "Have you let all the women live? ¹⁶Behold, 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.

NUMBERS 25:1-5 When Balaam couldn't curse Israel, he encouraged the Moabites to tempt Israel to join them

¹While Israel lived in Shittim, the people began to whore with the daughters of Moab. ²These invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. ³So Israel yoked himself to Baal of Peor. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel. ⁴And the LORD said to Moses, "Take all the chiefs of the people and hang them in the sun before the LORD, that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel." ⁵And Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Each of you kill those of his men who have yoked themselves to Baal of Peor."

REVELATION 2:12-15

Tempted to join in with the world,
not staying separate to God

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. 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. ¹⁴But 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. ¹⁵So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

REVELATION 2:12-15

They were (severely) persecuted for being different, for not fitting in

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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

REVELATION 2:12

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

REVELATION 1:16

¹⁶In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

HEBREWS 4:11-13

¹¹Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. ¹²For 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. ¹³And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

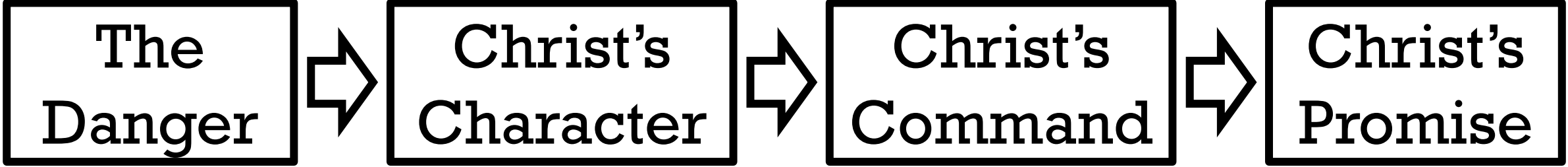
REVELATION 2:12

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

Jesus' Word cleaves holiness from unholiness, cleanness from uncleanness

If Jesus so 'violently' distinguishes between the holy, and the unholy, then we cannot mix the two and believe it is ok, we cannot participate with the world

THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



Pergamum

Desiring to "fit in" with the world

Christ, the holy one

REVELATION 2:16-17

16 Therefore repent. 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.

Conforming to the world to alleviate persecution
puts you on the wrong side of Christ's sword

So we should be on guard against syncretism, against just going along with the world sometimes, and if we find ourselves going along, we must repent and run back to Christ

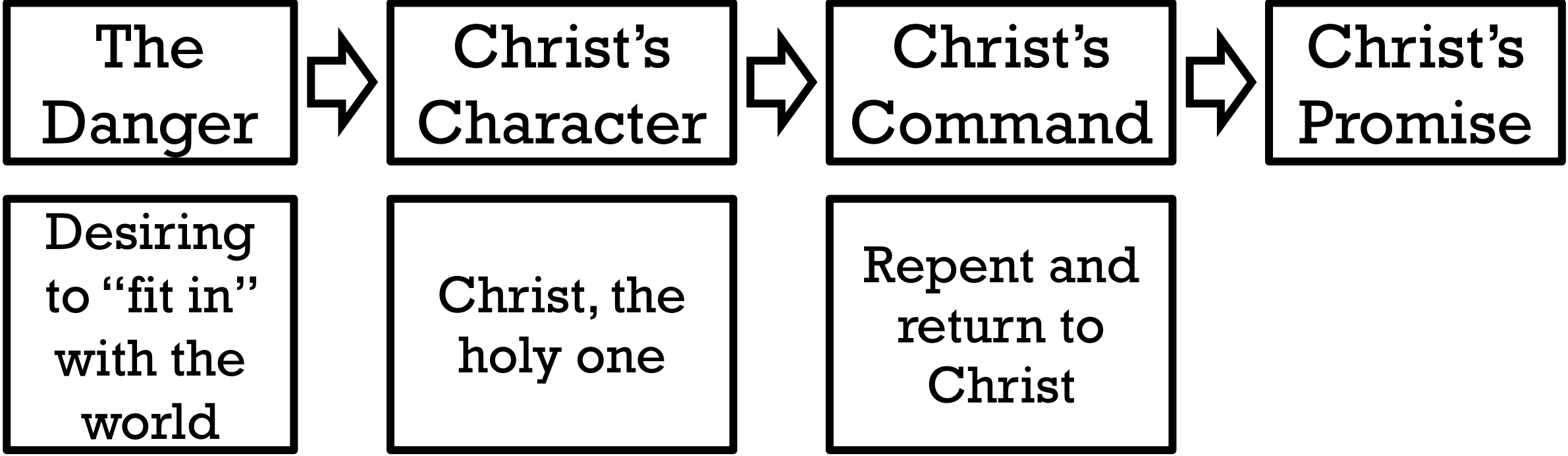
ROMANS 12:2

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the
renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the
will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

EPHESIANS 5:5-10

⁵For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not become partners with them; ⁸for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



Pergamum

The Danger

Christ's Character

Christ's Command

Christ's Promise

Desiring to "fit in" with the world

Christ, the holy one

Repent and return to Christ

REVELATION 2:17

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.'

Manna: sustenance in the wilderness – Jesus promises that He will give the power to endure if we reject the world

White stone: a victor's reward and invitation to the victory banquet – Jesus promises that the one who endures will be invited to the final victory feast

A new name: ??? – at the least this suggests intimacy and ownership – (perhaps) Jesus promises that the one who endures will belong to Him

THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS

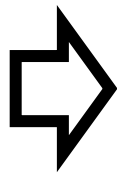
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Repent and
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Christ

Endurance
will lead to
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TO THE CHURCH IN THYATIRA

The Danger of Unguarded Love

REVELATION 2:12-29

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. ¹⁹'I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. ²⁰But 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. ²¹I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality.

REVELATION 2:12-29

²²Behold, 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, ²³and I will strike her children dead. 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.

²⁴But 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. ²⁵Only hold fast what you have until I come.

REVELATION 2:12-29

²⁶The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, ²⁷and 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. ²⁸And I will give him the morning star. ²⁹He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

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

REVELATION 2:18-21

Love had morphed into tolerance, and was no longer in harmony with holiness

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"Love" becoming tolerance for evil.

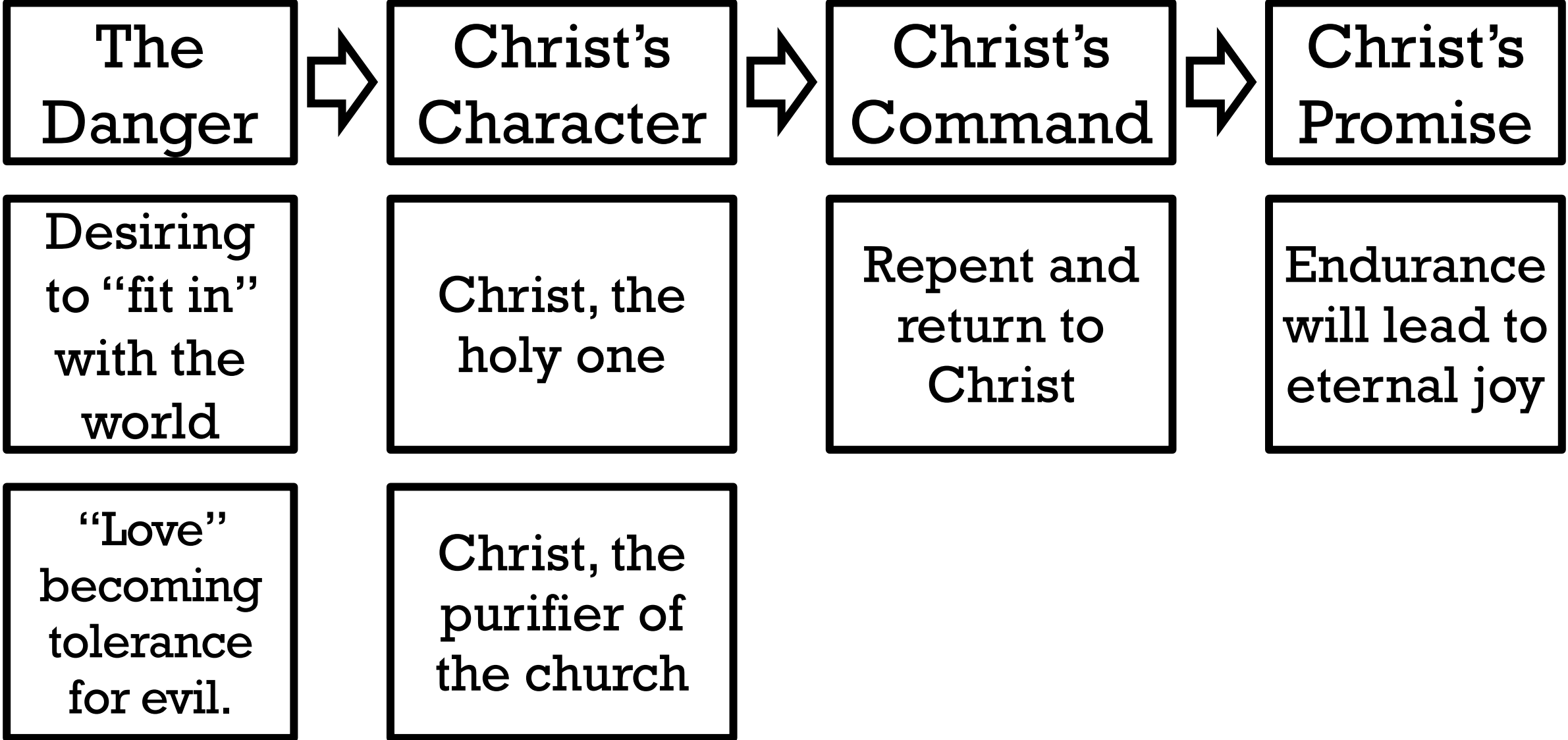
REVELATION 2:18

¹⁸And 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 1:14-15

¹⁴The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters.

THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



Pergamum

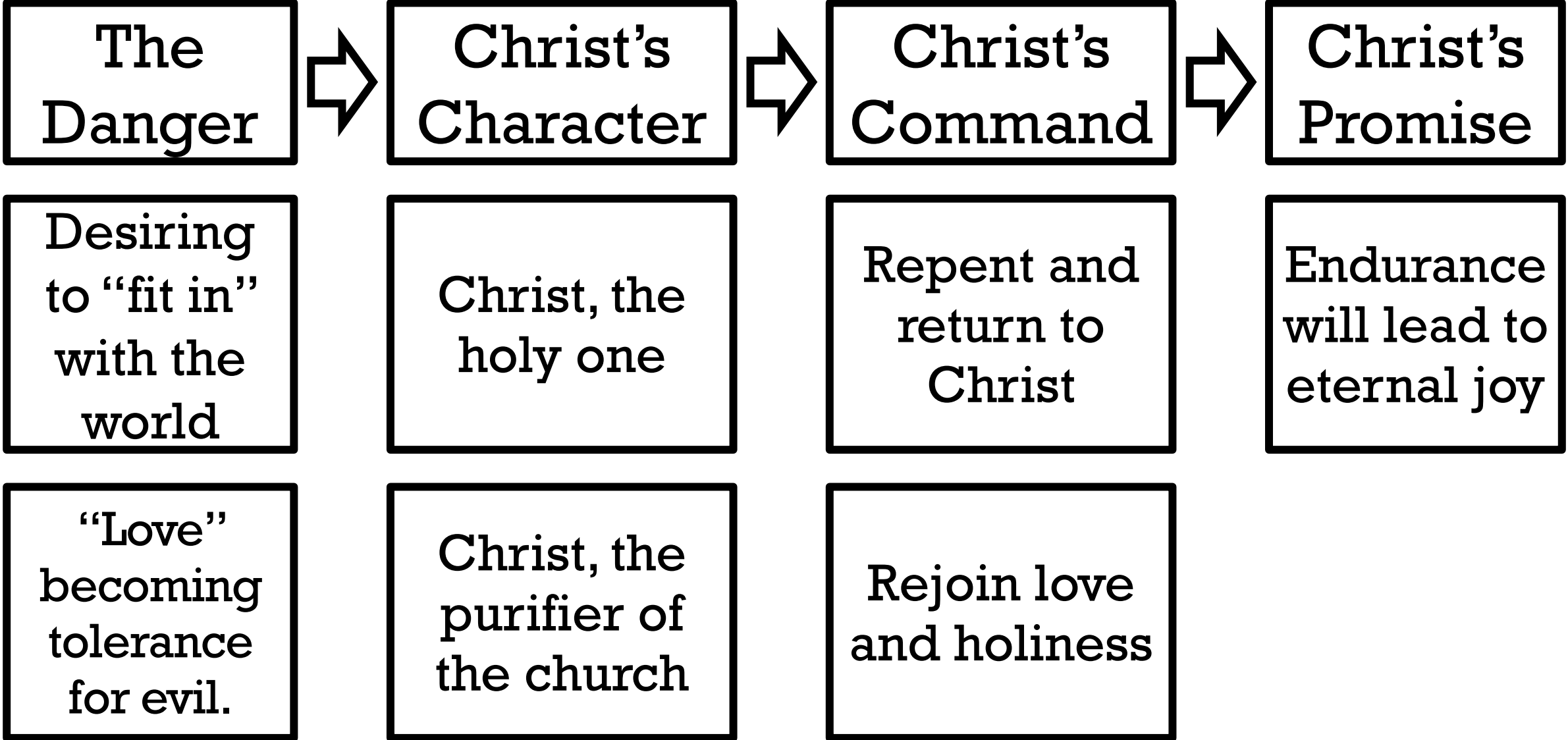
Thyatira

REVELATION 2:22-25

22 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, 23 and I will strike her children dead. 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.

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 on you any other burden. 25 Only hold fast what you have until I come.

THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



REVELATION 2:26-29

26The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, 27 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. 28And I will give him the morning star. 29He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

PSALM 2:7-12

⁷I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you.

⁸Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

⁹You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

¹⁰Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth.

¹¹Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling.

¹²Kiss 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.

REVELATION 22:16

¹⁶"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."

REVELATION 2:26-29

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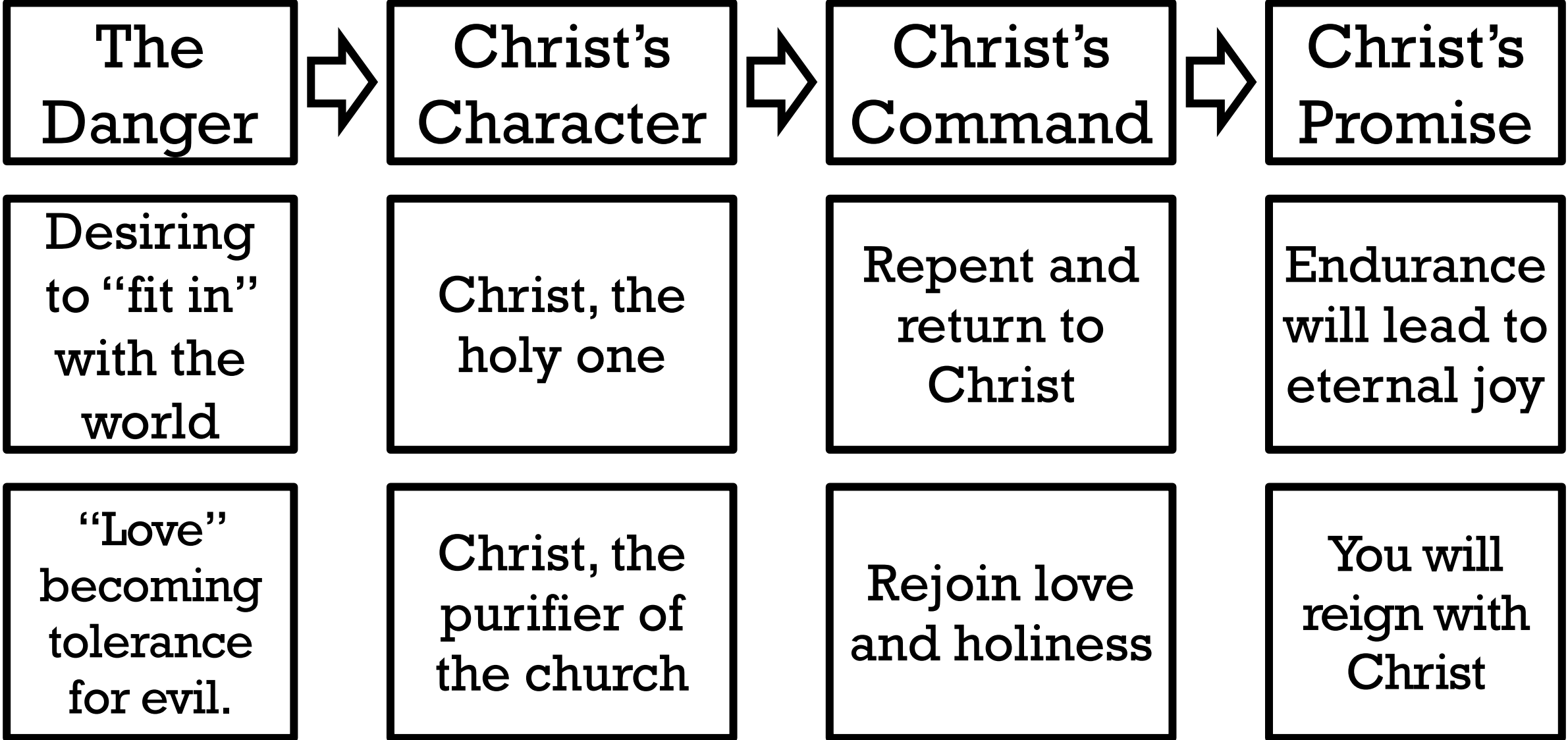
To those who reject the allure of this world, Jesus promises:

That the whole earth will be their inheritance

That they will reign with Him

That He will be theirs forever

THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



TO THE CHURCH AT GLORIA DEO

How do we face these dangers?

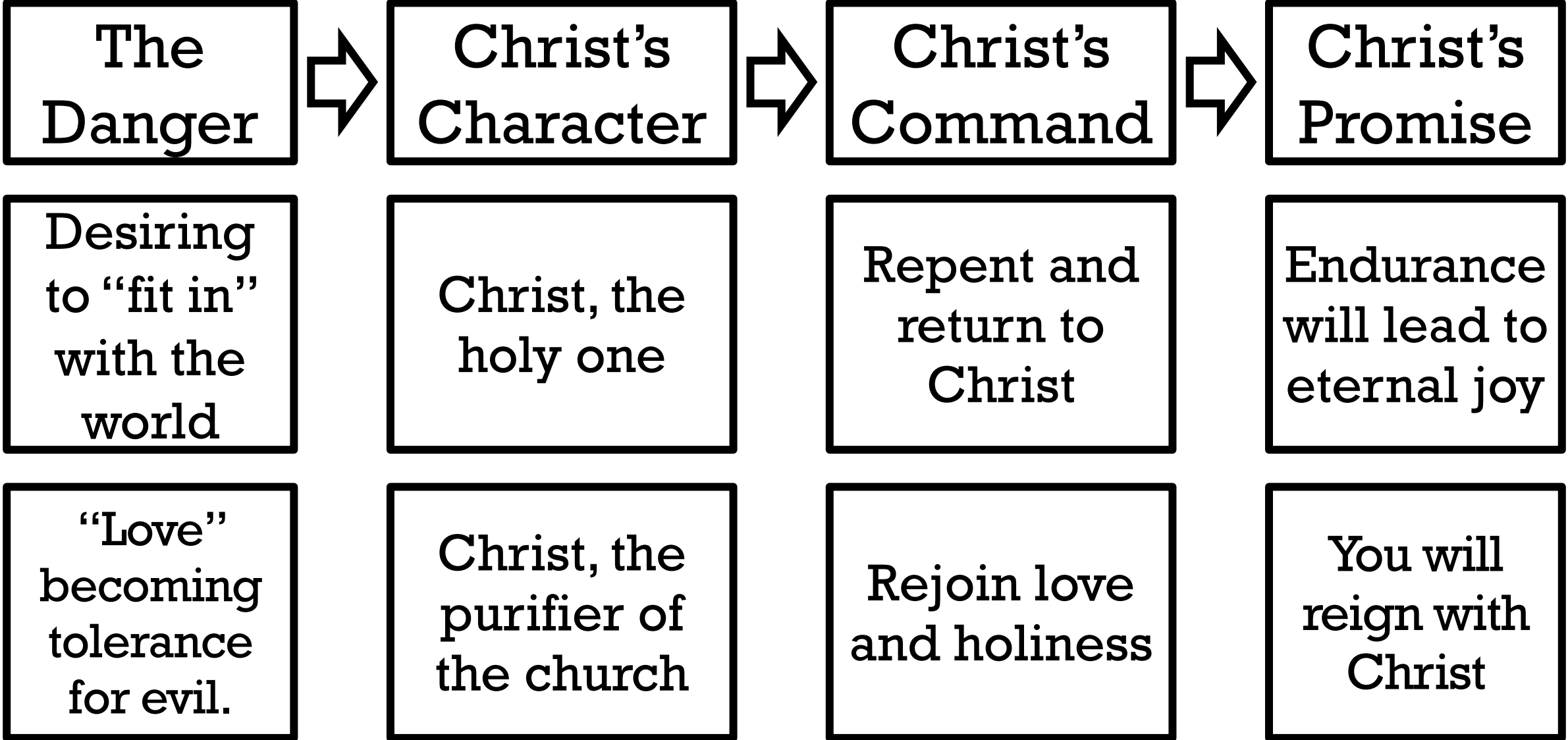
REVELATION 2:17

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REVELATION 2:29

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THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS



DESIRING TO FIT IN THE WITH WORLD

- **A danger that intensifies as the world rejects us as different and persecutes us**
- **A danger that could look like:**
 - **Trying to hide the fact that we belong to Christ**
 - **Doing things just to fit in with those around us**
 - **Being ok with things because everyone else is doing them**
 - **Caring more about what others think of me than what God thinks of me**

DESIRING TO FIT IN THE WITH WORLD

- **How do we guard ourselves from this?**
 - **Remember that Jesus has a sword that distinguishes holiness and unholiness – and that He has given that sword to us in His Word!**
 - **Remind each other that being different than the world is good! We are a separate people, holy to the Lord our God, and we are looking for His eternal joy.**
 - **Find your community hear in the church where together we can run after the commands of Christ**

“LOVE” BECOMING A TOLERANCE FOR EVIL

- A danger that appears when we forget the holiness of God and exalt “love” separated from God’s character
- A danger that could look like:
 - Pretty much everything in the world around us – this is the prevailing wind of our culture currently

“LOVE” BECOMING A TOLERANCE FOR EVIL

- How do we guard ourselves from this?
 - Remember that God is holy and His holiness cannot be separated from His love
 - Remember that Christ died to purify the church, not to allow the church to look exactly like the world
- Be encouraged – to those who don't embrace 'tolerance', on them Christ has laid no other burden

THE PATTERN OF THE SEVEN LETTERS

Heed

Embrace

Follow

Love

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

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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

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 Pergamum:
the danger of “fitting in” (syncretism)
- B. To the Church in Thyatira:
the danger of unguarded love
- C. To the Church at Gloria Deo:
how do we face these dangers?

KIDS' QUESTION:

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

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