



MESSAGE NOTES

PRACTICAL TEACHING FOR EVERYDAY LIVING

Title: **Tale of Two Cities**
Text: Revelation 21:1-4
Speaker: **Rob Songer** Date: **August 23, 2026**

Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (Re 21:1–4).

This passage reminds that there is a day coming when the Lord will make everything right. No more death or mourning or crying or pain. God will wipe every tear from our eyes. But in the meantime we find ourselves surrounded by a world and a culture that doesn’t always reflect that hope.

John describes **two cities that were radically different**, but occupying the same space. Those two cities were Babylon and The City of God.

In John’s letter to those 7 churches, Babylon was code for Rome.

Babel and Babylon became synonymous with human arrogance and rebellion against God.

“Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
Mark 10:42–45

The warning from the Lord to the 7 churches was given because they were being shaped, being disciplined by the culture.

- **Ephesus** – What do you notice? _____
 - “Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first.” Revelation 2:4
- **Pergamum** and **Thyatira** - What do you notice? _____
 - -“Nevertheless, I have a few things against you”...among them false teaching and sexual immorality, “Therefore, repent! Revelation 2:14,16

- **Sardis**, What do you notice? _____
 - “I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up!” Revelation 3:1-2
- **Laodicea** – What do you notice? _____
 - “I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.” And then, “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.” Revelation 3:15, 16, 20

We are living in a **temporary kingdom** but are citizens of the eternal Kingdom.

- *Are there any areas in our lives where, like it was in Ephesus, we love, but not like we use to? What could we do to turn that around?*

- *Are there any areas in our lives where, like in Pergamum and Thyatira, we’re doing some good things, but we sometimes compromise our faith to get ahead in this world? Are there things we do that sometimes don’t look very much like Jesus? What might we change to turn that around?*

- *Are there any areas in our lives where, like in Sardis, sometimes we can look alive, but something has actually died inside us? What should we do to change that?*

- *Are there any areas in our lives where, like in Laodicea, sometimes we can get so caught up with trying to have all the good stuff that we end up doing church in ways that don’t require God to show up? What would Jesus want us to do we need to turn things around?* _____