

LETTER FROM THE PASTOR – July 2022

Keep Your Eye on the Ball – Revelation 17:6-7

by Donny Friederichsen, Ligonier Ministries

The first lesson my dad taught me when I was in Little League was to keep my eye on the ball. Whether catching or hitting the ball, I was taught to follow it all the way to either my glove or my bat. Don't take your eye off the main thing. This lesson has an important application in our faith.

The Apostle John is given a vision of the weapons Satan uses against the church. The first is the beast ([Rev. 13](#)), a symbol of the power of the state to persecute. The second is the harlot (ch. 17), a symbol of culture's power to seduce through prosperity and pleasure.

The temptation of the harlot, Babylon, is so great that even John "marvels" at her (v. 6). It is far too easy for any of us to be captivated by the false beauty of Babylon. But the angel rebukes John by asking, "Why do you marvel?" (v. 7). Another angel comes to show him the fate of Babylon, proclaiming: "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons" (18:2). Then a heavenly multitude exults: "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up forever and ever" (19:3). Her beauty is a facade that will go up in smoke. Her demise is certain, and the rejoicing over her destruction will be great.

After Babylon's destruction, an even more curious event happens. John is given a vision of the marriage supper of the Lamb by an angel. John is again struck by what he sees. This time, however, he falls down at the feet of the angel to worship. And for a second time, the angel rebukes John. "You must not do that!" (19:10). The angel's simple correction is a powerful reminder to keep our eyes on the ball. "Worship God," the angel says (v. 10). (Amazingly, this call actually happens again in 22:8.) We must be aware not only of the temptations of the beast and harlot but also of the subtle temptation to worship things that are otherwise good. While the angel is holy and good, it is not God. It is just a creature and thus not worthy of our worship.

A fundamental truth we must learn and relearn is the distinction between Creator and creature. Sinners by their unrighteousness suppress this truth. They exchange the glory of God for images of creation ([Rom. 1:18–23](#)). Satan loves nothing more than to tempt us into worshiping the wrong thing. Traditions have arisen where worship is given to saints, icons, and relics. As good Reformed folks, we're quick to point out the folly of those practices. But in modern evangelical circles, we can lionize and venerate popular leaders, pastors, and teachers to a dangerous degree. The angel in [Revelation 19](#) redirects us to the true object of worship.

We must keep our eyes on the ball. John's experience warns us that not just the allure of evil but also even an inordinate preoccupation with secondary goods can take our eyes off the ball. This passage shows us how easily we can fall into idolatry. The correction is short and powerful: worship God alone.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: WHAT'S HAPPENING AT LBC

BIBLE STUDIES – Both the Wednesday evening and Ladies Bible Study are paused for the summer months. We look forward to reconvening in the Fall!

PRAY FOR OUR NATION – As another Canada Day comes and goes, let us continue to pray for our leaders, for the revitalization of the Canadian church and for the Gospel to go forth in our land for the glory of God!

PRAY FOR CAMP CHERITH – Lanark Baptist has sponsored all of the kids from the Lanark area who will be attending the day camp at Camp Cherith on July 4-8. Let's pray for a fruitful week of ministry.

SCENT FREE – Due to severe allergies within the congregation, we ask that we keep our worship gathering scent free. We appreciate everyone's help in keeping our gatherings a safe environment.

FOOD PANTRY – We now have a food pantry drop off box located at the back of the sanctuary. This will allow us to regularly support the local food bank and help show the love of Christ through meeting practical needs.

EVENING SERVICE – Please join us on Sunday July 31st at 7pm for a time of worship, teaching and corporate prayer.