

engaging contemporary culture in biblically faithful ways



the idols of our times and places  
revelation 17 and 18



The gospel of Christ ...

Culminates the scriptures

Contends with alternative false gospels

# Glorious Rome!

As (Caesar Augustus) sailed by the gulf of Puteoli, it happened that from an Alexandrian ship which had just arrived there, the passengers and crew, clad in white, crowned with garlands, and burning incense, lavished upon him good wishes and the highest praise, saying that it was through him they sailed the seas, and through him that they enjoyed their liberty and their fortunes.

Suetonius AD 14



D. H. C.

1987

# Empire themes in Revelation 17-18

Empires are systems of domination that seduce the powerful and intoxicate ordinary people with promises of power, prosperity and security.

Empires are expansive and self-promoting, making claims for themselves that are only true of God.

Empires present themselves as aesthetically pleasing, seeking to mask their abominations.

Empires are opposed to the true God and will do what is needed to silence faithful witness to the true God.

## Empire themes in Revelation 17-18

Empire grows, in part, because those it conquers, acquiesce. They surrender to empire rule and cooperate with empire ways.

Empires often perish because of self-inflicted wounds, and ultimately perish under the judgement of God.

Particular empires are historical manifestations or incarnations of something much more powerful that we may call Empire.

# Global empire

Modernity has come to encircle the globe, its effects felt in the most remote rural villages and not only in university campuses, urban shopping malls and government bureaucracies. It is not simply one civilization among others, but the first truly global civilization to emerge in human history.

Vinoth Ramachandra



<b>Ancient Gnosticism</b>	<b>Contemporary Gnosticism</b>	<b>Gospel of Christ</b>
The world is inferior.	Your world is inferior.	Creation of a world that is good, groaning and waiting its full redemption.
Matter is the problem.	The mundane is the problem.	Sin and rebellion against God are the problem.
Escape from your body to perfect-spirit.	Transform your body into a perfect-looking body.	God's grace frees us from sin and death.
Look inward to find truth and the god within.	Look inward to find the real you.	God's revelation in Christ opens our eyes to truth.

<b>Ancient Gnosticism</b>	<b>Contemporary Gnosticism</b>	<b>Gospel of Christ</b>
Escape the world to a perfect spiritual place.	Escape the mundane to the amazing life.	Worship and serve God and love others.
Move to perfection through finding hidden spiritual knowledge.	Move to perfection through tips, tweaks, hacks, and the secrets of success. Self-create.	Pursue Christlikeness.
You are a seeker, pursuing hidden knowledge.	You are a seeker, pursuing fulfilment through incredible experiences and pleasure.	You are a recipient of grace and are pursued and loved by God.
You are a god.	It's all about you.	It's all about God.

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