



"DEAR CHURCH"

A SERIES ON THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

"DEAR CHURCH", PART 12 STANDING IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

October 13, 2019

Pastor Randy Remington

BIBLICAL TEXT(S)

MAIN TEXT(S):

A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on its heads. Its tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that it might devour her child the moment he was born. She gave birth to a son, a male child, who "will rule all the nations with an iron scepter." And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne. The woman fled into the wilderness to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.

Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:

*"Now have come the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Messiah.*

*For the accuser of our brothers and sisters,
who accuses them before our God day and night,
has been hurled down.*

*They triumphed over him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony;*

*they did not love their lives so much
as to shrink from death.*

*Therefore rejoice, you heavens
and you who dwell in them!*

*But woe to the earth and the sea,
because the devil has gone down to you!*

*He is filled with fury,
because he knows that his time is short."*

*When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the wilderness, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach. Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent. But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring—those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus. **(Revelation 12)***

People worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can wage war against it?"

The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise its authority for forty-two months. It opened its mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. It was given power to wage war against God's holy people and to conquer them. And it was given authority over every tribe, people, language and

*"We don't strive
for the victory of Jesus.
If John's Revelation
taught us anything,
it teaches that we
strive within the
victory of Christ.
He's already won."*

—Pastor Randy

nation. All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world. (Revelation 13:4-8)

One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits by many waters. With her the kings of the earth committed adultery, and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries."

Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries. The name written on her forehead was a mystery:

*babylon the great
the mother of prostitutes
and of the abominations of the earth.*

I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God's holy people, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus.

When I saw her, I was greatly astonished. (Revelation 17:1-6)

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: king of kings and lord of lords. (Revelation 19:11-16)

SUMMARY

In Revelation 12, we see a great battle portrayed. It starts with a dragon chasing a pregnant woman, trying to devour her child. Then a battle rages in heaven, with God's army fighting against the dragon. This chapter gives us a "behind the scenes" look at the cosmic struggle our world is in. Satan is warring against God and his people. The good news is, it also gives us a "spoiler". We know how it ends. God wins. There are four "battlegrounds" in the book of Revelation (Revelation 6, 8-9, 13, and 17), but God wins them all.

This is good news for us and was good news for the original audience of the book of Revelation. For centuries, Revelation has reminded Christians that though they are in a battle (and that battle will only intensify in the last days), we are fighting from victory not fighting for victory. God has already won. Though we are a part of the battle, the outcome is already determined. That should give us peace and comfort, no matter our circumstances or the state of our world.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage and the speaker's message, helping them understand and apply the teaching.

LEAN IN

These are icebreaker/warm up questions, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. If you could ask John (the author of Revelation) one question about his book, what would it be?
2. Have you ever gotten into a fight? What happened?
3. What has been the thing that has stood out to you most about this Revelation series thus far?
4. What example or story stood out to you in Sunday's sermon? Why was it significant to you?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONT.

LOOK DOWN

These are questions on the passage and observations about what's been read.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. What happens to the woman described in Revelation 12?
Who do you think she represents? What clues from the text make you think that?
2. What does the dragon do in Revelation 12? Who/what do you think the dragon represents? Does he ever accomplish what he sets out to do?
Who does the dragon go to war against at the end of the chapter?
3. In Revelation 13:4-8, what do you think the beast represents? What makes you think that?
4. In Revelation 17:1-6, who or what do you think the woman represents? What do you think is happening in this passage? What does God say in Revelation 18:4 to his people?
5. In Revelation 19:11-16, who wins in the cosmic battle in the end?
What does Jesus do and why?

LOOK OUT

These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. How do you see Satan working against God and his people in today's world?
2. How have you seen or heard of God protecting God's people from Satan, as he does for the woman in Revelation 12?
3. In Revelation 13, it seems that "the beast" is representative of political power in the world and people will glorify it and see it as the answer to all problems.
How do you see this same attitude in our world today?
4. Revelation 17 paints a picture of Satan's forces working through hedonism, people being obsessed with sex, pleasure, fame, and wealth. How/where do you see this same attitude in our world today?
5. How do people in our world view the idea of God's final judgment?
Do they see it as just? Why or why not? What does the Bible say about this?

LOOK IN

These are questions that help you consider personal application.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. How have you experienced Satan working against you in your own life?
What weapons is he currently using against you?
2. How has/is God helping you to defeat Satan's schemes in your life?
3. Do you look to politics/power to solve the problems of this world? Why or why not?
What do you think a healthy, Christian view of politics/power looks like?
4. Are you (or have you been) tempted by sex, pleasure, fame, and wealth? How can you fight against these forces? How can you have a healthy view of these things?
5. Do you have a hard time reconciling God's justice and God's love? Why or why not?

LIVE IT OUT

These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life.

Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. How is Satan warring against you in your life right now? How can your group pray for you and support you in the midst of this fight?
2. What do you trust in instead of God? How can your group support you as you seek to ultimately trust God?
3. How can your group pray for you as you seek to better understand God's character?

NOTE: On the following page (for most weeks) you will find a set of sermon notes created by Charissa Burns, an artist who calls B4 home. We include them purely for your enjoyment and encouragement, courtesy of Charissa. You can follow her on the 'Gram @charissaburnsstudio