

(Timeless Doctrines) Revelation's Timeless Doctrines - Part 2

by Denny Kenaston

The sermon emphasizes the importance of making a choice between two options, living for God or living for the world, and encourages listeners to live in light of the end times with holy conversation and godliness.

Duration: 1:25:34

Scripture: Isaiah 65:17, Isaiah 65:25, Mark 8:34-36, Revelation 9:20-21, Revelation 16:15

Topics: "Doctrine"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that God is not slow in fulfilling His promises, but rather patient, desiring that all people come to repentance. The preacher then discusses the impending judgment of the day of the Lord, describing the destruction and burning of the works of man on earth. He references the book of Revelation, highlighting the signs of judgment such as earthquakes, famine, and wars. The preacher concludes by emphasizing the importance of relying on the grace and power of God, particularly in the last days, and encourages listeners to seek the fullness of the Spirit of God.

Transcript

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In our last session, we began to discover that the twos in the book of Revelation represent dividing lines. I don't know if you caught that yesterday or not. But every one of those twos represent a dividing line.

Every one of them call us to make a choice. And I don't know if you grasped the reality of it yesterday, but there are not three choices. There are only two, and this maketh the heart to tremble.

There are not three choices. There is no neutral. There is no limbo.

It is one or the other in every instance. And I searched it out more thoroughly this morning in my studies, and it holds true all the way to the end. These twos represent dividing lines, and each two calls us to a choice.

We must decide which king we're going to serve, which army we're going to serve in, and on and on it goes. Pondering these heart issues, it dawned on some of us yesterday as we were visiting, that if you get the heart issues squared away in your life, it really doesn't matter. If you have all those other things figured out, it really doesn't matter.

If you figured out the seven bowl judgments, the seven trumpet judgments, if you figured out when the Antichrist comes or when the church goes out in its world, it really doesn't matter if you don't have all that figured out right. If you have the heart issues cleared away in your life, all of that is not going to matter. Isn't it sad how many multitudes of hours people spend trying to figure out all those things when we're probably going to be wrong on a lot of them when it's all said and done? I want to exhort you through these meditations that you go beyond trying to figure out all the details and get down to the matters of the heart.

The rest of it will take care of itself. I want to hasten to say, I do believe it is right to seek wisdom concerning the last days. And I'm not against trying to discern when the church leaves, when the wrath gets poured out.

I'm not against those things. I study them. I ponder them myself.

And obviously, there's value in that. Consider this morning. There's great value in understanding, if it dawns on you, that we're going to face that ugly, treacherous king that I talked about yesterday.

That is going to affect a lot of things in my life. If I believe I'm going to face that king and the mark which he demands, it is going to greatly affect how I order my life, and it's going to affect how I raise my children. Amen? I told my children two or three days ago, as we've been going through the book of Daniel, I don't know if I'm going to face all of these things, but I'm almost sure you will.

And so, it behooves us parents that we guide our children in a path that's very clear and prepare them for losing their heads. And I mean that, literally. It is a great encouragement to deep reality in my Christian life if I realize I'm going to stand before that king and die for my faith.

I will order my lifestyle and my priorities in a very different way. Nevertheless, because God is who He is, the Supreme Sovereign, He requires my utmost loyalty whether I'm going to face tribulation or whether I'm living in the good of the land. He still requires my utmost loyalty.

So, let's get into the next set of twos here. We want to look at the two peoples. We find two peoples in the book of Revelation.

And I've titled them the dedicated ones and the worldly wicked. And again, I want you to know there are only two. There are only two.

The dedicated ones, the blood-washed, consecrated ones. They call them saints in the book of Revelation many times. This is a word that is not supposed to be used by somebody that the church canonized for the way he or she lived in their past.

We are to be the saints, the blood-washed, consecrated ones who live for God with all their hearts. These are the saints, the dedicated ones. In the book of Revelation, they are the ones that are singing a new song.

In the book of Revelation, they are the ones that worship, saying, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor and glory and wisdom and power and majesty both now and forever. Amen. They are the ones that are saying those kind of things.

They are the ones that fill up the golden vials with the prayers of the saints. They are the ones. Revelation chapter 1 and verse 2, John is one of them, and he says this of himself, who bear record of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ and of all the things that he saw.

I don't know how much you've read the book of Revelation, but that little phrase in verse 2 comes up again and again and again and again. Repeatedly through the book of Revelation, you will find that little phrase, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus. I believe that's the definition of the saints of God.

For the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus. Amen, brother Rick. It's the word of God.

True revival is when people turn back to the Bible, to the word of God. As I see these dedicated ones in the book of Revelation, they are the soul winners. They're the soul winners.

And you ponder that for a moment. You know, it's one thing for us to be a soul winner in America, the land of the free, where everything is okay, where you can go out on the streets and open up your mouth for Christ and it doesn't cost you anything. You can stand on the street corners and preach the gospel and nobody will throw you in prison.

But it's a very different thing to stand in the midst of the book of Revelation where you can lose your head for the testimony of Jesus, which, by the way, is testifying about the Lord Jesus. Realizing that if I do testify about the Lord Jesus, I may very well lose my head. But here they are again and again and again.

The description of the dedicated ones, it is for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. These are they that were slain for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. We should read over in the book of Mark just for a moment.

It gives such a beautiful explanation of what that really means. Mark chapter 8. Mark chapter 8 and verse 34. And when He called the people unto Him with His disciples also, He said unto them, Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it. Now, just read these verses in the midst of the book of Revelation. Amen? Whosoever shall save his life shall lose it.

But whosoever shall lose his life for My sake, and the Gospels, that's the testimony of Jesus, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He cometh in the glory of His Father with His holy angels. Wow! Look at that verse.

For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus. Brothers, sisters, that makes me tremble. That is not an easy thing to do.

That is probably the greatest challenge of the persecuted church. Wherever the church is being persecuted today, the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus, the persecutors will tell them, Look, we don't care if you're a Christian. You can be a Christian.

You can have your prayer meeting. You can read your Bible. But don't you go speaking to anybody else about the Bible or about your Jesus.

As long as you'll do that, everything will be okay. And, I'm afraid, many have just quieted down to save their neck. And more of us may do that than what we realize also.

So, I'm not judging the persecuted brethren this morning for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus. The book of Revelation speaks of the dedicated ones. They do His commandments.

They keep the sayings of this prophecy. They follow the Lamb with us to wherever He goes. These are some of the words which describe the dedicated ones in the book of Revelation.

Ah, let's see. Revelation 12, 17. Let's go see what verse that is.

Yes, this is a good one. 12, 17. And the dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

There it is. It's very clear. And chapter 16 and verse 15 yet also.

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. Those are pretty awesome words, aren't they, brothers and sisters, this morning.

But these are descriptions of this one group of people that we find in the book of Revelation. Let's turn now and look at the worldly wicked. Revelation chapter 9, verse 20 and 21.

They are characterized by a little phrase that we find in these two verses. I hope none of us are characterized by these words. But these words define this other group of people.

And it says of them, they repented not. You fill in the blanks. They repented not.

I hope there is nobody like that in here today. That the testimony of your life and the conviction of the Spirit upon your heart even as you sit here is he or she repented not. That's what it says of this worldly wicked group in chapter 9, verse 20 and 21.

And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands that they should not worship devils and idols of gold and silver and brass and stone and of wood, which neither can see nor hear nor walk. Neither repented they of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their fornication nor of their thefts. They repented not.

Even though judgment was beginning to be poured out, they repented not. They are the group that despised prophesying. They are the group that had a big party when the prophets were killed.

They are the group in the midst of judgment being poured out on every side. They had a big party and sent gifts one to another. They are part of that group.

They are the group that was tormented by the preaching of the two witnesses in Revelation chapter 11. That's the other group. They are the group that worship the beast.

They are the group that are caught up in the world. They are the group that lived deliciously upon the earth. They are the group that lived in the loss of their flesh.

They are the group that lived in riches. They are the group that is unjust still and filthy still. They are the group.

Revelation chapter 11, verse 9 and 10, we find an awesome set of verses which describe them. God's last gift to a world awaiting judgment is to send two prophets their way. Two prophets.

You watch. You note all the way through the Bible. God always does that.

He is a just and a righteous God. And He always sends one last warning. And here they are.

Verse 9, These two prophets were killed. And here is the people's response. And they of the people and kindred and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in the grave.

And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them and make merry and shall send gifts one to another because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. Tormented them with their words. Tormented them with the truth.

Tormented them with anointed words and an anointed life. They tormented the people that dwelt upon the earth. Well, can you see again? There is a choice to be made there.

Which group do you want to relate to? There is really no middle ground. As God brings us up to the end of the time of the end, there will be no middle ground. All the gray will be gone.

I know it's gray these days. We live in a mixed up Christian America and things are gray and they're mucky and they're lukewarm. And many times you can't figure the thing out.

Like one dear lady said to me today, we're tired of going to a circus called the church. But the day is coming when the lines will be clearly drawn and there'll only be two kinds of people. Kind of look forward to that day.

But, honestly, I don't know if everybody in this room is going to be on the right side. Let's move on to the next set of twos. Two worlds.

We find two worlds in the book of Revelation. The one is called the new heaven and the new earth. And the other one is called the world that now is.

Revelation chapter 21 and verse 1. We find these words. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away and there was no more sea. No more sea.

The first heaven and the first earth. They're passed away here at the end of this book. Brothers and sisters, we are living right now in the first earth and heaven that passed away in this chapter right here.

We are living in it right now. Isaiah, we should read over there, just looking a little bit, the book of Isaiah and chapter 65. Let's turn there.

All these things that we're looking at, God was telling them to His people through the Old Testament, through the prophets. In Isaiah 65 and verse 17, God says, For behold, I create new heavens and a new

earth and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. Verse 25, The wolf and the lamb shall feed together and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock and dust shall be the serpent's meat.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord. A new world, brothers and sisters. Peter said that this way, a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Glory! Wherein dwelleth righteousness. According to Peter, we are to be looking for a new heaven and a new earth. I'm afraid we enjoy this one too much to be looking for the next one.

But we're to be looking for a new heaven and a new earth. Let's look at the world that now is. And this is a little bit difficult.

It's a little bit difficult to look at the world that now is the way that we should see it. Because we live in prosperity and there is a danger that we will not see this world with eternal eyes. There is a danger.

Nevertheless, it behooves us to look at the world that now is and see it from God's eternal perspective. It will help us to find our place and learn how we are supposed to relate and fit in to this world that now is when we begin to see it from God's eternal perspective. The world that now is is under judgment.

It is under judgment. The judgment is already decreed. Listen to me, brothers and sisters.

If the house you live in, if you knew that in five years that house is going to burn to the ground, how many of you are going to put new doors on it when the doors are a little bit weak? How many are going to put all those new windows in there? Not against putting new windows in, Brother Roy. But how many of you are going to put all those new windows in there if you know that in five years this house is going to burn to the ground? Well, we all know the answer to that. I mean, I am not going to put new doors in and I am not putting new windows in.

The world that now is is under judgment. When we gaze into this world that now is, in light of the book of Revelation, this is what we see. We see famine.

We see pestilence. We see earthquakes. We see water turn to blood.

We see wars and killing everywhere. We see wickedness on every hand. Wickedness come to the full.

We see green trees and grass gone and burned up. And I could list a long, long list of what we see when we look at the world that now is in light of the book of Revelation. This world is under judgment.

The judgment is already decreed. Let's read in Revelation 6. Revelation 6, verse 12 through 17. And I beheld, when He had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood, and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island was moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth and the great men and the rich men and the chief captains and the mighty men and every bondman and every free man hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand? That, brothers and sisters, is a little glimpse of the world that is under judgment, which we live in today.

Turn now with me to 2 Peter, where we have the clearest admonition about the end times, besides this book of Revelation we're looking at. 2 Peter 3, verse 7. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word, are kept in store, reserved under fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. God, did you get that? God is holding the world that now is, for one thing, to burn it up in the fires of judgment when He judges ungodly men.

It is kept in store for that. This is the world that now is, that we all live in. It sure puts a different perspective on this world, doesn't it? But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day.

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in the which the heavens shall pass away with a gray noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

What are the works that are therein? Anybody tell me? Houses, that new car you just bought, the other towers that didn't fall yet, and on and on and on. Those are all the works of all the things that man had done with his hands. They were all burned up.

Boy, that sure makes the car look different, doesn't it? Seeing then, brothers and sisters, seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Do you see? Peter is tying the two together. Peter is making an application.

Peter is saying, look, if you see this thing the way it really is, it should affect your lifestyle. It should produce all holy conversation and godliness in you. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.

Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, what things? This world burning up under judgment and a new world wherein dwelleth righteousness. Seeing ye look for these things, both of them, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace without spot and blameless.

Those are awesome words in light of the world that now is. And I want to read one more just to let us settle down real good upon our hearts this morning. Let's read yet in Isaiah 24.

Isaiah 24 and verse 1. Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty and maketh it waste and turneth it upside down and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. Verse 3. The land shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled for the Lord has spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away.

The world languisheth and fadeth away. The haunted people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances and broken the everlasting covenant.

Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth and they that dwell therein are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned and few men left. Question.

What do you think? As we've looked at all these, as we've read all of these verses, what do you think? Playground or battlefield? Which one? How many vote playground? That's right. Brothers and sisters, the world that we live in, the world that now is, it is under judgment. It is under judgment.

Now we're here and we live in this world and God put us in this world and He put us in this world for some reasons. Oh, I hope we have our focus on the right reasons why we are here. Because this world is under judgment.

You know, as I look at the new heaven and the new earth and the way that the Bible describes it, that looks more like the place where the playground ought to be, amen? Where the children can go out and play next to the serpent's hole. You know, the lion and the lamb will lay down together and we can go for a walk with the king of the beast in the field. That sounds a little more like the playground.

Let's make sure we're not playing in the battlefield, brothers and sisters. We live in a day and an age when the professing church is playing in a world that is under judgment and they are seeking after those things in mass. God, deliver us! Deliver us from that mentality! Deliver us, Lord! That world is under judgment.

I wouldn't live too close to the edge of that thing. It's under judgment. It has the smell of smoke on it already.

New York City had a few day glimpse of how it really is going to be someday. After those two towers fell, man, everybody's perspective was changed for two or three days. They walked around in a stupor.

Nothing mattered anymore. All the nice restaurants didn't matter anymore. All the entertainment places didn't matter anymore.

All the baseball games didn't matter anymore. All the evil didn't matter anymore. They walked around in a stupor as they looked at the spot where those two giant buildings stood.

And again and again they said, I can't believe it. They really fell to the ground. So quickly they're gone.

And for two or three days, things changed a bit. I mean, if there was ever a time you'd get God back into the public schools, it would have been the day after 9-1-1. Amen? All of a sudden it was okay to use the name God.

Everybody's praying. Everybody's singing hymns. I know it wasn't real for most of them, but it was a little glimpse into the reality of what's coming someday.

Oh, dear brothers and sisters, must God make our world crumble to the ground before we realize, hey, wait a minute. This doesn't mean a thing. It doesn't mean a thing.

It's gone in a moment. We are an eternal being placed in a world under judgment. Let us be like the two angels who went to the city of Sodom.

Amen? Let's be like them. They were in a world that was under judgment, but the judgment hadn't fallen yet. And what were they doing? They were running out of the city and they had their hand upon Lot and his family.

And out of the city they were going. Why? Because they were living in a world under judgment. Let us be like those two angels and get our hands upon the shoulder of somebody and snatch them out of this world that's under judgment.

We have been placed in a world that is under judgment to prove and test us for the world that is to come. Ah, let's read 1 John 2 yet. We must do that.

We often don't grasp this last verse that we're going to read. We know the other verses very well. 1 John 2, verse 15.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, which is under judgment, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. Little children, it is the last time. And as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists whereby we know that it is the last time.

Look at those verses, brothers and sisters. Through the eyes of the book of Revelation here this morning, you look at those verses. What God is saying through the Apostle John in 1 John and also in Revelation is let's make sure we are clearly associated with the world that is to come and not with the one that now is.

I'm afraid many, many people are going to be shocked who are all caught up in a world that is under judgment. Instead, let us turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in his wonderful face and the things on the earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.

I'm not talking here this morning about running away from this world and hiding on some mountain somewhere. I'm not talking about that. God has left us in this world to be a testimony of his saving grace and to preach the gospel to a lost and dying world around us.

But, brothers and sisters, let us keep our eyes upon Jesus so that we are not affected by this world around us. The next two that we would like to look at in the book of Revelation is two cities. There are two cities in the book of Revelation.

There is the New Jerusalem and there is Babylon. Babylon, that great city. There is the New Jerusalem which is from above and there is that great city called Babylon.

Now, the city in the Bible represents a testimony. The city of Jerusalem was the testimony of God upon the earth. The city of Jerusalem was Mount Zion.

The city of Jerusalem was the place where God chose to put His name in the Old Testament. The city of Jerusalem was the testimony and the glory of the God of heaven upon the earth. There are two cities in the book of Revelation.

And some of these illustrations cross over each other a bit. Yet, God has clearly made the distinctions that we are looking at. And therefore, we want to draw out of them what we can.

In Revelation chapter 21, we read, let's read 21, verse 1 through 3, this time. I save the last two verses for this illustration here. I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away and there was no more sea.

And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them and they shall be His people and God Himself shall be with them and be their God. The New Jerusalem, the city in the book of Revelation, it's called the holy city.

It's called the city that comes down from God out of heaven, praise the Lord. It's called the city that is prepared. It's called the city, it's called the tabernacle of God.

What a beautiful name for a city, the tabernacle of God. This city is described in the book of Revelation having the glory of God in it and her light was like under the stone most precious, even like jasper stone, clear as crystal. This city shines brightly.

This city, nothing that defiles will enter into it. This city is made up of those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. It's a city.

Yes, it's a city set on a hill for sure, isn't it, brothers and sisters? This city, this New Jerusalem. Abraham, he was looking for this city, wasn't he? We find his testimony in the book of Hebrews chapter 11. It says it this way, By faith he, Abraham, sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.

For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. A city. While we look into the book of Revelation and we see the glorious fulfillment, the final fulfillment of this beautiful city, which is a testimony to the glory of our God, while we see all of that in the book of Revelation, we are that city, even today, brothers and sisters.

We are Mount Zion. New Jerusalem is the ultimate testimony of God's glory and grace. But we are a foretaste of that glorious city which is to come.

We are a foretaste of that now. We are to be the city that is set on a hill. Each and every New Testament local church is supposed to be a city that is set on a hill, a testimony of the glory of the God who saved us and washed us and changed us and made us bright and made us holy and made us so that we are not defiled anymore.

We are to be a testimony of that God who has done that in our hearts and our lives, and that is the church of Jesus Christ. We are to be that. That city.

That beautiful city. David and Solomon, they saw it afar off and pressed toward its beautiful fulfillment. David, dreaming about Jerusalem and the temple and the Shekinah glory there and the majesty of the temple and all the things that he planned for before he died.

Solomon, his son, picking up the vision from his father, went on and built the city of Jerusalem to be the testimony of God upon the earth in his day. Brothers and sisters, we are that city. David wrote these words.

He knew what he was talking about. He was dreaming as he wrote them. Dreaming into the future, but also living in the reality of the present when he wrote.

In Psalm 48, verse 1, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

And also, Isaiah, that great Old Testament, New Testament prophet, he said it this way so beautifully as he also longed and dreamed and prayed for a day when there would be a testimony, an unshaking testimony for the glory of his God whom he saw seated on a throne high and lifted up. This is the way he

said it in Isaiah 62, verse 1 through 3. For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace. For Jerusalem's sake I will not rest until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory, and thou shalt be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. That is the new Jerusalem, the Jerusalem that is from above.

We are to do the same, beloved. If we are not jealous for the testimony of this city now, I seriously question if we will ever be a part of its final revealing. Let me say that again.

If we are not also jealous for the fulfillment of this city in the future, I question whether we will ever be in its final fulfillment. Revelation chapter 14. Babylon.

The city of Babylon. Revelation 14 and verse 8. And there followed another angel saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all the nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. This city is also a testimony and a glory to another king, to another king.

He is very proud of his city. It exemplifies and represents who he is very well. This king and this city is very different than the one that we have gazed upon in the beginning here.

It is very different. In Revelation chapter 18 we get some glimpses of the city. We are going to read there, but just first consider some of the characteristics of this other city.

This city is characterized by sensuality, fornication. It is a habitation of devils. What quite a difference.

The habitation of God. The habitation of devils. Don't look like any middle ground to me in that one.

What do you think? The habitation of God. The habitation of devils. It is characterized by riches, prosperity and the finest of things.

We want to read some of the verses in Revelation 18, but before we read them, I want for you to put your mind for just a moment upon the two-thirds world around us. Two-thirds of this world we live in live in utter poverty. Utter poverty.

Go there with me for a little bit. Walk down through the village. Smell the stench.

See the mud huts, the grass. See the little babies with their malnourished bellies sticking out in front of them. See them there in two-thirds of the world around us.

That's where two-thirds of the population of this great big world we live on, that's where they are. Revelation chapter 18 verse 2 and 3. The other city. And he cried.

This was an angel. The angel cried. It was a bright angel.

Lighted up the whole earth with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen and has become the habitation of devils and the home of every foul spirit and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

Drop down to verse 9. And the kings of the earth who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her shall bewail her and lament for her when they shall see the smoke of her burning. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, the mighty city, for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.

The merchandise of gold and silver and precious stones and of pearls and fine linen, the merchandise of purple and silk and scarlet and all fine wood, the merchandise of vessels of ivory, all manner of vessels, of most precious wood and of brass and of iron and of marble, the merchandise of cinnamon and odors and ointments and frankincense and wine and oil and fine flour and wheat and beasts and sheep and horses and chariots and slaves and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee. And all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee.

Thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things which were made rich by her shall stand afar off for her, by her. They shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing and saying, Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, for in one hour so great riches is come to naught.

Quite an awesome description of the other city. Quite an awesome description. Right in the middle of this description, God says to His people, Come out of her My people, God says.

Come out of her My people, God says. Why? That ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not her plagues. We must ask ourselves this morning, which city do I more readily relate to? The one or the other? Which one do you mourn for? Which one do you sigh and cry for? Which one? Are you like the prophet Jeremiah? Or are you like the merchants of the earth? Which one do you relate to the most? You know, Jeremiah, he was that weeping prophet and when he walked through the streets of the city of Jerusalem, after that city, that testimony of God was rashed to the ground, after the temple was broken to pieces and carried away, after the walls of the city were destroyed and broken down and the gates were burned with fire, Jeremiah, one of God's sweet prophets, moaned and groaned and sighed and cried as he walked through the streets of the city of Jerusalem, groaning and sighing for the testimony of God upon the earth.

I wonder this morning, do you sigh and cry over the testimony of God upon the earth? I know that many of you do. I know that many of you, your hearts break and groan as you realize that the church is so confused and mixed up that there is no difference between the people of God and the worldly wicked around us. I know that some of you sigh and cry over these things and I thank God for that.

We need to be careful, brothers and sisters. What if all her riches are destroyed in one hour? Will we moan and groan with the merchants of the earth? This is a good question to ask ourselves, all us businessmen that are gathered in this place today. What if the stock market crashes and all of a sudden I don't have anything but the little piece of land that I'm living on or maybe not even that.

What if will we join in with the merchants of the earth and moan and groan and weep? I hope not. I hope there wouldn't be any of God's people that would sit on the step next to the worldly man who cries his eyes out outside of Wall Street. I would hope there wouldn't be any Christian man sitting out there next to him moaning and groaning over all the money that he lost.

Which one do we relate to more? You know, I read something a few weeks ago which if I can use the words of Keith Daniel staggered me and I mean that literally. It staggered me. I was supposed to go up to Manitoba and preach a few weeks back tent meetings up in Manitoba where the Hutterite people live and I thought to myself, you know, before I go up there I need to do a little more studying of the history of the Hutterite people before I go up there so I'll know more how to relate to them, so I'll know what to say to them and I'll know what not to say to them.

So I went to the Mennonite Historical Society and they had two or three different books there and one of them was about this thick and I didn't think I could get through that in a week. But there was a small little book there about like this. Which was a history of the Hutterite people from 1528 to 1931.

And I began to read that to prepare my heart to minister to the Hutterite people up in Manitoba. I was really impressed. I was really impressed by some of the things that I found in that little book.

But I was also deeply shocked, grieved and burdened over other things that I found in there. Those people in their early days ah, they were like the people that I already described here earlier in this sermon today. They were those people who stood for God, for the testimony of God, for the testimony of Jesus in the Word of God.

And oh, they were persecuted again and again and again. They were persecuted. They were driven here and there.

Their things were stolen over and over again. And I worshipped God for the way that He worked in the lives of those Hutterites back in the 1500s. But you know, I came to a little section in their history which is called the Golden Years of the Hutterites.

There were no wars. There was no persecution. There were no troubles on any side for about 30 or 40 years.

And in those years, the Hutterite people grew. Oh, many people joined them. Everybody wanted to be with them.

Oh, they were prosperous people. The men became great craftsmen. Their work was sought after by all the people in the world around them.

Come manage my farm. Come manage my mill. Come watch over my estate.

Come do my work. Come build this for me. Come build my house.

Oh, they were sought after by everybody on every side. And they prospered for 30 or 40 years. But during those 30 or 40 years, something was happening behind the scenes that they did not realize.

There was a weakening in them. There was a cooling in them. There was another generation coming up who had not tasted the fires of persecution.

And then after those 30 or 40 years, persecution broke out again. And one man, a Jesuit priest, set himself to wipe out the Hutterite people. Oh, he wanted to destroy them.

And he got a decree from the queen of the land that he lived in to go after them and do whatever you have to do to wipe them out or get them to recant and baptize their babies in the Catholic Church. He came to

them. He boldly walked into their assemblies.

Stood up behind the pulpit and began to speak to them and preach to them the false doctrines that he believed. And they stood up and told him he was wrong. And he defied them to their face and said, you will find out who is wrong.

And he went after them. And he took them. He took those men and he put them in prison.

And he beat them. And he beat them. And he beat them.

And he beat them. And oh, some of those men longed to be killed. Oh, just let us die an honorable death like our forefathers.

But he wouldn't kill them. He just beat them and beat them and beat them. Until they finally, one by one, they began to recant.

And one by one, they gave in. And another one. And another one.

And when he was finished with that colony, he went to the next colony. And the news had traveled what happened at the one colony. And they didn't put up much resistance.

And colony after colony, they just gave in. And baptized their babies in the Catholic Church. When I finished reading that account, I closed the book.

And I just sat in my seat. It shook my faith. It made me sick in my stomach.

It took me three or four hours to get over it. And I'll tell you why it shook my faith. Because I kinda had this idea in my mind.

Everything's gonna be alright. When persecution comes, bless God, God's gonna give me the grace that I need. And I'm gonna stand for the Lord.

But all of a sudden, I got a little bit of a different perspective. If I'm soft, if I'm weak, if I'm spineless, if I'm up and down and up and down, living delicately upon this earth, it may not go quite the way that I thought it was gonna go. And it shook my faith.

I had to wrestle with God about the whole thing. For my own life, and for my family. Which city do you relate to more? That's the question this morning.

Which city do we relate to more? The scenario of those thirty or forty years of the Hutterite people? We're living in that, brothers and sisters. We're living in that. And it's not one generation of children who know not persecution.

It's several generations who know not persecution. Lastly today, the last two for the day, there are two spirits clearly manifested in the book of Revelation. The seven spirits of God.

And the spirit of deception. These two spirits are manifested in the book of Revelation. The seven spirits of God.

You know, as I began to ponder that, I thought, Lord, what does that mean? The seven spirits of God. The spirit of God is the spirit of God all the way through the Bible. Why now, in the book of Revelation, is it the

seven spirits of God? And it's that way in every place in the book of Revelation.

So, I just sidetracked from the twos for a while and looked at the sevens. And looked up what the number seven signifies in the Bible. Here's what it means.

The number seven is the number of completeness, fullness. Seven is the ultimate expression of the highest, greatest manifestation of fullness of anything. Thus, seven trumpets or the fullness of God's judgment.

Seven vials over or the fullness, the overflowing of the wrath of God. That's why God used those sevens in there. But now, we come to the seven spirits of God.

Could it be the fullest, greatest manifestation of God's spirit? God's spirit manifested in His fullness? I was pondering those things this morning in the early morning hours. And I thought to myself, OK, Lord. Here we go.

I don't know what this means. But my mind began to go to other verses. Early rain, latter rain, spring rain, summer rain, light rain, heavy rain.

I just pondered all that in my heart. And I don't know if I understand what it means. But I do know that in the book of Revelation, the Spirit of God is called seven spirits of God.

Let's read a couple of those verses as we move toward a close here. Let's read in Revelation chapter 1 and verse 4. John said it this way. John to the seven churches which are in Asia.

Grace be unto you and peace from Him which is, which was, and which is to come. And from the seven spirits which are before His throne. Chapter 3 and verse 1. We find these words.

Under the angel of the church in Sardis write. These things sayeth He that hath the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know thy works.

Chapter 4 and verse 5. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne which are the seven spirits of God. And lastly chapter 5 and verse 6. And I beheld and lo in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts and in the midst of the elders stood a lamb as it had been slain having seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

He is the spirit that sayeth unto the churches in the last days. That's who He is. The spirit of God in the book of Revelation is the spirit that sayeth unto the church in the last days.

Don't forget that, brothers and sisters. He is the spirit that sayeth unto the church in the last days. That sevenfold spirit of God represents God's power, God's authority, God's wisdom, and God's discernment for His people in the last days.

And if ever we will need the grace and power of God, it will be in the last days. If we have to go through one third of what we see in the book of Revelation, we're gonna need the fullness of the spirit of the living God. We're going to need all seven of those lamps pouring out into our hearts and our lives which burn before the throne of God.

We're going to need them. Those seven spirits represent the ultimate, the greatest, the fullness of God's power, His authority, His wisdom, and His discernment upon His people in the last days. And as I ponder all the things that are written in the book of Revelation, it only makes sense that God would pour out the fullness of His spirit upon us to keep us in this evil day.

The spirit of deception is also found in the book of Revelation. We find him described this way. We find him described as unclean spirits and spirits of devils.

Revelation chapter 16, verse 13 and 14. Let's look there for a moment. Revelation 16, verse 13 and 14.

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils working miracles which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God almighty. There is a spirit of deception that is at work in the book of Revelation.

Chapter 13, Revelation 13, verse 11 through 15. And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth and he had two horns like a lamb and he speak as a dragon and he exercises all the power of the first beast before him and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed and he doeth great wonders so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast saying to them that dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword and did live and he had power to give life unto the image of the beast and that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. Should be killed.

Paul in the New Testament clearly warns us of a spirit of deception which will be released in the last days. Jesus trying to answer the questions of his disciples when they said to him, Lord, when shall these things be and what shall be the sign of your coming? Matthew chapter 24. The first words out of the mouth of our Lord Jesus Christ was, take heed that no man deceive you.

There is a spirit of deception that is released in the last of the last days. Paul said it this way to Timothy, the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter days some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils or doctrines that devils teach. This is the spirit of deception which has been released even upon our land that we live in.

A spirit of deception very different than the seven spirits that burn before the throne of God. We must be aware of these things. It says in Thessalonians that those in the last days they shall receive a strong delusion that they may believe a lie.

That's talking about our day and our age that we live in. A strong delusion by a strong deceiving spirit. And the Bible even says why they will receive that strong delusion.

Because they received not the love of the truth. And here we are right back to the Word of God where brother Rick started. Because they did not receive the love of the truth, they received a spirit of deception.

Brothers and sisters, we live in those days. If we are not walking after the spirit of the living God, we will be deceived by a false spirit. Do you understand that? There is no neutral.

Many of God's people are coasting along in neutral. But I'm telling you, the day draws nigh when there will be no more room for neutral. You will have to choose whether you will open your heart to the strength and manifestation of the spirit of the living God in all its power and authority and wisdom and discernment or whether you will open your heart to the spirit of this age, which is a deceptive spirit, which is leading the people away from the Word of God.

And the Word of God is becoming the issue more and more all the time. We are becoming nuts. Are you ready to be a nut? I mean weirdos, you weird people.

More and more that's how we are looked upon. And as the people depart from the Word in mass, we become more weird all the time. Which spirit do you relate to? Do you walk in the spirit and not fulfill the lust of the flesh? We can't be playing games with that.

That is not an option, brothers and sisters. Brother Aaron shared with me yesterday some very sad news, telling me about some of the grievous burdens that some of the liberal Mennonite churches are facing these days because they joined themselves up with a more liberal Mennonite conference. They are now being faced church by church, one by one.

What are you going to do with the virgin birth? With the inspiration of the Bible and homosexual preachers in the pulpit? You must make your decision whether you will support that or not if you want to stay in our conference. And guess what? They are wringing their hands over that one. What are we going to do? What do we do now? But it's my church.

But it's where I always went. But what will the people think? Oh, I tell you, the greatest grief of my heart is that they would even have to wring their hands over such a thing as that. It shouldn't even have to even go through their mind.

They shouldn't even have to stop for one moment and think whether it's right or wrong. They shouldn't even have to sit down and dialogue at all about it. But, they are all going to the meetings.

The yea hath God said meetings. Did God really say that a homosexual was an abomination? Let's just ponder that a little bit more. Yea, hath God said that? Brothers and sisters, are you ready to lose your head? We may lose our head.

It may be sooner than you think. Are you ready to sit in a prison? I mean, in Europe, it's against the law to preach out of Romans chapter one. That's hate theology.

In Holland. And they're toying around with a bill up in Canada to do the same thing. Soon it'll be here.

We are going to be nuts. Oh, I plead with every one of us that we avail ourselves of the sevenfold Spirit of God which burns like fire before the throne in heaven because we're going to need all the grace that God can give us to stand in these last days. This is the practical messages of the book of Revelation.

Shall we stand for prayer? God our Father, O Lord, what do we do with these things, Father? Maybe some of them we never heard before. Maybe there's some thoughts today we've never thought of before. Lord, there's some things that I thought this morning that I never thought before.

O God, please give us the wisdom and the discernment that is available to us as your people in the last days. And God, somehow, some way, Lord, prepare us and let us prepare. Don't let us be like those dear

Hutterite people whose guards were down, who were not aware of where they were really at until the fires begin to burn.

O God, for the sake of us and our children, would you please open our eyes? We pray in Jesus' name.
Amen.

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