

## **To Prophecy the Mystery III . . . and Conquer the Beast**

Revelation 11

#21 in our series “The Gospel According to Jesus: The Revelation”

April 22, 2018

Peter Hiett

*All images by Peter Hiett unless otherwise credited.*

### **Prayer**

Lord God, we thank you that you gave yourself away. We pray that we would give ourselves away. We pray that you would help us to preach, that you would help us to see you and to become like you, in Jesus’ name, Amen.

### **Message**

Let’s review!

In the Revelation 6-8, John hears a voice saying, “Come up here.” And he does, and he sees a scroll. [Peter picks up a scroll with seven seals and holds it up for all to see.] John watches a slaughtered lamb open the scroll sealed with seven seals that had been in the strong right hand of God.

When the seventh seal is opened John sees seven angels prepare to blow seven trumpets. [The very beginning of theme song from the movie “Rocky” is played.]

Trumpets were blown on the Day of Atonement—which was the day that the High Priest would go behind the veil in the inner sanctuary in the temple to make atonement for the sins of the people. To do so, he would sprinkle blood on the Mercy Seat on top of the Ark of the Covenant, which was the throne of God, and the Judgment Seat of God on earth.

The Israelites also blew seven trumpets before the Ark of the Covenant, on the Seventh Day, after walking seven times around Jericho, at the edge of the Promised Land.

It was a proclamation that atonement had been made. It was then that the dividing wall of hostility came tumbling down. The Angel of Yahweh was not opposed to Canaanites or Hebrews, but He was opposed to the wall.

In fact, His very Body was dependent upon the destruction of that wall; on one side of the wall was the great, great, great... grandfather of Jesus and on the other was his great, great, great... grandmother, Rahab. The Angel of *Yahweh*, in flesh, is Jesus.

The walls came tumbling down and the kingdoms of this world became the kingdom of something else—which was a foreshadowing of the Kingdom of God.

God destroyed what was evil, but this is the great mystery hidden for ages and generations...

-He destroyed what was evil—not by *preserving* evil in some place of

endless torment.

-He destroyed what was evil, by *transforming* it into Good.

It's what the voice from the throne declares at the end of the Revelation:

*"Look! I make all things new."*

That's the Atonement—it means "at-one-ment."

That's where we ended our message last week and every week—the Atonement: On the night He was betrayed...the Angel of Yahweh, who is the Word of God, who is the Judgment of God, and the Will of God, and our High Priest, the Slaughtered Lamb...

He took bread and broke it saying this is my Body, which is for you.

And He took the cup saying, "This is the Covenant in my blood."

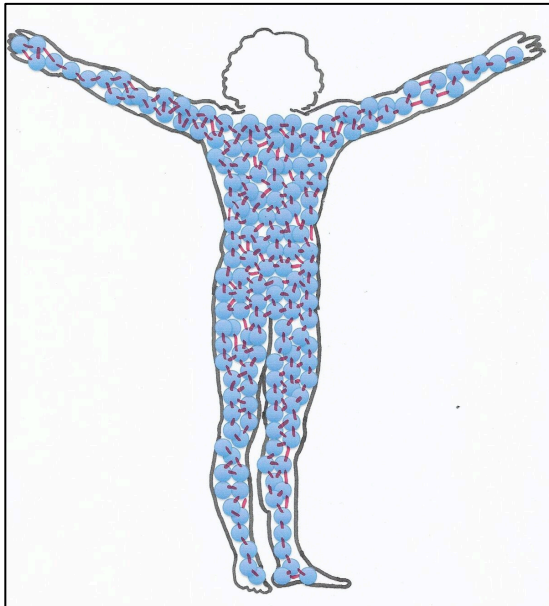
And then, when everyone was asking, "What now?" He didn't leave behind a list of instructions, a set of laws, a program, or any sort of worldly government. He didn't even give an explanation...

He just said, "Eat it... my body, and drink it—my blood."

In the morning, Jesus was crucified on a tree just outside the walls of Old Jerusalem, which the Jews believed to be the site of the Garden of Eden.

On that tree of knowledge and life, Jesus bled for us as He cried, *"Father forgive them for they know not what they do."* That's the Atonement.

And then He said, *"It is finished."* That's the great mystery: He has united and is uniting all things in Himself (Eph. 1:10).



Having broken down, in His flesh, the dividing wall of hostility (Eph. 2:14) making one Body (Eph. 4:4) under one God and Father of *all* who is over all, through *all*, and in *all*—the Atonement.

For thousands of years, we've tried to explain it.  
But Jesus didn't say, "Explain it" or "Understand it," He said, "Eat it."

His disciples ate it, and then testified: Saint Paul writes, "*By works of the law* (That's what we can understand, explain, and do), *by deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified—made right.*" That's Romans 3:20.

In Ephesians, he writes, "*For by Grace you have been saved through faith and this (this faith) is not of yourselves. It's the gift of God, not by works, that none should boast.*"

In other words, *your* faith does not create God's Grace—the Atonement.  
But God's Grace creates your Faith...

In 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians Paul writes, "*God made him to be sin, who knew no sin, so that in him, we might become the righteousness of God.*"

On the cross Jesus bore our sin, which is faith/lessness...  
And gave us His righteousness, which is faithfulness—faith in God, who is Love.

John writes,

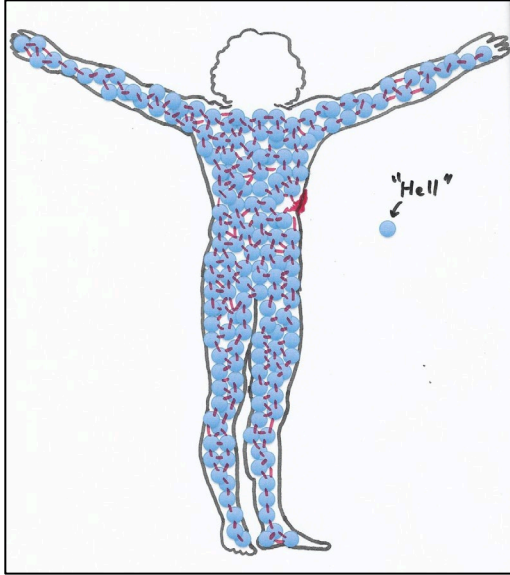
*For God so loved the world (not some of the world—the world)  
For God so loved the **world** that he gave his only begotten son, in order that all, believing in him, (that's a literal translation)—might not be lost, but might have eternal life. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn, the world, but that the world would be saved through him. He who believes is not condemned, but he who does not believe is condemned already, for he has not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God. —John 3:16-18*

Think about that!

- We have all "not believed in God is Salvation" and were therefore condemned.
- But upon believing, we are now no longer condemned—no longer damned but undammed because we trust in the name of Jesus. The name means "God is salvation".

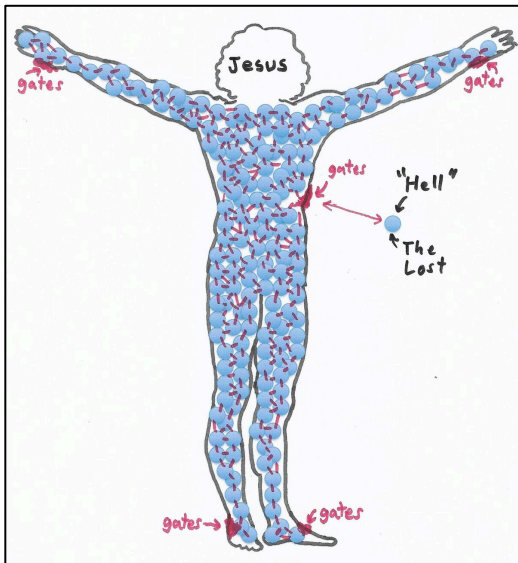
To believe "God is Salvation" is the substance of heaven.

And to not believe that God is not Salvation" is the substance of hell—it's the outer darkness where men weep and gnash their teeth.



But your belief, or lack thereof, does not determine whether or not the Lamb of God has taken away the sin of the world: "God so loved the *world*."

In other words, the Atonement is *not* dependent on *our* belief. Our belief is dependent on the *Atonement*—that's how *God* creates belief.



He bleeds for us—to make us want to bleed for Him and each other like members of one Body all bleeding for each other. To want to love is called faith.

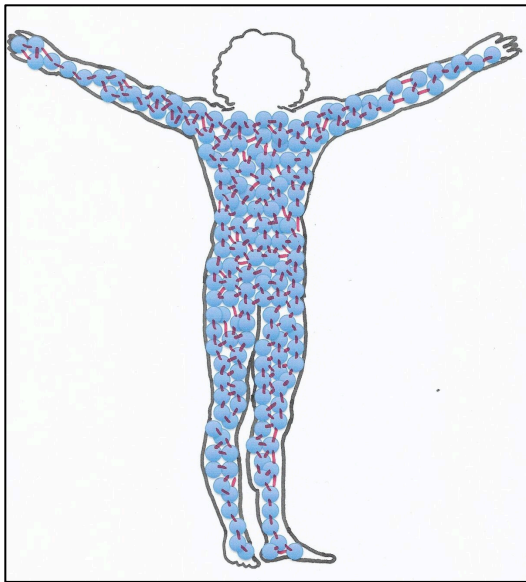
So, Jesus hung on the cross outside the walls of Old Jerusalem and cried, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."<sup>1</sup> Do you see? We are forgiven before we even know what sin is! And then He cried, "It is finished."

And now, this is the mystery hidden for ages and generations: It's always been finished. "The Lamb has been slain from the foundation of the World" (Revelation 13:8).

So Jesus cried, "it is finished," delivered up His Spirit, there was a great earthquake (we don't know how many died—perhaps 7000), and all the walls came tumbling down.

- First were the walls around the heart of a Roman Centurion who dropped to his knees and worshipped.
- And then the walls of Hades itself, for the tombs were opened and the saints came out.
- And then, in a generation, the walls of Old Jerusalem. They were literally plowed into the ground in 70 AD.
- And still today the dividing walls of hostility are tumbling down...

Or maybe I should say, they're dissolving like an illusion, like a world that suddenly vanishes when you wake up from a nightmare.



---

<sup>1</sup> See? Forgiveness is granted long before we even know what sin is.  
*"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."*

Well anyway, this is where we ended our message last week and every week... Jesus announces the Atonement—"My body broken and my blood shed." We all wonder: "What now?"

And Jesus says,



[In the background, Weird Al Yankovic sings, "Just eat it. Eat it. Don't you make me repeat it."]

That was the point of last week's sermon: "Eat it." And then, forty days later, having risen from the dead, He appeared to His disciples and said, "Prophesy the mystery."

Actually Acts 1:7 reads as follows: "*He [the resurrected Christ—it's forty days later] said to them, 'It's not for you to know times or seasons which the father has fixed by his own authority [That's means that the Revelation is not a calendar], but you shall receive power [that's what we get from food]... when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and to the end of the earth.'...Then He was lifted up and a cloud took him out of their sight.*"

He says, "Eat it and testify." "Eat it and be my witnesses."  
"Eat the Word and prophesy the mystery" . . . "Be my witnesses."

So, that's your Job... So, How are you doing?  
When was the last time you witnessed, and how did it go?  
Close your eyes a moment and answer this question, "*What keeps me from witnessing to my neighbor?*" (File that away in your mind).

OK. Witnessing: It's what Revelation 10 and 11 are all about. It's the interlude between the sixth and the seventh trumpet.

In Chapter 10, six of the seven trumpets have sounded, the walls of this world have been crumbling and, surprisingly, nobody repents.

And then John sees the Angel of the Lord—the Angel of *Yahweh*, who must be Jesus, descend with a scroll in His hand. The scroll obviously contains the word of God and He

is the Word of God. He stands on the land and sea and swears that time will be no more, but that in the days of the seventh trumpet call, the mystery of God would be fulfilled.

He hands the scroll to John and says, "Eat it... and prophesy." "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," says the Revelation (19:10).

John ingests it and digests it; it's bitter in his stomach and sweet on his lips.

John is a witness. That's chapter 10. In chapter 11 he's told to measure the temple. It's more than just the sanctuary in Old Jerusalem. It's the New Jerusalem coming down. It's the Body of Christ that bears witness to Christ.

Just like your body bears witness to all the cheeseburgers that you've eaten.

He measures the Body of Christ and then we meet the witnesses.

Revelation 11:1-13

*Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, "Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months. And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth [That's repentance]."*

Last time we noted that 1,260 days is 42 months, which is 3 and ½ years, which is a broken 7, and refers to all sorts of biblical events—all of which are a time of tribulation in this fallen world—kind of like the time in which we live.

*These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth (Not "mouths"; it's singular in Greek—they have one mouth) and consumes their foes. If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed. They have the power to shut the sky, that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying [Like Elijah], and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they desire [Like Moses].*

You can read about the two olive trees in Zechariah . . . and about the lampstands that are churches, in the first three chapters of the Revelation. (The oil from the trees lights the lamps that shine on the place of atonement in the Temple.) And in Scripture, we read: "Nothing is to be established without two witnesses." These two witnesses look like Moses and Elijah, who represent the law and the prophets, and who bear witness to the Faith of Jesus, as Paul writes in Romans 3. The two witnesses are two people, but as we read, they have one mouth.

In a minute we'll read that they have one Body.

You think there are many bodies, but "there is one body," writes Paul, time and time again in Scripture.

*And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them...*

This is our first introduction to the Beast. He's already appeared in the book of Daniel. In Daniel 7, four beasts come from the sea—that appear to be Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. This one looks like Rome and Nero in particular.<sup>2</sup>

The Dragon calls up the Beast from the sea to war against the church.

- The Beast from the sea appears to be the demonic forces behind human politics—like that of Rome.
- And there is a Beast from the land, who appears to be the demonic forces behind human religion—like that of the scribes and Pharisees.
  - They ride the Great Harlot, who is also a city.
  - Roman power and Hebrew religion join forces in the city of Jerusalem to crucify the Angel of *Yahweh* in human flesh.
    - They are the “principalities and powers of this world.”

The Revelation never uses the term “Antichrist.” But people usually equate the Beast with the Antichrist. John talks about the Antichrist in his Epistles. Antichrist means “imitation Christ” and all human political entities and all human religious entities, imitate Christ.

Jesus means “*God is Salvation.*”

Politics and Religion, both teach, “*We are Salvation*”:

“*Our laws, programs and rituals are salvation.*”

2000 years ago, John wrote that the spirit of the antichrist is in the world already and that many antichrists have come. And yet Paul mentions a “man of lawlessness” who will sit on the throne of God in the temple of God and proclaim himself to be God. Then Paul claims that Jesus will destroy this man with the breath of His mouth and the “manifestation of his presence” (2 Thess. 2:1-8).

For 2000 years, people have conjectured as to who this man is. The list has included emperors, popes, reformers, and kings.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Adolph Hitler murdered 6 million Jews and therefore seemed to be the most likely candidate. After Hitler, many thought the obvious candidate was the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. As a young man, Sadat admired Hitler for hating the Jews and the Brits, who defended the Jews and occupied Egypt.

- In 1970, Sadat became president of Egypt.
- In 1973, he attacked Israel in the Sinai.
- But surprisingly, in 1979, he signed a peace treaty, a covenant, with Israel.

---

<sup>2</sup> We'll soon learn that the mark of the beast is the number 666, which in that ancient society was like a reference code for the name Nero. And 666 is also a reference to the rule of human flesh, the power of old Adam.



(That was just a few years before the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the modern nation-state of Israel.)

Many American Christians were convinced that it fulfilled the prophecy in Daniel 9:27... and so, Egyptian Pharaoh Anwar Sadat was the Antichrist.

And if not Sadat, well then, it must be Jimmy Carter. He was the one that set up the treaty in the first place. I still have the book, *Countdown to Armageddon*, in which Hal Lindsey points out that Jimmy Carter was groomed by the trilateral commission, which clearly prepared the way for the one world government ruled by the Antichrist—perhaps “Jimmy, the Antichrist, Carter.”

In the *Left Behind* series, the Antichrist is Nicolae Carpathia. He’s modeled after the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu... for “Romania” kind of sounds like a revived Roman Empire . . . and Ceausescu was a jerk.

Well anyway, back to Scripture.

The witnesses battle the Beast from the bottomless pit.

*And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, and their dead bodies [“body” is singular in the Greek] will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified.*

What city is that? Jerusalem.

Listen closely all modern American Christians—‘cause we really, really need to get this through our thick skulls. Scripture refers to Old Jerusalem as Sodom and Egypt. And we will soon read that “The Great City” is “The Whore of Babylon.” Before you get all worked up about blessing Jerusalem, it’s worth asking, “Which Jerusalem am I blessing?”

- The New Jerusalem, that comes down from God . . . or
- The Great Whore . . . the one that crucified our Lord and murdered the prophets . . . the Great Harlot.

*...their dead bodies [“body,” singular] will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. For three and a half days some from the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies [“body,” singular] and refuse to let them [“bodies” plural] be placed in a tomb, and those who dwell on the earth [land] will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth [In Greek—“land”]. But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here!” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them. And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.*

Well anyway, that’s what it means to be a witness.

That's what it means to, "Eat the Word and prophesy a mystery."

Like I said, "That's your Job... So, How are you doing?"  
If you're not witnessing, why aren't you witnessing?

According to the *Left Behind* movies, it should look something like this:

---

[A cameraman along with another gentleman carefully approach two bearded men dressed in robes. The witnesses take turns speaking.]

Witness 1: *"The Lord has chosen this as a building for his sanctuary."*

Witness 2: *"By the deeds of the law, no flesh shall be justified in His sight. For by grace you are saved, through faith, and this not for yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not by works, so that no one can boast."*

[Nicolae Carpathia, the "Antichrist" watches the witness from a comfortable charis and says, "Cut it."]

Witness 2: *"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that, in Him, we might become the righteousness of God."*

Witness 2: *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His one and only son, that whoever believe in Him will no perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. He who believes in the Son is not condemned. But he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."*

Gentleman standing next to the cameraman: *And the name of the Son of God?*

Witness 1: *He is the Christ, Jesus."*

[Armed men dressed in black enter the scene and begin showering the witnesses with bullets. The witnesses calmly raise their hands and remain unharmed.]

[Suddenly fire comes out of their mouths setting the armed gunmen ablaze.]

---

Peter points to the screen as the scene ends and says, "Witnessing!" and then exhales with concern.

Did you catch all of that?

✓ "God has chosen this building for his sanctuary," His temple—that's a stone building in the Middle East . . . in the Old City of Jerusalem.

- ✓ The witnesses then recite the most gracious and loving words that human ears have ever heard . . . Romans 3, Ephesians 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5, and John 3. And then they say the name “Jesus,” which means “God is Salvation.”
- ✓ And then, when threatened, when they tried—and it didn’t work out and it’s like they’ve run out of patience—they burn their enemies to a crisp.

The *words* they speak are true, and even, life.  
However, they may be a wee bit *undigested*!

Jesus said, “*Eat it...*” and then, forty days later, “*Be my witnesses.*”

So, anyway, I asked you, “What keeps you from being a witness?”

## What keeps you from witnessing?

1. *“I don’t know what to say.”*
2. *“I don’t have all the answers.”*
3. *“I don’t like selling stuff.”*
4. *“I’m not good at arguments.”*
5. *“I might lose my faith.”*
6. *“It’s too much responsibility.”*
7. *“It doesn’t feel like good news.”*
8. *“Sometimes it seems . . . unkind.”*
9. *“I’ll fail.”*
10. *“It won’t work.”*

(I wish we had time to discuss this more, but I’ve been asking folks and I imagine that I can anticipate some of your answers... like maybe.)

### **#1. “I don’t know what to say?”**

But you see, you are actually the only one that does know what to say.

A witness testifies to what they have witnessed and only you, or Jesus in you, can do that.

And that’s why there are always at least two witnesses. All eat one gospel cheeseburger and each digests it and manifests it in a unique and indispensable way—you are a unique and indispensable member of the Body of Christ—a unique and indispensable witness.

### **#2. “I don’t know all the answers.”**

Well then, testify to what you do know, and say, “I don’t know all the answers.”

You *cannot* testify to the Truth, who is Jesus, by telling lies and making up answers.... And no one knows all answers except Jesus, who *is* the answer.

Faith is not lying. If you feel like you're lying—stop—and testify to the truth in you; that's called honesty.

**#3. "I don't like selling stuff."**

You're not selling stuff... and if you think you're selling stuff it's not the Gospel. The Gospel is free, and yet, worth the life-blood of God in Christ Jesus. If you make the Gospel dependent on any created thing, it's not the Gospel. The Gospel is the Word of God, which creates all things. And the pinnacle of Creation is Faith in you, which is the Judgment of God in you, which is Love sitting on the throne in the temple of your soul.

**#4. "I'm not good at arguments."**

Well, ask any judge. What does he want from witnesses? Does he want arguments? No. To testify is not to argue... Witnesses don't argue . . .  
It's good to have a logical defense prepared for the hope that is in you . . .  
But you have a Defense Attorney, who can win any argument against the prosecuting attorney, the accuser—that is satan. The Angel didn't say, "eat it and argue" but "eat it and prophesy." That's the testimony of Jesus.

**#5. "I might lose my faith?"**

Well, no you won't . . . not if it's faith.  
Real faith is not the result of some human argument.  
Faith is the gift of God and it's eternal.  
*"This is the victory that conquers the world,"* writes John, *"our faith."* That's why the 144,000 were sealed. I think that's why the temple is measured: *"To Him who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God,"* says Jesus You are the temple and it's already been measured.

**#6. "It's too much responsibility."**

Well, if you think it's your responsibility, I doubt you're testifying to the Christ, but instead, the imitation Christ—the Antichrist. You're not testifying to *"God is Salvation,"* but testifying that *"You and your judgment are Salvation"*—that you are your own atonement.

1 John 2:2, John wrote: *"[Jesus Christ] is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."*

- The Atonement is not dependent on your ability to respond.
- Your ability to respond is dependent upon the Atonement.

To Repent is not to make forgiveness happen but to believe it *has* happened.

When I witness in fear and shame, as if forgiveness might not happen, I testify that it has not happened and we need to make it happen. Even if I say "Jesus," which means "God is Salvation," I testify that God is not salvation—if I testify in fear as if I were responsible; I don't testify to Jesus, but Me-sus.

**#7. "The Gospel doesn't feel like good news."**

Well, if it doesn't feel like good news, maybe the gospel you've believed is not the Good News; maybe it's not good and it's not news. It's probably a threat.

- The principalities and powers of this world run on threats.
- The Gospel is not a threat but an announcement that delivers us from every threat.
- It's an announcement: "The Atonement has been made and all is forgiven."

That's Good News, but if you don't hear the Good News, it can result in some very bad things. If you don't believe that God *has* paid, *you* will try to pay.

I read about an Indian Christian Man who found a young woman sobbing uncontrollably, pounding on her chest as she knelt on a beach in India. When he knelt down and asked her what had happened she sobbed, "The problems in my home are too many, and my sins are heavy on my heart. So I offered the best I have to the goddess Ganges: my firstborn son." She had just thrown her baby in the river... trying to pay. All the worst sins, perhaps, all sin . . . is trying to pay that which cannot be bought: Life—eternal Life.

Now I'm convinced that the goddess Ganges does not have her baby. Jesus has her baby, but wouldn't you like to have told her only a few minutes before: "*You* don't have to pay. *God* in Christ Jesus has already paid." This actually happened to my friend Phil. Preaching in India, he met a woman at one of his rallies.

See? We don't have to postulate some place of eternal torment. People, who think they have to pay, are already in torment in bondage to the accuser. The outer darkness where men weep and gnash their teeth is for people that think they have to pay, people that don't believe they're forgiven.<sup>3</sup> And you get to tell them—witness: "Your sins are forgiven you! Repent! (The means change your mind and believe the Gospel)." You see? The Good News really is the *very* Best News; it destroys the illusion that is your Hell and delivers you into the reality that is the Kingdom of Heaven.

#### **#8. Sometimes, "*it seems unkind.*"**

Well, pestering people you don't know with pamphlets and surveys, at public events, in order to justify yourself, does seem rather unkind.

I know that God uses programs like that, at times, but He says to all of us "Love your neighbor." And the most enjoyable way to love a neighbor is to announce Good News. And they'll believe you because you're their neighbor; you have a relationship. They probably won't believe me because I'm a pastor, who is part of an institution, who obviously has ulterior motives.

But yeah. . . sometimes witnessing seems a little unkind, and well, let's be honest... Setting people ablaze *does* seem a little more than unkind:

*[Images of burning people from the "Left Behind" movie]*

That seems slightly unkind. . . right?

Romans 2:4, "*It's the kindness of God that leads us to repentance.*"

---

<sup>3</sup> And so, of course, it was the Scribes and Pharisees, the self-righteous religious leaders, that Jesus most warned of Hades and Gehenna, which we often translate as Hell.

And that's what's so weird, about Revelation 11 . . . People are terrified, but then, they all give glory to God. And in the next verse, at the seventh trumpet, everyone repents.

So, you see? This fire that proceeds from the mouth of this body—this Body of Christ—is some rather unusual and Holy Fire. And now, it might be helpful to remember that John is writing the Revelation. Jesus nicknamed James and John, “the sons of thunder” . . . for it appears that they had some anger management issues.

In Luke 9, James and John ask Jesus if, like Elijah, they can call down fire from Heaven upon the Samaritans, like Elijah. Elijah does this in 2 Kings chapter 1, until the Angel of Yahweh tells him to cut it out.

So, John asks Jesus if He can call down fire on his enemies. And then the Fire of God descends on John, for Jesus turns to John, rebukes John and says, “*You do not know what manner of spirit (pneuma, breath) you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy . . . but to save*” (Luke 9:55-56 NKJV).

Save us from what?

Our Sin.

Sin is trusting *our* Judgment instead of *God's* Judgment.

It's believing that “*we are salvation*” instead of “*God is salvation.*”

It's faith in *Me-sus*, instead of *Jesus*.

It's faith in the imitation Christ—the spirit of the antichrist—who wants to seize the throne in the temple of your soul.

In 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians, Paul writes that Jesus will destroy this Antichrist with the Word of His mouth—a Fire that rides on His breath. Well, Jesus speaks words of Fire. John ingested those words and digested those words. The Word burned the Antichrist in John and took his place on his throne in the temple of John's soul. The Word was bitter in John's stomach; it was repentance. It was bitter in John's stomach, and then, sweet on his lips—that means it was kind.

It burned away John's ego and turned him into the Apostle of love. To digest the Word is to be humbled by the Word, and then, speak the Word. And like we mentioned on Easter, John's request was answered; he did call down fire on Samaria—He baptized Samaria in the Holy Spirit that's fire.

If you haven't digested the Word, don't speak the Word. Over and over in the Gospels, there are people that want to testify to Jesus, and Jesus asks them not to. They're not to speak the Word for they haven't digested the Word.

The first person told to testify in the Synoptic Gospels is the Gerasene demoniac—he didn't know anything except, “God is Salvation.”

The very first person told to testify in John's Gospel is a woman on her sixth husband—and a Samaritan. The Word was bitter in her stomach—six husbands—and sweet on her lips: "We are forgiven."

*"Is not my Word like Fire?"* says the Lord.

The Fire is not punishment for refusing to believe the Word.

The Fire is the Word of God that is the Will of God, who is the Atonement of God.

"God is one; God is Love; God is a Consuming Fire. Love is a Consuming Fire and Jesus is the Word of Love. He is the Kindness of God"—the Kindness that leads us to repentance.

But if you think that means that it doesn't burn, you are profoundly wrong.

It does burn. It burns the Antichrist. And it burns the spirit of the antichrist sitting on the throne in the temple of your own soul.

It burns the work of the Antichrist in you. It burns your ego.

That's why the people of the land are tormented by the Word of the witnesses.

### **#9. "I'll fail."**

Well, actually, yes . . . correct.

Perhaps you noticed that the two witnesses are killed by the Antichrist.

They fail—they can't make this whole church thing work.

John is exiled on an island writing to seven little churches that in so many ways appear to have failed and yet are called to conquer.

None of the apostles appear to conquer; none of the disciples got a raise or a nice retirement package . . . and all, except maybe John, were slaughtered by the beast when they battled.

- John's brother James is beheaded by King Herod in Acts 12.
- Peter is crucified upside down in Rome under Nero.
- Saint Paul is also martyred—in fact, that's the word for "witness" in the Greek language *marturos*, it's where we get our word martyr.

And it's not just that their bodies died, but that they sacrificed their egos, for the Gospel. At the end of his life sitting in a jail cell, Paul writes that all had deserted him. I think he felt like a failure (2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:16). He doesn't know that he was writing the Bible... and yet he still wrote...He testified.

Perhaps that's why they were such amazing witnesses—because they were obviously no longer witnessing to "me is salvation," that is, their ego; they were witnessing to "God is Salvation," who saved me from my self—my old self.

They loved Jesus when e seemed to be "good for nothing" just Good.

In the same way, Jesus testified to His Father, when He seemed to be good for nothing just Good.

He cried, *“My God my God, why have you forsaken me?”*

He didn't understand.

And then He cried, *“Into your hands, I commit my spirit.”* That's Faith.

And lo and behold it's not good for nothing. It's everything. That's Faith.

And He gives it to us through His witnesses.

Well, the witnesses are killed by the Antichrist.

They fail—or maybe I should say their flesh fails . . . their ego fails . . .

But the Word does not fail.

Revelation 11:13-19

*And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come.*

*Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.” And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.”*

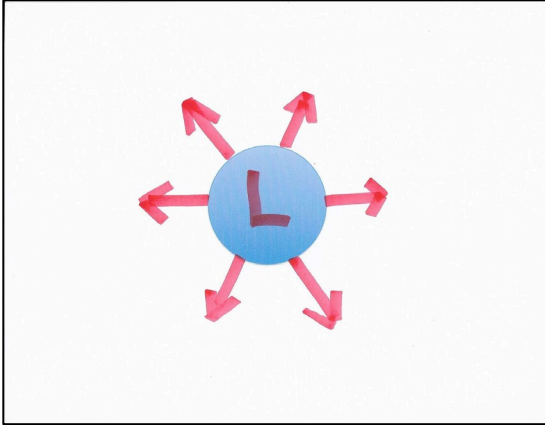
*Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple.*

The Ark of His Covenant is His Judgment, and His temple is you.

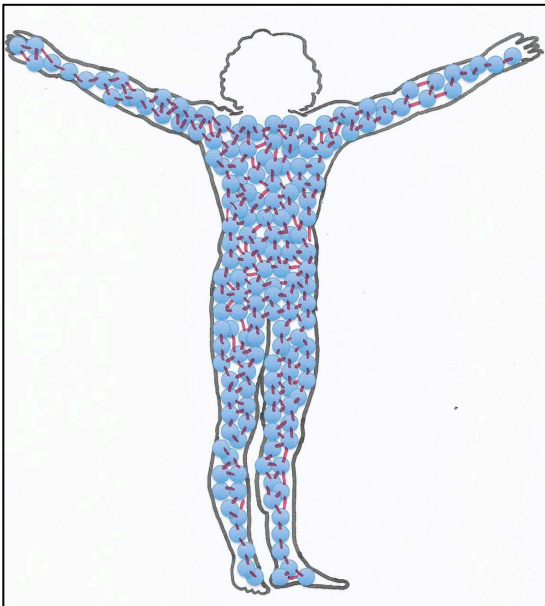
The Imitation Christ is no longer on the throne; the Lamb is on the throne in the temple of your soul.

Look:





And this is the End, which we saw in the beginning (Chapters 4 and 5).



This is the End, for evil has been destroyed, *“and the kingdoms of this world, have become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ.”* And it has happened through the proclamation of the Atonement, through the mouth of the Witnesses, which is us.

**#10. You say, “It won’t work.”**

But it’s the only thing that will work. Legislation, programs, rituals, armies, governments, and movements won’t work. But the Word will work, and already *has* worked. The Word will not return void, even when, especially when it rides out on your tongue.

I heard this story from Tony Campolo, who heard it from Millard Fuller, who is a friend of Jimmy Carter and the founder of Habitat for Humanity. After Reagan’s landslide election in 1980, Carter struggled with depression. A struggling economy, the Iran hostage crisis, and a landslide defeat all made him feel like a failure as president. On top of that, people in his own denomination thought he was the Antichrist! That sucks, believe me.

One day this friend said, *“Jimmy, is there anything you feel good about?”*  
Carter said, *“I do feel pretty good about the Middle East Peace Accord.”*  
The friend said, *“What I mean is . . . Did you do what you promised you would when you entered the White House? You told me you would share Jesus with anyone who spent the night at the White House.”*  
Carter thought for a moment and then said, *“Actually, yes. I did do that.”*

He went on to share with him about a night in 1976 when Anwar Sadat spent a night at the White House. That night, President Carter got up, grabbed his Bible, and went down to Sadat’s room. He knocked on the door and asked Anwar if he could talk to him for a moment. Sadat invited him in, and Jimmy Carter and Anwar Sadat sat next to each other there on the bed. And Jimmy told Anwar about their Father in Heaven, and how much he loved each of them, and what he had done for the both of them. He told him about Jesus.

According to the story, that night when Jimmy finished his testimony, the two of them sat next to each other on the side of the bed and prayed to the Prince of Peace.

I don’t know if Sadat called himself a Christian or not . . . but . . .

- That next year, Anwar Sadat shocked the world by going to Israel and giving a passionate speech for peace.
- The year after that, he won the Nobel Peace Prize.
- The year after that, the Middle East Peace Accord was signed.
- A few years after that, he was gunned down by Islamic Fundamentalists for his gracious and loving ways.

Well, if Sadat was the Antichrist, that’s how Jimmy Carter conquered him . . .

-Not with legislation, governments, and armies.

-Not as the president of principality and power, that is the United States of America . . .

but as the son of a Georgia peanut farmer, sitting next to the son of an Egyptian store clerk, just telling his friend, why he liked Jesus.

He ate the scroll and prophesied the mystery.

### **Communion**

Jesus says, “Eat it” and “testify” (Rev.12:11).

We overcome, we conquer by the blood of the Lamb and . . .

[Peter dips the communion bread into the communion wine and eats it]  
the Word of our testimony. Communion wine is fire. Come to the table.

[Several worship songs are sung.]

### **Benediction**

I am really grateful for you—The Sanctuary—because there are a lot of people that testify: “You really don’t need to be saved; there’s nothing wrong with you. And there are a lot of people that testify: “You can be saved if you’re part of our thing and you join our

group. And then you will be saved, and you can look down on those people who aren't saved."

There really are, in our world right now, especially in our country, few people that testify to the Lamb on the throne, that He's the Savior, and that He *has* conquered, and that He *will* conquer, and every creature in heaven and earth, and under the earth, and in the sea will worship Him, will adore Him, and will be home.

Thank you for testifying. Just your existence is a testimony. And I know it's kinda hard. I used to be the pastor of a really big church, now I'm the pastor of a small church. I don't know where our testimony is going, but I'm just grateful that you are here and that you are a testimony. The witnesses end up getting killed by the beast (and that encourages me because I think: *OK Maybe we're doing something right*) and yet their testimony, in the end, conquers all things because it's the Word of God moving out upon this creation.

I am grateful for you! I hope that you would testify (that's a big church word so maybe forget it). I just hope that you will tell people you like Jesus...

You don't have to have all the answers. Maybe it's just that you say:

"Ya know? I think Jesus likes us. He died for us, and He's on the throne."

Or maybe you talk to someone who thinks God's forsaken them, and they feel alone and abandoned, and you say (like we talked about a few weeks ago):

"I am sure you are not a bastard. Our Father is GOD!"

Or maybe there's someone who thinks: *"I've got to pay. I've got to pay for my sins."* And they've been trying to fix themselves with drugs and alcohol and all sorts of other things in the world. They think: *"I have to pay"*—that's what Judas did—and you get to share the good news:

"Your sins are forgiven you! Repent [literally: 'Change your way of thinking.']" I'm just saying that's good news.

You don't have to have all the right words. Maybe you just speak something from a verse like *"He makes all things new"* or *"As in Adam all die so in Christ will all be made alive"* I can't explain it all, but I know He loves you!"

All I'm saying is eat it and testify!

*Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio or video version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.*