



Worship Guide for July 18, 2021

Sermon Notes

A Violent Nativity

Revelation 12 (pew Bible pgs. 1034-1035)

In Revelation 11, we saw the announcement of the eternal rule and reign of “our Lord and his Christ”. At the center of John’s vision and message is the fact that King Jesus is enthroned. God has reclaimed his creation and his eternal kingdom is established (Rev 11:15-18).

Chapter 12 begins a new section of Revelation, even as it continues to develop the themes of the previous sections of the book. It takes us behind the scenes and shows us the cosmic origins of the spiritual conflict between the church and the world we have seen in chapters 1-11. Chapters 12–22 show us what can be seen only with eyes of faith, and what we see beginning in chapter 12 is a war in heaven.

Some commentators refer to Revelation 12 as an “apocalyptic Christmas story”. This Christmas story has no shepherds, no manger, no angels singing. This is a violent nativity with a powerful evil dragon waiting to devour the soon to be born baby and destroy the woman who gives him birth. Instead of praising God and announcing, “peace on earth”, heaven’s angels are fighting a war against Satan and his demons. And while Revelation will end with the eternal destruction of the dragon, that inevitable end is delayed, and until then he rages against those “who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.” (12:17)

Christ has won the decisive victory over Satan through His death and resurrection. It is by this victory that the Dragon is cast down, the Accuser's lies are revealed, and his accusations silenced. This passage is strange; its interpretation is challenging; but the message of Revelation 12 should encourage us. Christ is victorious! Those who keep his commandments and stand firm in the gospel are preserved and secure. Because of what we see in Revelation 12, we can persevere in our witness despite the opposition and persecution we face.

Heaven's Perspective of Christmas (12:1-6)

Christ's Victory Over the Accuser (12:7-12)

Satan's Relentless, but Futile Fight (12:13-17)

Applications:

Weekly Discipleship Guide

Know

What does God intend for me to know?

In your journal, use the following prompts to write some truths that stood out from this week's message.

I never knew...

I was reminded...

A question I still have...

I was challenged...

I was convicted...

A truth I could share...

I was encouraged to...

I need to dig deeper into...

Be (Consider)

What does God's Word lead me to prayerfully consider?

In your journal, use the following questions to write some prompts to use in praying through this week's passage.

Is there a command to obey?

How am I compelled to exalt God?

Is there a promise to claim?

Is there a principle to follow?

Is there an example to follow?

Am I convicted to confess any sin?

Is there a sin to avoid?

How do I need to rest in Jesus/the gospel?

How can I pray for someone else?

What am I compelled to love or desire?

Do (Yield)

How does God's Word call me to yield my life?

In your journal, write your answers and thoughts in response to the following questions.

How does Revelation 12 help you understand the grand narrative of the Scriptures? How does it change and even deepen your understanding of the birth story of Jesus?

What do the descriptors of Satan in Revelation 12:9 tell us about his character and goals for humanity? How can we learn to rest in our security in Christ and his victory over that enemy, especially in considering these descriptors?

What does it mean to have victory as described in Revelation 12:11-12? How can believers walk in this victory?

*Use this guide to help you internalize this week's message & to prepare for Life Group.

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