

06.06.21

Revelation

Chapter 17 - Revealing that Which Allures Men The Mystery of Savage Enticement Prt 2 (vs. 7-12)

Revelation 17:7-12: And the angel said to me, “Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. The beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction. The ten

horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour.

We come to this passage, and we are reminded in the Book of Revelation, once again, that the Lord desires to reveal things to His church. "Here is wisdom," Scripture says. And you can hear Him giving us the mind of understanding that these things might not just be something that we look into, but something that changes us. It is for the purpose of directing and in some cases correcting the church; because so easily the Church allows the things of this world to come within its doors. And it thinks that by looking like the world that it would be better off. But it's just the opposite. We should be repulsed by these things.

In this Book of Revelation, written by John, who is a very personable individual, we know that as we look at the Gospel of John, and we see one who is displaying the love of God throughout that book, as well as 1 John and the

epistles. So, we know that this individual that writes this, that God has so chosen to write the Book of Revelation, is not writing from a mere scientific or in some way academic perspective. He is writing from a very emotional perspective. So that when you look through the book and you begin to see the imagery that is given throughout, and certainly there's a lot of imagery that's given in the passages, you begin to understand that the imagery is there to stir our emotions. When John begins to, in Chapter 17, talk about the woman, and then he talks about the beast, and then as it follows, he goes on to explain these things. I think it's to be noted that he doesn't begin with talking about the nations. He doesn't begin talking about the kings. He doesn't begin talking about the patterns that are given to us. But what he begins with are the pictures. And so, you're hit almost instantly by the imagery that is given to us. And the imagery that God gives to us about the things of the world is not really exclusive to Revelation because you can see the same kind of imagery as Jesus is talking with the Pharisees or whatever.

One of the passages, Matthew 7:15, deals with the false prophets. And He says, “They dress in sheep's clothing, but inwardly,” and He describes them this way, “they are ravenous wolves.” Right?

When Jesus is talking about Herod, in particular in Luke 13, He says, as people are telling Him, “Well, Herod wants this and Herod's over here and he's warning about this.” And He goes, “You know what? Herod's a fox, a crafty old fox.” And you have to walk away, and you go, “Well, that's still a beast, right?”

And when John is baptizing and the religious leaders come to him, he goes, “You guys are just brood of vipers.”

Now, in every case what you have are beasts being described, and those beasts are really showing the character and the nature of the evil. I mean, you could say, well, the religious leaders at that time were just really not nice guys. Or you could say they're a brood of vipers. Now, if you understand what a brood of vipers is, they eat each other when they're born. And then they turn on the mother and they start eating her. So, what a picture. What a graphic picture of what the religious leaders were

like, because they didn't care for anybody. If you started getting a little bit further ahead, they were coming after you. And so, you have this graphic picture with just a few words. And that's the same thing that's happening within this particular passage.

Of course, Peter refers to Satan in 1 Peter 5:8 as a roaring lion looking for somebody to devour. And in every case, we have this picture of a beast.

When you come to the Book of Revelation, and I oftentimes think of Chapter 13 in particular, where he begins to describe the beast coming out of the waters, and we know that as he goes on to say that the number of the beast is 666, which is the number of man; which we understand that as Psalm 49 so clearly puts it, man in his pomp is like the beast which perishes. And left to ourselves, our greed and our avarice, it's not long before we just devour. And it's all selfish. So, out of this comes this picture. And what Scripture is describing through this symbol of the beast is this worldwide effort to literally devour anything and everything that God loves. This is the picture that you see specifically in Revelation 12. And the

interesting irony of all this is that it's describing Satan himself as this great dragon that comes to kill the woman, that is to say Israel, God's love of His life, and then the child that she bears; the dragon then goes after.

The interesting thing, if you look with me in Revelation 13, is that man chooses to worship the beast because there's kind of a love affair there. We're going to talk about why he does that. But if you look in Revelation 13:4, he not only worships the beast, but he also worships the dragon. Now, what the passage is saying is that man will love Satan. You go, “Why would he do that? Why would man, conglomerate, love Satan?” And the answer is right here in the text.

It says this,

(Revelation 13:4) “they worshiped the dragon...”

I.e. Satan. We know that's true. Revelation 12, right? Satan, a dragon; it gives all the names, devil.

But it says in verse 4,

“they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast...”

Listen to what it's saying. Somebody gives you your greedy desires and you're with them. Because man is this devouring machine and anything that gets in his way, he hates. Paul warns the Galatians, and he says, "Look, I know you have freedom and the freedoms in Christ and I want you to live like free men, but I don't want you to use your freedom to devour one another." It's an interesting picture. Of course, that's what we've done in America. We've taken that wonderful gift of freedom, and we go, "I can have anything I want. It doesn't matter who gets in my way. I'll just go get it." And so, it becomes destructive in nature. The beast of man comes out with his selfish, self-centered pursuits. So, the beast is that symbol of ultimately this worldwide effort to destroy. And you see this beast pulling up its ugly head every so often, whether it's with Egypt or Assyria or with Babylon or the Medes and the Persians. You have these world powers coming up out of the peoples that just want to devour God's people and want to devour anything and everything that God loves. So, they have that beast mentality. It is that picture that is given.

Now, the woman that is given within the text is a picture of how man is so easily seduced away from God and from a meaningful relationship with Him. So, she's described as the great harlot. Once again, you go to 1 John, "Love not the world." Love. He uses the word "love," right? "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." And you can see all of the glitz and the glamour, but the bottom line in this is that it doesn't matter how pretty the world makes it; it's still usury and exploitation and profiteering. It's still a fraudulent, nefarious debilitation of people. Scripture says that the harlot, she reduces the man to a loaf of bread. So, you know, "Think how rich I'm getting." Think about how they're using you. "Oh, we're going to give you all these riches." Yeah, we'll see how that turns out. But the perception is that "This world loves me." The world doesn't love you. It's using you. And everything about the world is doing that.

So, as 1 John 2:16 will say, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the boastful pride of life, are all being allured by this great harlot, which is the world's glitz; which is described in the passage as the cities, as he states within

the text. These are the cities; this great harlot; the cities that sits on the nations. And it gives these empires that are described and these great empires that long to devour. So, she's sitting on the beast, these empires that long to devour everything that is good and godly. And she's the proverbial carrot. So, strangely enough, the beast is using the woman to allure you into a state of not only love for the world and infatuation for the world but also take you away from the security of God. Because if we can take you out of the arms of God and into the arms of the world, guess what? You become vulnerable. But if you're in His arms, you're protected. The shelter of His wings. So, the love for these other things is kind of a bait and switch. You know, we're being allured by the world to come into the world. The perception is, "The world is going to take care of us," and then the world turns us over to the beast. And that's what ends up happening within the passage.

So, we pick up in Chapter 17, and hopefully a little bit of explanation on that is in some way helpful. We come to Chapter 17, and the focus is on the beast. And we can in

some way understand somebody being allured by the glitz and the glamour. You can understand that. I think they're getting TVs that are almost like 3D. You got to understand, "That's pretty interesting. That kind of allures me." So, there are a lot of things out there that the world has that are very alluring, and you can understand that. But what really becomes dumbfounding is how the world takes to loving a beast. That just takes it to another level, doesn't it? And you can understand the glitz and the glamor, but why would they love the beast?

And it's that wonderment that we see in particular, if you drop on down with me in verse 7,

(Revelation 17:7) "And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

(Revelation 17:8) The beast that you saw was, and is not..."

Which is making reference to the fact that, at this time, the beast has been subdued. We've been talking about this, so I'm not going to go into as much detail, but what

we understand is that there's been a subduing. What caused the subduing of the beast? And the answer is very clear- The Holy Spirit in Acts 2 coming upon the saints and the power, as we understand, according to 2 Thessalonians 2, a restraining force has now come into the world and has caused the beast to back off. Though the nation of Rome had come in and literally burned down the woman's house, which is Jerusalem, had been literally destroyed in AD 70, but the church is becoming such a force that it is now beginning to restrain the beast of the world. And this restraint will continue until the second part of this kingdom comes into play, and thus the tribulation, and the restraint will be taken off once again according to 2 Thessalonians 2.

As you look at this passage, it says this in verse 8,

“The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of...”

So, there's a time when the beast is going to resurge again. And once again, the resurgence of the beast, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medes and Persians, Greeks, Romans, and then it's going to resurge again, that great beast. But

more as a grouping, as a federation. All of these nations will come together.

And it says,

“... come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth... will wonder...”

Now, what it's talking about, and we touched upon this last week, but it is giving a picture of those who perceive the earth as their home, i.e. the word “dwell”. Thus, when it uses the word “*katoikeō*,” “*oikeō*” is really a word that refers to home. And it refers to a place that you and I have fixed our home to and have made that a place of condition or a place that we will abide in. So, a state of abiding- “This is my home.”

So, the phrase is this, “those who have made the earth their home,” watch the phrase,

“... will wonder when they see the beast...”

These are people whose name has not been written in the Book of Life. Why? Because this is their home. And what they've desired is not the life of Christ, but what they've desired are the things of the world. So, this is their home.

Now, the word “wonder” is emphasizing an infatuation. They're infatuated by the beast. In fact, some texts will literally define it as admiration. They will admire the beast. There is this drawing to a beast, here again. It's so bizarre when you think about it that they love the things that the beast stands for, whether it be power or wealth or control and even cruelty. They are somehow drawn to the nature of the beast. And man begins to lift this up and long to have this in his heart. This is who he becomes, i.e. the number of man.

So, as we come to the passage, it is describing this bizarre mystery that the world is infatuated and marvels with great admiration for this beast because of its great power, because of its great control, because of its great cruelty. You've seen this pattern from the beginning, whether it be with Nimrod. Nimrod was the first one that started the whole slave labor thing. But hey, he built a tower into the heavens. And the text actually reads that he was a hunter of men. So, what it's talking about is, he hunted men to enslave them to build great edifices unto himself. So, he builds Babylon, the tower of Babylon; he builds Nineveh;

he builds all these great things. And man begins to worship Nimrod and the things that he elevates. And you go, "Why would anybody worship a beast?" But they worshipped the Pharaohs; they worshipped the Caesars; they worshipped Nebuchadnezzar. It doesn't matter what they do, because they have this great power, man pays great homage to him because his perception is that "This is the god." This is the god of the world. This is what the god of the world worships. The god of this world worships beast. And that really is the key. And once again, you see that in Chapter 13 within the passage. It is this that you can see that the disciples even have a drawing to it.

Let me give you an example. In Matthew 20, there are just some brief pictures of this. I'll pick up in verse 20. Jesus is there with the sons of Zebedee and the other disciples. And the mother began coming down, making their request of Christ, "This is a good time. He doesn't look busy, so we'll ask Him for something we've been wanting for a long time."

(Matthew 20:21) "And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Command that in Your kingdom

these two sons of mine may sit one on Your right and one on Your left.”

(Matthew 20:22) But Jesus answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?” ...”

“Are you able to sacrifice your sons on a cross?”

“... They said to Him, “We are able.”

(Matthew 20:23) He said to them, “My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father.”

(Matthew 20:24) And hearing this, the ten became indignant with the two brothers.”

So, now, we don't only have the brothers involved; we have the rest of them that maybe jealousy and rivalry is coming in.

“And hearing this, the ten became indignant with the two brothers.

(Mat 20:25) But Jesus called them to Himself and said...”

“You have no idea where you're heading. This is the way the world thinks.”

“... “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them.”

It's the very description of Satan as he's being described in Isaiah 14 as this oppressive king in Babylon. So, that's the way of the world. But how quickly we find ourselves elevating this kind of mindset that if you're strict and hard and you put all of this oppression on people, then wow. I mean, it's what psychologists say. If in fact you don't charge a lot of money for your counseling, people have a tendency to think that you don't have anything important to say. So, the more you charge, the more you oppress them, the more they go, “Wow, now this man's really important because he charges thousands of dollars an hour.” And he probably says 2 words, and you go, “Okay, I'm sure they're deep because I paid a lot of money for that.”

So, the same thing is seen if you look at me in 2 Corinthians 11. In this particular passage, of course, the warning is, you have to be careful because Satan disguises

himself as an angel of light. And, you know, we were looking at the apocalyptic horses. Remember the first horse? It was the white horse. But remember what the white horse was doing? Conquering.

So, 2 Corinthians 11, he warns them in verse 13, (2 Corinthians 11:13) “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

(2 Corinthians 11:14) No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

(2 Corinthians 11:15) Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.”

Then Paul has to deal with this sense of, “But you're not looking for the right qualities. I mean, you had these great men.” I remember going to a particular church, and right before they introduced the speaker in the church, they went down a list of all his credentials. It was so amazing. I said to myself, “How did he have time to go to all those

schools and classes and still stand before me today? I would think he'd still be studying.” But they went through all these credentials, and finally he stood up to speak. I wasn't thoroughly impressed, but nevertheless, he spoke. And I'm sure people were thinking, “Well, I'm sure we heard the greatest message ever because this guy really had the credentials.” But the point is, if in fact that is what is drawing you, you're listening to the wrong spirit. That's why Jesus goes, “Okay, you fishermen. You guys there.” I mean, these are not scholars. I'm not saying don't study, but I'm saying, what are you infatuated with? What's drawing you? So... He goes on, he says, “I know that you seem to gravitate towards people that boss you around and tell you what you have to do and they grade you and they do this stuff and they make you feel like you're this big.” He says, “I know you gravitate towards those people.”

And he states this,

(2 Corinthians 11:19) “For you, being so wise, tolerate the foolish gladly.

(2 Corinthians 11:20) For you tolerate it if anyone enslaves you, anyone devours you, anyone takes advantage of you, anyone exalts himself, anyone hits you in the face.”

“Well, that guy's important.” And what Paul's trying to convey is that you're going for the wrong standards. But it's the standard of the world. They'll try to put you through the ringer. When you get finished, you go, “Wow, I must have something very important here because they really beat me up on this one.” And you begin to think like the world because the world, it elevates the beast. It doesn't elevate love. Christ came, and said, “I love you.” “Well, I haven't really done anything.” It doesn't matter. But the world goes, “Okay, so that couldn't be important because, I mean, if He just loves you for just who you are... I mean, what did you do to earn that?” Nothing. That's why the picture that is given in Revelation is of Christ at the very beginning, the Lamb of God that was slain. And He wants you to fall in love with a love that would die for you rather than a power that would devour you. But unfortunately, man has this love affair for these

kinds of things. And sadly to say, it often disguises itself as an angel of light and goes on crusades and slaughters people under the guise of righteousness. But clearly, we know that's not true.

So, the very beginning of this in verse 8 is dealing with this beast and the wonder of the beast and man's infatuation with brutality. And then the second part of this, which makes it even more bizarre, is that man will come together, forming a federation, relationships. Politics makes strange bedfellows, doesn't it? And you go, "How is it that these guys are working with these guys? They hate each other." And you know this to be the case, and this is going to be the point within the passage, evil is going to work together to destroy everything that God loves and God. So, they're going to join hands. And I would say this- You need to be afraid when you see the world joining hands; when you hear phrases like "We're all coming together." When you begin to see these peoples that you know hate each other begin to join hands, whether it's through technology or healthcare, it doesn't matter where they're being united from, they're

being united. And it's a part of the world controlling and coming together for a purpose. Now, your perception is, and what they're telling you, here's the white horse, "We're coming to help you." It's like (President) Reagan said, the most dangerous words that you could hear from the government, "We're the government, we're here to help you." But here the world comes, and it's under the guise of the white horse, but really what they're going to do is destroy the Lamb. And you're going to see this within the particular passage. The world's going to come together for one purpose, with one mind, destroy the Lamb. And this is why you and I are not to be a part of the world. Loving not the world, not being a part of it. You know, when it talks about those who dwell on the earth see the beast as something to love, they see the beast as something to admire. But we don't.

I was looking through Revelation at how many times it was mentioned. Revelation 12:12, Revelation 13:6, Revelation 21:3. In every one of those cases, it makes reference to you who dwell in the heavens.

And the way it reads in Revelation 12:12 is this,

“... rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them...”

Now, the thought is initially, “Well, those are the people that already died, and those are the angels.” No, this is not what He's talking about. He's talking about those who have made heaven their home.

And we see things very different because you come to Revelation 18, and you see the destruction of Babylon, and the world's crying. But the church is rejoicing because we see things very differently.

1 Peter 2:11 says that you and I are strangers and aliens on this earth.

And Hebrews 12:28 says that we've received a kingdom, which is very different than the kingdom of the world; this kingdom that we received can't be shaken.

So, the things that we embrace are things like, well, we get to grow lasting fruit, think about that. You and I get to drink water that is eternal life. You and I are anxious for nothing. You and I are always of good courage. We embrace a love, according to Scripture, that never fails. Now, the world has all their kinds of definitions of selfish

love, but we have a love that never fails. Therefore, we embrace something quite different and we have a peace that never wanes. You think about it, “Peace I give you, not as the world gives. But the peace that I give you, the world can't take away in a joy that never ends.” “In His presence is fullness of joy; at His right hand are pleasures forevermore.” I think of that song, let's see, how does it go? *“Things that are nobler, things that are higher, these have allured my sight.”* So, the woman of the world is not alluring to me. It's a prostitute. I'm not drawn by that. I'm drawn by a love of my life, faithful and true. So, what are you looking at? And ultimately, what we see within this passage is that you and I become resolved. And I think the song goes on to say something like, *“I am resolved, no longer to linger, charmed by the world's delight. Things that are nobler, things that are higher. These have allured my sight.”*

So, Hebrews 11:10 says that Abraham was looking for the city which has foundations whose architect and builder is God. And this is why we rejoice, and of course, we desire that better country. It is that allures us, but strangely

enough, the world is allured by brutality, by the ferociousness of savagery. They love that. Just look at the movies, that's all you have to do.

So, as we drop on down, then what becomes more bizarre is the culmination of these people that have never gotten along with each other. We always have wars, right?

There's always somebody fighting somewhere in some place. But the sign comes where they're going to drop their war towards each other and form a confederation with each other to destroy their greatest hatred- And that is the Lamb.

So, the picture gives it this way; it says in verse 9, if you drop on down,

(Revelation 17:9) “Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits,

(Revelation 17:10) and they are seven kings...”

“*Basileus*” is a word that is used in basically a foundation of power. Another way of putting it is they are world empires. These are the world empires.

“... five have fallen...”

And we kind of go through that list.

“... one is...”

At that time, the Roman Empire.

If you go on, it says,

“... the other has not yet come...”

So, let's see, that'd be five; that'd be six.

“... one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.”

Very interesting way of putting it. The point seems to be for a season to accomplish something. In other words, out of this will come another empire. And what you're going to understand, and I won't go into Daniel with all this, but the point is that the empire is going to be like the Roman Empire coming out of that same grouping. And yet, it's going to take in the whole of what has always been. That is to say, this beast is still one. Egyptians, Assyrians, Medes and the Persians. The beast is still one, and then the Roman Empire has brought it in together, and then the one will come out of this as a whole.

And the way it describes it is,

(Revelation 17:11) “The beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth...”

Now, without going into too much detail in this, and believe me, I've checked myself with what I believe to be some great theologians that I believe do a lot of study in Scripture, because you always have to check yourself, right? Yeah. You can't be rogue in these things. But one of the things that they make clear is, and I don't want to get too specific, but the definite article is not used with this word, “eighth”. The point is that it's not there to show succession. That is to say, it's not counting. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. What it's saying is that, and actually some texts will actually read this way- It'll read that the last one will consist of the seven. So, it has that connotation, not of being another number, but of one coming out of the empires that always existed, but inclusive of all. So, it's not next in succession, but consists of the former ones. It is a part of. Not trying to confuse you here. So, the point is that out of these empires will come one which will rule.

Now, what's interesting is this- Here's the interesting part- the powers are going to come into play to revive this great world empire. The world hasn't had a world empire since Rome. There hasn't been a world empire since Rome. There's been, you know, up to that point, six in all, but not until Rome. What's going to be revived is a world empire. That's the point of the passage. What's going to happen is, one's going to come in on the onset to rule, but only for a short time to then be taken over by another who will literally come in and is not like any of those. In other words, not coming out of that grouping, but is so unique that he's listed as like an eighth.

As the passage says,

“... and is one of the seven...”

See, isn't that what the passage says in verse 11?

“... and he goes to destruction.”

The point is that these nations are going to come together, they're going to gather together under whatever guise it is, under the guise of some kind of unity. It could be healthcare, because we know that

they're trying to, you know, put stuff on your forehead, chips and stuff like that. But whatever it is, it's going to be very alluring to you, because, hey, it's for you. "We're just thinking of you." Technology. "We're going to put a camera in every corner. This will be for you, for your protection." And little drones flying around. "This is for you." So, all these "wonderful" things are happening, and you're going to be drawn to it. And whoever it is that begins to pull us together, but his work will be for that; and there will probably be some magnetism that's there, as well as a kind of altruism that is an undercurrent, "We're feeling good about this. We're feeling wonderful. There's this hope of utopia. There's this hope of wonderful things coming, and there's a great big, beautiful tomorrow." So, there's this kind of moving that way. And then, someone else will come and take it over, like an eighth, but he's one of the seven. So, he's going to come and take it over out of the blue.

And the reason why it's referring to him not being like one of them at all... Now, this is what's interesting about this, because it goes on to say,

(Revelation 17:12) “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour.”

Or more specifically, the word makes reference to a specific period of time for a specific purpose to accomplish a specific work. So, these kingdoms are going to come together, and they're going to submit to this beast, this desire to destroy and devour. As it'll go on to say, they'll have one power, in verse 13.

We're not going to jump this far, but ultimately the power is, verse 14, what is their desire?

(Revelation 17:14) “These will wage war against the Lamb...”

But they're all coming together. The interesting thing is that they're forming a ferocious federation, all these different kingdoms coming together, and are willing to drop their authority and hand it over to some strange foreign force that nobody knows. And so, in the context, what you're reading is that there's a uniting with a breaking away of their ideological, racial, political, socioeconomic... I mean, people have their traditional ties

and their cultures, and they're going to abandon all of that to come together with this one. Now, the picture that is given to us is for the church. And the purpose is, you know, people say, "I can't give this up for God. I mean, you don't know how strong tradition is. You don't know how strong my culture is. You don't know how powerful race is," and people start gathering under these little things. And you know what Scripture's saying? "You would do it to kill Me."

You know, you read in Acts 4:27, it says, Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the Jews all worked together to crucify Jesus. That's everybody. And let's see, we know that the Pharisees were working together with the Herodians, which they hated, and then they pulled together with the Sadducees, which nobody really liked them. And then, ultimately, in John 19, the whole Jewish nation, which many had died because Rome had come in trying to put shields in the holy place, and so they went into war with Rome in Jerusalem because "You can't do that in our place." But now they're crucifying Jesus, and you know what they say? They say to Pilate, "Caesar is

our king.” What happened? What happened to all their zeal for their God? And the point is the world comes together and will come together to hate God. They would do that. And they will abandon all the things that they use as an excuse to leave Christ. “I mean, wait a minute. You have no idea the background. I can't just leave this. I can't just drop this. I mean, I've got family. I've got...”

2 Corinthians, just by way of reminder, and we'll close with this. 2 Corinthians 6. We'll close in verse 14.

(2 Corinthians 6:14) “Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?”

In other words, we're setting a different standard. We're not dealing with culture. We're not dealing with race. We're saying it's about right. And it's about what's wrong. And contrary to what people were saying in the days of Isaiah, in Isaiah 5, and they call good evil and evil good. Contrary to that, we know what the right thing is.

(2 Corinthians 6:15) “Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?”

(2 Corinthians 6:16) Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.

(2 Corinthians 6:17) Therefore..."

What does he want you to do? "Get out of there. Don't let the world be a part of you." "Oh, I can't do that." They can leave everything to unite with the destruction of God. You can't leave for the love of God?

"... COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN;
And I will welcome you.

(2 Corinthians 6:18) And I will be a father to you..."

"We'll be a family. We'll be the family."

And if you look, in some ways, that's the way it closes there in Revelation 18, where it talks about the demise of Babylon. And of course, it talks about what this great city has allured us away from and that it's ultimately going to be destroyed.

And then it says this, as you hear the voice coming out of heaven, look with me in Revelation 18,

(Revelation 18:4) “I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues.””

God is calling you and I out. And what a strange phenomenon that the world would form a federation to destroy and would be good with that. God has formed a federation of love for Him, for His children. You and I should be willing to leave everything. And I think in some ways this is what He's doing. He's speaking to the churches, and He's saying, “Look what's happening.”

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for this message and just a reminder of what You've called us to do and just a reminder of what the world is about. We're on two different tracks and we're going in two different directions. And when You tell us, “Don't love the world,” You're telling us not to love the savagery that the world

worships. So, You're calling us to Yourself. You're telling us to love You and to love Your kingdom, and that means that I love things like forgiveness. I love to forgive people. I long to do that. And it means that I love the One who died for me with all of my heart.

And so, with your heads bowed and your eyes closed, could you not be devoted to the King of kings and the Lord of lords? Would you not be willing to abandon everything for His name's sake? In some cases, the fishermen were asked to drop their nets; tax collector, his ways; a Sanhedrin, his mindset. What's getting in your way? The world would leave everything.