

Revelation 2:8-11 – Sweet Aroma

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[0 : 00] We're not just quite, but we are in a way that we don't normally hit these books.

But we are looking at some overviews to start with. And I was just kind of trying to think in my mind about, you know, how to see these overviews.

And maybe one of the ways that we see these is that these are streams, themes, streams that run through the book that are filled.

The water is Jesus. And I think we're going to see that next week when we actually start the text proper in verse one, where John says it's the revelation of Jesus Christ. This whole book is about Jesus.

And yet we see Jesus in so many different ways. And so certainly we see that there is a war going on and we see Jesus as a victor of that war. And we see how we are to remain faithful.

[1 : 01] But really the true one is Jesus who's remained faithful and so on and so forth. And we talk about, you know, the persecution. Well, actually we see Jesus is the one persecuted. And so it's good to see that as we go through these themes, we actually are not focusing on one of these themes above another, but are seeing them interplayed with each other and Jesus being kind of the main flow of all of these themes.

So what we've seen so far, and it's going to come on the screen for you, is that the ways that Revelation helps us, like why study the book of Revelation?

And the ways that Revelation helps us is number one, by reminding us God is sovereign, showing us what proper worship is, exhorting us to live like the people of God, reminding us of who our true enemy is and rekindling our love for the nations.

And so we've been looking at those five. And this morning we're going to look at number three. And as I say, next week we're going to finish looking at the final theme.

And so if you're taking notes, and I hope you are, the sixth thing that Revelation helps us is that it helps us to believe again that wrong never wins. And so, you know, most of us have read news stories from time to time or fairly frequently about some kind of atrocity that has just left us shaking our heads, right?

[2 : 34] You know, we've read the news or we've heard this or that, and sometimes we've come away just asking God, surely it's time that you judged that. Surely God, you would do something about that.

Or, you know, maybe, Lord, why did you even let that happen? Isn't that a common complaint from those who don't follow Christ? It's like, if God is good, why are all these bad things happening?

I remember a few years ago reading the death of Peter Connolly, otherwise known as Baby P. Do you remember that? And this young guy who was born actually into a nightmare of abuse and violence, and for 18 months of his 17-month-old life, suffered more than 50 injuries.

Finally found dead in his cot from wounds sustained by his mother and her boyfriend. And you just think, as you read those and events like those, which are numerous, that sometimes this leads us to doubt if God is going to judge evil.

Or does just kind of life carry on? Does evil just going to exist forever? Is God ever going to put a stop to evil that seems like it's just out of control?

[3 : 54] And, you know, most of us have never, nor will ever, faced serious persecution. The kind where you die if you're a myth being a Christian.

But, you know, thanks to organizations like Barnabas Fund and Open Doors and people like that, we're becoming more and more aware, certainly in the last probably 50 years, of the struggle of Christians around the world.

And I don't know if you're aware, but in the recent 2022 watch list, Open Doors reported that at least 360 million Christians around the world experience high levels of persecution and discrimination. That's one in every seven Christian. Last year, 5,898 Christians were killed for their faith. Of these 4,650, we're in Nigeria alone.

And again, we can think about these events and it challenges us. It challenges our thinking about God and his sovereignty over evil.

[5 : 01] We're not alone in thinking this. Again, one of the questions that we often get asked, if God is a God of love, why X, Y, Z? And actually, look, if you flick to Revelation 6, verse 9, you'll see this is the exact question that the martyrs who are around the throne of God are asking.

So we read, he opened the fifth seal, verse 9. And I saw under the altar the souls of those who'd been slain for the word of God and for the witness that they had borne.

And they cried out with a loud voice, Oh, sovereign Lord. So that they recognize God is sovereign, but they just can't work out. They can't make sense of if God is sovereign. How long is the text?

How holy and true. How long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth? How long is it going to be? What they're saying is, surely you won't let evil get away with it.

Surely wickedness will not win. When are you going to judge evil? Edmund Burke once said that the only thing necessary for triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.

[6 : 16] And there's a lot of truth in that statement. And last time we talked about how this sin and evil is inspired by Satan. And for most of us, we're not in a position, are we, to do anything about sin and evil?

Does that mean it's like there's not a lot we can do about it? Like we read the stories in our hearts, Mel, partly because it seems that we are helpless to do anything.

When we experience the horrible darkness of evil or we read about it, often we struggle not with the actual fact, but we struggle with what seems to be the lack of God's involvement.

Why did God not stop the war crimes in Mariupol from happening? Why did God not stop baby P from being abused? What about those Coptic Christians beheaded in Ethiopia?

Why did that happen if God is good? Well, the book of Revelation's strong and steady response to those honest questions is, No, evil will not win because God is in the process of defeating it now and will ultimately destroy it in the future.

[7 : 32] It's going to come about the destruction of evil. Look at the setup in chapter five. Chapter five, verse one, it says, Then I, and that's John, saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals.

And we find out actually in chapter six that those seals, when those seals are broken, judgment comes upon evil. He says, In other words, who is worthy to judge evil?

Who can do that? And tragically, verse three, no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it.

And so he says, I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or look into it. There's this realization that John has that evil and sin should be judged.

And the mechanism for that judgment, the scroll and the seals, no one could look at it. There was no one worthy. And that broke his heart because there wasn't an answer.

[8 : 54] So this is, of course, the proper response. If there is no one to right all the wrongs and settle all of the the brokenness and deal once and for all with evil, then evil wins.

And that should break our hearts. And the only thing worse than experiencing evil is the thought that evil might one day get away with it and win in the end.

So in the midst of John's despair, we read about one of the elders says to him in verse five, weep no more. Behold, look, lift up your eyes.

The line of the tribe of Judah, the root of David has conquered so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals. Weep no more. John is told because there is one worthy to open the seal judgments.

There is one worthy who will not allow sin to win. And then notice in chapter six, when these judgments are given and notice the expression each time that it's given.

[10 : 00] There were good. It says they were given or it was permitted. Someone is standing in the background saying, let this happen now. Chapter six, verse two.

I looked, John says, and behold, a white horse and its rider had a bow and a crown was given to him. The one opening the seals is given the authority for judgment to take place over sin and evil.

It was given to him and he came out conquering and to conquer. And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, come and out came another horse. Bright red, its rider was permitted.

It was given to him to take peace from the earth so that people should slay one another. And he was given a great sword. And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, come.

And I looked and behold, a black horse and its rider and pair of scales in its hand. And I heard what seems to be the voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying a quarter of wheat for a denarii, three quarters of barley for a denarii, do not harm the oil and wine.

[11 : 04] And I looked and behold, a fourth seal and heard the voice of a fourth living creature say, come. And behold, I looked, a pale horse and its rider was death. And Hades followed him and they were given authority over a fourth of the earth to kill with the sword, with famine, with pestilence and beasts, wild beasts of the earth.

So this is, this is God's action plan against evil. Incredible. How many commentaries that you read miss this and move straight from the text to world events without giving credit to God for the one who is making, who is working in the background to bring judgment against evil.

God is the ultimate source of these judgments against evil, even though the horsemen are the ones dishing it out. And because of God's actions, both in the seal judgments and the trumpet judgments that follow, what happens is praise erupts from the throne room of God in chapter 15 as they sing in verse 4, who will not fear you, O Lord, and glorify your name for you alone are holy.

In other words, God is praised for judging evil because judgment of evil flows out of his holiness.

after that, the scene changes in verse 7 to preparations for pouring out the last series of judgments against evil.

These are called the bowl judgments and we read that one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls, notice this, full of the wrath of God.

[12 : 48] And actually, that's a key word in this book, wrath. That is God's judgment of evil, wrath. And I think it's important for us to understand that wrath is God's intentional condemnation of sin and evil.

This is not accidental. You know, God is not wandering around stopping his tone and getting angry. Right? This is not consequential. This is intentional.

And look, at the end of Revelation, we kind of catch a glimpse of God's wrath. The last chapter, or sorry, the last judgment scene in chapter 20, it's often described as the great white throne judgment.

There we read that, then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. And from his presence, earth and sky fled away and no one was found for them.

And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was in, what was written in the books according to what they had done.

[13 : 57] And the sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them and they were judged, each one of them according to what they had done. Then death and Hades itself were thrown into the lake of fire.

This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name is not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. And so look, this reminds us, as we're reading the news, as we're watching the news, as we're hearing the stories, as we're encountering some people on a daily basis, it reminds us that one day the wicked must stand in final judgment.

Those who rebel against God and reject Jesus Christ will face eternal condemnation as sin itself and evil itself is finally judged once and for all. Now the seventh way the book of Revelation is going to help us is that in massive contrast to the first, it helps us to hope.

It helps us to hope. I think places are some of the most underrated aspects of life.

Just cast your mind back to maybe one of the first houses you ever lived in. And, or, you know, the place that you grew up. You can probably still remember the telephone number, right?

[15 : 17] Your first house. Think about the places you hung out with with your friends. Or the school that you went to. You could probably still smell the canteen food.

Or, you know, when you walk into a place and you smell and you kind of go, this smell reminds me of XXX, wherever. Life itself, good or bad, is connected to important places, isn't it?

And, going back to those places can bring a degree of nostalgia. Well, in the same way we, that we look back into the places that we visit or are living in, we can also look forward.

But, did you know, trivia for the day, second amount of trivia for the day, that Christians never end up in heaven?

Like, total misconception. So, Christians never end up in heaven. The place we're going to live for in eternity is neither a place we go to nor a place called heaven.

[16:24] Check it out, Revelation 21, verse 1 and 2. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and the sin was no more.

And then he says, I saw the holy city and new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. So, this is the place we get to live in. And notice two things.

First, it's called the holy city, the new Jerusalem, and it comes from heaven. So, it comes from heaven but it isn't heaven. And the second thing, that Christians don't go there, it comes to us.

So, we need to throw out the idea that one day we're going to be floating up into the sky and live forever as chubby angels sitting on clouds strumming harps and eating marshmallows.

Now, there are, there are, there is a good, Revelation 15, you can look at it in your own time. There are, there is going to be harps in heaven and there is going to be people playing them. I don't know how I feel about that but I think when I get there I feel fine about that.

[17:34] But listen, our future destination is a new world that our new bodies will live in. Like, we're going to get new bodies too. Right?

That's something to celebrate for sure. Right? And I think that actually, you know, after reading what Revelation says about this new world that's going to give us hope to actually want to live there. Perhaps not at this very moment but in God's timing. Just flick back to chapter 2 and you'll see that almost all of the promises given to the churches relate to this future place.

So, in verse 7 of chapter 2 He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches the one who conquers I will grant to eat the tree of life which is in the paradise of God.

Like, whatever that future place is going to be it's described as a paradise place. Right? Like, that excites me straight away. Because, like, I've seen paradises on earth but this is going to be a new place recommissioned by God redesigned by God and it's going to blow out of the water all of the paradises of this world.

[18:48] It's going to be a paradise. Verse 11 He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the church the one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death. No fear. No fear of death.

We haven't got time to talk about how many, most of our motivations in life are motivated by fear of one thing or another. And, and this promise in verse 11 you're not going to be hurt by the second death.

That's great. Like, whatever that means that's good news. Verse 17 He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches the one who conquers I will give some hidden manna.

I don't know what that means but it sounds amazing. And, and I will give him a white stone. I'm not too sure what that means either. We'll get that when we get to chapter 2. But, it's going to have a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.

It means that you've got an identity a brand new identity in Christ and you're going to realise it. Like now we go oh yeah, I'm in Christ I have this identity in Christ and we scratch the surface of what that means and in heaven we're going to stand in front of the Lord and we're going to go I know who I am in Christ.

[20:01] chapter 3 verse 21 the one who conquers I will grant him to sit with me on my throne. Like I don't even need to explain that it sounds amazing.

Verse 4 and 5 chapter 3 yet you have still a few names inside us people who have not spoiled their garments and they will walk with me in white for they are worthy. The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments.

I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my father and before his angels. That's a promise. Verse 12 chapter 3 the one who conquers I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God.

He shall never go out of it and he will write I will write on him the name of my God the name of my city of my God the new Jerusalem which comes down from my God out of heaven and my own new name.

Like all of these promises strike at the very heart of what is coming. And actually you know many of them strike at the very heart of our motivations right now.

[21 : 13] Right? I don't often give book recommendations from the front but I'm going to make an exception. If you put if you could put one book on your reading list over the summer make it heaven by Randy Alcorn here's what he says about heaven and our current motivations.

He says nothing is more often misdiagnosed than our homesickness for heaven. Just pause there. Why do we do what we do?

Because we're homesick for heaven. He says we think that what we want is sex, drugs, alcohol, a new job, a raise, a doctor, a spouse, I nearly said a sponge, a spouse, some people do, people like sponges, a large screen TV, a new car, a cabin in the woods, a condo in Hawaii, what we really want is the person we were made for, Jesus, and the place we were made for, heaven, and nothing less can satisfy us.

the motivations that we have are misdiagnosed as being homesickness for heaven. Paul said a similar thing in 1 Corinthians chapter 2.

He says, what no eye has seen, and this is one of those verses that the first part has taken out of context and put on a fridge, right, and quoted, but what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.

[22 : 48] And people go, oh, it's going to be amazing. But then verse 10, these things God has revealed to us. What does that mean? It means that the things that we can only imagine God has told us about, how has he told us about them?

Our homesickness for heaven has been revealed to us in the motivations of our heart. That's why, and I've quoted this before, French philosopher Blaise Pascal talks about the disinherited prince theory, and how he talks about how this idea that we are like a prince who knows that they once had it all and lost it and spends the rest of their life trying to get it back.

It's exactly what Paul is saying. It's exactly what Alcorn is saying. Somewhere God has revealed to us in our very nature that our home is somewhere else.

that we're not satisfied by the things of this world. We're made for someone and for some other place.

But look, the place really isn't enough, is it? Because although Revelation does give us a longing for that place, it also reminds us that in that place will be people.

[24 : 04] I can spend a long time just thinking about this and just getting excited about this.

Because look, I think that that day that we step into that place, it's going to be an amazing day.

It's going to be a day where there's going to be introductions, going to be reunions, there's going to be reconciliations. Like it's going to be a day when all of the unborn children will be introduced to their mothers for the first time.

Just think about that. It will be the day when 400 million abandoned children will discover that God is father to the fatherless for the first time.

It's going to be a day of reunions of all those people who have gone on before. It will be their reconciliation, like we're repeatedly told, as we've seen before, that the new creation will be this multi-ethnic place.

It will be a day of healing, no more pain, no more sorrow, no more tears. Like I don't even know what breakfast with the apostle Paul is going to be like.

[25 : 15] I know that I'm going to get an education, that's what that means. He's going to teach me some things. Like who would be the top of your list?

Abraham? I don't know. But listen, surely the greatest thing about people is that we're told that Jesus will be there.

And God created us to enjoy the perfect community of fellowship, not just one to another, not to just those people who've never met or those people we loved and have gone on, but we're created for that, to enjoy that perfect community of fellowship with God.

this is the fulfillment of the Old Testament theme of God living among his people from the tabernacle, the late to the temple. He promised one day he would do it in a way more personal and permanent way.

I mean, look at just what he promised in Exodus 29. He says, I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. God. And they shall know that I am the Lord, their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them.

[26 : 33] I am the Lord, their God. Ezekiel chapter 37. My dwelling place shall be with them. I will be their God and they shall be my people. How does the New Testament kind of story begin?

In John chapter 1 verse 14, the word became flesh and did what? Dwelt amongst us. We have seen his glory. Glory as of the only son of the father, full of grace and truth.

Later, he sent the Holy Spirit to live within individual believers, making the people of God, the temple of God's spirit. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3, don't you know that you are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in you?

If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him for God's temple is holy and you are that temple. And yet what we see in the future is that God himself will permeate the entire new heaven and new earth.

Revelation 21 verse 15. The one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates with walls. The city lies four square, its length and the same as its width.

[27 : 39] And he measured the city with its rod 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal. I remember reading this years ago and someone told me that this looks like a Borg spaceship from Star Trek and I wasn't amused.

But it's a square. He also measured its walls for 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement.

So the new Jerusalem is a cube. Verse 22. I saw no temple in the city. For its temple is the Lord God, the Almighty and the Lamb.

In other words, the whole new creation will become this holy place of the tabernacle and the temple. The whole place. There won't be somewhere that we go on a Sunday morning where we might meet with God.

The whole new Jerusalem, the whole new creation is going to be filled with the presence of God. And so can I encourage you to think about this new heaven and new earth to come, to let those thoughts saturate your mind and even flood your imagination.

[28 : 58] C.S. Lewis once said, if you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this.

So Revelation gives us hope of what's coming next. Finally, the eighth way Revelation helps us is that it gives us strength to keep going. The overwhelming expectation, and I'm sure you'll agree, the overwhelming expectation of the Christian church today seems to be that God has promised to make our lives safe and comfortable and happy.

And our responsibility is simply to follow him faithfully. And although we might not use those exact words, it's pretty clear that most of us, most of the time, think the Christian life should run somewhat in that direction.

That's the reason we get frustrated with things when they don't go right. God. But listen, of course, that runs contrary to many other believers experiences, as well as the plain teaching of the New Testament.

The book of Revelation is going to suggest to us, is going to remind to us again, helpfully, that being a Christian is long and difficult.

[30 : 25] And that's a bad combination. Like, short and difficult, we can deal with. Long and easy, we can deal with.

Long and difficult, that's a problem. But knowing this helps us. And John is going to help us, not by, not only by telling us about the future, but by also exhorting us to faithfulness in the present.

One of the things that amazes me about this, about John, just generally, is that it's almost like the sequence of John's writing.

So, John, well, according to the Roman historian, Dio Cassius, John wrote this book while he was on the Isle of Patmos.

And, or shortly wrote it after coming off. But he was released from Patmos by Emperor Nerva. And, according to Irenaeus, John, then, after he came off Patmos, he then wrote the Gospel of John, and he wrote his letters.

[31 : 46] In that order. So, Revelation, Gospel of John, his letters. You would have thought it was the other way around, and we think it's the other way around because the way it's ordered in our Bibles. Gospel of John, letters, Revelation.

But that's backwards. It's Revelation, Gospel of John, letters. Now, you might go, so what? Who cares? Well, here's my thinking. So, none of that actually amazes me. What does amaze me is that John didn't retire or become a hermit.

Like, he was like mid-90s. And he had gone through some horrific things. And you would have thought, like, I've done my time.

Like, literally, John had done his time. And yet, after writing Revelation, he then wrote the Gospel of John, and he wrote his three letters whilst living in Ephesus, and supporting Timothy in Ephesus. He dedicated the rest of his life, which is only about two or three years, to living out the message that he had received. That's the key. He spent the rest of his life, no matter how long that was going to be, and he wasn't told how long that was going to be, but he dedicated the rest of his time to living out the message that he had received.

[33 : 07] And it does seem to me that many of the most vocal proponents of the extreme futurist view of this book are also those who are unable to live out the things that they say they believe.

Remarkably. They forsake the assembly of God's people together. Like, listen, if you really believe the book of Revelation is true, you're going to be wanting to meet with other Christians as often, as purposefully, and as deeply as you can.

Why? It's a picture of heaven. Simple. Tragically, they are also quite often those later caught in extramarital affairs.

Those who go from conference to conference, the latest speaker to the latest speaker, itching ears, waiting for them to be scratched, ignoring the plain reality that the Christian life is a life to be lived in all of its mess, with all of its challenges, to be done so in the fellowship of God's family in front of a watching world.

And in a way, I think that it's true that it doesn't matter what your view of the end times is if you are not living the Christian life now. Makes no difference. John 14 calls us to this.

[34 : 40] John 14, verse 4. Follow the Lamb wherever he goes. I mean, you want a French magnet verse, make that one a good one. Follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

And John did that. The things that he believed became demonstrably true in his life. what that means, he said that he believed them and then his life reflected the fact that he did believe them.

John saw this vision, recorded the words in the book of Revelation and sat down, wrote the Christians, urging them to to believe the things that they had seen and heard.

I mean, listen to how he opened his first letter. So he gets off Patmos, writes Revelation, sits down, decides to write a gospel of John. And he says this, that which was from the beginning, which we've heard, which we have seen with the eyes.

Who's he talking about? He's talking about Jesus. He's saying, look, I've been given this message and believe it. Now let me tell you about Jesus.

[36 : 00] What we've seen with our eyes, which we looked upon, we touched with our hands concerning the word of life. The life was made manifest and we've seen it and testified to it and proclaim you to you the eternal life, which was with the father was made manifest to us.

That which we have seen and heard, we proclaim also to you so that you too may have fellowship with us. And indeed, our fellowship is with the father and his son, Jesus Christ.

And we are writing these so that our joy may be complete. You see what I mean? That the Christian life isn't a series of confessional statements that you utter, but a life to be lived.

John says, it's not your life to be lived, but his life being lived through you.

I mean, I think we go wrong so many times with that, don't we? Like it is my life. And if I just try harder, it's my life. I'm just going to try harder. But Paul said in Galatians chapter 2, that I've been crucified with Christ.

[37 : 06] It's no longer I who live, but it's Christ who lives in me. In the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. This is what he said. This is what Jesus said to the church of Sardis.

He says, I know your works. You have a reputation of being alive, but you're dead. Wouldn't you hate for Jesus to say that about us? Like you have a reputation of being alive, but you're trying to work all of these things out in your own strength.

You're not really alive. You haven't tapped into that power yet. The death is you living out in your own strength. It was Watchman Nee who said this.

He said that the common conception of sanctification is that every item of the life should be holy. But that is not holiness.

That is the fruit of holiness. Holiness is Christ. Christ. I think Revelation helps us get that. Let me show you what I mean. Revelation 12 verse 11 explains in a nutshell how we become sanctified. [38 : 19] How we become progressively more holy so that we're able to demonstrate these things that we believe. So we believe these things.

How do we demonstrate these things? How do we prove not even to the watching world? How do we prove to us that we believe these things? Revelation 12 verse 9.

The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. And he was thrown down to the earth and his angels were thrown down after him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying now, the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down who accuses them day and night before the God before our God.

Here it is. Verse 11. And they, that is the Christians, have conquered him, Satan, by how? The blood of the lamb. Do you notice that?

sanctification doesn't come by our sweat and blood, it's by Christ's sweat and blood. By the word of their testimony.

[39 : 31] So, I mean, you don't get off the hook. It's like, I'm just going to leave it to the Lord. It's by the word of their testimony. For they love not their lives even unto death. So, how do we, how do we have lives that are demonstrably true?

Well, we have to rely on the victory that Christ has already won for us and we have to say no to evil and saying yes to God. Well, how do we do that? Well, by being more with Christ.

The more you're able to say like John was able to say that which we have heard, that's what we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands. Can we say that this morning? Can we say that these things, that I believe these things, why?

And these are becoming demonstrably true in my life. Why? Because I've seen him. I've held him, I've beheld him. That which I've seen, that which we've heard, we've seen with our eyes, we've looked at one, we've touched with our hands.

The more you're able to say that you've been with Jesus, the more you can rely on his life being alive in you. we're told at the end of Revelation that there are multitudes of people because of that who have conquered.

[40 : 49] This is the definition of being an overcomer in Revelation. Those who have overcome, we're even called overcomers, we're called those who conquered.

We conquer nothing, right? Jesus conquers. Revelation 21, verse 7, the one who conquers will have this heritage. I will be his God and he will be my son.

So Revelation reminds us that it is God fighting for us. That it is God who defeats our enemies. That it is God who is doing a work in us and through us.

And our main task is to follow him wherever he goes. And that means to stay as close as the Lord as you possibly can, to remain faithful. and say no to evil.

And so next week we're going to start the book proper from verse 1 of chapter 1. And we'll plow through all the way through to the end of chapter 22.

[41 : 50] And I'm excited to see all that God has for us. And so let's pray and commit these things to the Lord and then Hannah's going to come up and lead us in a song to close.

Father we come before you Lord and we want to confess Lord that this book is sometimes difficult and complex for us to understand Lord. But Lord we don't want to try and understand it with our own minds and our own thoughts.

Lord we need you to help us. Lord we don't want to build up a whole bunch of knowledge that then builds up our pride. Lord we want your word to become alive in us.

Lord more of you in us. Lord we know that we can't attract anyone to Christianity because of our lives alone Lord.

Lord so we need you to be alive in us. Lord we need our lives to be demonstratively true of the gospel.

[42 : 56] And so help us with that Lord. We know our own weaknesses and we feel that frailty. Lord we pray Lord that you would help us.

Lord even this week Lord as we imagine, as we dream about what heaven is going to be like.

Lord give us hope. Lord we pray that it wouldn't lead us to despair. Lord would you give us joy. Lord joy seems to be in so short supply right now.

And Lord we can have a fleeting happiness that doesn't last. Lord we want a deep down joy. In knowing Lord that that evil is not going to win. Wrong is never going to be right.

Lord that you have provided a hope for the nations and that includes us. A hope that is true. A hope that is promised. A hope that is still yet future.

[43 : 58] It's not our current present reality. And Lord part of that reality is that you're going to be there. And so Lord this week we pray.

Fill us with that. Fill us with all joy. Lord in knowing you. Lord would you help us to draw close to you. Lord would you draw close to us. Lord we thank you that you're so gracious.

Lord that you have promised promised your Holy Spirit to those who ask Lord and so we ask. Would you give us your Holy Spirit?

Lord we pray these things in Jesus name. Amen. Amen.