

September 19th, 2021 “Revelation- The Unveiling #5”

Partners in Prayer

Dear Partners in Prayer Team,

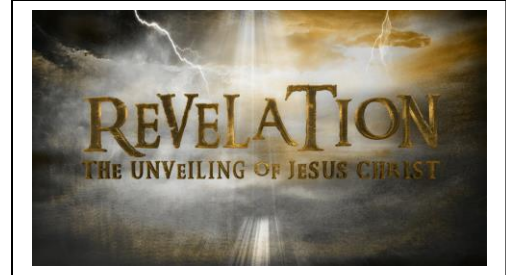
“I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.”

Revelation 2:9 (NKJV)

“I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast My name, and you did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.”

Revelation 2:13 (ESV)

“The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.” **Revelation 12:9 (NIV)**



Dear Pastor John of Patmos [the Revelator],

Does “Satan” go to church nowadays? Really?! I’ve been reading through your first few chapters of Revelation, and I feel you are sharing some unloving things about our churches. You even go so far as to mention Satan’s presence in the middle of several of our churches. I don’t intend to cause a problem because you are a very good preacher, and I’ve always loved your personal and caring touch with our church in days you were here visiting before your exile, but it seems you are coming across very radical and even somewhat loony! Everyone in today’s world understands that evil exists, and we definitely see the problems that immoral and sinful man seems to cause. Don’t try to blame everything on Satan as if he is under every bush! Our problems are certainly a result of the political hurt and suffering that Emperor Domitian brought upon us, but I think you are insulting our modern age, and scientific understanding of the minds of many decent people we are trying to win in this world. We are not superstitious worshipers of the Greek and Roman gods like Diana or Zeus, so don’t bring the person of a devil into our churches. Don’t insinuate that our churches are “thrones” of Satan, as if there really is an evil man in a “red suit” running around causing problems. We are suffering and hurting through some difficult times; why are you saying Jesus is displeased with some of our actions and teachings? Can’t you give us credit where credit is due? How else are we going to reach the world? I think you need to tone down your criticism of our churches and other believers with this “hate” speech. We are not going to win people with “vinegar” rather than words of sugar. We need a message of love to show that we are all overcomers in this world. I understand if you are just using “allegorical”

pictures to try to teach us spiritual things, but truly do you actually believe our churches have Satan in them? I think you need to improve your messages and sermons a little. Give our churches some good news. Don't tell us we are "dead" or lacking the "Spirit of God."

A Doubting and Offended Church-goer

Dear Doubting and Offended,

Does Satan go to church today? Absolutely! Like it or not, Satan is real, and his minions are actual dangerous spiritual forces active in this world. In fact, it is because of believers that he knows his Bible better than most Christians, and it doesn't surprise me that most believers are not aware that Satan attends churches more often than they do. I seriously say this to some people's shame because many are finding ways to excuse themselves from attending churches regularly. Yes, there are some who can't attend services because of true physical pain and ailments, but honestly, does it really offend you that it is possible that Satan could be real, and be a real enemy of God's people? Peter said this in 1 Peter 1:12: "The Gospel was preached to you... things which the 'angels' desire to look into." Since they are created beings, even Satan, angels are looking for answers and need to study and look into why God saved mankind. That means they are trying to understand God's future events. The truth is that if Satan is a prowling lion going about (1 Peter 5:7), he and his unholy angels may tag along on a Sunday morning to come to church. They are not afraid of crosses, and holy water, like the movies seem to convince us. The enemy doesn't care a whit about being in church building. Sometimes, I wonder on a Sunday morning, if the spiritual veil could be lifted, who we would see sitting in the service with us each Sunday.

It may surprise you to know that Revelation holds several passages about the spiritual end of our real enemy, shares the activities of our real enemy, and his demise. It is certain that the enemy doesn't want churches or Christians to believe he is working and active today. In fact, if he can't upset churches, he can prevent believers from knowing what his end will be! Look ahead to chapters 10, 12, and 20 of Revelation and see these truths about Satan's end: The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth and his angels with him" (Revelation 12:9). Another is: "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years" (Revelation 20:1-2). And especially read this: When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—and to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down

from heaven and devoured them. And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Revelation 10:7-10). I believe these are literal happenings, and are not allegorical occurrences for us to use as moralistic teaching lessons. So let me just make some points about the devil and his mission today in our churches:

1. Satan is a real “trouble-maker” in all churches.

Since 1957, when “The Music Man” debuted on Broadway, the tune and lyrics to one of its most famous songs have become iconic in American music history. See if you recognize this snippet from the more than seven hundred words of the hit “Ya Got Trouble”: “Friends, the idle brains is the devil’s playground! Trouble! Oh, we got trouble, right here in River City! With at capital “T” and that rhymes with “P” and that stands for pool.” If you can’t hear that song in your head while reading those lyrics, search for the clip of Robert Preston singing it in the movie version of “The Music Man” (1962). So what’s this song about? It’s all about a charming, fast talking con man named Harold Hill who comes to River City, Iowa to start trouble in a town. So why have I referenced it? Because the world doesn’t understand that the devil named Satan, tries to trick us. Listen to my words written in 1 John 5: “We know that we are children of God and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one” (1 John 5:10). This troublemaker uses lies, counterfeits, and contradictions to stir up trouble in our lives and churches. Every Sunday a very diligent believer must not think that it is impossible for the Devil to not enter our churches. In fact, let me clarify that more. Satan is a limited created angel. He isn’t equal to God, though you know he wants to be (Isaiah 14:12-15). Yes, he is not God, so he also can’t be “all-knowing” so he will learn the Bible as best as he can to try to crack God’s plan for his end in Revelation. Satan and his cohorts are not afraid to enter a church. If the curtain could be lifted on Sunday morning, we may be shocked at who follows us and unbelievers to church. Satan and his active crew are not afraid of crosses, holy water, and pictures of Jesus. They are not warded off by entering a church building. We’ve taken our theology too much from the horror movies of Hollywood. So, yes, when I make references of Satan’s throne in churches of today, and Satan as oppressing suffering and persecuted believers, just know it is his plan to destroy all that God is doing and redeeming.

2. Satan is a real “counterfeiter” in our churches today!

Our modern world is a counterfeiter’s dream. Forged \$100 bills are popping up all over the United States. Designer knockoffs are increasingly everywhere. *Money Magazine* recently reported: “Thanks to the rise in shares on e-commerce platforms like Amazon, counterfeiting luxury products has become a ‘highly profitable venture’... The cosmetic industry loses more money to counterfeit products each year than any other industry losing around \$5.4 billion each year.” (Online article, “The Hidden Cost of Buying”, *Money Magazine*, January 19, 2021). Since we are seeing counterfeiting everywhere,

does it really surprise you that we are not seeing it more in churches? Read Revelation 17 and you will get a picture of counterfeit religion during the end times. Satan is doing his best to imitate all the attributes and programs of God in this world, deceiving millions.

Believer, remember this very misunderstood and important truth: “Satan isn’t God, and he isn’t everywhere!” He isn’t omnipresent, so he can’t be everywhere at once. That is why he is called the “Prince of the power of the Air” (2 Cor. 4:4). He must move around like we do not knowing everything that others know. He can’t even read our minds and know our thoughts unless we speak them. And since he can’t be everywhere, he depends on a network of minion, or fallen unholy angels who follow him (Rev. 12:7-9). So often we speak as if the devil is the one who follows us and tempts us every day, but we honestly are not worth his time, but he does assign and rely of his demonic angels to scope us out and follow us, and report things to him. What does he do? He uses them to come to Christ as he did to Job (Job 1:6-12). It says: “One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them. The LORD said to Satan, ‘Where have you come from?’ Satan answered the LORD, ‘From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it.’” See, Satan isn’t everywhere, and he can move around heaven to still give account to God.”

We need to be thankful and praying that Satan is “hedged” from our churches. If we as believers are not united on such a prayer front, the enemy will silently and secretly slip right inside our services causing havoc. I love the story of the preacher heading to church one Sunday, and as he is walking downtown passing several churches, he notices that his own church ahead and up the street has a crowd of people yelling, screaming and fighting. But before he gets up to his church, he sees Satan, the fallen angel, crying and frustrated sitting on the sidewalk away up the street before the pastor comes to the church. He stops a moment recognizing who this is, and exclaims with perplexity: “Hey, if you really are Satan, why are you sitting here having a hissy fit! I thought you would be happy to see my church people fighting and fussing!” With that Satan says, “Yes, I would be happy, but I’m not!” “Why,” asked the pastor? “Because,” said Satan, “They were fighting and fussing long before I even got here, and they are blaming it on me and I didn’t even do anything yet!” Loved ones, the devil has a hard time fooling a person who is committed to Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, and dedicated to regular Bible Study. Be that person, and let the Spirit of truth foil the father of forgeries in our church. Remember, “Greater is He [The Holy Spirit] that is in you, than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

3. Satan is a real tempter and accuser in our churches today!

As followers of Christ, we’re engaged in active combat, fighting Satan at every level. He’s a relentless foe, and we must never underestimate the battle. According to Ephesians 6, unseen spiritual forces are behind much of the evil

in our world. When a person proclaims Christ as Savior and Lord, these evil forces line up against him. But we are not fighting alone. Our Commanding Officer has already won the war and He has given us body armor for the temptations we face, as we learn in Ephesians 6:10-18. But here is the reason most people have Satan follow them into church: if he can tempt us even when hearing God's Word, to deflect the truth and not obey God, and keep falling to sin, he will try hard. And when reading the spiritual armor of Ephesians, it becomes very telling that many people never pray or use the heavenly armor that Jesus provides. That is why in the postcards from Patmos there are several times I reference Satan's involvement in the church. He is trying to cause believers to be defeated by immorality; he is trying to get believers to suffer and reject God by being discouraged and tired. He is trying to pit believers against each other for non-Biblical issues and personality styles, so they don't strengthen themselves against his devices and schemes. He will run to the throne room to accuse us before God. "You see that Pastor Corvin down there, do you know what he did this week?" Now Satan prowls the earth, seeking to hinder all he can from choosing salvation and living a life of obedience (1 Peter 5:8). In addition, Satan acts as the accuser of believers in an attempt to discredit them before God. Satan has always used this trick throughout the ages (Zech. 3:1-2; Rev. 12:5-10). And especially he will accuse us when we are trying to bring our hearts to worship God on a Sunday morning.



The Book of Revelation tells us a bit more about Satan's role as accuser: "Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: 'Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down'" (Revelation 12:10). Satan is relentless in his accusations—he accuses God's children continually. He hates God and all that God is, which means he also hates God's mercy and forgiveness extended to sinful humanity. Satan the accuser stands before God in an attempt to somehow lessen God's love or diminish God's mercy. Fortunately, his accusations against us fall on deaf ears: "Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies" (Romans 8:33). Salvation belongs to the Lord, and His justification cannot be reversed. God is greater than our accuser.

Satan the accuser desires to remind believers of their sin and their unworthiness of a place in God's family and in this way sow doubt into their

hearts and minds. He will even during a message get you angry with the pastor so you can't bring any of the messages to apply to your life. That is what was happening in Pergamos and Sardis. He wants to tempt you with a pretty face or form instead of look to Jesus. Satan wants to make Christians fear for their salvation and forget God's love and faithfulness. Satan says, "Look at your sinfulness"; God says, "Look to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith" (see Hebrews 12:2).

What's ahead for Satan?

I can sum it all up in a single word: "Hell!" Jesus Himself spoke of the "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). The Lord gives the details in this Book of Revelation. During the end times, Satan will be filled with "great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time" (Revelation 12:12). He will empower a great world dictator- the Antichrist- to lead the armies of the world. Incidentally, if Satan isn't all-knowing, how does he know to be ready with an antichrist if he doesn't know the timing of Christ's return? This may also blow your mind, but one reason he attends church and studies the Bible more diligently is so he can discern the signs of the times. That means that Satan will have had an "historic and literal" figure during each generation to be ready to show into the position of antichrist at any moment. That means even now he has been working and preparing a candidate. That means even during World War II he was working and preparing a candidate. That means even through every major era of history he was always grooming and getting ready a candidate so that when Christ returned he would be able to implement a false beast and leader to try to destroy the Jewish people and prevent Christ's return. Doesn't that make you wonder who that may have been during the years? We can absolutely understand how Adolph Hitler may have at one moment been Satan's candidate, but I don't think we will always prove or know who that person is. That is why it is extremely important that God's people keep growing in His Word and disciple and reach others for Christ. What's ahead for God's people? What's ahead for you?

So Doubtful and offended, do you want to join the "overcomers" elite prayer force?

Do you realize that when I talk about "overcomers" we don't all automatically as believers receive an "overcomer" reward, much like our schools today giving participation trophies? One of my favorite Christian songs to listen to when facing the trials and tribulations of life is "Overcomer" by Mandisa. In the chorus it says, "You're an overcomer. Stay in the fight 'til the final round. You're not going under 'cause God is holding you right now. You might be down for a moment feeling like it's hopeless. That's when He reminds you that you're an overcomer." I like to keep these lyrics on my mind at all times especially when I'm having a rough day. They help remind me that no matter what I'm going through that day, God is always right beside me and helping me become an overcomer. But we as believers must choose to be "overcomers!"

That is what Jesus means in these letters when he mentions it seven times (2:7; 2:11; 2:17; 2:26; 3:5; 3:12; 3:21). Aside from these references, I have seven scriptures that assist me even more to conquer the trials that God is having me face:

1. “The Lord is my strength and my shield; in Him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exalts, and with my song I give thanks to Him”

(Psalm 28:7). The Lord is in your life to not only be your strength but for you to put your trust into so that you may be helped through him. This scripture is one of my favorites because it helps those of us who are going through hard times in life know that God will always be our strength and our shield. We should put all of our trust in him and he will guide us through the hard times.

2. “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). This scripture is mostly self-explanatory. We should put our faith into God and he will guide us through the distress that we are facing in life. If we walk by sight, then we won’t be able to get through it as we would with God.

3. “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid” (Psalm 27:1?) When facing suffering, trials, and tribulations, look to the Lord for guidance and he will help guide you. With him in your life, you should fear nothing. You shouldn’t be afraid of failure, loneliness, heartbreak, etc. Everything that happens in your life, the good and the bad, are all a part of God’s plan for you. He is what is giving you the strength to live and push through the hard times in life.

4. “I [Jesus] have said these things to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world” (John 16:3)! The Lord will give you signs in life that the good times will come and that you should continue trusting in him to give you strength to make it through. Yes, it does seem frustrating at times when these signs don’t seem as unmistakable as we would like but that doesn’t mean that they’re not there. He gives us these tribulations to make us as strong as he intends for us to be. Your hardships may seem more intense than others; this is because God gives his hardest battles to his strongest soldiers. He does this because you are able to handle them. No matter what you face, the Lord has overcome the world and we must put our trust into Him.

5. “Cast all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7).

Despite what you are going through, God DOES care for you. I say this all the time and have even already said it in church endlessly but God gives His hardest battles to His strongest soldiers. We must remember to cast any anxieties or fears that we have onto Him and He will help us persevere until we find the joy that is meant for us to have in our lives.

6. “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth

comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Romans 8:18).

Times in your life may seem hard now and you may not find any joy currently in your life BUT our current anguish that we feel will seem meaningless once we make it through then find our bliss in life again. To make it to that point, we must continue to put our trust into our glorious God and know that He is leading us on the right path that we should be on. He has written our life stories for us. ONLY He knows where we are going in the future.

7. “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7). Most recently this has become one of my favorite scriptures to read when facing the woes of life. This last week was a tough one for me and just a few days ago this scripture became visible to me multiple times throughout one day in many different variations. Every time that I saw it, I read it and then closed my eyes to think. After doing this, I was able to continue my day with as much glee that I could conjure up in me. This scripture is saying that we have no need to be anxious about anything in life because if we lift up our sorrows in prayer to God, He will help us through them and peace will eventually be found in our lives. As long as we put all faith and trust into our God and Christ Jesus, we will find harmony in life again.

There are many more scriptures that can be used to help form an overcomer but these are my top picks that I always look to. I would like for YOU to do something. If you think that you need these scriptures in your life, do what I did. Take each scripture, write each one on a separate note card, then go around your living space to find spots you look at daily, and then tape each note card in a different spot. Remember to try and read these daily; but don't just read them, take it all in and pray about any anxieties you have or hardships that you are going through. Remember to pray, pray, pray.

Take it to the Lord in Prayer!

So believer, we have to turn everything over to the Lord in prayer! Ephesians 6:18 says, “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.” Look at the “alls” in this verse:

- Always
- All prayer
- All perseverance
- All the saints

Satan cannot stop us from praying, and he cannot stop God from answering. Prayer is our tactical radio system with heaven. I believe when in each of the letters to the seven churches Jesus mentions how to be “overcomers” he is specifically inviting believers to join an elite group of spiritual arm forces which protects our church in the end times. I also believe that churches and

Christians are so distracted from the spiritual war, that they are leaving themselves wide open for their church to be defeated. And there is no one to blame but the prayer warriors of a local church. Remember the real emissary of darkness will exploit every weakness in our lives and if he finds a Christian who isn't wearing the armor, or praying each Sunday, he'll go to church on Sundays and cause a lot of trouble! Believe me, you can be an "overcomer" of this troublemaking, accusing, counterfeiting tempter if you start each Sunday with prayer. Remember to make it to 9:00 hour of prayer. Why can't you? Why won't you? As writer E. M. Bounds says: "The devil only fears God's people when they are on their knees!" If we do anything right during our study of Revelation, may we understand this!

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones was a young and successful Welsh physician with a promising career ahead of him. But when he became a Christian, he decided to enter the ministry and was called to a small church in a poor fishing village. Lloyd-Jones was still a young believer. He later recalled how Satan would sometimes plague him with doubts about his salvation and his purity and calling to ministry. He was frequently visiting young women in the village, and he was facing temptation and struggling to marry. He was feeling defeated, because things didn't seem to be growing in church even when he preached his heart out on a Sunday. One day, the good doctor turned around and said, "I want to know, Satan, why would I rather talk about Jesus with the humblest fisherwoman in Wales? Why would I love doing more than I love talking about medicine with my peers and other men who have gone to the same schools as me and are of the same social class?" His doubts vanished, for Satan had no answer for someone who would rather talk about Jesus and the Bible than anything else. Yes, we must be aware of Satan, but not preoccupied with him. Our eyes should be on Jesus, our minds on Scripture, and our mouths full of the wonderful words of life. So believer, remember not to invite the devil or his minions to church with you. The devil lost the battle a long time ago, and he's awaiting a day of reckoning. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Victor- and in Him we are overcomers on the winning side, forever!

Pray with me,

"Mighty Father, Your Word says that we are overcomers because of the blood of the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the word of His testimony! We praise You for the Commanding Officer we have in Jesus, all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and that we have been given fullness in Christ and share in His authority over every spiritual power and authority! But we confess that we do not feel like an overcomer, and we often give in to the influence of this world instead of submitting to Christ. O God, raise up those from this church to be overcomers in prayer, save us from our sins, self and the enemy! May we all be full of Your Spirit and Your mighty power—the power of the resurrection! Holy Spirit make us overcomers every time we come to church! Keep the enemy out of our church! Work in lives today that we might see

strongholds demolished in lives and help others to walk in freedom all along this 611 corridor! In Jesus, Amen.”

**Praying to overcome,
Pastor Corvin <><**

Quote: “If evil is not something directly willed by God and not something wholly outside of His control, but something in His good world which He has temporarily permitted to exist while He calls for volunteers to oppose and correct it, then the task of overcoming evil is never a hopeless one.” ... Walter Marshall Horton (1895-1966)

Quote: “Why do we not pray? What are the hindrances to prayer? This is not a curious nor trivial question. It goes not only to the whole matter of our praying, but to the whole matter of our godliness. Religion is bound to decline when praying is hindered. That which hinders praying, hinders churches. He who is too busy to pray will be too busy to live a godly life.” ... E. M. Bounds (*Hinderances To Prayer*, pg. 75).

