



Introduction

- We have seen throughout this study that the imagery in Revelation is intended to encourage believers to live faithfully and to warn us of the dangers that are present in the world and by which we could be overcome.
 1. We are tempted to become discouraged or despairing in light of cultural pressures or outright persecution.
 2. We are tempted to compromise our testimony by becoming idolators (moral, economic, religious, political, etc.)

Key Point: The visions of Jesus and His people _____ in heaven are intended to encourage believers who are enduring trials on earth to remain faithful in the present in light of God's promises for the future.

Waging the Good Warfare

1. Living as a faithful witness is described in Revelation using the imagery of _____.

"to conquer"—νικάω (nikáō)—to subdue (lit. or fig.)—to conquer, overcome, prevail, get the victory.

⇒ This term is used of Jesus and His victory (Rev. 5:5) as well as of Christians that hold fast their faith against the attacks of their enemies, and under persecution and in the face of temptations.

Rev. 2:26—*The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations*

2. Revelation demonstrates that, although we are called to bear witness in the world, our existence is not merely an _____ one.

⇒ An aspect of our existence is already heavenly, even though we find ourselves living on the earth.

Rev. 1:20—*As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.*

⇒ Believers are contrasted throughout Revelation with unbelievers who are referred to as "earth-dwellers."

Rev. 6:10—*They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"*

Rev. 13:7b-8a—*...And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,⁸ and all who dwell on earth will worship it...*

Key Point: We must keep in mind both the heavenly and earthly aspects of our _____ if we are to faithfully carry out our calling to live as Jesus' witnesses.

Imagery of Heaven & Earth

Conflict on Earth

1. In the letters to the churches (Rev. 2-3), believers are exhorted to remain faithful in the present in light of who Jesus is and how they will be _____ in the future.

⇒ In each letter, Jesus speaks in the present tense ('the one who conquers') of the conflict in which believers find themselves.

Example: The Letter to the Church in Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11)

The Vision of the Lord Jesus:

The Present Danger:

The Promise of Reward:

2. The visions of the future anticipate that believers will appear to _____ their conflict with the world.

Rev. 11:7—*And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them,*

Rev. 13:7—*Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation,*

Key Point: Truly conquering (remaining _____) in the present, will often look to the world like being conquered.

Victory in Heaven

1. The conflict which we are engaged in on earth is done so in light of the victory that Jesus has already _____ and which will be made complete in the future.

Rev. 5:5—And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”

Rev. 17:14—“They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.”

2. The visions of the saints in heaven reveal that they will conquer by maintaining faithful witness in the world, even unto _____.

Rev. 12:11—And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.

Rev. 15:2— And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands.

Key Point: We must keep in mind that victory is ours in Jesus so that we do not become discouraged by the _____ associated with our conflict in the world.

A Vision of the Post-Conflict World—Revelation 21:1-8

1. The two distinct spheres of our existence are brought _____ in the New Creation.

Rev. 21:1-3—¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.

2. We will be delivered from all of the worldly _____ associated with our conflict on earth.

Rev. 21:4—He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

3. The deepest desires of our hearts will be _____ in fully knowing God just as we were designed to do.

Rev. 21:5-7—⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶ And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.

4. Believers will experience consummate _____ in God’s presences while unbelievers, however, will experience consummate _____ for their rebellion and idolatry.

Rev. 21:7-8—⁷ The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. ⁸ But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

Applying the Imagery of Revelation

“Revelation [has a] capacity to create a symbolic world which its readers can enter and thereby have their perception of the world in which they live transformed...Revelation [therefore] provides a set of Christian prophetic counter-images which impress upon its readers a different vision of the world...The visual power of the book effects a kind of purging of the Christian imagination, refurbishing it with alternative visions of how the world is and will be.”
— Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*

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