Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Beast Out of the Sea, Part 3
Scripture: Revelation 13:5-10
Code: 66-46

We come now to the study of God's Word, Revelation chapter 13, this is the third in our series of looks at the first ten verses of this chapter which delineate for us a figure described as a beast coming up out of the sea there in verse 1.

Somewhere in the world a child may already be alive. A child whose name will some day be Antichrist. He could even be by now an adult. This is not a Hollywood fantasy, this is not a religious illusion, this is not a dream, this is not the figment of a fearful imagination. This is not some theologian's hallucination, this is a divine promise, Antichrist will come. There will be a man who will be Satan's false Christ who will deceive the whole world, pretending to be the world's Messiah, the world's deliverer, the world's savior, the world's king, and even pretending to be the God of this world. The whole world will accept him. The whole world will buy the satanic ruse and fall victim to his power. He is Satan's man. And his agenda is to destroy the nation Israel so that they cannot be saved, so that they cannot have a kingdom. His desire is to prevent their salvation and prevent the kingdom. He will fight against all who believe in that day, and massacre them all over the world.

He will attempt to take over the world on behalf of Satan, to rest it, as it were, from Christ Himself. And then when Christ returns attempt to engage Him in battle which will defeat Christ and allow him as the representative of Satan to reign supreme.

Now this is Satan's final effort to stop the kingdom of Christ, to take the place of God, something he has been attempting to do since the very time of his fall when he said, "I will be like the Most High." The compelling driving issue in the mind of Satan is to be above God, to be the sovereign, to be in charge. And in order to work out his diabolical plan in the world, he has to do it through humanity, and that means he needs a man to lead other men. And so there will come a demon-possessed man. This man is not unfamiliar to any student of Scripture. Daniel talked about him. Jesus affirmed the reality of his coming by affirming what Daniel said, as Jesus reiterated it in the sermon on the Mount of Olives, Matthew 24. Paul talked about him in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, describing him as a man of sin, a son of perdition who would come with great power and lying wonders and the whole world would go after him.

But the most dramatic New Testament description of this individual is found in our text in Revelation chapter 13. Let me just read it to you again.

"And he stood on the sand of the seashore and I saw a beast coming up out of the sea having ten horns and seven heads and on his horns were ten diadems, or crowns, and on his heads were blasphemous names. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion, and the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain and his fatal wound was healed, and the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast. And they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast and they worshiped the beast saying, `Who is like the beast? And who is able to wage war with him?' And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes. If anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints."

This amazing and startling description of the Antichrist at first seems somewhat overwhelming, but as we have carefully and thoughtfully worked our way through the chapter, I trust that its significance has unfolded on your minds.

Now remember, we first of all talked about his ancestry, which is clearly identified from verse 1 where he is described as having ten horns and seven heads. That same description is given in chapter 12 verse 3 of the great red dragon who is none other than the devil and Satan. So here is a human figure whose ancestry is obviously satanic because of the similarity in the description. He has the family likeness of the dragon himself, none other than Satan. The likeness also continues as he is identified as bearing blasphemous names. And, of course, the arch-blasphemer is none other than Satan himself who blasphemed God by thinking himself to be potentially equal to God and has ever and always blasphemed Him since that time.

So we clearly find out in verse 1 the ancestry of this individual, he is connected to Satan. If ever there has lived in the history of the world a child of the devil, this man will be that child.

Then secondly we noted, and I'm just briefly reviewing, secondly we noted his authority in verse 2. We saw that description of him that is drawn out of Daniel's prophecy describing him with the combination of the leopard and the bear and the lion. And you remember back then, other empires in the history of the world were so described. But this individual who is synonymous with his empire will be the consummation of all the power of all the world empires in one great final energy, one great final Satanic power. And the dragon gives to him power and his throne and there it says great

authority. And what that means is he has the power to act with no accountability and no one and nothing to stop him. Satan gives him freedom to carry out the satanic agenda and God steps back and let's him have at it.

Then thirdly we saw his acclaim...his ancestry, and then his authority, and then his acclaim. In verse 3 the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast. We're looking again, remember now, into a future time called the time of Great Tribulation, in particular this the seventieth week of Daniel, a seven-year period just prior to the coming of Christ to establish his earthly kingdom. It is in that period of time just before the return of Christ that Satan pulls this tremendous enterprise together. And the whole earth is amazed and follows after the beast.

Now it says that what...what gives him this acclaim is one of his heads had been as if it were slain and his fatal wound wa healed. And I suggested to you that there are a number of ways to look at that. Some Bible scholars see it as a reference to the Roman Empire being one of those seven heads. We pointed that out. The Roman Empire dies, the sixth head, and then is revived in the final ultimate form, the revived Roman Empire. It could refer to a kingdom that passed off the scene that is rejuvenated. It would be a worldwide kingdom but it would be centered in a rejuvenated Europe, a revived Roman Empire which certainly is a reality, at least a possibility today, as Europe is coming together in what we know as a united Europe.

Others would say it is the suggestion of a resurrection. That somewhere along the line the beast is killed and he rises from the dead. There are some other verses that might lead us to that conclusion. Down in verse 12 it says they worshiped the first beast whose fatal wound was healed. And in verse 14 again the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. And verse 15 again indicating the image of the beast there who having been killed now speaks.

So some would say that this is a resurrection. That's what's going to happen is somewhere along the path of these holocausts and judgments coming from God and the terrorizing of the demons that are belched out all over the earth and all of these things that the Antichrist is doing, he's going to get killed. And then he's going to rise from the dead. And when he rises he won't be a man anymore, not just a brilliant oratorical genius, not a military genius only, not just some great charismatic leader and not some economic marvel, he's going to be more than that. Not just a man of great military prowess, but he's going to be a demon-possessed man rising right up out of the abyss, as we indicated might well be the meaning of verse 1. He will be demon-possessed as some very special demon takes him over. And so some would suggest this would be a real resurrection.

Some have gone so far as to suggest it could be a resurrected Hitler, it could be a resurrected Stalin. Some have said it could be a resurrected Judas Iscariot since he alone is called also the son of perdition. He alone in the Bible of any man is called a devil.

It is also possible to conclude that that can't happen because Satan doesn't have the power to give life. He has the power to take it but not to give it. And so it has been suggested, and myself, I certainly find my best comfort at this level that this is a fake resurrection which means it's either a fake death, or a fake resurrection. Not something hard to imagine that this man could actually be killed and they could fabricate some kind of electronic man who could make the whole world believe he was still alive. And it may well be that that's the function of the false prophet, that he gives some breath to the image of the beast, it says in verse 15, and makes the image of the beast speak. And maybe it is this sort of satanic false fabricated resurrection that causes the whole world to be engulfed in amazement and follow after the beast.

Some writers would take another approach, interestingly enough. And some have suggested that this is a claim that will be made by the Antichrist himself that he is the Christ spirit reincarnated. Now if you wanted to do something that would touch the majority, or the largest number of religious people in the world, reincarnation would be it. More people would be inclined to accept reincarnation than resurrection. This concept of reincarnation appeals to much of the religious world. The theory of reincarnation rapidly is engulfing the world and gaining millions and millions and millions of followers. And it may well be that he is able to convince the world that once he was here as the Christ and now the Christ's spirit is back again in him and the tremendous things that he is able to do will convince the world through the lying signs and wonders that he indeed is the reincarnation of the Christ's spirit. Whatever.

And we cannot be dogmatic at this point. He does something that gives the world the sense that something that is gone is back, be it a kingdom or be it the man himself, and the whole world acclaims him. They've always wanted a supernatural conquering hero and now they have one, one that transcends death. And I'll tell you, certainly in that day and that hour people are going to be looking for somebody who has the power to transcend death, right? Because as you go through the seven seals and the seven trumpet judgments and even on to the seven bowl judgments, death is everywhere. And everybody must be living in the terror and the sheer horror of death because people are dying by a myriad of means. A fourth of the world is killed, a third of the world is killed, and those two things only in two events, to say nothing of the rest of the death. So if this individual can somehow convince people that he is the life that transcends death, he will gain their acclaim.

That takes us to number four as we unfold the text, and that is his adoration...his adoration. It isn't enough to him to have acclaim, he wants adoration. And so in verse 4 it says, "And they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast and they worshiped the beast saying, `Who is like the beast? And who is able to wage war with him?'" Fascination turns to worship, acclaim turns to adoration. And in effect, whether they know it or not, some may, some may not, but in effect they are worshiping Satan himself who is behind this demon-possessed individual. It may well be that the demon that indwells him is none other than Satan.

They're probably...not all of them are probably conscious that they are worshiping the dragon, actually, but they are. Because he is the force behind this demon-possessed man. It's much like 1 Corinthians 10 which says the Gentiles sacrifice and when they sacrifice they sacrifice to demons. They think they're sacrificing to an idol, but behind the idol that doesn't exist is a demon that does. And the world is adoring a man but in reality their adoration goes beyond the man to the source of the power, namely Satan himself. And that's what he's always been after. He wanted to be like God, to be adored like God, worshiped like God and considered high and lofty as God.

So, ancestry, authority, acclaim, adoration, let's go to number five...number five, his arrogance, his arrogance. Another point which we can get a glimpse of this individual. "There was given to him a mouth, speaking arrogant words and blasphemies and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him."

Just one note. It says twice there "there was given to him." There was given to him a mouth that spoke arrogant words and blasphemies, and there was given to him forty-two months to function. Now clearly the giver in both cases is whom? It's God. Because there is no way that Satan would want to limit the operation of Antichrist to forty-two months. Here you have the sovereign God establishing the limits. And so it is God who gives him the authority to act during this period of time, the last three and a half years of the time of the Tribulation known as the time of Great Tribulation. And it is God also who gives him a mouth, literally God steps out of the way and let's him say whatever he wants to say and Satan is primarily an arrogant blasphemer. The sin that damns Satan was, in a word, the sin of what? Pride. He is arrogant and pride of such a nature has led him to blaspheme God and want to dethrone God and replace Him with himself. It will be characteristic then of the unhindered Antichrist who will be free to do whatever he wants and say whatever he wants for this period of time to blaspheme continually.

Go back with me to Daniel for a moment and let me show you how Daniel chronicles this same particular characteristic. It says in chapter 7 of Daniel and verse 8 that this man, this Antichrist called the little horn, has eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts...a mouth uttering great boasts. Verse 11, "I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire." Down to verse 20, and here we meet him again. And in the middle of the verse, this horn again is described as having eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts. And down into verse 25 gets specific, "He will speak out against the Most High." And again Daniel tells us it will be for time--that's one, times--that's two, half a time--that's three and a half, forty-two months, three and a half years.

Over in chapter 11 of Daniel and we have looked at that in the past but I remind you of it. It says, "He will exalt...verse 36...and magnify himself above every god." There's that pride again. "And will

speak monstrous things against the God of gods and he will prosper only until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done." Namely his judgment, damnation and the coming of the kingdom. Verse 37, "He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers." Utterly and absolutely and totally irreligious because the only one that Satan worships is himself. He will show no regard for any other god, end of verse 37, he will magnify himself above them all. The Antichrist will claim to be Christ, will claim to be God and exalt himself above the true God.

In 2 Thessalonians now, chapter 2 and verse 4, it says about this man, this son of destruction, that he opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god, or object of worship, taking his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. So his arrogance is unequalled. It is the arrogance of Satan. It is the arrogance that caused Lucifer to be kicked out of heaven. God allows him forty-two months for this arrogant operation. That period of time, as I noted for you, is the delineated a number of times back in Daniel's prophecy as well as in the book of Revelation. We saw it in chapter 11, we saw it again in chapter 12.

Now all of that to say this. Blasphemy is not incidental but central to his operation. Blasphemy is not incidental, it is central to his operation. When he speaks, it is blasphemy, total disregard for God, setting himself up as God. That is the heart and soul, that is the characteristic of the Antichrist's operation. It is not subtle, it is not covert, once he gets into power it is open, outrageous, monstrous blasphemy.

Wanting to emphasize that, verse 6 says, as John sees the vision, "He opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name." He literally, I think, identifies with the blaspheming world. I think we have to realize that by the time the world has felt all of the blows of the unleashed power of God, they are either going to bend and believe and repent and be saved, or they're going to blaspheme God and shake their angry fists in His face. And if you want to see that, you need only look at chapter 16 of Revelation. Chapter 16 and verse 9 when the fourth bowl comes and men were scorched with fierce heat, they blasphemed the name of God. And when the fifth angel poured out his bowl and the throne and his kingdom became darkened, they gnawed their tongues because of pain, they blasphemed the God of heaven.

So this individual literally rules a whole world of blasphemers. I told you, by the time you reach a certain point in the unfolding of the Great Tribulation events, people get pass the point of conversion and whatever God does by way of judgment elicits not faith, not cries of repentance, cries for mercy, but cries of outright blasphemy. These blasphemers have been well trained by a blaspheming world ruler who represents a blaspheming dragon, none other than Satan.

Now verse 6 says, "They blaspheme against God to blaspheme His name." That is who He is. His name, He says is "I am that I am." It's the summation of all of His attributes. They'll blaspheme God. They'll blaspheme His attributes, all of His characteristics. Then it says, "They will blaspheme His

tabernacle." That's heaven. And that is not only heaven but those who dwell in heaven. He'll...they'll blaspheme God's character, they'll blaspheme God's abode and they'll blaspheme everybody who dwells with Him. They're...they're literally engulfed in the blasphemy of Satan and the Antichrist. They're going to blaspheme its...it's those folks, those angels and those redeemed and glorified saints who are before the throne of God serving Him day and night in His temple, those who hunger no more and thirst no more, those upon whom the sun beats down no more, those redeemed and glorified saints who are with the Lord who are in heaven already. And the angels as well. He'll lead the whole population in blasphemy of them.

And this is not just talk. This is action. Look at verse 7, we move to his activity. "And it was given to him...again by God who never relinquishes His sovereignty...it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him." He rules the world, but the particular object of his venom and his blasphemy and his hatred is the saints. In Daniel chapter 7, again it says in verse 25, "He will wear out the saints of the Highest One." He goes after them. He'll wear them out. He will destroy them.

In chapter 9 verse 27 in the middle of the week he stops the sacrifice and grain offering which Israel is carrying on, and he abominates and desolates the temple. And I think that really kicks off the middle point, the fury of his hatred of the saints and his murderous intent. Daniel 11 says he will honor a god of fortresses, that means a god of might, a god of power, a god of force. He will be a great soldier and he will command a great army.

Jesus warned in Matthew 24 that when the abomination of desolation hits, Matthew 24:15, you better run because Antichrist is coming after you with all his fury. Revelation 6 we see martyrs already who have died, perhaps under the early part of his reign of terror, under the altar crying for retribution, crying for vengeance. In chapter 7 we see a great multitude from all over the globe, standing before the Lamb, standing in heaven, those who had come out of the Great Tribulation, had their robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb. Again, many of those would have been martyrs of the killing machine run by the Antichrist. He kills the two witnesses in chapter 11. Over in chapter 17, I think it's verse 14, it says, "These will wage war against the Lamb...that is all the allies and adversaries of the beast himself...and will overcome them because He is Lord of lords and King of kings and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful." Ultimately we will triumph when he tries to turn his battle on Christ. But the Antichrist will lead a worldwide slaughter of unbelievers...I should say a worldwide slaughter of believers as well as attempting to wipe out the Jews.

The Antichrist is even so vicious he'll kill his own. Chapter 17, we'll talk about that when we get to it, but chapter 17 talks about how he even chews up and swallows the false church. But chapter 17 verse 6 describes this final empire of Antichrist as drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. False religion has always killed the saints, and it will in its final and consummate form.

And notice then back in chapter 13 it says that it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. Now listen carefully to what I say. He does not have the power to destroy their faith, but he does take their lives. There is nothing that can destroy their faith. Is that not true? Not principalities, not powers, Romans 8, right? Nothing. It is not a question of Antichrist destroying their faith, the faith that Christ grants us is an indomitable faith, we are more than conquerors, but he will overcome them in the physical realm and take their life. And beyond that killing activity, verse 7 says, he has authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation and there is that phrase again that refers to the whole of the unregenerate population.

So we see his ancestry, his authority, his acclaim, his adoration, his arrogance, his activity. And then verse 8, his admirers...his admirers. "And all who dwell on the earth will worship him." Boy, I can see so many ways where the mentality of our own nation is moving to the point where this can happen. All who dwell on the earth will worship him. All? Oh, excuse me, "Everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain." Everybody but the elect.

All who dwell on the earth will worship him. That's what verse 4 essentially said, they worshiped the dragon and they worshiped the beast. It's also 2 Thessalonians 2:10, it says with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. The rejecters, the unbelievers. Notice it doesn't say the non-elect, it says those who wouldn't believe. That's always there to balance that off. Those who are saved are the elect, those who are lost are those who didn't believe. Unbelief damns and faith saves.

There's a limiting factor in verse 8 and that is the factor that everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain will worship him. The elect won't. They won't. That is a great statement about the elect. Believers are identified this way in the book of Revelation as those whose names were written before the foundation of the world in the book of life. The elect...the book of life, by the way, is mentioned seven times in this book of Revelation. And the book of life is simply the book in which God inscribes the names of the elect. It's the book in which He gives the names of His people. Matthew 24:24, "False Christs, false prophets will arise, show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even...what?...the elect." But is it possible? No, and that's why the thing is phrased that way. The eternal registry of the elect has no excommunication capability.

And it's wonderful how he adds that all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life which belongs to the Lamb who has been slain. And the point is this, the elect cannot be lost by virtue of the decree itself of election, but they cannot be lost doubly by virtue of the atoning work of Christ which is so proficient as to guarantee the eternality of their redemption. We have been redeemed, beloved, not with

perishable things like silver and gold, but with the precious blood as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. And the Father will not look at the work of Christ and reverse it. And that's why it's impossible for the elect to be ultimately deceived and lost. God has written down the names of the elect in the book of life and He did it before the foundation of the world. You say, "When was that?" How do I know? Sometime before there was a creation as we know it.

Then during the history of this world, His Son came and fulfilled elective purpose in purchasing the eternal salvation of the elect, which cannot be altered. So that Antichrist no matter what he does will not triumph over the elect, will not triumph over those who belong to Christ, for whom Christ has died and purchased an eternal redemption.

Look at chapter 15 verse 2 for a moment. John says, "And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mixed with fire and those who had come off victorious from the beast and from his image and from the number of his name standing on the sea of glass holding harps of God. And they sang the song of Moses, the bondservant of God, and the song of the Lamb." Who's this? This is the elect, this is the redeemed, and when the smoke clears and the battle is done, they are victorious. He may take their life, he doesn't take their faith.

Now back to chapter 13. In conclusion comes an application of all of this, particularly for those who are alive at that time, those saints. Verse 9, "If anyone has an ear, let him hear." Which is God's way of saying...listen up, folks, listen up, you better be listening, you better be aware of this, it's reality and it's coming.

An interesting note here. There is a phrase missing from this verse. This very verse, same words, has appeared seven times prior in the book of Revelation...in chapter 2, in chapter 3. Each time it appeared there it went like this, "If anyone has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." It is a curiosity of some note that that ending phrase is left out. It's not here.

You say, "Why not?" Could it be that the church is not here? Those who affirm a pretribulational rapture, or a midtribulational rapture will inevitably come to that verse and say...isn't it interesting that that is missing? The point is to those who are there in that time to listen because this is going to be reality for all of us to listen, for all of us to be aware of what is coming. It's a call for spiritual understanding. It's a call for perspective. It's a call to realize the direction the world is going. It's a call to all of us to realize that some saints are going to be alive at that time. If the church is gone, then there will be a new group of believers being gathered during that period of time, and those who will be gathered will constitute the saints who need to hear and need to understand.

And now here comes some direct instruction to them in verse 10. It's a proverb with a message. "If anyone is destined...the actual text would leave that out, it's in italics...if anyone is for captivity, to captivity he goes." What do you mean by that? Well, the point is if God has destined you for that,

you're going. That's it, accept it, don't fight it. Now listen to me, he says, you know this is coming. You know Antichrist is coming. I'm telling you right now, follow this thought, if God has destined you to experience the captivity of Antichrist and even execution at his hand, that's God's destiny, you go.

What do you mean by that? Don't fight it. We've got a lot of militant Christians today, I could only imagine if some of the militant Christians today are around in this time in the future, those kinds of people, they're going to be gathering their own army to make war with the Antichrist. A lot of Christians are going to be put in prison. Remember Matthew 25? Jesus said when you went to prison and you visited the least of these, My brethren, you visited Me. Believers are going to be incarcerated and imprisoned and executed. And what he is saying to them is, listen to what I tell you, if you're going to be destined for captivity, to captivity you go. God has ordained it. You will suffer at the hands of Antichrist, that's the way it's going to be. Don't retaliate. And then he says, to show you not to retaliate, "If anyone kills with a sword, with a sword he must be killed."

This is an amazing upholding of capital punishment even if a believer kills an agent of Antichrist. Amazing. We don't kill the enemy like that, that's not our way. We don't shoot the abortionists. We don't fight back with carnal weapons. If we are destined to captivity and martyrdom, we go. And he says if you try to strike back and you kill with the sword, then with the sword you must be killed. You don't even have the right to take a life when it is a member of the army of the Antichrist to defend yourself. We don't want the saints in that day to be taking out their weapons and fighting that kind of warfare.

Now keep in mind that this is not a negation of any issue of war. We have addressed that subject many times. This is for those who are under persecution for righteousness sake and for the faith of Christ not to kill their persecutors. Our weapons are spiritual.

Then he says, closing out verse 10, "Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints." In other words, by patient endurance like Jesus who because of the joy set before Him willingly endured the cross who when He was reviled, reviled not again but committed Himself to a faithful creator...here is the perseverance and faith of the saints. We don't retaliate. We don't take out weapons. We don't get swords and fight the Antichrist army, we don't get our guns and start blazing away, we endure with trust that God is in control. Let Satan have his day. Let Satan have his hour. Let Antichrist shoot his rubber darts. Let him loose his demons, kill believers. The future is still God's and we are God's and the future is ours. That is our faith and we patiently endure through it all to the glory of the kingdom promised to us. And in the end we will be victorious. As chapter 11 verse 15 says, "The kingdoms of this world...the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He will reign forever and ever." The monster from the abyss cannot destroy our faith, he cannot destroy our kingdom because he cannot destroy our King.

For those who are alive at that time, you may be destined for captivity, you may be destined for martyrdom, don't strike back, endure patiently. That is the faith of the saints. And God will be glorified and so will we, and so will all God's people.

So, in the end the assault of the Antichrist on the King and the kingdom and the subjects of the kingdom fails miserably. And all he does in the end is collect those people who are going with him to an eternal hell. Nothing is gained. For God is indomitable, Christ is undefeatable, and those of us who are the elect are more than conquerors.

Father, we thank You for this word to us tonight. And we are grateful, O God, that no matter what may be happening in the world around us, be it human or be it satanic, be it natural or supernatural, be it the foolishness of men, or the deception of Satan himself, nothing can separate us from the love of God which is ours in Christ, nothing. We thank You for the affirmation of that strong word from the Apostle Paul when he said, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? Or distress? Or persecution? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or peril or sword? I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." We thank You for that confidence and that it doesn't depend on us for we fail in our part of the covenant so often, but You never fail...You never fail. You put in the words of Your own Son that great hope, "All that the Father gives to Me shall come to Me and I have lost none of them." And so we can say, "Come what may from Satan and demons, come what may from men, we're secure in Christ now and in the future because of Your sovereign, gracious and elective purpose and the absolute proficiency and comprehensive sufficiency of the atoning work of Christ." Thus we live in hope what e'er may fall. And we give You praise in Christ's name. Amen.

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