

The False Prophet and the Beauty of Christ

Revelation 13:11-18

Big Idea: Even in prophecy's darkest moments, God's sovereignty remains absolute. The false prophet will deceive, the beast will demand worship, but Christ is Victor. Prepare your hearts daily to see His beauty. Death is swallowed up in victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Main Points

- 1. God's Sovereignty Remains Absolute** - Even during the tribulation, nothing happens without God's permission and control.
- 2. Deception Has Been Satan's Strategy Since Genesis** - The pattern of lies that began in the Garden continues through the false prophet.
- 3. The Mark is Conscious and Intentional** - It represents a deliberate choice of allegiance, not an accident.
- 4. Six Represents Human Incompleteness** - 666 emphasizes the imperfection and impurity of humanity apart from God.
- 5. Christ is Victor** - Despite the hideousness of evil, Christ's victory is certain and complete.

Scriptures:

- Genesis 2:17
- Genesis 3:1-5
- Deuteronomy 13:1-3
- Matthew 24:24
- Acts 8:9-11
- 2 Thessalonians 2:5-12
- Daniel 12:10
- 1 Chronicles 16:29
- Psalm 27:4
- 1 Corinthians 15:52-58

Opening Question:

Share a time when you were deceived by something that seemed harmless or good on the surface. What did you learn from that experience?

Discussion Questions:

Read Revelation 13:11-18 together. What stands out to you most about the description of the false prophet? Why do you think he appears as a lamb but speaks like a dragon?

How does the deception in Genesis 3:1-5 parallel what we see in Revelation 13? What does this tell us about Satan's tactics?

Mark emphasized that the word "permitted" appears multiple times in this passage. Why is this significant? How does God's sovereignty provide comfort even in this dark prophecy?

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:5-12. How does God's "deluding influence" reflect His justice? What does this teach us about the consequences of rejecting truth?

The sermon warned against false prophets who preach "any gospel other than the one given in Scripture." What are some modern examples of false gospels you've encountered? How can we discern truth from deception?

Discuss the Mark's statement: "We have enough things to worry about than speculating on things like this." Why is it important to focus on what Scripture clearly reveals rather than speculate about details God hasn't given us?

The sermon listed practical responses for believers: magnify Christ, pray, evangelize, find peace in Christ, be holy, and love God completely. Which of these do you find most challenging? Why?

Read 1 Chronicles 16:29 and Psalm 27:4. What does it mean to "prepare your heart" to see the beauty of Christ? How can you practically do this in your daily life?

In a world surrounded by "evil and filth," how can we intentionally focus on "the beauty of Christ's holiness, perfection, completeness, victory, and purity"?

Practical Applications:

1. Guard Against Deception - Examine what you're consuming (media, teaching, entertainment) through the lens of Scripture. Write down any messages that contradict biblical truth. Share your findings with an accountability partner.
2. Prepare Your Heart Daily - Before prayer or Bible reading, take 2-3 minutes to consciously prepare your heart. Confess any sin or distraction. Intentionally focus on Christ's beauty before approaching Him.
3. Share the Victory - Identify one person in your life who doesn't know Christ. Pray daily for their salvation. Look for an opportunity to share the gospel with them this week.

Closing Thought/Prayer:

Read together: "Death is swallowed up in victory. Oh, death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:54-55)

Reflect: No matter how dark the prophecies of Revelation may seem, Christ has already won the victory. How does this truth change the way you face difficulties today?