

Revelation 13 – The False Prophet

Revelation 13:11 is where we pick up. Let's remember – a good reminder – In **Revelation 13** we're still in a parenthetical section within the book of **Revelation**. That parenthetical section began back in chapter **10**. It's going to continue through chapter **14**. And when I say parenthetical I mean the chronological series / sequence of events is on hold here. So we're in this parentheses (if you would) in the chronology of the book. And God is just filling in details for us that are important when the chronological sequence picks up in chapter **15**.

This chapter opened with the apostle John describing something that he saw. And the opening verse of this chapter is one of those moments in the book of **Revelation** that makes a lot of Christians treat the book of **Revelation** like the weird uncle that they might have, that they're ashamed of, that they're embarrassed of when he shows up at holiday events they're kind of like, 'Oh it's Uncle Weirdo'. A lot of Christians read the opening verse of chapter **13** and it makes them think of this book of **Revelation** like that. It's one of those parts of the book that many people would say, "Okay, this is understandable if it was a sci-fi screen play, outside of reality. But there is no room for anything like that in the realm of rational consideration." And that's true especially when you throw on top of that the very real lunatic fringe that twists and contorts the imagery of this book to validate some legitimately irrational views. But John opens the chapter by saying –

**“¹ I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems (or ten crowns) on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.
² The beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth.”**

Now we went to great lengths in our last study in making it clear that God is speaking by way of images here. And the images that he is using are images that he's employed throughout the Scriptures. So we can make application of those previous uses of such images. And we see that with this imagery he's describing a man, a specific man that Satan is going to use in –
his war against God,
and his war against man.

The Bible tells us that this man is going to come on the scene as the man that the whole world is looking for. He will be like a beast rising out of the sea. And in our last study we said in Biblical language the sea pictures –
the restless strivings of the nations of the world without God
the restless strivings of the nations of the world against God.

And so he arises on the scene as a man of peace. We see that in **Revelation 4**. We see that in **Daniel 9**. He comes on as a man of peace in the midst of geo-political chaos that poses an existential threat to all of mankind. He's going to be the world's man. The people are going to love him. He's going to be an extraordinary celebrity in the world, a geo-political celebrity. And, of course, the voice of celebrity is the voice that post-modern man really wants to listen to. The world is literally going to bow down to him.

But God wants us to know that this man is no saviour. 26 times in the book of **Revelation** God specifically calls him **“the beast”**. And it means – a wild animal, metaphorically – a brutal savage ferocious man. Now the reference to **“ten horns”**, **“seven heads”**, **“ten diadems”** – These are references to world powers that are going to work with this man, and finally capitulate to him.

We noted that in – **Revelation 17**: **“¹² The ten horns that you saw are ten kings”**. It says – **“¹² ... they are going to receive authority as kings for one hour together with the beast”**. And – **“¹³ They are of one mind, and they hand over their power and authority to the beast.”** And – **“¹⁴ They will make war on the Lamb...”**

And **Joseph Seiss** summed it up. The big idea in all of this is that – *“This is a real person in whom the political power of the world is finally concentrated and represented.”*

The beast will come on the scene out of geo-political chaos. But his rise to power will be satanically driven.

“² **And to it** (that’s a reference to this man, the beast) **the dragon gave his power & his throne & great authority.**”

Satan is going to make the same offer to this man that he made to Jesus in the Gospels when Jesus was in the wilderness and Satan was tempting him there –

Matthew 4: “⁸ **Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.** ⁹ **And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”**”

Jesus didn’t argue with Satan.

But he refused the offer.

This man will accept it.

His rise to global power –

We see the context – geo-political chaos;

We see what’s empowering him in all of it –

Satan is giving to him the authority that he’s been usurping in the world ever since **Genesis 3**.

His rise to global power will be enhanced and solidified by way of a demonically miraculous deceptive event.

Three times in this chapter we’re told that one of the things that makes this man so famous is that he receives a seemingly fatal wound. And that’s very important. The Holy Spirit inspires John to make sure that it says that it seemed like it was a fatal wound. So he receives a seemingly fatal wound. And he’s healed.

So now Satan has his *‘instead-of-Christ’*.

And remember that’s the big thrust of this concept antichrist.

He is the *‘instead-of-christ’*.

And he even imitates Jesus in his death and resurrection.

And the world is going to believe this.

And their belief in this apparent resurrection will add tremendously to his fame and his power for 3 ½ years.

We also noted that this person referred to as “**the beast**” is also called in **1 John 2:18** “**the antichrist**”.

And we said that without a doubt this man is going to be against Jesus in every way.

But the big idea in the name is the *‘instead-of-christ’*.

He’s the *‘pseudo-christ’*, the *‘counterfeit christ’*, the replacement of the real Christ.

And verse 3 says – “**the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.** ⁴ **And they worshiped the dragon.**”

And that’s been Satan’s true agenda since the day he declared –

that he wanted to exalt himself and take the place of God,

that he wanted to be the Most High instead of God.

That’s the agenda of Satan in the person of the antichrist.

To satisfy his lust for being the object of worship he’s going to possess this man called the antichrist –

I believe even as he possessed Judas, who went out & betrayed Jesus into the hands of those who murdered Jesus.

And having possessed this man, the antichrist, Satan is going to look through the eyes of this man and see the world bowing to him. And that’s what he’s wanted all along.

Now here’s the bridge to our study of the remainder of the chapter.

Satan has his counterfeit version of whatever we hold true as Christians.

We have the Gospel – Satan has his counterfeit gospels.

With the false gospel comes false hope.

The false hope is offered in a false messiah, the antichrist.

In this study we’re going to look at a character who completes the counterfeit trinity.

“¹¹ **Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth.**”

Father, as we move forward in this chapter, please, we ask in the name of Jesus, that you would open our hearts to the work of the Holy Spirit, that, Lord, we might find our hearts, not only opened to the work of the Holy Spirit, but, Lord, we pray that you would open your Word to our hearts, and that the Holy Spirit would speak clearly to us. Lord, I pray that we would find great comfort and great peace that you are the God who knows the end from the very beginning. Encourage our hearts that you win, that as we look at how dark things are going to be on planet Earth during this seven-year period of time, that, Lord, we would know that the Lamb is on the throne; and he rules over all of it. May you be more exalted in our hearts than ever before. And, Lord, may you give us wisdom to see and know and to understand the world that we're living in, and the events that come up, our current events are moving towards the events recorded in this book. And, Lord, for those who, maybe they have believed with their heart on the Lord Jesus, but they've never even thought about the prophetic element of Scripture, I pray that you would grip their hearts with the certainty of what you have declared. You have said that you do declare the end from the beginning. And, Lord, I pray that if anyone doesn't know you, I pray that they would come to meet you, that they would put their trust in you, that they would believe the good news of Jesus and be saved. And, Father, for everything you want to do, I pray that you would overlook my inadequacies as a man and as a teacher so that your Word would go forth in the demonstration of the Holy Spirit and of power, all to the glory of the name of Jesus. And it's in his wonderful name we pray, amen.

“¹¹ Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. ¹² It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. ¹³ It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, ¹⁴ and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.”

Now the same word **“beast”** – *‘therion’* – is used to describe the first and the second beast.
So it's the same word to describe them.
And yet this beast is different from the first beast.

This is the final member of the counterfeit Trinity.
The dragon is the anti-Father.
The beast rising from the sea is the anti-Christ.
The beast rising from the earth is the anti-Holy Spirit.

This second beast is often referred to as the false prophet.
The false prophet is the counterfeit of the Holy Spirit.

Now one of the ministries of the Holy Spirit –
We saw this throughout the course of our series on [the person and work of the Holy Spirit](#) –
The Holy Spirit, the genuine Holy Spirit, God, the third person of the Trinity –
He is absolutely passionate about revealing Jesus to people.
He's passionate about Jesus.
He wants to see Jesus glorified.
He wants to lead people to trust in Jesus.
He wants people to worship Jesus.

Well, even as the Holy Spirit leads us to worship the real Jesus, the risen Lord Jesus –
The false prophet will direct people to worship the first beast, the false Christ.
And through the worship of this antichrist they ultimately worship the dragon, the anti-Father.

And as I said in our last study –
This is the anti-Trinity.
It's against the Triune God of the Bible.
It's the 'instead-of-trinity'.
It's the false replacement of the Triune God of the Bible.

Christianity is Trinitarian – Our worship is –
by the Spirit,
through the Son,
to the Father.

God, the Holy Spirit, convicts us of sin and reveals and points us to Jesus, the Son of God, whose death and resurrection makes the way for us to know and worship God, the Father.

Now don't miss this –
The antichrist is not only going to harness the political and military power of the world.
He is also going to bring about a new world religion, a one-world religion.

Now for a lot of people the idea of the world being led to worship a man, and ultimately worship Satan, is viewed as the king of lunatic fringe stuff. And it brands Evangelical Bible-believing Christians as irrelevant and laughable, and makes people dismiss the Bible as unbelievable, therefore discarding the Gospel as possibly being believable. For those very reasons there are a lot of Christians who run away from the very mention of the book of **Revelation**, which, by the way, is why a lot of Christians kind of feel the same way about the book of **Genesis**, because, after all, the world says that anyone with half a brain knows that only morons and the intellectually challenged would buy into something like, “**In the beginning God created.....**” So the same reasons Christians withdraw from taking the book of **Genesis**, and especially “**In the beginning God created.....**” as literal, is the same reason they don't want to deal with the book of **Revelation**. Because the world thinks that we're nuts for believing “**In the beginning God created.....**” And the world thinks that we're nuts for believing that it could actually possibly happen that the world is going to worship a single man, and ultimately worship Satan. Now we all need to take a breath & think about this.

First of all – The book of **Revelation** –
is every bit as God-breathed as the **Gospel of John**,
is every bit as God-breathed as any other book of the Bible.

And Second – We need to understand this –
By nature man has an innate drive to worship.
That's because he was made to exalt and enjoy God.
Some people would say that man is – for a lack of a better term – that man is incurably religious.

Joseph Seiss says – “*True or False human nature must have a religion.*”

In other words, it doesn't matter whether the religion is true or whether the religion is false, man just has to have one. At the same time, ever since man's 1st sin (**Genesis 3**) every man & woman has an innate drive to rebel against God. Every son and daughter of Adam comes into this world with his face raised against God.

Don't miss this –
What men and women want most is not the elimination of religion.
Fallen men and women just want their own religion.
They want Paradise. They want Heaven.
They just don't want the one, true, living God of the Bible in it with them.

The 'hot button' word in today's culture is 'tolerance', especially religious tolerance. There is so much talk about –
the need for people to set aside their religious differences,
and the need to embrace a common belief,
and just take anything that would cause any kind of conflict, any differences, and just throw that all away.
We just need to have tolerance when it comes to religion.

I don't know if you've thought about the trajectory of the world towards what's happening in the book of **Revelation**–
I want you to think about this –

What are the world's three biggest religious groups? – Judaism, Christianity, Islam.
Anybody giving ground there? Nobody is giving ground there, right?
Orthodox Jews are fiercely mono-theistic.
And their problem with Christianity is they think that Christians are poly-theistic because they call Jesus God.
And they only think YHWH is God.
They don't see Jesus as God Incarnate.
They don't see Jesus as the God of the Old Testament.
Christians aren't going to abandon the everlasting Gospel.
And Islam wants to kill everybody essentially who won't agree with them.
So the trajectory of planet Earth is not one of religious tolerance. That's for sure. Something has to give, right?

One of the most influential people in America – regarding celebrity being the voice people listen to – is Oprah Winfrey. Sunday mornings I go by Starbucks. I'm not the biggest Starbucks coffee fan. When I'm in a pinch I'll go there and grab something. I'm not the biggest fan of their beans. But I go there and get their little protein pack on Sundays – a hard-boiled egg, a little handful of grapes, some sliced apples, a couple pieces of cheese, a little bit of peanut butter (Justin's Honey Peanut Butter), and one of those little cookies or bread things. I do that. I get out of the car; and I walk in. And the first thing that's there on the door in really big print is 'Oprah's Cha'. And I'm thinking, 'Can't I even get Starbucks without Oprah?' It's like, 'What doesn't she influence?'

All Oprah has to do is mention a book – And what happens to it? – It becomes a best-seller, right?
Some time ago on one of her shows she quoted from a book titled, 'Discover The Power Within You'.
Now when she introduced that book it was by no means hot off the press as newly published.
The book was actually penned in 1968 by – and I'll use the term loosely – Reverend Eric Butterworth.
I want to read you a quote from consciousmedia.com.
Now it's known as – and I don't even know whether this is a word or if it's an acronym – gaiamtv.com.
And then I'm going to read you the quote from Oprah.

Here's a little taste of the home page of gaiamtv.com.
Under the heading of Secrets of Ancient Mystics is a video titled 'Secrets of the Serpent'.
And you take your mouse and put the cursor over that, and it comes up with a little blurb box.
I'm sure there's a name that people who design web pages call those little info boxes.

Here's what it says –
"Across time and across the world, an ancient serpent cult once dominated mankind, and has since disappeared over the eons. Now, after years of research, the real religious history of the world can be told by Philip Gardiner." – the real religious history of the world that's rooted in a serpent.

So this is the world that this book has been nestled in.

Here's the quote from that site concerning this book that Oprah endorsed –
"Now in paperback the inspirational classic that has led thousands of readers towards a vision of the divine within themselves, this inspirational classic has guided the way towards a faith that will" – this is it – "serve humanity." – a belief that serves humanity.

See, man is incurably religious.
He just wants his religion, not the Bible.

Here's what **Oprah** said –
*"Jesus did not come to teach us how divine he was, but to teach us that divinity was within us.
For Jesus to claim to be God would have been pure egoism.
There couldn't possibly be only one way to God."*

The voice of celebrity is powerful stuff – the gospel according to Oprah.

It's the same lie that the serpent told to Eve in **Genesis 3** when he said, "You can be a god".
It's the exact same lie.

She went on to say – "*Actually there are many diverse paths leading to the one you call god.*"

Now the intellectual dishonesty in that is like – Are you really kidding me?
How do you say that there are diverse paths leading to a god –
when the Hindus say, "*Oh there are a few hundred million gods*"?
It can't be the same road.
It can't be the same path.
They can be nothing in common to them.

And those who preach that we should be tolerant of every, and any, so-called path to god –
They have zero tolerance for those who say that there is only one true path to the one true God.
The champions of tolerance are the most intolerant.

"¹¹ Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon."

It had "**two horns**".

Now we've already noted this – the imagery of the horn in Scripture is –
a reference to power,
a reference to authority.

So this beast has authority.
But the absence of a crown – authority without a crown – indicates that the authority is not political.
And as we read on we're going to see that his authority is spiritual.

This second beast is a prophet.
He's not a king.
He's not a warrior.

In **Matthew 24** Jesus warned that in the last days there would be false prophets.
It's one of the first things he says when they said, "**Tell us what the signs of your coming will be.**"
One of the first things he said – would be false prophets.
This one will be the greatest – the consummation of any and all false prophets.

John tells us that this second beast –
looks "**like a lamb**",
but speaks "**like a dragon**".

Now would you please – if your Bible is so printed – draw a line back to – **Revelation 12:9**?
And if your Bible doesn't work that way – next to verse **11** write the cross reference – **Revelation 12:9**.
And you can turn back to Revelation 12:9, and write the cross reference there – **Revelation 13:11**.
Now you're connecting it from both directions.

**12: "⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down,
that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world..."**

Now Jesus said in **Matthew 7:15** – you want to put that in the margin of your Bible there – **Matthew 7:15** – that –
We need to beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep, but are really vicious wolves.
The thing about a false prophet is they never look like a false prophet;
Or everybody would be saying, "*That's a false prophet*", right?

This one looks “like a lamb”;
But he speaks “like that old serpent”.

This false prophet, the third person of the counterfeit trinity, is going to come working miracles.

“¹²It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. ¹³It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, ¹⁴and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.”

Energized by the dragon, who is Satan, the false prophet is going to perform great signs to support his false teaching. In the text there is one specific miracle of the false prophet that is singled out and described –

“even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people”

Does that take you back into the Old Testament onto Mount Carmel, and the great showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal? He says, “*Let’s prepare a sacrifice. And we’ll see whose God sends fire from heaven. And whoever’s God answers by fire is the true God.*” And you can imagine the false prophet stealing the words of Elijah in the Old Testament - “*And let the true God answer with fire*”, and then performing his deceptive wonder. The supernatural power of the false prophet will be proof enough for the whole world to believe that whatever he says about the antichrist is true.

And here’s what **Seiss** says in his commentary –

“There is a supernatural power which is against God and truth, as well as one for God and truth.

A miracle, simply as a work of wonder is not necessarily of God. There has always been a devilish supernaturalism in the world running alongside of the supernaturalism of divine grace and salvation.”

Remember Satan is always the counterfeiter.

In **Deuteronomy 13:1-5** – and you want to put that in the margin of your Bible there right next to verse **13 & 14** – There God assumes there are going to be supernatural works performed by false prophets in the name of false gods. And he warns his people – this is huge – this is lost on a lot of modern church culture – He warns his people to judge a worker of miracles by their message, not just their works. A lot of people are just taken up by the supernatural – anything that is outside of what we call the realm of the natural. If people see something supernatural they obsess on the supernatural event – without any connection between Heaven or Hell, without any connection between truth and lies.

In **Matthew 7:22-23** Jesus said that some who worked miracles, and even worked miracles in his name, that – They were actually false followers, and they would forever perish in Hell. Does that blow your mind?

They’re going to come to him and say, **“But did we not perform miracles in your name?”**

And he’s going to say, **“Depart from me, you workers of iniquity. I never knew you.”**

They claim to know him. And they claim that what they were doing they were doing in his name.

And Jesus says, **“You depart into everlasting darkness. I never knew you.”**

In the week in which Jesus would die on the cross Jesus spent time with the apostles on the Mount of Olives, telling them in great detail the signs that would precede his second coming. That teaching is found in **Matthew 24 & 25**. And, again, you want to put that in the margin of your Bible there. And in [our study of the Gospel of Matthew](#) that you can find on the Metro Calvary Church app and metrocalvary.org – we saw that teaching is known as the Olivet Discourse. In **Matthew 24:24** Jesus said that in the end times false prophets would emerge and perform great signs and wonders. And he says that they are going to be so deceptive, that if it was possible, even the very elect would be deceived.

In **2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10** Paul said this about the coming of the antichrist –

**“⁹ The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders,
¹⁰ and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing,
because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.”**

Now we believe in the present day manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the gifts of healings and miracles.

We desire to see the Holy Spirit work in that way.

Jesus said that signs and wonders would follow those who believe.

But you need to know something – Signs and wonders alone are no guarantee of truth.

In **John’s Gospel** the Holy Spirit inspired John to use the word **“signs”** to describe the miracles of Jesus.

The point of a sign is that it always points to something, right?

It points away from itself to something else.

The miracles that were performed by Jesus in his public ministry were never an end in and of themselves.

They were legitimate expressions of the mercy, the compassion, the healing power and mercy of God to men and women in a fallen broken world.

But they were never an end in and of themselves.

They were always intended to point to Jesus as being the Son of God, as being God in human flesh, to save man.

That’s always the point of the miracle.

The false prophet is going to use lying signs to point men and women to a false christ, the *‘instead-of-christ’*.

And they’re going to believe the lying signs, and follow the counterfeit christ because –

they had rejected the truth of the Bible;

and they had rejected the truth concerning Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-11 –

**“⁹ The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders,
¹⁰ and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing,
because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.
¹¹ Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false,”**

They’re going to believe what is false because –

they’ve already rejected Jesus who is the truth;

they’ve already rejected the Scriptures that are the truth.

Years ago there was a large multi-denominational conference.

And it bore this slogan that was hung on a huge banner over the conference platform.

It said – **‘UNITY UNDER SIGNS AND WONDERS’**

I don’t want to be united around signs and wonders or under signs and wonders.

I long to see the Holy Spirit work.

I long to see him manifest himself in the gift of healings, in the gift of miracles.

I want to see the supernatural happen by way of the power of the Holy Spirit –

pointing to Jesus, confirming the Word, the truth of Scripture.

But for people to merely say – **‘UNITY UNDER SIGNS AND WONDERS’** –

That’s a unity that Satan, the antichrist and the false prophet are going to promote; and the people are going to buy.

“¹⁴ and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived. ¹⁵ And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain.”

Now that is a big bunch of stuff!

First – The whole world is worshipping the image of a man.

Again, it's the kind of thing that makes many unbelievers brand Christians and the Bible as beyond credible. It's what makes a lot of unbelievers say that the Bible is irrational and unreasonable; And therefore the claims of the Gospel must be equally irrational and unreasonable.

But once again this is not outside the realm of human history. It's exactly what happened in the era of the Caesars. They worshipped a man as god.

Now if people take issue with that as –
Well, if you're trying to build a case by way of an ancient Empire, we're talking archaic and pagan ignorance; This is the 21st century – We really don't think that could happen here –
Well, we need to only be reminded of the radical personality cults in 20th century totalitarian governments. Within the Soviet Union – I went to Moscow not long after the Iron Curtain came down – There were statues of Stalin everywhere.
Communist China – There are ever-present images of Mao.

Those things are merely precursors to the ultimate worship of a totalitarian ruler who is going to save the world from apparent annihilation and apparently be raised from the dead and surrounded by lying signs and wonders performed by an insanely charismatic religious man.

Second – This false prophet is going to give the image of the antichrist breath and the ability to speak.

Now the word “**speak**” –
It's believed that it means to speak intelligently, and therefore without having to respond to outside input. In our contemporary language this is referring to artificial intelligence. It processes information. It doesn't need input. It can observe and respond.

Whether the image is animated supernaturally or whether it's animated technologically –
The result is going to be so impressive that it makes worshipping this image plausible.
Now this is very 'in your face', very 'anti-God'.

Inspired by the Holy Spirit the Psalmist said this in **Psalm 135** –

**“¹⁵ The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands.
¹⁶ They have mouths, but do not speak; they have eyes, but do not see;
¹⁷ They have ears, but do not hear, nor is there any breath in their mouths.
¹⁸ Those who make them become like them, so do all who trust in them.”**

This image of the antichrist is the ultimate idol – an idol unlike any made by the hands of man. This idolatrous image is what Daniel, Jesus and Paul spoke of as “**the abomination of desolation**”. And there in the margin of your Bible you want to write – **Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4.** This idol is going to be set up, I believe, in the rebuilt temple. It's an “**abomination**” in the sense of being the ultimate idolatry. It's “**desolation**” in the sense that it's going to bring the judgment described in the seals, the trumpets and the bowls.

Now this is where it gets – if it's not crazy enough – it gets really crazy here. And I don't mean crazy – unbelievable; I just mean crazy – intense.

The false prophet, the one who comes on the scene like a lamb –
He is nothing like a lamb when it comes to the worship of this image of the antichrist. It says that –
He has authority the he might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain.
He will have the authority to cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain.

Today in America as Christians we might encounter rejection.
Have you suffered rejection because you became a Christian or you told people about Jesus? It hurts, doesn't it?
Today in America as Christians we might endure ridicule.
Have you been ridiculed by your friends for being a Christian?
We might be ostracized, and actually, in some ways, be penalized, marginalized for our professed faith in Jesus.
We encounter rejection and endure ridicule;
We can be ostracized because we refuse to buy into the nuanced course of this world that Paul talks about in –

Ephesians 2 –

**When we were dead in our trespasses and sin we walked –
according to the course of this world,
according to the prince of the power of the air,
who is even now working in the sons of disobedience.**

Behind the direction of this world, in organizing itself without God and against God, is the god of this world – Satan. At this moment we're going to encounter rejection; we're going to have to endure ridicule; we'll at times be ostracized, because we don't buy into the nuanced course of this world, for not bowing down to the same idols that men and women bow down to today – the idols of sex, the idols of money, the idols of power, the idols of prestige. We're going to have those things happen to us for simply believing in Jesus. That which we suffer in America is nothing compared to the torture and the murder that Christians face in other parts of the world today. But as horrific and as brutal as it might seem to us so far removed from the torture & murder of Christians today in certain places on the planet, that is by comparison dwarfed by the ability to globally prosecute & execute those who refuse to bow to this idol.

Would you try to get your heads around that?
This is a global prosecution, not just persecution.
They will prosecute on a global level those who refuse to bow to this image.
They will execute on a global level those who refuse to bow to this idol.

And this is what hit me while we were worshipping Jesus for –
how beautiful he is, how wonderful he is,
what his grace is, what his mercy is,
and how our hearts are bowed before him because he's the king of our hearts.

The dragon, the old serpent tempted Adam and Eve in the garden with the lie of lies, right?
You've heard me use that phrase before – the lie of lies.
The lie of lies is essentially this – You don't need God to govern you.
As we were moving thru the book of [Proverbs](#) – You don't need God to inform you, define you & direct you.
Here in **Revelation 13** – I hope you don't miss this – I hope that God the Holy Spirit sears it on all of our hearts, all of our minds so that we can rightly understand the present very nuanced course of this world –
Here in **Revelation 13** we see the real agenda behind the lie of lies.
The lie of lies was never about man governing himself – never.
Since **Genesis 3** man has been living under the delusion of self-rule.

The reality of life in a world not governed by God has always been that described in –

Ephesians 2 – “¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked,”

Sin kills us spiritually, separates us from God.

Sin is saying, “God,
I don't want you to govern me.
I don't want your kingdom to come.
I don't want your will to be done for your glory.
I want my kingdom, my will, my glory.”

And then it says this –

“following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body...”

That has always been the reality of life –
in a world that is not governed by God,
in the world of one not governed by God.

In **2 Timothy 2:26** Paul talks about **“the snare of the devil”** –
He captures us – We’re **“captured by Satan”** in his snares **“to do his will.”**

There is no such thing as man governing himself ultimately.
You will be governed by God or you will be governed by the devil.

In **Revelation 13** Satan’s rule in this world is no longer nuanced. By way of the false christ Satan will overtly rule over men, doing what he has been doing all along since **Genesis 3** – lying, stealing, destroying – Only now with zero restraint – How unrestrained? – that anyone and everyone who would not worship the image of the beast will be slain. We’ve already seen the souls of those who were slain for their testimony in the heavenly scene.

And I just want to reiterate – We are living in the restrained version of Satan’s influence. The course of this world is incredibly nuanced. It’s only blatant and very overt in small pockets of the world, pockets of the world that have for so long been in spiritual darkness that there’s far less restraint there than here. I saw a picture on one of the news sites on the internet of that man who has been kidnapped all these women in Nigeria. And it’s beyond comprehension that somebody is that wicked. We wouldn’t call that nuanced wickedness. But even that wickedness is nothing like the wickedness that’s going to be happening here.

You need to understand that what we’re looking at in **Revelation 13** that seems – if we didn’t believe this was the inspired, infallible Word of God we would think – impossible, incredible, can’t conceive it. But it tells us what’s really behind the scenes, what’s really behind the curtain in what is the influence of the god of this world now. One day it’s not going to be behind the curtain.

“¹⁶ Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, ¹⁷ so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. ¹⁸ This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.”

Not content to control people through spiritual deceit –
The false prophet will institute and extend the government of the antichrist by way of total economic control.
He’s going to institute total economic control.
And this to me is where the preterist view of the book simply cannot stand.

Preterists are those who take the position that –
the book of **Revelation** is entirely past tense;
it was just a book written at the close of the 1st century that’s all code,
it was only understood by Christians at the end of the 1st century & into the 2nd & 3rd centuries, dealing with Rome;
but everything is done; it’s all history.

It’s impossible.

Such absolute control of personal economy – I mean you’re personal economy – the economics of your life –
Such absolute control of personal economy on a global scale has been absolutely impossible apart from the use of computer technology that’s essentially unique to the 20th and 21st centuries.

We all know we're rapidly moving towards a cashless society, right?
Banks hate checks, right? They don't even want to deal with checks. They're a headache for them.
They don't want to send you your checks back in the mail stamped that they paid for it, that they're covered.
They just want to say – Look online. We aren't going to deal with checks anymore.
Checks are the headache of the banking community.
The absence of cash would surely drastically reduce a large spectrum of criminal activity.

Since we have moved into card-based economy –
That card-based economy is the platform upon which the system in the book of **Revelation** is birthed.
The problem with the card-based system is the possible loss or theft of your card.
So nobody is sitting around today thinking, '*How can I invent this system for the antichrist?*'
Nobody is thinking that. Nobody is doing that.
What they're thinking of is, '*How can we make life easier?*' – and then –
'*How can I make money by making life easier with some invention in terms of a cashless society?*'
Well, the problem with a card-based system is possible loss, theft.
The solution is one that people are trying to figure out right now, and it will be in place then –

**“¹⁶ it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave,
to be marked on the right hand or the forehead,”**

You don't lose your right hand, generally speaking, or your head.
No one is going to mug you for your hand, take your hand, and kind of stick it inside one of their sleeves, and walk up, and put it over the scanner at a checkout stand.
No one is going to decapitate you if you have the mark on your forehead, and when the checker at the grocery store is not looking, take the forehead out of a bag, and scan it over the thing. That's not going to happen.

e-business – that term didn't exist until just recently.
e-business is the norm in the world today.
These systems are in operation today.
Scientists are working today on the possible means of permanent id.

This is crazy – I'm going to go back 15 years – 1999 – Applied Digital Solutions Company –
They issued a press release concerning a product named 'Digital Angel'. Here's their release –
“Applied Digital Solutions acquires rights to world's first digital device implantable in humans with applications in e-business to business security, health care and criminal justice. The transceiver's power supply and actuation system are unlike anything ever created. When implanted within a body the device is powered electromechanically through the movement of muscles. The implantable transceiver sends and receives data and can be continuously tracked by GPS technology.”

They do that for your pets now, right? Our little Toby, rest his little doggy soul, if he has a soul – he had one.
They did it for him one time. We didn't have to worry about losing him.

They go on to say –
“We believe its potential for improving individual and e-business security and enhancing the quality of life for millions of people is virtually limitless. We can expect to come forward with applications in many different areas – from medical monitoring to law enforcement. However, we plan to focus our initial development efforts on the growing field of e-commerce security and user id verification.”
That's 15 years ago.

Digital Angel's, Dr Peter Zhou, he made this comment – *“I'm particularly excited about Digital Angel's ability to save lives by remotely monitoring the medical conditions of at risk patients and providing emergency rescue units with the person's exact location. I also see great potential for Digital Angel in the area of” – this is big – “location aware e-commerce. This is a whole new wireless and web-enabled frontier in which a purchaser's actual location is integral to making a successful sale or providing a valuable location critical service.”*

If the preterist view is right, and this mark of the beast was a 1st century thing, and unless you had Caesar's mark on you, you couldn't buy or sell, even if you were a Roman citizen doing business in Ephesus because who could ever track you there – this is not that.

Location aware e-commerce – And this is all 15 years ago.

What's the trend - How often does technology increase? – Every 2 years it doubles, right? That was 15 years ago.

There are very few places left on the planet where the platform for that technology does not exist, and is not used.

When I went to Kenya a few years ago I was blown out. Where we were staying in Entebbe, right next to Lake Victoria – the marketplace next door to Calvary Chapel Entebbe was all mud, no paving. It was so filthy, so dirty. It was just inconceivable – like this is a developing country. Everybody was walking around with a cell phone. Everybody was texting everybody. It's insane. And a few people – if they had the resources – they had the capacity with satellite phones to be out in the middle of Lake Victoria, that massive body of water, and to be out there communicating with people on shore in one of the most impoverished underdeveloped places I had ever seen.

By the way, here's the product slogan for 'Digital Angel' – 'Digital Angel – Technology That Cares'.

I think the false prophet is going to care about stuff, like –

Who's buying?

Who's selling?

Where are they buying?

When are they buying?

Now some people think – *Is my credit card the mark of the beast? Can you be a Christian and have a credit card?*

Yes, you can be a Christian & have a credit card; because, no, your Visa or check card is not the mark of the beast.

Do you have to be afraid of using them for fear that you're going to be wrapped up in this whole antichrist commerce?

No, you don't have to be.

Do you have to be afraid of getting your hand stamped on the way out of Disneyland?

No, you don't have to be.

But the concern is not illegitimate. My friend, Jack Hibbs, was speaking at a prophecy conference on the east coast. And after the conference a Navy Seal man came up to him, and said, "*Pastor, I'm about ready to go on a covert mission. I can't tell my family where I'm going. My dental record has been changed. They've removed my finger prints in case I'm captured. Nobody knows where I'm going. And if anything happens to me it's all plausible deniability. Nobody is going to know who I am. They can't identify me. But here's what's troubling me. They've put a chip in me. And this chip is going to track me. And it's not only going to track me, it's going to monitor my physical condition. It can tell them whether or not I'm losing blood by body temperature. It's going to tell them all sorts of things.*" He was wondering if he had unknowingly received the mark of the beast. And Jack rightly assured him that he had not.

And here are two crucial things to remember.

This is directly related to the worship of the beast.

Only those who worship the beast were able to get the mark of the beast, and thus be able to buy and sell

So there is no confusion as to whether or not you have bought into this antichrist economic system;

Because it's very clearly going to be tied to the worship of the beast.

And secondly – The Scriptures teach us in **2 Thessalonians 2:6-8** that the antichrist is being restrained at this time.

He is yet to be revealed. And thus the demonic implications of participating in the use of technology is still yet future.

The antichrist isn't revealed yet. And it's not going to be until he's revealed 3 ½ years into him coming forward onto the world scene that he's actually going to demand to be worshipped & thus this mark of the beast be put into play.

“¹⁷ no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.”

Now in Greek and Hebrew as well they didn't have a numerical system –
The letters of the alphabet were assigned a numerical value.

An interesting example of this is –

Archaeologists discovered graffiti in the ruins of Pompeii that reads – “I love her whose number is 545”.
That's kind of interesting. They didn't give the name – just – “I love her – 545”.
So anyone who wants to text a little love note to somebody about somebody –
Say, “I love”, and then figure out the number of their name, and put it in there.

**“¹⁸ This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast,
for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.”**

Now the schemes, the attempts to unlock the number of the beast are as confusing as they are endless.
I read a whole litany of them – And they're really big and confusing.
So that's why I'm not going to waste your time with them.
But they're there.
And people are trying to discover it.

Let me tell you this –

Instead of being overcome with fear, and instead of being obsessed with an interest about the 'instead-of-christ';
We should be obsessed with the genuine Christ, the Lord Jesus.

We're going to close here. And here's the deal –

We are living in really exciting times.

The things that we see in this chapter have never been in place geo-politically.

And they have never been in play technologically.

We are the generation that's living closer to the return of Jesus than ever before.

I think that means we should be taking more seriously than any generation of believers that's ever been before us
the immanence of his return.

Now I'm not going to pretend to say when it is; but I'm just saying we're getting close.

And the book of **Revelation** –

It not only tells us about the trajectory of the world, and how things are going to roll out leading up to the second coming of Jesus;

But I think the big thing for us is that God wanted to pull back the curtain on who's really behind what is just a nuanced course in this world, for this world to be organizing itself without God and against God. It's so nuanced. God says, “Here's what it is. Here's the lie of lies.” And it's full deception. It's never been about man governing himself.

So if you don't know Jesus –

If you know about Jesus, but you are not governed by the Lord Jesus, if he is not the Lord of your life –

You need to understand, if you're not ruled by Jesus, you're not free.

Jesus said, “If you heard his teachings & you kept them, you would know the truth & the truth would set you free.”

The Bible says that if anyone is in Christ they are free indeed. Jesus sets us free.

And until we're ruled by Jesus we are not free. It's the lie of lies to think that you are.

So I want to encourage you to say, “*Lord,*

I want to be ruled by the one who loved me and washed me from all of the stain of my rebellion and sin in his blood;

I want to be ruled by the one who loved me and gave himself for me;

I want to be ruled by the one who loved me so much that he would die in my place for my sins.”

That's the king that you were made to know.

And until you know him you are not free; and you're not living; and you are far from ruling your own life.

Father, we come to you in the name of Jesus. And we thank you for Jesus, the Lord of lords. Would you please work in the heart anyone, no matter how familiar they are with church, how familiar they are with the Bible. If there is anyone who is not truly governed by Jesus, I pray that right now they would surrender their heart to him, that they would turn from their idols that can neither save them, and will never love them, and will always want to hold them in bondage, so that they can serve the true and living God who so loves them that he sent his only begotten Son, that if they would believe on him right here and right now they will not perish but have everlasting life.