

Word: means of grace

love you more

love the world less

know you more

care about this world's stuff less

Dealing with judgment on Babylon: 17-18-19

interpretation of 6th & 7th bowls

backing up but zooming in

6th bowl right up to Christ's return

7th that which comes with Christ

16.19—given here in detail in ch 17-18

17: Babylon

18: how and why Babylon destroyed

19: heaven's response of praise at this destruction

Repeated parallels

seeing things from different perspective

similar things, events, but not exact

each one progresses a bit further where focus is on last parts

more and more

getting close to book being over, closer to things coming to an

end

v. 3: summary

two symbols: woman 1-6, beast 7-18

look at beast first, seen beast before

v. 7: the beast

angel explains the mystery

mystery: not a puzzle; something hidden but now revealed

mystery of gospel: Gentiles would be included in God's people

final end times rise of beast and woman: mystery: not yet fully

happened, revealed

Babylon: prostitute

corrupt society, religious compromise, economic idolatry

Babylon is the world: the evil desires against God

Beast: first beast from ch. 13, the one from sea

13.1

beast and woman have some overlap in their specifics

but what you have is fallen culture

woman rides the beast: great evil, hating God

seems to be alluring, prosperous

Beast: once was, is, and is to come

abyss, comes from Satan

mimic of Christ, counterfeit because Satan cannot create anything

Christ: lived, died, rose again, ascended and reigns

same with beast: lived=was, died=is not, will come up=sort of resurrection

different: instead of ascending to reign, descends, goes down to hell for destruction

Beast, Satan, minions operate in the world

Satan is real, alive, doing work in world, up to Christ

then Christ comes: incarnation—huge in history

in death and resurrection, deals death blow to Satan

Christ triumphs, beast=he was not

when end is near, Satan has something like a resurrection

seen this with beast, wounded, “dies and rises”

time is very short-lived

Christ once and for all finishes off Satan

cast into Lake of Fire: he descended — goes down to destruction

Know this: we must live as people who know the ending

like DVR of World Series or Super Bowl
as much as try not to hear score, someone tells you
but you watch the game anyway
want to see how it happens, works out, even though know the
outcome
this is Revelation
enables you to live confidently in Christ
not afraid of Satan: like Luther's Mighty Fortress
the Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him, one little
word will fell him

v. 9: mind with wisdom

7 heads=7 hills — speak of strength and grandeur
maybe Rome, city of seven hills, but not confined to that
other clues to this being worldwide, not limited to one place or
one period of time
7 = completeness and perfection, so this beast (kingdoms of the
world) have great power
hates the church, God's people with a sense of complete hatred

v. 10: 7 kings

metaphor, hard
could get bogged down counting out world empires

Main goal you have in your life

not to be someone who is with it, hip, cool, relevant
no, your reason for being in this life is to glorify God and enjoy
Him forever
but to be someone who is with God

So, will you live for the Lamb?

Or will you live for this world and all it offers...only to lose it all

Live for the Lamb and live eternally

if you and I as a church want to be relevant: we must touch the things that are eternal

we must see the way of Christ as the way to live, to think, and yes, to believe

You and I are surrounded by Babylon

worldliness in this country will ruin far more spiritual lives than many other things put together

worldliness is biggest counterfeit to the gospel

biggest threat to you walking in faith to Christ

Proverbs 6:27–28 (ESV)

27 Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned?

28 Or can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched?

Beware of subtle ways world wants to squeeze you into its mold

Prov 7.6-10

7.21-23

Worldliness

emperors, let's do that, but can't really do that either; doesn't work

seven kings: not to count specifics, but because completeness of power against God & people

not meant to help us countdown, but to realize close to the end this part of Revelation: at the 6th bowl, coming right up to end

v. 11: once was...and eighth king

extension of seventh

why and 8th: imitation of Christ

early church linked 8 to Christ because Christ rose on 8th day 7 + 1

Christ will create new heavens and new earth on 8th day of re-creation

Noah = how many delivered? 8

v. 12: 10 horns=10 kings

final conflict, last attack by Satan

ten=sign of his power

v. 13: one purpose—to serve beast and fight the Lamb

Lamb will overcome & His people with Him conquering

see this again in ch 18

v. 15: nations—whole world

turns in upon itself: house divided against itself cannot stand
God so rules over evil, granting authority, superintend activities,
forces seem invincible
God not only defeats them but does so by turning them against
themselves

God's purposes: beast would turn upon woman

world will defeat itself due to total corruptness
we see this pattern throughout Scripture: God confusing His
enemies

Now, back to v. 1—the woman

v. 1–6

Who is this prostitute = Babylon

symbol of all that is wrong in world
enemy of God's people, the world system, "the man"
Babylon is worldliness, way it thinks, lives, acts
imagery is sexual, whore, harlot, prostitute
not because adultery is the only sin here

we are so much a product of our culture than we think,
because we don't think about it

we live and breath in this world, so answer isn't to start
forming Christian monasteries
form a commune and shut out the world...not the answer
problem with that:

we think if we can just make worldly things Christianized,
it's better

but it's still the system of the world
movies, radio stations, TV stations
might be good, but the way of thinking is still the same
we still want the experience, the feeling, the sense of
superiority

but nothing is really different: it just has label "Christian"
slapped on front of it
our goal is not making an alternative to Babylon just for
Christians

no our goal is living according to an entirely different story
being shaped by something completely different
about being relevant to a dying world by smashing the idol
of relevance
and living for the Lamb

determined that we are amusing ourselves to death
we live for entertainment: computers, and smartphones and
devices
we live for game systems, virtual reality and more
As Christians, we rail against Hollywood, but hard for us to
escape culture driven by entertainment
prevents us from growing in godliness...how?
by making us want Sunday mornings to make us feel like
latest blockbuster movie
by making us think daily discipleship should be like Amazing
Race or something like that
spiritual disciplines of prayer reading your Bible, should never
be boring
that's the danger of Babylon: she tells us, sells us a bill of
goods
we trade in faithfulness and godliness and holiness for
feelings, experiences, and often, pure sentimentality
not so much: I might watch the wrong movie, but instead, live
a life that is saturated with worldly things and thoughts that
God doesn't carry any weight at all

Many more: materialism, pragmatism, so forth
what we need to see, from Rev 17

but sexual immorality is the ideal picture of compromise with
world
follow after all the stuff, gods, possessions, etc of this world
follow American dream more than follow God
not just misplaced affections: we're prostitutes, idolaters bowing
to gods of this world
when you run hard with your life
after money, degrees, careers, sports, grades, lifestyle
not simply that your loves are wrongly directed
you act the whore against God, given over to another lover
Ezekiel 16 a very graphic depiction of this with God's people
playing the whore

We are made new creatures to maintain exclusive allegiance to
Jesus Christ
We are meant to live for the Lamb, not for the world
if we do otherwise, we are living like a harlot: pursuing some
other lover

Six times Greek word: porn

- v. 1 show you the great prostitute
- v. 2 kings committed sexual immorality
- v. 4 she had cup filled with sexual immorality

- v. 5 mother of prostitutes
- v. 15 waters (representing the whole world, here) are where this harlot sits
- v. 16 beast will hate this prostitute

This sin is so serious
when Bible wants to shock us and wake us up to seriousness of turning from God
uses imagery of sexual immorality
in our society today, we've become numb to this
don't get me wrong: most of us still appalled and disgusted
but overall, culture has given itself over completely to sexual immorality
numb to harm, danger, consequences, repercussions of such deplorable activities
Bible talks like this to shock us, wake us up, show seriousness of such disloyalty to God
turning from God is pornographic
pornography, not just what you see or read, but life given over to sensual pleasures of all sorts
life given over to whatever YOU want to do, not what God has commanded
doing things you ought not to do

Health-ism

we want to have good health
but we, in America, have become obsessed with health
we don't want pain, so we come up with all sorts of ways to get rid of it or hold it off
we don't want to grow old and feeble, so we do all sorts of things to hold it off
what we eat, how we live, what we do, all so we can live longer
but I know people, much older than me
they do these things, pursue these things, have bought into these things
and then they complain about how old they are and don't want to live like this being so old

Entertainment-ism

now don't get me wrong: not going to tell you to burn your TVs
I watch a movie now and then
read a fictional book that has no great lasting meaning
but Neil Postman wrote book from secular point of view years ago
observed American culture, education, business

Lots all around us that test our faithfulness, loyalty to Christ
some are just obvious: sex, money, fame
we see those and think: oh, no; can't go there
but what about others, less obvious, seem more tolerable to
us

Intellectualism

intellect isn't bad, but -ism makes it like a god to us
pursuit of knowledge is good, but allure of snobbery of
seeming smarter than others
we play games with theology and other matters
we think God should conform to our thoughts

Experience-ism,

we want the next great thing that will jazz us up
we want feelings, to feel good, powerful, excited
restlessness that drives you to do so many things that are not
helpful
we you live for next experience, next thrill, next feel-good
movie, show, worship time
you don't come for God, you come to feel good

seeing things you ought not to see
listening to things you ought not to hear
it's all pornographic—a gross and vile disloyalty to the One who
made us & One who saved us
that's how serious this is

Babylon is the anti-church

compromised, idolatrous
not pure, spotless bride
Babylon is even made to appear like the church, v. 4
tries to give birth, but only gives birth to the demonic

Wilderness, v 3

21.9—contrasts vision of Bride
here: anti-church, barren desert, wilderness, horrible place
Babylon the great is an attractive, seductive, worldly, prostitute
God showing overcomes in harsh contrast to succubers
you can be part of spotless bride of Christ or you can be a
whore
if these were two pictures, like selfies of you, which are you
hanging on your frig?

Three things

1. She is attractive, royal clothes, purple, scarlet, gold, jewels and more
do not think that worldliness doesn't look good
it does
Christians: know the right thing to do, but the world lures us
example: boyfriend, girlfriend, not a Christian
think: hey, it's not so bad, maybe I can flirt and convert
it's not so bad
even when we know it is wrong, Bible tells us not to do something, we want to do it
why? The world and sin is alluring

But beauty is only skin deep
this woman, of her own choice sells her body because she can
in fact, sometimes, this doesn't even have to be sexual; offer bodies in other ways
men: pornography—to see it
women: pornography—to be it; power of attraction, garner attention, be an influencer
Babylon seems interested in you, but doesn't care about you
cares nothing of your soul

2. Influence is pervasive: sits on many waters
literal city sat on many waters
water here is symbol for influence: v. 15—influence over the whole world
followers of Christ: nations, tribes, languages, peoples
followers of Babylon: nations, multitudes, languages, peoples also, why whole world, not just one nation
it reigns over kings and kingdoms everywhere—it is invasive

v. 6: impressive—John marvels greatly
astonished at her power, influence and hold over the earth dwellers
maybe even at way she would lead believers astray
how can it be wrong when it looks and feels so right
American culture: impressive
Hollywood: impressive
certain lifestyles: comfortable, ease, things you want: impressive

we must admit we live in Babylon in order to be able to resist and flee Babylon
there is a golden cup being held out to you all the time
abominable things, filth of adultery