

DON'T BACK DOWN

Part 1 of PREPARING FOR JESUS. Revelation 11:7-18.
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. November 27, 2022.

TOM PETTY: I WON'T BACK DOWN

Tom Petty's popular song:

Well, I won't back down
No, I won't back down
You can stand me up at the gates of hell
But I won't back down

ANTHEM FOR THE CHURCH: DON'T BACK DOWN

Christians face pressure to fit in, but we won't back down.

- Author, Rod Dreher, wrote *Don't Live By Lies* to warn the church that pressure to compromise is growing.
- Read Revelation 11:7-18.
- Faithful Christians reject three lies ...

LIE ONE: I AM GOD OF MY LIFE

Revelation 11:7 & 10 paint a picture of unholy people at war with Christians.

Revelation 11:7, 10 (ESV) And when they (the church) have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, ... 10 and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth.

As faithful Christians testify to the world, the people respond in rage. Why? Because our Bible-based message says, "You are not God. Only Jesus Christ is God."

We find courage to faithfully testify by putting hope in God who raises the dead.

Revelation 11:11-12 (ESV) But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them (the faithful, witnessing, church), and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. 12 Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them.

- The world is passing away, but God will raise his faithful people to life with him forever.

LIE TWO: THE WORLD IS OUT OF CONTROL

The world feels like a scary place. No wonder people are anxious.

- American Psychological Association report: (<https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2022/11/mental-health-care-strains>).
- The good news is, we have never been IN control, and God has never been OUT of control. And that means the world is always UNDER control.

Jesus Christ is in total control of the world.

Ephesians 1:22 (ESV) And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,

Revelation 11:15 (ESV) "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

The cure for anxiety about the state of the world is to worship King Jesus.

Revelation 11:16-17 (ESV) And the twenty-four elders (representing all God's people) who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying, "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.

- The "chaos" is under his control. He wields the great power of Lord God Almighty forever

LIE THREE: FAITHFULNESS IS FOOLISHNESS

Does it look as if Christianity is "winning" in the USA?

The temptation is to believe that faithfulness is foolishness.

- The temptation is to put popularity above faithful living and testifying.

"I believe that one reason why the church of God at this present moment has so little influence over the world is because the world has so much influence over the church" (Charles Spurgeon. www.christianquotes.info/quotes-by-topic/quotes-about-compromise).

Combat the lie by living in light of Jesus' return.

Revelation 11:18 (ESV) The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth."

- We are called to: 1) obey God faithfully as servants, 2) to share his Word accurately as prophets, and 3) to live worshipfully as saints.

WE WON'T BACK DOWN

- "Lord, give us grace to never back down; to testify and not be silent; to be faithful servants, prophets, and saints."

CORNERSTONE GROUPS - TALK IT OVER

Pick one or more of these questions to discuss this week.

Start Talking. Get the conversation going.

- What rewards do you think faithful Christians receive at the final judgment?

Start Thinking. Review Sunday's teaching.

- Review Sunday's study guide or watch Peter's teaching on YouTube.
- What part of the teaching most impacted your thinking?
- Discuss one of the three lies Peter described and how to counter it.
- When did God's reign begin? How does that square with Rev. 11:15 and 17.

Start Sharing. Apply Sunday's teaching.

- What are some areas in which Christians and churches are feeling pressure to compromise? What are some reasons and ways to stand firm?
- What advice would you give a faithful Christian who is experiencing set-backs and hardships for being faithful?

Start Praying. Be bold.

Lord, you reign! You are Almighty God. Lord Jesus Christ, you are highly exalted and you shall reign forever and ever. The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. We bow in humble worship before you. You deserve all the glory. Lord, we admit that we are prone to wander, to be unfaithful, to compromise to make life easier for ourselves. Give us grace to stand firm, to never back down, to be your holy servants and prophets. We pray in Jesus' Name. Amen!

Keep Reading. In preparation for next Sunday.

- Blessed: Chapter 6, pages 123-142. For 11/4/22: Blessed, Chapter 7.
- Steve Gregg on Revelation 11: www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0DPdG5Lr-k
- www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/66-39/the-seventh-trumpet-part-1.
- www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/66-40/the-seventh-trumpet-part-2