

ONE MILLISECOND LATER

Part 5 of THERE IS A GOD IN HEAVEN. Revelation 6:9-11; 7:9-17.
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. March 12, 2023.

THE PRESSURE ON CHRISTIANS NOW

An English street preacher: www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11830447/Christian-street-preacher-harassed-transwoman-calling-man-reported-police.html

A Texas basketball coach: www.toddstarnes.com/opinion/texas-tech-coach-out-after-sharing-bible-verse

Today's teaching: What will happen to us if we stand firm in faith.

REVELATION 6:9-11

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. 10 They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

ONE MILLISECOND AFTER MARTYRDOM

One millisecond after martyrdom, we'll be in the Lord's presence.

- Verse 9 is based on the OT Temple. The altar is the table of incense.
- Verse 11 tells us two facts we need to know:
 - Faithful martyrs will be clothed in white robes ...
 - God knows exactly how many of us will be martyred ...

Paul described his attitude to martyrdom:

Philippians 1:20-23 (ESV) it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored

in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. **My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.**

This makes us strong and courageous in the face of martyrdom.

REVELATION 7:9-17

9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” 11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

13 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” 14 I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 “Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. 16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. 17 For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

ONE MILLISECOND AFTER CHRIST’S RETURN

Revelation 7:9-17 describes the destiny of every faithful believer.

- Verse 9: We’ll join every believer ever. A huge number.
- Verse 9: We’ll stand in the presence of God and the Lamb.

- Verse 9: We'll celebrate in worship - Feast of Tabernacles style (Lev. 23).
- Verse 10: We'll praise God and the Lamb for salvation.
- Verse 15: We'll be priests of God offering sacrifices of praise/thanksgiving.

Whether we're alive or dead, when Jesus returns, we'll be transformed:

1 Corinthians 15:51-53 (NLT) But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! 52 It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. 53 For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

GREAT TRIBULATION - GREAT FAITH

We know martyrdom is in God's sovereign plan and purpose.

John 16:1-3 (ESV) I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. 2 They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. 3 And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me.

Revelation 13:15 (ESV) (The second Beast - False Prophet, Rev. 16:13; 19:20) 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.

We know we're in a period of tribulation or great tribulation now.

1 Peter 4:12-13 (NLT) Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. 13 Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.

We know being in God's presence later will be worth any hardship now.

THEREFORE, STAND FIRM BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

CORNERSTONE GROUPS - TALK IT OVER

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

Review Sunday's teaching on Revelation 6:9-11; 7:9-17.

- Review Sunday's study guide or watch Peter's teaching on YouTube.
- What part of the teaching most impacted your thinking?
- Summarize the main ideas in your own words.

Prayerfully apply the teachings of Revelation 6:9-11; 7:9-17.

- How can we prepare now for potential martyrdom? Is it even realistic?
- What are some areas of vulnerability that make it more difficult to stand firm in Christ? Examples: loving comfort, demanding financial security, wanting man's approval. How can we guard against such vulnerabilities?
- Which elements of the vision of our destiny in 7:9-17 fill you with the greatest motivation to stand firm through tribulation? Explain.

Pray together. Be bold.

Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to you forever and ever! Lord, give us more grace to faithfully follow Jesus even when conditions are hard or our lives are threatened. Thank you for the vision of being with you, in your Temple, forever. Fill us with longing for the return of Jesus. We pray these things in his name and for your glory. Amen!

Preparation for Next Sunday.

- www.samstorms.org/all-articles/post/the-second-coming-of-christ--blessed-hope-or-dreaded-nightmare