

Tales of the End: A Study of the Book of Revelation

Session 11: The Last Word On Witness

Scripture: Revelation 10-11

Biblical Witness

- It is both dangerous and difficult to tell the **truth**.
- Through the Bible, people of faith are called to tell the **truth** of the revelation they have received.
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- **Moses** gave witness to pharaoh.
- Nathan gave witness to David.
- John the Baptist gave witness of the arrival of Jesus.
- The Apostles gave **witness** to the resurrection.
- Steven gave witness as they **stoned** him.
- **Paul** gave witness in synagogues and churches, in city squares and government halls.
- Antipas from the Pergamene Church gave witness to Jesus and lost his **life**.
- *Martus* (Greek) = in 1st Century – “telling the **truth** about God.
- *Martyr* – one who loses life for telling the truth
- Most families in the churches John addresses would have **friends** or relatives among the martyrs.
- The truth about God has been revealed (scripture, prophets) and must be said – honestly, boldly, accurately.
- “**Witness**” = A personal report of a conversation.

Revelation 10

- Chapters 8-9: Angels blow 6 trumpets.
- Out of the silence God speaks.
- And in c.8-9, we see the prayers of people lifted as incense – words we speak to God.
- In C. 10 – we see words we speak to others **about** God – witness.
- Chapter 10 interrupts trumpets. It is delayed for witness.
- The chief difficulty in maintaining Christian witness is **timidity**.
- What do we have to say?
- C. 10 reveals a fiery angel.
- Angels are a biblical means to representing the invisible.
- Angels are presented in 2 ways in scripture.
 1. Ordinary **People**.
 2. Extraordinary Figures.
- Angels encourage (messengers) not entertain.

- We've lost the imagination and words for **angels** in present faith.
- If Christians suffer from timidity in witness, John creates a backdrop in the Revelation with the power angels.
- John is preparing his people (and us) for the work of **witness** – the daily conversational use of words in service to the Gospel.
- John teaches us we do not have to tell everything to be a witness.
- There are some things the unbelieving world is **not** ready to hear.
- What could this be?
- There are also words John is commanded to say.
- This is the same book the angel held in c. 7 which only Jesus – the lamb who was slain – could open.
- The book has now been unsealed – the meaning of the book has been preached.
- Book/scroll = **revelation**.
- Jesus has fulfilled all of God's promises.
- John is called to "**eat**" the book."
- Eating the books means taking it all in.
- The angel calls John to assimilate the revelation into the fabric of his life.
- Witnesses first **BECOME** what they then say.
- Witness is not opinions about God – Witness is speaking the truth of God in us.
- I was taught to memorize an evangelism script.
- John calls us to consume God's Word.
- John cannot consume whole book.
- Takes the "Little scroll."
- We can never fully understand or speak all of scriptures.
- We speak what we **know**. God uses that!
- Our inadequacy is not a reason to not witness.
- God wills God's redemptive work to be known!
- NOT Witnessing is **NOT** an option.

Revelation 11

- The role of Rev. in witnessing – **NOT** instruction, but a strengthening to keep us steadfast and working.
- John retells the story of the Transfiguration to show the importance, danger, and inviolability of Christian witness.
- Who are the 2 witnesses?
- The 2 unnamed witnesses in Rev. 11 are the 2 witnesses in the Transfiguration: Elijah and **Moses**.
- Moses = Giver of the **Law**
- Elijah = Giver of Prophecy
- Prophecy (Elijah) is the immediate application of God's truth NOW in our lives.

- Law tells us how God is involved in our lives.
- Prophecy tell us how we are involved in God's life.
- 2 witnesses point us to **Jesus** who reveals all of God to us and requires our total response to God.
- The work of the witnesses takes place between the 6th and 7th trumpet.
- The 7th trumpet blows (11:15-19)
- "On earth as it is in heaven" is a **present** experience.
- John has eaten (absorbed) the scriptures and now uses them as witness to the world of the Lordship of Jesus.