

CMPC Sermon Notes

Series: *Revelation: Strength for Today, Hope for Tomorrow*

Text: *Revelation 13.11-18*

Message: *The Call for Wisdom*

Meet the Second Beast, 13.11

- Elsewhere is called the false prophet, cf. 16.13; 19.20; 20.10
- Claims to speak for God as a religious authority- symbolizes false religions/philosophies
- Has two horns like the Lamb, but speaks like the dragon
 - Lamb-parody of Jesus; Also the embodiment of deception: a cuddly lamb
 - Speaks like a dragon: a deceptive liar, cf. serpent in Eden
 - Cf. Jesus comment about false prophets in sheep's clothing
- Considered to perhaps be the Anti-Christ, looking at First John and Paul's man of lawlessness
- Mocking the Trinity
 - This beast functions like the third member of the unholy Trinity

The Tactics of the Beast, 13.12-17

- Worship
 - Compels unbelievers to worship the "resurrected" beast
 - Government, communication, media, educational resources, business
 - False religion with power reappears, cf. Matthew 24.24, II Thessalonians 2.9
 - Believers are tested, Deuteronomy 13.1-3
 - Makes an Image
 - Image does not necessarily mean a literal image but is John's way of saying the beast is worshiped
 - The beast is a parody and counterfeit of Christ.
 - The second beast parodies the Holy Spirit (who came to glorify Jesus and anoint him with power) by honoring and empowering the image.
 - Feeds on human desire to "Be like God."
 - Prevention and Remedy: knowing Christ
 - What about those who do not worship the beast?
 - May face death
 - Eg, Pliny writing to the emperor Trajan or Nebuchadnezzar's actions: putting believers to death
- Economic discrimination
 - Must have a mark on head or hand to signify devotion to the beast
 - Society sees Christians as misfits who cannot be trusted. We do not fit in. The trajectory of Christians in the United States shows the reality of our inability to fit in with the state.
 - For example, bakers, and florists
 - For corporations, there is now **ESG**
 - **ESG** takes the holistic view that sustainability extends beyond just environmental issues. **ESG** is best characterized as a framework that helps stakeholders understand how an organization is managing risks and opportunities related to environmental, social, and governance criteria.

The Call is for Wisdom, 13.18

- 666
 - The mark of a man
 - Popular thinking connects him with the anti-christ
 - At the time of the Reformation, the anti-Christ was considered to be the Pope
 - Gematria: numbers correspond to letters to spell out a name.
 - Use math to identify the anti-Christ! (Brad Mills: Pin the tail on the anti-Christ)
 - If Nero Caesar is transliterated from Latin to Greek to Hebrews, and the spelling is changed, the letters calculate to 666. Didn't appear until 1830's
 - (It is highly unlikely an original hearer would have thought to do that)
- **Wisdom, not Gematria**
 - 777 represents perfection
 - 666 is the number of a man- all that is in opposition to God
 - Judgment comes on the sixth seal, the sixth trumpet, the sixth bowl
 - *Six hundred sixty-six is perfect imperfection. Complete incompleteness. The fullness of dissatisfaction... Always falling short of the glory of God. Seems to get its devotees very far, but it always, always, always fails because there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved but the name of Jesus. The state can't save you.... Vague spirituality won't do it either – always falls short. World religions will not rescue you. They offer a counterfeit but they end always in emptiness. (David Strain)*

So What About Us?

- Navigating this world we live in
 - 2 weeks ago: The blood of the Lamb and our testimony
 - Last week: endurance and faith
 - This week: wisdom