

# Victory in Jesus

Revelation 12:10-11

By Phillip G. Kayser at Dominion Covenant Church on 2017-05-28

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## Text

Revelation 12 7 War was declared in heaven; Michael and his angels were to wage war with the dragon; so the dragon and his angels made war, 8 but he was not strong enough; neither was there any place found for him in heaven any more. 9 So the great dragon was expelled, that ancient serpent, who is called Slanderer and Satan, who deceives the whole inhabited world; he was thrown into the earth, and his angels were expelled with him. 10 And I heard a loud voice in the heaven saying: “Now the salvation and the power have come, even the Kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accused them before our God day and night. 11 And they conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not cherish their lives, even up to death. 12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, yes, you who are dwelling in them! Woe to the earth and the sea! Because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has little time.”

Introduction - The place of these verses in the structure of Revelation

In the first twelve chapters of this book we have seen that Satan and his demons play a huge role in the problems of this world. We would make a big mistake if the only time we resisted demons is when there is an obvious outward occult practices happening. You look at what each of the demonic rulers in chapter 6 were producing and you see that demonic influence was pervasive in culture. The first twelve chapters show that demons stand behind wars, statism, international banking, cultural traditions, medical practices, sexual perversions, church politics, church divisions, socialism, family troubles, and a host of other things that trouble us and puzzle us. And we have seen that without Christ you cannot succeed in overturning these demonic strongholds. Until the church of Jesus Christ gets rid of her carnal weapons and begins using the weapons of Christ, it will not have success in America. It's as simple as that.

And the two verses we are going to look at (verses 10-11) powerfully display how everything in our spiritual warfare must flow from Christ. We will be seeing in verse 10 that even angels must apply Christ's salvation, power, kingdom, and authority in their battles. And if angels must do so, how much more so must we. So verse 11 points out that the only way we can triumph is if we utilize Christ's blood, Christ's Word, and die to trust in ourselves and instead have faith in Christ's provision.

So, how important are these two verses? They are critically important. And even the structure shows that. When we looked at the structure of the book

of Revelation as a chiasm ask a couple weeks ago, I pointed out how verses 10-11 form the heart of the heart of this book.

Verses 10-11 show a victory which had been achieved in heaven and on earth, and it describes this victory in a way that might seem puzzling to those who do not have eyes of faith. It might seem puzzling first of all because it seems to onlookers as if Satan is winning - as if the church has almost been annihilated. Apart from the eyes of faith it might have looked like anything but victory.

And it might have seemed puzzling secondly because verses 7-9 attribute the victory to Michael and his angels, yet verse 11 attributes this victory to the saints on earth. In fact, the Greek for "they" in verse 11 is an emphasized "they" that some versions have translated as "they themselves overcame him..."<sup>1</sup> It is attributing the stupendous victory of verses 7-9 to these weak saints on earth. How could that be? One commentary vividly describes the striking language this way:

That's the puzzle in this passage, because a decisive victory has been won, but it seems that two quite different groups of people have been involved in winning it. There is 'war in heaven'—an alarming enough concept; Michael, the great archangel of Daniel 10, summons all his angels to fight against the dragon and his angels...

But wait a minute. The song of victory which follows this great event gives credit for the victory, not to Michael, but to God's people on earth. 'They conquered him', says the loud voice from heaven, 'by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony, because they did not love their lives unto death' (verse 11). So who defeated the dragon? Was it Michael, or was it the martyrs?

Well, in a sense it was both. The heavenly reality of the victorious battle is umbilically joined to the earthly reality of the martyrs' deaths...<sup>2</sup>

What a vivid image - this commentator says that there is an umbilical cord that joins the angels and the saints on earth and which empowers both in this spiritual warfare. And we spent some time in the last sermon looking at the vital connection between our prayers and the warfare of angels. Both must be involved if spiritual warfare is to be won. I like that image - it's almost as if there is an umbilical cord between the two groups.

But it is not the angels that empower Christians or the Christians that empower angels; it is Christ who empowers both. The umbilical cord of both is really connected to Christ. He is the source of 100% of their life and

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1 Several commentaries point this out. Morris says, "It can be said that they overcame him, where the emphatic pronoun puts stress on the fact that they did this and the aorist tense on the completeness of the victory. But the martyrs did not win their triumph themselves. They overcame by the blood of the Lamb." Leon Morris, *Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 20, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1987), 158.

2 Tom Wright, *Revelation for Everyone*, For Everyone Bible Study Guides (London; Louisville, KY: SPCK; Westminster John Knox, 2011), 111–112.

victory. Yes, verse 10 alludes to the angelic war, but what was it that was the means or the cause of their victory? Christ's salvation, Christ's power, Christ's kingdom, and Christ's authority. They couldn't have won without those four things. Nor can we. Yes, verse 11 says that believers on earth themselves overcame, but how did they do it? They did it by the blood of the Lamb, by Christ's Word on their lips, and by dying to self and living solely to Christ. Ultimately the warfare is Christ working through us.

Angels could not have won this victory without Christ's prior victory in AD 30. Believers could not have won this victory without Christ's shed blood conquering Satan in AD 30. That's when the ultimate victory was achieved.

And because the cross of Christ factors so heavily in these verses, a handful of commentaries have wrongly assumed that the battle being described in verses 7-11 happened at Christ's ascension in AD 30. I used to hold to that. But we already saw that Michael is not Christ, though Christ works through him. The warriors of verse 11 are not Christ, though Christ works through them. It is better to see both of these armies as standing in the victory of AD 30 and applying it to their own battles, which occurred in AD 66. After all, the Greek of verse 11 says, "And they themselves conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony..."

So that's the bird's eye view of this passage. Even though settling the timing of this event may seem like overkill, it spells the difference between seeing this as something that Christ alone achieved in AD 30 or being a paradigm for how we must always stand in that victory if we are to succeed in spiritual warfare. It is not an academic question. It is vital to our spiritual warfare.

## **I. Victory #1**

Let's look at the angelic side of the warfare first. This is where the first surprise occurs because we may have wrongly concluded that because angels are perfect that they don't need Christ. Nothing could be further from the truth. The battle of verses 7-9 was not just a tussle between two forces. It was an application of Christ's redemption to heaven itself. Verse 10 says, And I heard a loud voice in the heaven saying: "Now the salvation and the power have come, even the Kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accused them before our God day and night.

### **A. Location - heaven (v. 10a)**

The location of this victory was in heaven: "And I heard a loud voice in the heaven saying..." Commentators point out that verses 10-11 are pointing back to the victory just achieved in verses 7-9. And that happened in heaven.

### **B. Timing - "now" (v. 10b) - AD 66**

And the timing is given in the next verse: "Now..." So when is that "Now" referring to? Everybody agrees that is referring to the event of verses 7-9 when Satan and his angels were cast out of heaven. But that is about where the agreement ends.

There are four basic positions that people have taken. Dispensationalists say that it happens in some period of time future to us and that we cannot have such victory now. And their reasoning is threefold.

First, verse 11 says that the kingdom of God and the authority of Christ happens at exactly the same time as that "now," and since their system believes the kingdom and the authority of Christ cannot come until the future, the casting out of Satan must also happen in the future.

Second, the context of verses 13-14 shows that Satan was cast out of heaven just before the Great Tribulation, and since they wrongly believe that the Great Tribulation happens in the future, this has to happen in the future too.

Third, verse 12 indicates that after Satan was kicked out of heaven he would only have a short time left to fight on earth before he would be bound in the pit, and the epistles indicate that Satan was not bound in the pit when Paul was writing them. He was a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Their assumption is that that is a state that continues on into the present. So that is yet another reason why they put the battle in the future. So, their exegesis is right; it's just that their timing is wrong.

The second position is held to by some Amils and some Postmils. I used to hold to this myself. They say that the "now" must be referring to the ascension of Jesus. They point to the context of verse 5, which says,

And she bore a Son, a male, who was about to shepherd all the nations with a rod of iron.  
And her Child was snatched up to God, even to His throne.

So they say that the context for the great battle was at the time of the ascension of Christ. That viewpoint has some very strong arguments in its favor. Those who hold to it appeal to Christ's statement in John 12:31, where Jesus said, "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out." In years past I applied that to these verses and I preached

that the war in verses 7-9 took place immediately after the ascension just like they do. It's a bit awkward because it puts verse 6 out of context. But at least it takes place after the ascension of verse 5. Colossians 2:15 is another verse that they use. Paul uses the past tense to say that He "disarmed principalities and powers" and "made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it." So at least on the surface, those verses seem to fit. Perhaps, these scholars think, this is talking about the same thing.

But, there are three things that have made me change my mind and to take the third position that some people hold to - and that is that this declaration took place just before the war against Jerusalem that is referred to in verse 14. In other words, the third position holds that this took place in AD 66 when Jewish, Roman, and Christian historians say that heavenly battles were seen with their own eyes. They saw these battles in the heavenlies.

I've already mentioned that there are three reasons why I've changed my view to this view. The first reason is that there is a difference between what Christ accomplished in His death, resurrection, and ascension and how we creatures do battle in the strength of Christ's finished work. The two victories in Revelation 12:10-11 are accomplished by creatures who act upon or who apply Christ's victory in history. And I will talk about that more.

Second, every one of those passages that they appeal to for an AD 30 fulfillment refers to the cross of Christ, not the ascension of Christ. So even their interpretation doesn't fit the order of the verses in Revelation 12. Revelation 12 makes clear that the war had to take place after Christ's ascension in verse 5 and before the tribulation of verse 14. But the verses about Christ's victory that I just read took place on the cross, not after the ascension. Colossians 2:15 is crystal clear that it was in the cross that Jesus disarmed principalities and powers and made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it - the "it" referring to the cross, not to the ascension. It was the weakness of His blood that triumphed over Satan. It was his shame and exposure on the cross that shamed and exposed Satan and his angels as powerless. As one commentary worded it, "The cross on which Christ died is compared to the chariot in which the victor rode in triumph."<sup>3</sup> Well, the cross comes forty-three days before the ascension, so that doesn't really fit.

John 12:31 indicates that it was by means of being lifted up on the cross that Christ judged the world and cast Satan out. So that passage doesn't fit this

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3 Scott as quoted in James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, *New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: William B. Eerdmans Publishing; Paternoster Press, 1996), 168.

context either. John 12:31 indicates that the cross was the legal victory that Christ won. This chapter is discussing more than legal victory - it is discussing actual warfare and the actual application of Christ's legal victory to a specific event in history. And in doing so it teaches us how to stand in Christ's victory in every age.

Third, the flow of Revelation chapter 12 seems to indicate that the timing for this war was in AD 66. Look at verses 5-6 again. The first sentence deals with the birth of Jesus: "And she bore a Son, a male, who was about to shepherd all the nations with a rod of iron." She bore a Son. That is referring to the birth of Christ.

The next sentence of verse 5 occurs thirty three and a half years later. "And her Child was snatched up to God, even to His throne."

The next sentence in verse 6 is another jump forward of thirty six years. "And the woman fled into the wilderness to where she has a place prepared by God..." That flight took place in AD 66 a few months before the three and a half year war against Jerusalem. And you might think, "But what about the last clause of verse 6? Shouldn't that move us to the end of the first half of the war - in AD 70?" And the answer is, "No." The last clause of verse 6 gives the purpose statement for her fleeing to Pella. That place had been prepared in order to spare her during the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of the first half of the war. But it is not until verse 14 that the purpose clause is lived out in history. And in verse 14 John makes clear that the three and a half year war took place immediately after the heavenly war of verses 7-9, not before it. So the last clause of verse 6 anticipates the war by giving the reason for the woman's flight, but the flight itself happens in AD 66. And that is where verse 7 picks up.

And actually, that settles a fourth interpretation - that the war took place in AD 70. I've seen a couple of preterists who hold to that view. So the third position is AD 66 and the fourth position is at the end of the war in AD 70. If you just read the first nine verses, that interpretation could work. But verses 12-13 definitively show that the three and a half year war by the Romans against Jerusalem occurred after Satan had been cast down, not before it. So I think it is fairly certain that the heavenly war of verses 7-9 occurs in AD 66, not in AD 30 or AD 70.

If you disagree, and see it as AD 30, that's fine. That's when the legal basis for victory was achieved. But based upon my timing, let me explain how even angels must apply the cross of Christ in history. Everything flows from the cross. There is no facet of the reversal of the fall that can happen apart

from Christ's redemption. In other words, you shouldn't just be cross-centered in AD 30. You need to be cross-centered in the rest of history.

### **C. *The source of the victory (v. 10c)***

Let's look first at the source of the victory. The loud voice in heaven says, "Now the salvation and the power have come, even the Kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accused them before our God day and night..."

The salvation was already won by Christ on the cross, but now it has come; it has been applied to a specific issue in history. The power of Christ's kingdom over the devil was demonstrated on the cross, but now it has powerfully come in a remarkable way. This war was a specific application of that redemptive power. The text also mentions the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God was demonstrated in Christ's life, death, and resurrection, but now it has come in a powerful way to heaven. The kingdom bought and sealed by Christ's death has an application with this casting out of Satan - and we will see exactly what that is. It mentions the authority of Christ. Didn't Christ have authority even before His death? Yes He did. And certainly His authority was vindicated in His death and resurrection and ascension, but now it was exercised in a way that powerfully reverses something that had been unchanged since the fall. This is just one historical manifestation of that already-existing legal reality. As one commentary worded it, Michael the archangel was enforcing the legal verdict that was won on the cross.

### **Salvation of Christ**

So let's think of each of those words. "Now the salvation... has come." You may never have thought of salvation needing to come to heaven. But it did. Salvation came in a practical sense when heaven was cleansed of sin and of Satan. What is salvation? It is rescue from sin and from Satan.

Matthew 1:21 says that Jesus came to save us from our sins. And there are stages to that salvation. We have been saved meritoriously in Christ's life and death, we were saved judicially from the penalty of sin in justification, we are being saved from the power of sin progressively in sanctification, and we will be saved from the presence of sin in our glorification. All of that is labeled as salvation in Scripture. Well, when you apply that concept of being saved individually from sin you can see that salvation came to heaven when heaven was forever cleansed from sin. It was swept out of heaven

But we are not just saved from sin; we are saved from Satan. 1 John 3:8 says, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." So salvation doesn't just involve saving us from the authority, penalty, power, and presence of sin; it also involves saving us from the authority, power, and presence of Satan and his demonic armies.

So whether you think of the cleansing of heaven as taking place in AD 30 or as taking place in AD 66, it was an application of salvation in its fullest sense. No longer would sinners like Satan have access to heaven. Heaven was cleansed and saved from the presence of sin and Satan.

And that foreshadows what must eventually happen to earth. Christ's purpose will not be finished for earth until an identical thing happens on planet earth. Satan will not win by keeping earth evil. Sin and Satan will eventually be swept and purged from planet earth. So very literally salvation came to heaven.

### **Power of Christ**

What about the next word? "Now the salvation and the power have come..." Did Christ demonstrate supernatural power before death? Yes He did. And He demonstrated power when he conquered death in His resurrection. And He demonstrated power when He triumphed over demons in His ascension.

But this is something that has come through Christ's creatures, the angels. Michael and his angels were standing in the power of Christ in this war and bringing that redemptive power to heaven. What Christ accomplished in his death, resurrection, and ascension, Michael the archangel was now applying in history. And I do see the battles of heaven as being part of history. Michael would have no power over Satan without Christ's power. So heaven was modeling how we must war. We must receive His salvation, His power, and the next phrase says we must receive the kingdom from Him as well.

### **Kingdom and authority of Christ**

In what sense did the kingdom of God come and the authority of Christ come in AD 66? Wasn't Christ already given all authority in heaven and on earth? Yes He was - even before His ascension. But He also assumed a position of authority when He ascended to His throne. So how could there be an advance on that? He already has the exercise of authority and the position of authority.

And the answer is that when it comes to creaturely application of Christ's

benefits, Christ's kingdom comes more and more and His authority is accomplished more and more, and the cleansing of heaven was one manifestation of both kingdom and authority having come. They operated in His authority just like we must. As Beale's commentary words it, "The victory won through Christ's blood must be the basis, not only for the saints' earthly victory, but also for Michael's triumph in heaven."<sup>4</sup>

#### ***D. The evidence of the victory - Satan cast out (v. 10d)***

And what was the evidence of the victory? Verse 10 says, "because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accused them before our God day and night." And what a marvelous victory this was. In Old Testament times Satan was able to accuse Job before the throne of God. In Zechariah 3 he accused Joshua the high priest because of his sins and successfully opposed his ministry until Christ's redemption was provisionally applied to Joshua. It's a marvelous passage. I was going to have us look at it, but decided we didn't have enough time.

Well, this passage indicates that we have a far greater privilege than Job or Joshua, the high priest had. It indicates that the throne of heaven no longer allows Satan to bring accusations before its court. No longer do demons have access there. This is such an added dimension of protection that it is hard to adequately appreciate what has happened. Victory #1 is an awesome victory in which we can rejoice.

## **II. Victory #2**

#### ***A. Location - earth (v. 10e,12)***

But John moves his focus to the earthly participants in this victory. And that the location is earth can be seen by the last phrase of verse 10 - that he was thrown down, and also by verse 12, which says,

Therefore rejoice, O heavens, yes, you who are dwelling in them! Woe to the earth and the sea! Because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has little time."

So there are two victories in these verses. There is the victory in heaven which is complete and full and there is the victory on earth which is progressive and ongoing. But the two are somehow vitally linked together.

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<sup>4</sup> G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC; Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 663.

## **B. Timing - ongoing (vv. 11-17)**

And the timing in verses 11-17 is clearly during a time when things look like anything but victory. The Jewish remnant was holed up in Pella. The Gentile remnant was on the verge of extinction. How could God say that these Christians who were being butchered were actually winning? It was a horrible time. But just as Michael the archangel began enforcing the legal verdict against Satan in heaven, the Christian remnant began to have faith to enforce that same legal verdict on earth. In fact, heaven became the paradigm for earth. Here is how Vic Reasoner words it:

Paul wrote the Romans in A.D. 57 that "the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Rom. 16:20). The kingdom of God was replacing the kingdoms of this world. The heavenly saints would have to wait a little time (6:11) and then Satan would be bound, as the Church began to enforce the legal verdict on earth which Michael enforced in heaven.<sup>5</sup>

So yes, those were tough times, but John was giving the beleaguered saints faith that their actions were winning the victory in time and history; that their labors in the Lord were not in vain. And because they believed John's eschatology of hope, they achieved the impossible. They believed that though the Great Commission was impossible for man, nothing is impossible for God. Like the paralytic whom Christ commanded to stretch forth his hand (that's an impossible command to obey in our own resources), they attempted the impossible by faith and saw Rome converted within two lifetimes. And you read the early church fathers and you see an eschatology of victory. You see fathers who were absolutely convinced that the church would win in history. No wonder they had faith to expect great things from God and to attempt great things for God.

In contrast, the various Pessimillennialists of today have insisted that faith and hope in the future is heresy. They have turned everything on its head. It appears that pessimism and defeat are to be the expected norm. One amillennialist said, "The world [is] filled with sin and getting worse, a hopeless situation beyond repair and impossible to salvage"<sup>6</sup> But Amillennialists aren't the only Pessimillennialists. One pessimistic Dispensationalist said, "Without the hope of our Lord's return...what future do any of us have?"<sup>7</sup> That is not the fighting spirit that John is seeking to instill in the church. Joseph Balyeat rightly points out,

"The Church has been paralyzed by its false short-termed, pessimistic, predestined view of the future. The enthroned Christ, who has been given all power and authority and

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5 Vic Reasoner, [A Fundamental Wesleyan Commentary on Revelation](#) (Evansville, IN: Fundamental Wesleyan Publishers, 2005), p. 338.

6 Hanko, "The Illusory Hope of Postmillennialism," p. 159.

7 Salem Kirban, *Your Last Goodbye* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1969), p. 252.

dominion, has stretched forth His mighty hand to the paralyzed cripple, and said, "Arise, take up your mat, and walk!"<sup>8</sup>

It takes eyes of faith for a paralyzed cripple to get up when he has been used to thinking that he can't. But because Christ commanded it, he believed it, and he arose. And it is my prayer that Christians who are defeated would believe these words and overcome the evil one with the same faith.

What is the cure for pessimism? It is a renewed faith and confidence in three powerful tools that Christ has given to the church. Granted, these tools look foolish and weak to the world, but they are powerful in Christ.

### ***C. The source of victory***

#### **The blood of the Lamb (v. 11a)**

The first tool is the blood of Christ. Verse 11 begins, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb..." To the world that seems strange. In what ways does Christ's blood overcome the devil and his demons? Why must they flee when we apply the blood of Christ to our minds, our bodies, our homes, and our church? This is not just talking about getting saved. Obviously pleading the atonement of Jesus is an essential for our initial salvation. But this is talking about blood-bought saints continuing to overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb. Let me show you four ways that Christ's blood gives us victory over demons.

#### ***Forgiveness***

First, Christ's blood can be claimed to cleanse us from ongoing sins that might make us weak and vulnerable before Satan. Since Satan loves to accuse us by means of our sins, we can shut Satan's mouth by appealing to the blood of Christ which cleanses us from all sin - not just the little sins, but all sins. 1 John 1:7 says, "...if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." Who is he talking to? To believers. Believers confess their sins and are cleansed from their sins by claiming His blood.

But lack of forgiveness results in lack of power in prayer as well. 1 Peter 3 warns husbands to dwell with their wives with understanding, giving honor to the wife as the weaker vessel, lest your prayers be hindered. Sin against your wife can make you powerless in prayer. Psalm 66:18 says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear." Without prayer we are powerless against Satan.

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8 Joseph Balyeat, *Babylon, The Great City Of Revelation* (Sevierville, TN: Onward Press, 1991), p. 192.

I can tell you story after story of men and women who had previously been able to cast out demons suddenly becoming powerless and unable to do so any longer because of bitterness or other sin that they harbored in their hearts. If you have secret sins that aren't cleansed in the blood of Christ, Satan can have access to you. But 1 John 5:18 says, "We know that whoever is born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who is born of God guards himself and the wicked one does not touch him." So that is another reason why forgiveness by the blood of Christ enables us to have victory over Satan. If you can't gain the victory, ask yourself if you have availed yourself of the blood of Christ.

Yet another reason that being forgiven and cleansed in the blood of Christ gives us power over Satan is that Satan can claim legal ground to afflict us or mess around with our lives. For example, 2 Corinthians 2:10-11 says that when we fail to forgive each other, Satan can take advantage of us. Hosea 6 says that when believers engage in idolatry, Satan can overpower them - even leading them into adultery. Ephesians 4:26 says that when we do not resolve anger, we give an opportunity for Satan to get into our lives. The Greek word is sometimes translated as a foothold. Unconfessed sin gives Satan a foothold. It is a scary thing to not be cleansed in the blood of Christ moment by moment. But when we put our sins under the blood of Christ, Satan has nothing on us. He can't get a foothold.

Satan loves to bring fear and bondage, but 1 Peter 1:19 says that Christ's blood buys us back us from fear and bondage. Satan loves to torment our consciences, but Hebrews 9:14 says that Christ's blood frees us from a guilty conscience. Any work that Satan might do in our lives to make us ineffective, Christ's blood can wash away. So when we appeal to the cleansing of Christ's blood, we are free. A cleansed conscience is a huge part of victory over the demonic. So that is the first way in which the blood of Christ helps us to overcome Satan - it removes the sins that make us weak.

### ***Sanctification***

Second, Hebrews 9:13-14 says that Christ's blood sanctifies us and gives us what we need in our Christian life. Think of it as a price paid. We can claim the price of Christ's blood when we ask for anything from the Father. Ephesians 1:3 says that Jesus purchased a massive bank account in heaven by His blood. Do you need wisdom? Well, Christ's blood purchased the wisdom you need. Claim it. Do you feel powerless? 1 Corinthians 1:18 says that the cross is the power of God for believers. All the "put ons" can be claimed by faith if we see Christ's blood as the password (so to speak) for

our online bank account. So the first benefit of the blood is the put offs; the second part is the put ons.

### ***Protection***

The third benefit is protection from the attacks of demons. When the demons have somehow gained access to our house (and demons have from time to time), I very literally walk around our house and anoint the doors of our house with oil and say something along the lines of this:

"Lord, I dedicate this house to you. Just as the Israelites applied the blood of Lambs to their houses, I apply Christ's blood to this house and give it unreservedly to Him. Whatever sins have given demons access to this house, I put them under the blood of Christ, and I claim the protection of Christ's Passover blood. Please send your warrior angels to escort all demons out. They no longer have legal ground here. This is your house."

You see, we have the legal right to appeal to His blood when demons attack. Christ's cross disarmed principalities and powers according to Colossians 2:15. It was the basis for destroying all the works of the devil according to 1 John 3:8. So there is a defensive aspect to the blood.

### ***Advancement of the kingdom***

But those same Scriptures indicate that every advancement of the kingdom flows from redemption as well. When we pray that God's kingdom would come and His will would be done on earth, one of the good reasons to give to the Father is that Christ's shed blood has earned it. "Do it for the sake of your Son."

You almost never see preachers talking about the blood of Christ anymore, but it is critical to victory. Get used to speaking about and claiming the blood of Christ in your spiritual warfare. I have had confrontations with demons that got nowhere until I claimed the blood of Christ. In fact, I have had times when it felt like the demonic would suffocate and kill me and I could barely get the words out, but rebuking demons with the blood of Christ and the authority of His Word instantly released me.

### **The word of their testimony (v. 11b)**

And of course, the authority of the Word is the next tool. The second source of victory was the Word of God that these saints put upon their lips. "And they conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony..." Beale,<sup>9</sup> Lenski, and others point out that the way Revelation

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<sup>9</sup> G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC; Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 663-664; R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation* (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1935), 379-380.

uses this phrase "the word of their testimony" shows a personalization of the Scriptures on the lips of the saints. Quoting the Scriptures against Satan is an absolutely critical part of our weaponry. Lenski says,

A second reason is added: "because of the Word of their testimony." This is "the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ" (1:9) of which 6:9 says, "which they held." The blood is the expiatory cause, the Word and testimony the mediatory cause (διὰ with the accusative, both times to express cause). It is "their" testimony as received and "held" (6:9) by faith. Christ made it, they held it.<sup>10</sup>

And Jesus modeled for us how to use the Scriptures against Satan. Every time Satan tempted Jesus, what did He do? He said, "Get behind me Satan! For it is written...." and then He would quote a Scripture that was pointed specifically against each temptation. And what happened every time? Satan had to flee. Scripture is a powerful sword and when wielded properly, makes demons flee. Sometimes when I have been confronted with demon-possessed people, I have found that authoritatively quoting Scriptures in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ has made demons back off and let me deal with the demon-possessed person. And I have shared many times how I have used the Scriptures as a tool for resisting Satan in my own life. We need to hide God's Word in our hearts so that it becomes so much a part of us that we can instantly recall God's Word and use it against Satan. Until you have memorized and meditated upon the Scripture it is not really your testimony. God's Word must become part of us.

### **Dying to self (v. 11c)**

The third weak tool that gives us power is dying to self. It's the flip side of coin of faith. Verse 11 ends by saying, "and they did not cherish their lives, even up to death." Beale points out that this is a description of all God's people, not simply martyrs. The first part of the clause, "and they did not cherish their lives" points to a self-sacrifice for Christ, and the second phrase, "even up to death," indicates that this self-sacrificial attitude is willing to even physically die if God calls us to do so. When you have given everything to Christ in this way, you automatically start living by faith because having given everything to God you have nothing but the resources of Christ to rely upon.

In Luke 14:27 Jesus said, "whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple," and a few verses later He says, "whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple" (v. 33). There is a cost to being a disciple. There is a cost to victory. In Matthew 16:25 Jesus worded it this way: "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but

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<sup>10</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation* (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1935), 379–380.

whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."

The principle is this: those who want power over the world, the flesh, and the devil must daily die to their own selfish desires and ask Christ to live His life through them. It is when we lay down our own agendas and seek first His kingdom and His righteousness that God adds life, meaning, purpose, power, and everything else that we need for victory. How do you embrace Christ's salvation, power, kingdom, and authority in verse 10? You do so by dying to your own salvation, power, kingdom, and authority. It really is the flip side of faith. One of the ironies of life is that when we selfishly seek first our own life and kingdom, God takes away even what we have. The life of victory and satisfaction only comes to those who have abandoned self and who seek Christ.

***D. The evidence of the victory - Satan angry and desperate (vv. 11-17)***

Does that mean that everything will be roses and sugar once we do so? No. In fact, Satan is most furious with those who are most sold out to Christ. And the next verses show the fury of Satan unleashed upon the church after his loss in heaven. But those verses also show God's protection and loving care for His elect. So the war is not over, but the first battle is won. And next week we will pick up on the intensity of that battle.

So the bottom line is that verses 10-11 show that victory in time and history is achievable by every one of us - no matter how weak we are. This victory that we ourselves experience is somehow tightly tied together with the warfare of angels. But most importantly it is grounded in the victory that Jesus already achieved on the cross. The weakness of the cross becomes the power of God unto salvation. May each of us stand in that power. Amen.