

# Demons

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[ 0 : 00 ] Father, we thank you that you love us. We thank you that your son came to die on the cross for us. We thank you, Father, that he has defeated in his death upon the cross and in his resurrection all sin, all death, and all hostile spiritual powers.

We ask, Father, as we gather now to hear these words of the Bible and to think about these words and to pray about these words, we ask, Father, that your Holy Spirit would move deeply in our minds and hearts and wills, that we will receive what you desire to give us in your word.

And we know, Father, that you have something that you desire to give everyone who is here. So, Father, in your mercy and kindness, deliver us from hardness of heart. Grant us a soft heart willing to hear your word.

Make us good soil so that we will receive your word and bear fruit to bring you glory. And all this we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior.

Amen. Please be seated. So, I've had an interesting time this week.

[ 1 : 14 ] If you're a guest at Church of the Messiah, we want to make disciples gripped by the gospel who bring glory to God. We want to be used by God as he builds a prayerful Bible teaching evangelical church in the heart of the city with a heart for the city and the world.

And so, one of the things we do is we preach through books of the Bible. And we're preaching through the book of Revelation. And that's why we read Revelation chapter 9. And I've had an interesting week thinking and praying about it and studying it.

And if you were listening to Laurier read, and we're going to look at the Bible text in a moment, every Sunday, if you forget to bring your own Bible, we always have some Bibles up at the front or by that door.

And you're welcome to keep the Bible if you want or return it afterwards. But if you're listening to this text, a third of all the people on the earth die.

Great torment. I have to confess, I like watching certain types of movies. And every time one of the verses, I come across one of the verses in this text, I think of the Wolverine.

[ 2 : 22 ] And many of you who have seen the last movie with the Wolverine, I mean, the rest of you, it's like I'm speaking in hieroglyphics. But if you watch or follow that at all, longing for death but not being able to find it, speaks a lot about Wolverine and a lot of his character.

But it's a very, very stark text. And it could lead us to say, is God cruel? Is God cruel? Why does God seem to order demons to hurt people?

Why is such crazy stuff in the Bible? Isn't this proof for some people that only crazy people, not rational or well-educated people, would take the Bible seriously?

Because this is just crazy. And it seems to portray a God that just seems to be cruel. And it seems to talk about things that just aren't true to well-educated, well-adjusted people.

So, given that that's, I don't know if any of you are thinking that, but I could well imagine that if I was to say, I'd like you to share this Bible text with your office workers or your classmates on Monday, you might have some apprehension about what they would think.

[ 3 : 40 ] So, it would be a great help to me and to you if you were to get your Bibles and turn to the last book in the Bible, and the book of Revelation, and turn to chapter 9. And let's look and see more carefully what it is that the Bible says and doesn't say.

In fact, I actually think that as we look at this text, we see that this is a very robust, thick, deep text of the Bible, which actually has profound things to say about human nature and about God and about good and evil.

In fact, I think it's, if we grasp it in the context of other spiritualities and philosophies, that we will just be completely struck by how deep and wise the text is, even though at first it looks very, very

frightening and daunting and seems to say terrible things about God.

So, let's just start at verse 1. And just, actually, we're going to start at verse 13 of chapter 8. And just if you want to sort of have a bit of the flow of the Bible text, what it is, is in around chapter 5, there's a, chapter 4, there's a vision of God in heaven.

Chapter 5, there's a vision of Jesus on the throne in heaven. He's pictured as the Lamb who was slain. And chapter 5 sort of begins with this idea that God knows the future and he has a scroll and only the Lamb who's slain is able to take the scroll, the sort of the things that are going to happen in the future, only the Lamb, Jesus, is able to take it from God's hand.

[ 5 : 11 ] And then in chapter 6, we see Jesus starting to open the scroll by opening the seals. And as he opens it, there's a series of judgments.

And then in chapter 7, there's a bit of a pause. And in chapter 8 that we looked at last week, the final seal is opened. There's silence in heaven. And then the seventh seal enters into seven new judgments described in terms of trumpets.

And the image is that all of heaven adores the Lamb. Then the prayers of the saints come up to Jesus. And as a result of the prayers of the saints coming up to Jesus, an angel takes fire from heaven and he throws, hurls the fire down at the earth.

And the fire that comes down to earth appears in seven different forms as these seven different trumpets. And last week we looked at four. And at the end of the four, in verse 13, this is what happened.

Then I looked and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew directly overhead. And he said, Notice that again.

[ 6 : 50 ] Notice that again. Notice that again. Notice that again. Notice that again. They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree.

But only those people who did not have, do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were allowed, that's these locust type creatures, were allowed to torment them, that's the people, for five months, but not to kill them.

And their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone. And in those days, here's the Wolverine text, in those days people will seek death and will not find it.

They will long to die, but death will flee from them. Now just sort of pause here for a second. Here's the first thing to see in the text. Remember we began by saying, like, this just sounds crazy, it sounds cruel.

Why does God seem to order demons to hurt people? But here's the thing that the text, I'm going to show you in a second, but here's the thing, Andrew, if you could put it up on the screen. God is absolutely sovereign over every demon, and he restrains them until their inevitable judgment.

[ 8 : 16 ] This text, not only here, but the rest of the text, and I'm sort of giving away a bit of the ending by adding the word inevitable, telling you what's going to happen in chapters 19, 20, 21 and all.

But what this text is showing is that God is absolutely sovereign over every demon, and God restrains them until their inevitable judgment.

One of the things that happens in the book of Revelation is that they use a variety of different images for angels and for demons, and so sometimes you have to just be careful and read slowly and meditatively and look at the context to sort of keep things straight.

And so the angel here isn't an angel that begins the whole thing, and it's an image of the angel descending with great speed. So the trumpet's blown, and an angel with great speed descends. An angel comes from God, and he goes, and he opens the door which leads to the bottomless pit, the abyss.

[ 9 : 24 ] And the abyss, all the way through the book of Revelation, is portrayed as a type of prison where demons and the devil are held. In other words, they're restrained.

Why? Because God is sovereign over them. Because Jesus has triumphed over all hostile spiritual forces in his crucifixion and resurrection.

And the text doesn't make any comment about whether all demons were there or all that, but it's just giving you this image that God restrains them, and he goes, he sends an angel, the angel lets the demons out, and the demons, of course, come flooding out, they escape, but even as they escape, God sets limits on them.

And he says to them, he says that they're not allowed to harm the trees or anything like that. They're only allowed to harm people who do not have the seal of God on their forehead. And they're not even allowed to kill them. And in everything about it, we just see this picture of the demons doing what they desire to do, but even what they desire to do, that God, who's sovereign over them, restrains them.

[10:35] That's why the text is showing all the way through chapter 9 and all the way through the book of Revelation, that God is sovereign over every demon, and he restrains them until their inevitable judgment.

And it's obvious that these are demons, not animals. They're coming from the bottomless pit, from the abyss, from a place that God has contained them.

That's not what normal locusts look like, and as we're going to see in a couple of minutes, they don't look at all like normal locusts. They don't act like normal locusts. It's a way of picturing demons swarming and of being inhuman and anti-human and destructive.

Yet God is sovereign over them. And so, but here's the question that some of us might say. If you look at it very carefully, like, you know, he told them what to do and et cetera, et cetera.

But the fact is, why would God still allow such demons to come out from a place where he has bound them to hurt anybody? Like, why would God allow that?

[11:47] Isn't that almost the same as him causing it? And that's a very, very good question. Well, to start to answer that question, let's look at verses 7 to 12.

In appearance, the locusts were like horses prepared for battle. Notice all the way through this description, like, like, like, like. In appearance, the locusts were like horses prepared for battle.

On their heads were what looked like crowns of gold. Their faces were like human faces. Their hair like woman's hair. It means they had long hair.

I was in a church back, I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm a hundred million years old. And in, in the 70s, I grew up in a church that always had these prophecy conferences all of the time.

And, you know, in like, like 1975 or 76, it was very, very uncommon in conservative baptisty type churches to have anybody in the church who had long hair.

[12:49] So there's a whole pile of people looking one way and then there was me with my hair halfway down my back at that point in time and dressed in jeans and all, which everybody was dressed in suits. And there was this prophecy conference.

I stuck out like a sore thumb and there was a guy drawing a picture of the devil and demons and he said, looking around the room, let's make him a hippie. Wasn't trying to single me out at all.

I felt very welcomed, actually, by this guy. Anyway, so verse 8, their hair like woman's hair and their teeth like lion's teeth. They had breastplates like breastplates of iron and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle.

They have tails and stings like scorpions and their power to hurt people for five months. That's actually a restraint, again, is in their tails and they have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, sort of an arch demon, maybe the devil himself and his name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek he is called Apollyon, destroyer and destruction.

The first woe has passed before two woes are still to come and you're saying, George, how does this exactly help you at all? Well, here's the thing. Here's the point. If you could put it up on the screen, Andrew.

[14:09] What the text is showing is that demons are real and they hate their devotees and turn on us when they can.

I spent a long time trying to think of whether I should say turn on them or turn on us and I decided with us. You can ask me about it or we can debate it over coffee if you want, but demons are real and they hate their devotees and turn on us when they can.

And so, here's how you should interpret this language is it's, you know, here's the thing. I think it's, my daughter-in-law, my son Jesse was just telling me about his wife, my daughter-in-law, Kavita. You know, she did an engineering degree at Waterloo so she's really smart and she's really good with numbers and Jesse says you can tell Kavita like a phone number or some other type of number and she just remembers it and, you know, her ability to do math in her head and all that, she's this really good number person and there's some people in the congregation they've told me about how they live in a world where numbers are really, really important and, in fact, there's all these numeric things that go on in the Bible that sort of help them to understand that the Bible has

to be the Word of God and for a lot of us numbers and all these numerical things and our eyes start to glaze over and all, but for people who really numbers work there's lots of things in the Bible about numbers that communicate to us and for some of us it's poetry, for some of us it's more like philosophical types of stuff, for some of us it's narratives and for some people what they really need is powerful images and because the Bible is written for everyone it means that there's some parts of the Bible that people are going whoa, look at that, that just so sticks with me

I can really understand that I can really remember that look at those numbers and other people it's not that at all and so what the Bible here is talking about it's all the way through it's making a very, very strong claim that demons are real that demons are spiritual beings or creatures that were originally angels that rebelled against God and in their rebellion against God they not only hate God they hate people they hate those who bear the image of God and that's human being every human being whether it's a whether they're a poor person or a rich person a smart person or a dumb person whether they're profoundly handicapped or whether they're the world's greatest athlete every human being is made in the image of God bears the image of God and demons are portrayed in this text as being real and as they hate God they also hate human beings because we bear the image of God and are made in the image of God and so this text here it's not to be taken that somehow the demons have all these things but it's to communicate for those of us that images stick in their heads that if I was to give you you know five points and the five points wouldn't stick in your head but you just hear this description and the image of them being like horses in the ancient world it means that they're powerful it means that they're bred for war it means that they're bred for aggression in the Roman world the hooves of the war horses would often have like they'd shoe them and they'd have they would be sharp so that they would cut and the breastplate so once again that they're ready for battle and that they have protection and everything and the long hair is that they're like the barbarians that the Romans were starting to know of and in other words they were other and they were dangerous and they were fearful and they were powerful and they were organized and they were a swarm and it's trying to communicate truth about demons that just using words will not do for some people and so it's a series of word pictures to try to communicate the reality and the nature of demons that demons are real and they hate their devotees and turn on us when they can but then the question still is why is it that God allows them to come out well first of all look back up at verse 4 again they were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads this is a very very this in the next trumpet it's a very very unique type of teaching in the scriptures and it's showing how demons turn on their own people who have given themselves to evil have given themselves consciously to demons those who believe that by practicing white magic or using spells or potions are in touch with the demon the spiritual world which is in rebellion against God and we think it makes us stronger and we think it puts us in contact with stronger things and it does put us in contact with stronger things and maybe in the short run things seem to work but the Bible here is giving us a picture of the end game and from the end game these powers that we dabble with it's not talking about it's not talking about anything now about Christians it's talking about those who have not given their lives to Jesus and these demonic powers will turn on them because ultimately they hate them you know it's very very interesting that often here in the west when we think of Buddhism or Hinduism when we think even of Islam in a good sense because it's a complicated thing our culture

[ 20 : 01 ] with Islam we tend to think of philosophical high high-end philosophical versions of Buddhism or Hinduism or Islam and even when we think of secularism and agnosticism we tend to think of high-end ones that are more abstract and philosophical but the very interesting thing is in every one of those cultures apart from the high-end there is the reality of a fascination with demons and a worry about demons if you were to go I've never been to Thailand but if you were to go to China or you go to Thailand you see you see idols everywhere there is a concern with spells and with evil spirits and bringing misfortune upon you it's true in Islam it's true in India it's true in China it's true in Thailand and even here in the educated west it's true here you go to any chapters and you see the wide range of bookstore in the bookstore given over to occult types of matters that even and this isn't just something that the really uneducated people are fascinated with it's true even if you have your bachelor's degree or your master's degree or your doctorate or multiple doctorates there's this fascination with it and the interesting thing about it is that these philosophical forms of Hinduism and Buddhism and Islam and secularism that they actually are sort of powerless they're powerless against this widespread worry and presence of practice of magic and concern

about demonic types of things that there's a type of disconnect to in Christianity what often appears in certain circles as philosophical

Christianity actually isn't a higher form of Christianity it's residual Christianity but the Bible as you go into the Bible and understand Christianity from the Bible and from Jesus' own words you see that it's a very robust and thick faith that talks about the practical things that attract and frighten and bind and repel both ordinary people and educated people and what this text is showing here is a certain type of way that God sometimes how it is that God acts towards us as human beings I've been a few times on my travels when I've been at some type of a conference I've been away from my wife and kids I've been at some type of a conference and I've been right next to a casino and I'm not boasting here about how strong

I am at resisting temptation but I can tell you that those I think it's three or four times I've stayed either right next door or across the street from a casino and I've never gone into it once why? I have going to a casino to gamble I have zero temptation for it okay two dollars to a one-armed bandit or a coffee at Starbucks like I don't even think about that for a millisecond of a second a muffin or a scone or a one-armed bandit I don't even think about that for a millisecond like it has no attraction to me I'm going to stop giving you any illustrations because you realize how many sins I'm actually deeply tempted to but gambling is one that I have absolutely zero temptation to I could stay in the casino and I wouldn't put a penny in a one-armed bandit I just maybe I would once just say how it worked but it wouldn't even be temptation it would just be I wonder how this works I've always seen movies that would be it and then I'd go buy a coffee preferably an Italian roast or French roast something nice and dark but the fact is that there are many things in my life that I'm tempted to evil things that I'm tempted to and in the book of Romans it gives a very philosophical description of how that works and here we see in the book of Revelation it gives an image picture of how it works and how it works it's as if there are different currents in my life it's as if there are rivers inside of me rivers that have a current towards something which is wrong maybe it's slander maybe it's pride maybe it's anger maybe it's gluttony maybe it's lust

I mean it's going to be there's going to be different streams within every human being there are like it's as if there's a current going on in my life and what it is is the Bible has this idea of what's called common grace that God generally restrains the strength of the current in our lives and doesn't usually allow the current to have full reign in our life so it's as if I am a boat tied to a rock or a dock and the boat's in a current and for some things it's as if I'm very tightly tied I can feel the strength of the current and partly I resist it by my will and by my disciplines but partially it's just God holding me against the current but what the Bible pictures here is that sometimes the way that the judgment of God works it works in one of two ways sometimes what happens it's as if he takes the rope that ties me so that

I'm not being taken with the current and he lets it out a hundred feet he lets the rope out a hundred feet and the current takes me bang against rocks bang against trees who knows what happens I get to experience the strength of the current that by God's common grace he usually is holding me back but even then he might just let it out a hundred feet and sometimes the Bible says he unties the rope all together and I experience the full strength of the current towards doing wrong that I have within me and so what we see here is that the fact of the matter is demons and idols and evil don't restrain evil they actually only want to harm us evil is harmful to us demons will harm us idols say that if we serve them love them obey them trust them and hope in them that they will make us greater and stronger but they will only harm us they are either powerless or they are harmful and sometimes what God does is not only does he not only is a type of a judgment upon us in our continued resistance against him but it's also sometimes an act that God allows to happen in the hope that we will realize what's going on in our lives and that we will say why is it why is it that even though I can begin the day saying that I will not be angry at my wife or will not be angry at my kids but before you know it as the day comes a moment will come when I realize I have a choice to say something angry to them or hurtful to them or sarcastic or demeaning to them and I don't want to do it

[ 27 : 40 ] I plan not to do it but then the time comes and I choose it I choose it and why is it that there are things like that within not only me but every human being and maybe for some it's anger as I said maybe for some it's a sexual thing or pride or revenge or ingratitude or whatever but it's not as if there's just a group of people here who have no currents in their lives and the others who have currents it's in us and the Bible here is trying to teach us that sometimes God allows this to

happen in our lives and he doesn't cause it because generally he's restraining it but he does it to allow it that we might realize our need for God to work that we might realize that our philosophical things our theological things our disciplines are the things that we're trusting in that these things are just not ultimately they do not have the power to ultimately change us or transform us to have us to be the type of free human being that

God we know ultimately desires us to be that we need God to act Revelation showing us this in picture language demons are real and they hate their devotees and turn on us when they can that's why if you could put the next thing up Andrew the Bible underneath this text and underneath the whole book of Revelation through the book of Revelation it's trying to teach us that human beings are created to know God and be free but we turn time and time again to idols demons and evil that human beings are created to know God and be free but we turn time and time again to idols demons and evil I'm not going to comment on verses 13 to 19 you can read it later it's a second snapshot only in this particular case the demons are allowed to actually kill up to a third of the people who have not given their lives to

Jesus how does this all work out here's how it all works out folks I don't know how it works the book of Revelation is a book about Jesus what he's done what he's doing what he will do on one hand everything in the book of Revelation is true of human existence between the death and resurrection of Jesus until the end of the end of the end of the ends and in some way there's something that's always true about this at every point in time in human history and there might be times I mean Bonhoeffer who was writing during the days of Nazi Germany he ultimately died by direct orders of Hitler because Hitler wanted him dead he was a devout Christian and he at times wondered if in fact images of the book of Revelation and demons were almost made visible I mean how could you not watch Hitler and those grand spectacles and watch the book burning and know about Auschwitz and know of the terrible things that are going on and not wonder if demons were walking the earth and so on one level it's true of human experience it's somehow true of all of this time and there's no doubt that there will be some final time close to the end when we'll see that this is just somehow or another perfectly fulfilled

I don't know how it would look but it wants us to understand that it's always always the case but that's what's going to happen I'm not going to read verses 13 to 19 you can read it yourself but after the sixth trumpet look at verses 20 to 21 remember I said that human beings are created to know God and be free but we turn time and time and time again to idols and demons and evil and that's what the text says I got it from the text look verse 20 again the rest of mankind the rest of humanity who were not killed by these plagues did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood which cannot see or hear or walk nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts and there's sort of three categories here there's a picture of the works of their hands which is just like an idol which is nothing worshipping of demons and idols as the book of first corinthians talks about sometimes an idol is connected to a demon and then there's the outright connection to demons and then there's the fact that we ourselves willfully choose things that we willfully choose evil and it's providing this remarkable sense that even though terrible things can happen to us and as it's been shown repeatedly in the book of revelation that we might even have a sense that God exists but rather than this making us desire to call out to God for mercy and help it leads us to shake our fist at

God and it's and all of the telling us of this is so that we could God communicates this to us so that we can see this and realize it about ourselves and he does it so we can realize it about our friends and neighbors so that we will pray greatly for them and so that we can search and realize that we need to call out to God for mercy every Sunday at the church in your bulletins we have two different things one of them is called there's a blog you can always read but there's something called growing and grace and there's always something and this Sunday it's at the back about going deeper and the going deeper is a way you can go do some Bible studies about things connected to the text the sermon that's happened to get some of the background and some other perspectives on it and the growing in grace which is usually on the insert like this it has a variety of different attitudes and prayers and Bible memory verse connected to the sermon and this week you'll notice the three attitudes one of them is that idols and demons always lie and tell me

[ 34 : 06 ] I cannot have new life in God through grace the idea of these attitudes is for us to think about them throughout the week to have it become part of how we understand the world that idols

and demons always lie and tell me I cannot have new life in God through grace that's a lie every one of the people who in a sense would go through what's described in Revelation chapter 9 the whole reason it's described is so they can ask God for new life through grace the second attitude the devil harms his own God saves his own and then the third one which is what I really want for some of us here's a main thing for us to pray into I have two problems with idolatry first I worship idols second I rarely recognize that I worship idols and that's something for us to pray into friends but here

I thought about this all week whether I would do it and I decided I would I don't talk about this very often and I'm going to say something I just ask you a little bit of grace for me but some of you might know that this congregation actually I think it's in about two weeks time will be the sixth anniversary of us leaving the Anglican Church of Canada there's maybe not many people in the room who were part of the congregation six years ago when we made that decision and that that led three and a half years later to us after lawsuits walking away from a building and a whole range of financial assets and and we did it because the Anglican Church of Canada created the doctrine and began the practice of blessing same sex marriages and the text here actually says something very powerful about why we felt we had to be willing to lose a building and take a position which is profoundly unpopular in

Canadian culture but we felt bound to do it and it can be seen here in verse 20 remember after having all of this description of demons and the lack of God loosening the cords and these things that happen to people the torment and them having on one level to realize that even as they devote themselves to demonic stuff that the demons actually still hate them and turn on them and there's this puzzling comment deeper cry for people to heed and to turn because the rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues do not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons of idols and silver and bronze gold silver and bronze and stone and wood which cannot see or hear or walk nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts and the word translated their sexual immorality as part of the porneia word teaches friends the bible teaches that god's intention for us as human beings not that sexual knowing is bad or sexual stimulation is bad but that for those who are called to enter into it that god limits sexual stimulation and sexual knowing between one man and one woman exclusive of all others with the intent that as they enter into this relationship called marriage that they intended for life and so sexual immorality the porneia word group says that any sexual stimulation or sexual knowledge outside of marriage of one man to one woman is sin and in fact it's actually a sign here a specific sign of a lack of repentance and a hardness of heart to god see in marriage in marriage of one man to one woman god has provided in a sense a path the bible doesn't portray marriage as just a mere contract between two consenting adults about financial and sexual and child raising relationships bible doesn't put it in that way at all it understands marriage as a form of holiness a form of holiness whereby a man will give himself in all senses including sexually to his wife and his wife will give herself sexually and in all other ways to her husband and that is a form of holiness that's blessed and so for a church to say that a sign of rebellion is blessed in the context of revelation nine is a horror it's a horror now some of you might say george are you saying that the people in this church are all just a bunch of goody two-shoes that they've never had any type of sexual temptations or sexual indiscretions are you saying that it's only perfect people in here not at all if all of a sudden an angel was to appear in the room and he and the angel makes me say all of those who've at any point in time violated this pornea commandment could you stand my guess is that just about every single one of us would stand and in fact if the angel said okay those who have violated this this past week stand we would probably be shocked at how many of us stand so that the text is not at all saying anything at all about us the stand and this text it's not saying anything at all about us being particularly brilliantly good it's actually saying I got something out of order in my talk Andrew if you could skip to the fifth point this is what it's saying actually go back to the fourth God always preserves goodness restrains evil judges evil and freely offers me grace and mercy and redemption in Jesus God always preserves goodness restrains evil judges evil and freely offers grace and mercy and redemption and Jesus that's what the Bible says and so for us as a congregation when we hear this sign of rebellion I mean on one level I don't know how many of you have either dreamed of stealing or cheated on your income tax or did some other type of thing this past week maybe there's nobody here who's murdered anybody this past week although the

Bible says that to really hate your brother and call him names is a type of murder and I don't know how many of us have maybe struggled with pornography or other types of things or maybe other types of sexual stimulation or sexual knowing outside of marriage but this text it's all calling us to receive mercy from God and it actually helps to illustrate and we're going to close by looking at Colossians 1 it helps us to understand a very powerful image of salvation in the Bible so if you could just turn to Colossians chapter 1 verses 11 to 14 we'll see how Revelation 9 is trying to help us to understand what it is that only God can do and what we need God to do Colossians 1 verses 11 14 may you be strengthened with all power according to his glorious might for all endurance and patience with joy giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light he has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son in whom we have redemption the forgiveness of sins verse 13 he has delivered us from the domain of darkness darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son in whom we have redemption the forgiveness of sins here's what the bible is telling us the fifth point [ 43 : 09 ] Andrew when I turn and put my faith in Jesus he transfers me from the domain of darkness into his kingdom and he seals me as his own forever forever you see what we're seeing in revelation 19 is what we're seeing in a sense the domain of darkness and what the text is saying it isn't saying that George you have to pull yourself up by your bootstraps you have to figure out spiritual disciplines you have to figure out all of these types of things you have to go to therapy so you can understand the roots of your genetic inheritance and your family of orange inheritance and you have to do all these rules and you have to be good and you have to be good and you have to be good and then somehow or another you force your way into the kingdom of God and now you're here and now you can look down on those who aren't there the Bible is saying something completely and utterly different it's saying that if you understand revelation 9 and if you understand the book of revelation you will understand cannot get from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of

God the kingdom of heaven and become citizens of it all we can do is call to God for mercy and God does what no human being can do by themselves in their own power by their rituals by their therapies by their disciplines by their successes by their failures by their wounds God does something that no human being can do is that when we put our faith and trust in Jesus and what he did for us on the cross that God takes somebody like me and somebody like you and he takes us and he moves us into his kingdom and when he moves us into his kingdom and we get there and then a week later a month later a year later and we say to Jesus Jesus did you realize when you move me from the domain of darkness into your kingdom do you realize how strong the current in my life is towards same-sex sex do you realize how strong the pull within me is towards pornography do you realize how much anger I have in me do you know how much I hate do you understand my racism or my anti-semitism and if we say that to Jesus he's not going to say oh good grief

I didn't know about you I'm going to kick you back out here I thought I was only taking a perfect Sinclair that's not how it works at all that knowing that knowing the power of the currents in our life we call out to God for mercy and he does what I can never do he moves me into his kingdom and when he moves me into his kingdom he takes Sinclair from the moment of Sinclair's conception to the moment of Sinclair's death with all of the currents and all of the problems and all of the wounds and all of the strengths he knows all about it and he moves me into his kingdom and he seals me as his own forever he does this for me because of Jesus's death upon the cross for me he does not weigh my merits he pardons my offenses and it is in the context of being in his kingdom that then I can say God

I have this current I don't know help me to help me not to go help me to restrain it helped me to incline my heart away from thievery to generosity and incline my heart away from adultery or fornication towards my wife incline my heart from lies to speaking the truth father you know you transferred me knowing what was going on and still you accepted me still Jesus was able to move me into this it's in that context that we can honestly talk to God and he day by day sometimes quickly sometimes slowly can change us please stand so what about you what about me some of us here today we were thinking maybe as we were going on saying

George you know I can never get into this Christian thing because I'm not like you you realize that those who are sealed by the blood of Jesus sealed by the Holy Spirit moved into the kingdom of God it's not God counting our merits or looking at how wonderful or strong we necessarily are but

he does something we cannot do and so we have an invitation if you've never done it to say to Jesus Jesus have mercy on me thank you for what you've done for me on the cross move me from the domain of darkness move me from Revelation 9 into Colossians 1 use your own words you can just say God I'm in Revelation 9 I want to be in Colossians 1 and only you can do it thank you that you do it thank you for Jesus and what he did upon us on the cross and for others we have to pray into the idolatries that we still struggle with the currents that we still struggle with and say Father I thank you that you brought me into your kingdom not weighing my merits but pardoning my offenses

[ 48 : 37 ] Father I just surrender before you and open myself for you for your Holy Spirit to move deeply in my life to deal with those things that I cannot have victory in my own power please help me thank you for your mercy let's bow our heads in prayer Father we all give you thanks and praise that you know us completely and utterly perfectly you know every current towards evil that every one of us has within you know Father those things that we delight in doing that are wrong you know those good things that we delight in not doing you know you know you know Father those of us who have opened ourselves up to demons and knowing all this about us still you love us still your son died on the cross to redeem us still your son died to defeat sin and death and all hostile spiritual powers upon the cross and

Father still you ask us to call out to you for mercy that you turn no one away who calls to you Father we give you thanks and praise for this Father we call out to you for mercy we thank you for the gift of Jesus we thank you that by faith in him we can be part of his kingdom that you do this not us and Father for those of honor and glory help us to be gripped by the gospel and bring transformation to our lives so that more and more of what characterizes each of us as each of us blesses your holy name and brings you glory and all this we ask and thank in the name of Jesus your son and our savior amen