

Revelation 1:9-10

Introduction

I. Believers share a common experience. Here at the first of the book, John introduces the major themes of the book as far as believers are concerned.

1. Tribulation:

1. The word tribulation (thlipsis) doesn't appear in the Bible until Jesus speaks of it in the gospels. From thlibo: to press, afflict. It is translated tribulation, affliction, or distress.

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have **tribulation**, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

Romans 5:3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that **tribulation** brings about perseverance;

Romans 8:35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will **tribulation**, or distress (*narrowness of space*), or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Romans 12:12 rejoicing in hope, persevering in **tribulation**, devoted to prayer,

1 Thessalonians 1:6 You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much **tribulation** with the joy of the Holy Spirit,

2 Corinthians 12:10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with **difficulties (press tight)**, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and *saying*, "Through many **tribulations** we must enter the kingdom of God."

Hebrews 10:33 partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and **tribulations**, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated.

2. Tribulation *in Christ* began from the time Jesus came and continues until He comes again. Those who are in Christ will suffer, be afflicted, and persecuted for His names' sake. The severity and greatness of tribulation increases depending on the time and place.

3. The point is this: In this present world, the church must suffer much tribulation, often open persecution because of her connection to Jesus Christ. But the church must not despair because, she also is a partner in His kingship.

2. Kingship: The second theme pertaining to believers is their fellowship in Jesus' process of ruling over all things in heaven and on earth.

1. This is a Greek form with its root being the word for "king". John wrote that he was a fellow partaker of "the kingdom" - the sovereign reigning which is in Jesus--literally it might be interpreted "kingship."

1. Jesus is King of kings.

2. Believers are kings.

3. Jesus reigns on earth through believers.

2. Jesus' reign as king of God's kingdom began from the time he ascended into heaven.

1. Already in v. 5, Jesus is called the ruler of the kings of the earth. This is not future, it is present tense action.

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2. *Matthew 28:18* And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
 3. *Ephesians 1:21* far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.
 4. *Colossians 2:10* and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;
 5. *Hebrews 2:8* YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.” For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.
 6. *Revelation 15:3* And they *sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations!
 7. *Revelation 17:14* “These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him *are the* called and chosen and faithful.”
 8. *Revelation 19:16* And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”
3. Believers have been made to be a kingdom by their new birth and union with Jesus. We have been raised up and seated with Christ.
 4. Throughout the revelation, John unpacks this theme of suffering saints ruling on earth *in Christ*. We find this same concept throughout the NT.
 1. By prayer for rulers (1 Tim. 2:1ff).
 2. By petitioning God’s will to be done on earth as in heaven (Matt. 6:10).
 3. By proclaiming the gospel (1 *Corinthians 1:18, 20-21* For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to* know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.)
 4. By overcoming our tribulation. Paul puts it this way:
 1. *Romans 8:28* And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.
 2. *Romans 8:35-37* Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, “FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED.” But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.
 5. What does this conquest in the midst of tribulation look like?
 3. Perseverance: An enduring love and faithfulness to Jesus Christ in the midst of tribulation.
 1. To persevere is to endure, to wait it out faithfully. *hupomone*: under+abide/remain-to wait.

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Romans 5:4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;
Romans 8:25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

Romans 15:4 For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Romans 15:5 Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus,
Ephesians 6:18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

2 Thessalonians 1:4 therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.

1 Timothy 6:11 But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness.

2 Timothy 3:10 Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance,

Titus 2:2 Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance.

2 Peter 1:6 and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness,

Revelation 2:2 'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them *to be* false;

Revelation 2:3 and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary.

Revelation 2:19 'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first.

Revelation 3:10 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that *hour* which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Revelation 13:10 If anyone *is destined* for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.

Revelation 14:12 Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

2. Perseverance is only *in Christ*. In the following chapters, John will unveil, by the Spirit's assistance, the tribulations the church will experience until the end of time, but he will constantly remind them of their victory in Christ, so they will endure, persevere, wait patiently until the end.

2. Application

1. Do you expect tribulation? or Do you expect ease?
2. Are you reigning in Christ? or Are you living for yourself?
3. Are you overcoming in Christ? or Are you quitting?
4. What encouragement would this have been to the churches? To you?