

WHO IS LIKE THE BEAST?

REVELATION 13:1-18 // TODD DUGARD
NOVEMBER 27, 2022



I must acknowledge God's sovereignty over all lest I worship falsely (13:1-4), believe erroneously (13:5-8a), and hope vainly (13:11-18) rather than hearing the call to endurance (13:10b), faith (13:10c), and hope in Christ (13:8b-10a).

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. *Todd opened with two descriptions of the way people live. People can have a self-directed life, which fits well with the empowerment philosophy of today. Alternatively, people can have a Christ-directed life, which is a departure from popular modern perspectives.* What are some tell-tale indications that a person is leading their own life rather than following Jesus?
2. *In the description of the beast in Revelation 13:1-4, we read that among the horns and diadems, it has blasphemous names written on its heads. Believers will know that the beast is not aligned with God because of the obvious blasphemy and will not worship Satan's impressive yet destructive representative.* What do you think blasphemy means? How do you react to blasphemy when you recognize it?
3. *Those who worship the dragon and the beast ask two questions for which they believe false answers to be true. "Who is like the beast?" Incorrect answer: No one, the beast is better than God. "Who can fight against the beast?" Wrong answer: No one. The beast is more powerful than God. If you only saw the beast and never met Jesus or had the Scriptures, you might believe this, but Christians know the truth.* What have you found in the Bible that demonstrates God's superiority to Satan? What may happen to our belief if we only trust our experiences to point us to God and neglect the study of his Word?

4. ***As Todd puts it, the mark of the beast is an expression of hope in anything or anyone other than Christ. While 666 has various possible interpretations, we can see that taking the mark is surrendering to a system steeped in blasphemous idolatry. That doomed, sinful system offers people pleasure, possessions, and power experiences while openly persecuting the church.*** How do you know when a pleasure, possession, or power experience is coming from a system like this rather than from God?

“...unbelievers stake their hope in the beast and mark themselves in this way, taking on his name, to identify with it. And that’s not just a future thing. Every person alive today—Christian and non-Christian of all kinds—have staked their hope in something. If it is anything other than Jesus Christ, it is in vain.”

5. ***Revelation 13:10 calls believers to endurance. We must endure when progress is difficult, and the rest of Revelation 13:7-10 explain how difficult it will sometimes be. Thankfully we won’t all face such harsh persecution, but we will be tested and tempted by our desires and need to be ready to endure.*** Have you ever turned down pleasure, possessions, or power so that you could stay true to Jesus? What was the outcome of your devotion? What leads and keeps you at that level of allegiance to Christ?