

**Date:** 08.04.2020

**Time:** 7.30pm

**Prayer Meeting taken by:** Rev Gavino Fioretti

**Scripture:** Revelation 10-11:13

**Outline: The Church**

a) Introduction

1. Its Message

2. Its representation

3. Its struggles

4. Its power

5. Its triumph

## THE CHURCH

- **Introduction**

**Repeated Structure:** We've seen previously that there was a break between the opening of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> seals. We see now a break between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> trumpets as the message develops. There is a cyclical cycle in Revelation, we are reminded again and again that God is in control and we need to be faithful to Him. The purpose of the book is to encourage the church that God is in control and the church's future is a glorious one.

**Great tribulation:** This describes our current time. We are constantly living in persecution and suffering. Freedom to worship could be considered an unusual thing. Persecution shouldn't take us by surprise – when it comes, we should be ready for it.

**Certain judgment:** The idea of judgement is repeated again. This judgement is certain. It's not a judgement of the church, but of the world. We, as God's people, are preserved from His judgement.

### 1) **Its Message**

The church's message has 2 elements; the severity of God and the goodness of God.

**The severity of God:** There is hardness, a bitter, but necessary part of the message of God – this is a message of judgement. The world is sinful and will be judged. This is difficult, because this affects people that we love.

**The goodness of God:** There is a sweet side to the message of God – God is full of mercy, kindness, goodness and grace. In His goodness, God is still warning people of the judgement that is to come.

We need to tell people, “you are a sinner in a dangerous place, but there is mercy in God if your trust is in Jesus.” We need to preach and speak both parts of the message. You can’t emphasise one without the other. We need to preach the sin and the solution. If we focus on only the solution, we don’t see the need for it. If we focus on only the sin, we create only legalism.

## 2) Its Representation

There are symbols used to describe the church.

**The temple:** This is a picture of the church, God’s Israel, Christians, the people of God. The courts are those who are outside of God’s people; unbelievers.

**The two witnesses:** There are not two men, but a picture of the church. These are people who are witnesses to God’s truth and who witness for God. They are the church of Jesus. They speak and preach for God. They’re concerned with defeating the enemies of God by the Word of God; not by killing them, but by bringing them from darkness to light, saving souls.

**The two olives and lampstands:** These are repeated pictures of those who God has called and equipped to lead the church, representing the church.

## 3) Its Struggles

**Constant opposition:** Persecution, opposition, mocking and enemies is a reality for the church. The church is always going to be opposed. We will be hated – that is the reality.

**High cost:** Sometimes, with opposition, there is a high cost. It might mean churches close, pastors are imprisoned, and some people might die. For some people, being faithful to Jesus means death.

**Temporary sufferings:** It is important to remember that the suffering is temporary. The church struggles, but it’s for a time and a season. There is not going to be a post-Christian era. Better days ahead are for the church. We’re reminded that the suffering is light when compared with the better days to come. We might feel out of place, like we’re not at home. We suffer in our souls for our sin and the sin of others, but this suffering is for a time.

## 4) Its Power

**Divine protection:** The church can do amazing things because of God’s divine protection. God might allow persecution to a certain point, but we won’t be overwhelmed. Even in the persecution, God is building His church, He’s preserving His church.

**Divine power:** We've been given the Holy Spirit. That means that the church is never alone, but is empowered by God. We're never alone in our spiritual battles. We're never left to our resources and power. We've got God on our side, so we don't need to fear – He is with us. His power is with us. His Spirit is with us, giving us all the power we need. There is no need to use man-made weapons and strategies – we need the power of God.

## 5) Its Triumph

**Deliverance:** Despite opposition, God delivers His people from their enemies' hands.

**Increase:** God will save sinners to the very end and will save all who should be His. The increase comes from God. He's building His church and is bringing people into His kingdom that has no end. There will be no census in Heaven – there will be so many people. We might be in the minority today, but many more will be added to His kingdom. We have a glorious future awaiting us.