

# *A Bittersweet Message*

## Revelation 10

**Big Idea:** Life is bittersweet—joy mixed with sorrow. But God offers sweet grace in the midst of bitter judgment. The world pushes God away, storing up wrath, yet He still calls: "Come to me, all who are weary." By grace through faith, we find rest. Choose the sweetness of salvation today.

### Main Points

1. Life is bittersweet—we experience both God's common grace and the consequences of sin in this fallen world.
2. God will judge righteously—His judgment isn't cruel; it's the natural consequence of people persistently rejecting Him (Romans 1).
3. There are secret things—We're responsible for what God has revealed, but we must trust Him with what He hasn't (Deuteronomy 29:29).
4. Warning people is loving—Speaking truth about judgment comes from love, not hate, like warning someone about a bridge that's out.
5. "But God" changes everything—We were dead in sin, children of wrath, BUT GOD made us alive in Christ (Ephesians 2:4-5).

### Scriptures:

- Revelation 21:4
- Matthew 24:3-21
- Deuteronomy 29:29
- 2 Timothy 2:15
- Psalm 29:1-11
- Romans 1:18-32
- Romans 2:1-5
- Ephesians 2:1-9
- Matthew 11:28-30

### Opening Question:

Share about a "bittersweet" experience in your life—something that had both joy and pain mixed together. How did that experience shape you?

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### Discussion Questions:

The Mighty Angel (Rev 10:1-2) - The angel places one foot on the sea and one on the land, proclaiming God's ownership of the earth. What does this image communicate about God's authority? How should this truth affect the way we live?

The Seven Thunders (Rev 10:3-4) - John was told NOT to write down what the seven thunders said. Read Deuteronomy 29:29 together. Why do you think God keeps some things secret? How do we balance seeking to understand God's Word while trusting Him with what He hasn't revealed?

The Bittersweet Scroll (Rev 10:8-11) - The scroll was sweet in John's mouth but bitter in his stomach. What do you think the "sweet" part represents? What about the "bitter" part? How does this dual reality apply to our lives today?

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Pastor Tim referenced Matthew 24:8 where Jesus describes tribulation as "birth pains." How does this metaphor help you understand both the pain of judgment and the hope of what's coming? Have you experienced something painful that led to something beautiful?

Pastor Tim called "But God" his two favorite words in the Bible. Share about your own "But God" moment—a time when you were heading in the wrong direction, but God intervened with His grace and mercy.

Max Lucado's story about warning people of a bridge that's out was used to explain why Christians warn others about judgment. How do you balance speaking truth about sin and judgment while showing love? Have you ever struggled with this balance?

We experience both the goodness of God's creation and the brokenness of sin. How can we avoid the extremes of hedonism (only seeking pleasure) or nihilism (believing nothing matters)? What does biblical hope look like in everyday life?

The angel proclaimed God's ownership of the earth. Are there areas of your life where you're still claiming ownership rather than surrendering to God? (Consider: time, money, relationships, career, etc.)

Pastor Tim mentioned feeling torn between wanting Jesus to return quickly and wanting Him to wait so more people can be saved. How does this tension affect your evangelism? Your prayers? Your daily priorities?

#### Practical Applications:

1. Study with Diligence - Following 2 Timothy 2:15, commit to studying God's Word daily this week. Use the RVL discipleship materials or choose a book of the Bible to read through. Journal what God reveals to you.
2. Share the Sweet and Bitter - Identify one person in your life who doesn't know Jesus. Pray for them daily, and look for an opportunity to lovingly share both the reality of sin/judgment AND the sweetness of God's grace and salvation.
3. Surrender Ownership - Identify one area where you've been claiming ownership rather than acknowledging God's authority. Take a concrete step to surrender that area to Him (it might be financial, relational, or regarding your time/plans).
4. Worship Through the Bittersweet - Like Psalm 29, intentionally worship God this week even in the midst of difficult circumstances. Keep a list of ways you see God's power, majesty, and glory—even when life is hard.

#### Closing Thought/Prayer:

Lord, help us to live honestly in the 'bittersweet' reality of this world—trusting Your grace, taking Your warnings seriously, and loving others enough to point them to You.