

# THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

## AN APOCALYPTIC ADVENT / Part 4

### THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Pastor Matt Jones, Del Rey Church (Revelation 12:12-17 & Matthew 1-2)

#### 1 The Red Hell-bound Dragon

#### 2 The Rejoicing Heavenly Dwellers

#### 3 The Rebellion Has Descended

#### 4 The Remnant Holds Defended

#### 5 The Redeemed's Hopeful Destiny

## COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

*Reflective Questions for You and Your Small Group*

1. It is Christmas this week. What are your plans? Are you stressed about anything? Is your family getting together? Are there office parties planned at work? What are the dynamics of your work and/or family/home (whether parents, siblings or roommates)? What about people outside your family or immediate friends/co-workers; is there anyone you could invite into your Christmas celebrations this year who are strangers to you, or maybe on the margins or perhaps in need of an invite to a warm home? Share about your plans for mission this holiday season to reach out to those around you.
2. In our Advent sermon series this year, we have been studying the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation and reflecting on the kingdom of darkness that sought to thwart the first Christmas. We have traced this Christmas attack back to the garden of Eden in Genesis, witnessing how Satan and his hatred drove him to chase Eve and later Israel/Mary in his attempt to stop the promise of Genesis 3:15. With this context in mind, let's think about the present. How might Satan be attacking the celebration of Christmas in our culture today as a part of his campaign against Eve and Israel/Mary, as well against Christ's church and you as a member in the church? More personally, how is the serpent attacking your life and bringing anxiety, hurt, hopelessness and division to your home as your approach celebrating Christmas this year?
3. Christmas is the season of giving. With that said, why do we as Christians think about giving this season in ways that are far different from our culture? How does our charity seem foolish to the world? In what ways are you personally sensing God's call to give and sacrifice with your local church on mission this season?
4. As we are studying Revelation 12 and the text is particularly apocalyptic and this seemingly abstract, in what ways can you very practically take what we have been learning this month and apply it to your life? Please share and pray together.