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## KINGDOM: GOD REIGNS

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### Part 13 of Doctrine

Pastor Mark Driscoll | June 29, 2008

You're listening to Doctrine, a sermon series where Pastor Mark Driscoll covers the basic beliefs of Christianity. This series also serves as a prerequisite for membership at Mars Hill Church. For more audio and video content, visit [marshillchurch.org](http://marshillchurch.org).

Well, howdy, Mars Hill. We are finishing up the Doctrine Series today. We've taken 13 weeks, gone through the storyline of the Bible and this is the prerequisite course for membership, so if you wanna become a member of Mars Hill Church, this concludes the series and we'd love to plug you in. In light of that, this is also the last week of our fiscal year, which runs July through June and so, I'll give you a quick update and then we're gonna get right to work and I'm gonna take you through the whole book of Revelation today. So, if you've got a Bible, go there. I'm not even kidding.

A quick business update – here's where we're at with membership. That's getting people officially connected, plugged in, beginning on The City, which is our online social network. Total current members are 1,252. Those who were previously members that are in the renewal process are 311. Brand new members, people joining the church for the first time, there's 684 and so, complete total between those that are already members and those that are in process is 2,247. Our prayer goal for the end of the summer, beginning of the fall, is 3,000. So, for those of you who are members, thank you; for those of you who are in process, hopefully, today we can get you finished up. For the rest, we'd love to get you plugged in. Fill out the card that says "Become a member", grab someone with a "Become a Member" t-shirt, stop by the "Become a member" table, drop by one of the computers to sign onto The City, and if that doesn't work, I don't know what else we can do – maybe just come get you up tomorrow and take you for a walk and chat about it. Our goal is to get you to be a member of the church and so, give us your information and we'll get you started.

Secondly, our fiscal year ends this week. Here is our totals for the year. Give you a brief update. For those who are members, once all of the accounting is done, we'll send you a summary report of our finances for this fiscal year and in saying this, I want you to know, this is rather unusual. When we have dealt with other churches that are of our like size, we call them and ask, "So, what's your total giving? How are things going?" They say, "It's none of your business." Say, "Okay, well, just total, what's your budget? We just wanna know how we're doing compared to, you know, other people." "None of your business." Churches tend not to share any information. We tend to share as much information as we think is reasonable. We don't wanna inundate and overwhelm you, but we're trying to just tell you what's going on. So, our total income giving so far this year with one week to go is about \$10 million, so we wanna say thank you. It's interesting, the number of people giving isn't as high as we would like, but those who are giving have been very generous. So, for those of you who are giving regularly, thank you. And the dollars per person is about the same as any other size church. We just tend to be a big church and so, it's a big dollar, so about \$10 million came in so far this year and with about a week to go, this is our final budget week of the year, we're about \$600,000.00 behind budget. As I've been speaking with you about it the last few weeks, we have exceeded budget three weeks in a row and so that's an encouragement. We're starting to go back the other direction and that would mean, basically, by the end of the month, early July, we need to bring in, including today's offering, about \$600,000.00 to end the year flush. That would be quite a run, to be honest with you, and if we don't make it, it'd be the first time in the 11 year history of the church that we don't make budget. So, that's where we are at going into July and August, which tends to be a down time for us, so do be in prayer for your church and for those of you who come to Mars Hill, we'd love to have you participate financially if you are Christians, so we can just float through the summer and get to the fall.

That being said, today we are going to have the last sermon in the Doctrine series. We'll deal with the doctrine of the kingdom that God reigns and I'll go ahead and pray. We followed the whole storyline of the Bible over the course of 13 weeks and this week, we will literally cover the entire Book of Revelation in about an hour. Very ish, but about an hour. So, I will pray and start speaking very, very quickly because I have a lot of material to cover. So, if you do have a Bible, go to the Book of Revelation and I will pray.

God, we, as we conclude this doctrine series, God, I thank you that I get to teach; that I get to teach the Bible, I get to teach doctrine and theology at Mars Hill Church. I love it here. I love these people and I love the fact that they are teachable. God, in most churches, the sermons are short. The pastor doesn't get to talk about anything controversial and if he does, he's quickly no longer the pastor. And God, I consider it a great honor to be able to deal with tough text and topics and issues and to teach at Mars Hill Church. And so, as I teach today, God, I pray that by your grace, I do a good job, that I would feed your sheep and that, God, they would learn some things that they don't know and be reminded, perhaps, of some things they do. When all is said and done, God, please allow us to understand your kingdom and to live in light of it out of love for Jesus in whose name we pray, Amen.

Well, as we deal with the issue of the kingdom, here's the big idea to set this up. Something has gone terribly wrong. And we looked at this in the sin in fall sermon, that the world is broken. There is violence, abuse, poverty, sickness, disease, death, famine, war, plague, injustice, tyranny and evil. And despite many years and many dollars and many wars and many leaders and many efforts, the world is still not the place that any of us wishes that it

were.

That being said, the hope for transformation in the world doesn't come from us. We're not going to fix everything. In fact, we are all part of the problem and sometimes, when we make an effort to make change in the world for good, we end up doing evil, even if we didn't mean to and contributing to the problems, not really bringing solutions. Our hope then isn't in ourselves, in our nation, in our culture, in our people. Ultimately, our hope has to be in God; that God is willing and able to change the world and to usher in the world that you and I deep down long for; one of peace and love and justice and mercy and unity and kindness and compassion and health. And that being said, the hope of the Christian is the kingdom of God.

I'll start with this question and then we'll proceed to the Book of Revelation. But first, I need to dismiss some of the false views of the kingdom. And so, the question is, what are some false views of the afterlife? Alright, if everything isn't going to be perfect in this life, what happens after we die? What awaits us on the other side? I'll hit these briefly. One false view is universalism; that is, that everybody wins. It doesn't matter what you do. You can walk with Jesus faithfully. You can be Adolph Hitler. You can be anywhere on the continuum of moral to immoral and, ultimately, everybody gets to go to Heaven. Nobody's going to Hell. Nobody's gonna be punished. Nobody's gonna suffer. God's gonna give everyone salvation, eternal life and Heaven in the end.

Similar to that, is a position called annihilationism and that is that everybody just dies. Either you die and you cease to exist or you die and suffer for a while and then you cease to exist, but either way, there is no eternal punishment. Both positions share this in common. In the end, no one's going to Hell. No one's gonna suffer. No one's gonna hurt. No one's gonna have to stand before a holy and righteous God and give an account. Both of these positions are negated by Daniel 12:2, which Jesus quotes in the New Testament. He says this, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth" – after you die, you're buried – "shall awake" – you'll resurrect. You'll come back, like Jesus did – "some to everlasting life and some to everlasting shame and contempt." The Bible teaches that everyone lives forever somewhere. With God as a friend or with God as a foe. In blessing or in cursing. In life or death.

The third position that is erroneous is reincarnation, that you die and come back to pay off your debt or purgatory, that you die and go somewhere else for a little while to pay God back by suffering. The point is that after death, there's a second chance. That's what they both hold in common. Hebrews 9:27 negates both saying, "It is appointed once for us to die and then judgment", so no reincarnation and no purgatory. You die once and then you're judged. No opportunity to get right with God after you die.

The fifth error or the next error is soul sleep. If you have friends that are Seven Day Adventists, they hold this position. That is, that Christians die and their body and their soul goes into the ground and they take a really, really, really, really, long nap until Jesus returns and then they resurrect. In the middle, they're just sleeping. When our body dies, our soul continues to live on and this position of soul sleep is negated in Philippians 1:21-23. Paul says, "To live is Christ and to die is gain." He doesn't save to live is Christ, to die is nap.

It's different. He says, "My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is better." He said, "I'm alive and I don't mind dying 'cause when I die, I get to go be with Jesus. I don't get to go take a really long nap."

And probably, the most popular false view of the afterlife is sort of the cartoon version of Heaven. You guys probably saw this growing up as kids. And the picture of Heaven is really sort of Hellish. You're very chubby. You sort of look like a baby. For some reason, you're wearing a diaper, right, which is not any of our eternal objective. And that you have little wings and that you sit on a cloud that's sort of like a cotton ball and you play a harp forever, right? And that's sort of the common view that many people have of Heaven because that is sort of the cultural perspective. You know what? That is absolutely erroneous. If that were Heaven, Hell would be fairly appealing. I mean – I mean, if – "Do you wanna go to Hell or Heaven?" "What's Heaven like?" "You're gonna be chubby, in a diaper with a harp." I'm like, "Well, heads, I lose; tails, I lose." I flip that coin, I don't think I'm gonna be happy with either option. So, many people reject their version of Heaven, which isn't the Biblical version of Heaven at all – not at all.

Here's how it truly works, that we are two parts. That's what the Bible teaches – material and immaterial, body and soul or spirit – use whatever word you like – and that we live presently as a unified person, body and soul. When we die, our body goes in the ground and our soul, if we are Christians, goes to be with the Lord. That's what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:8, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." And what will happen is that there will be a day for Christian and non when our soul or our spirit reunites with our body. So, when you die, if you're a Christian, your soul goes to be with God. If you're a non-Christian, your soul goes to a precursor of Hell, a place of punishment and justice and holding and one day, Christians and non-Christians alike, their souls will reenter their bodies and we will resurrect just like Jesus did. He rose from death, setting the pattern for our resurrection. Jesus spoke of this in John 5:25-29. He says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and is now here when the dead" – right? People who are dead and buried – "will hear the voice of the Son of God." Jesus says, "I'll return and they'll hear my voice and those who hear will live" – resurrect. "An hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life. Those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment." But, for everyone, you will live forever somewhere in a body, in a physical body, in a literal existence, that your soul will reenter your body. You will resurrect. If you belong to Jesus, you'll be with him forever in Heaven. If you do not, you will be with him forever in Hell. We'll get to that in a moment as we enter into the Book of Revelation.

The next question, who is the king? If you've got your Bibles, go to the Book of Revelation. We are truly going to do the whole Book of Revelation and we'll start by telling you that Revelation breaks into two scenes. There are heavenly scenes and there are earthly scenes. Most wing nuts, weirdoes, nut jobs and what one theologian calls eschatamaniacs, guys who loves charts and graphs and when is Jesus coming back? They focus almost exclusively on the earthly scenes. And so they're freaking out over the mark of the beast and the Antichrist and (gasp) these people have canned goods and live in fear, clean their gun a lot, and read Lamentations. Those kind of people. They're very scared.

In addition, there is, however, Heavenly scenes in Revelation and my point is that the Heavenly scenes are what should dominate our study and our

understanding because the Heavenly scenes are about Jesus ruling and reigning over Heaven and earth. And we shouldn't be afraid of what is going to happen on earth, providing we understand the Heavenly scenes of Jesus ruling and reigning. And so, the Heavenly scenes throughout Revelation show Jesus seated on a throne. I love this. This is one of my favorite images of Scripture. It shows Jesus seated on a throne, ruling and reigning over Heaven and earth, over all creation, over all created things and beings. The throne appears 45 times in the Book of Revelation. It appears in – I wrote this down here – 17 of the 22 chapters. So, the throne is the centerpiece and who is seated on the throne? Jesus. What proceeds from the throne? All truth. All judgment. What proceeds to the throne? All worship. All praise. All glory. All adoration. Jesus is revealed throughout Revelation as the king. He's actually in the book called The King of Kings. Now, while he was alive on the earth, as they were putting him to death, in mockery, they put a crown of thorns on his head. But, indeed, it was true. He is the king.

And so, the book opens up saying this, "The Revelation or the unveiling", Revelation 1:1, "of Jesus Christ." The book isn't primarily about the rapture or, you know, the mark of the beast or getting a bar code put on your wrist and they scan you at Safeway before they run you through with a salad fork. It's not primarily about those things. It's about Jesus Christ as the King of Kings, ruling over Heaven and earth, all of creation. That's what it's about. Revelation is about Jesus. He is the king.

Now, proceeding forward, here's the next question. What is the sign of the kingdom? If he is the king, how do you know that his kingdom is present? And for a kingdom to exist, you need two things – a king and his jurisdiction, his place of rule. Jesus is the king and he rules and reigns over all and the question then is, what is the sign of the kingdom? How do you know that Jesus' kingdom is present? We'll go through the whole Book of Revelation. Ready?

Start with me in Chapter 4:10-11. What I want to show you is this thread, this theme of worship that goes through the whole Book of Revelation; that the sign of the kingdom is the worship of Jesus. It's the worship of Jesus; that God's kingdom breaks into the cultures of the earth and is seen visibly as Jesus is worshiped.

In the Heavenly scenes of Revelation, we get this picture of Jesus being worshiped. Chapter 4:10-11. The 24 elders – some say it's the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 disciples. I don't know. I actually prayed this week, "God, I know the 24 elders are gonna come before your throne and lay down their crowns. You know, I hope, too, that all elders get to do that. I would love to be one of those guys who got to come before Jesus and just bow down and thank him for everything he's done. And that's what happens here. It's reverence. It's worship. "The 24 elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever." He's without beginning. He's without end. He's eternal God. "They cast their crowns before the throne saying, 'Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory, honor, power, for you created.'" It goes all the way back to Genesis. "You are our creator. You created all things and by your will, they existed and were created."

The first thing we see is the spiritual leaders leading by worshiping Jesus and whatever achievements a spiritual leader may have, ultimately, our goal should be to get before Jesus and one day take the crown off of our head. "God, here's what we did. Here's what we accomplished. Here's how it went" and take that crown off and just lay it at the feet of Jesus and say, "Thank you, Jesus. Everything that was done was by your grace and for your glory and our joy." I hope, I pray that one day I get to kneel before Jesus. This would be amazing. And to take the crown off my head that says, "Mars Hills Church" and just lay it at the feet of Jesus. Anyone who's met Jesus, anyone who's grown in Jesus, anything by God's grace we've been able to accomplish, any churches that have been planted, any campuses that have been initiated, anything we've done that wasn't bad, I'd love to just take that crown with all of its jewels and just lay it at the feet of Jesus and worship him and say, "Thank you" and celebrate his grace. The sign of the kingdom is gratitude. It's enthusiasm. It's passion. It's joy. And it's worship for Jesus. And it commences with the spiritual leaders, but it doesn't end there.

Chapter 5. We won't read every verse today. We'll move quickly, but Chapter 5:11. "Then I looked and I heard around the throne" – there's the throne again. Who's seated on it? Jesus Christ the king – "and the living creatures and the elders and the voice of many angels." You'll notice now that the spiritual leaders go first and now others are joining them. Creatures and angels, the chorus around the throne of Jesus is growing. By the time the book has culminated, there will be billions of people and angels and creatures around the throne. Seated on it will be Jesus and there will be a party unlike none other. And here, the crowd grows. "I looked and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders and the voice of many angels numbering myriads and myriads and thousands and thousands, sang in a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.'" Thank you, Jesus for dying on the cross in our place for our sins.

You'll notice in the Book of Revelation, the worship traces many of the major doctrines that we've looked at throughout the course of the series.

Creation – you are our creator. The cross – you are our savior. Kingship – you are our Lord, God and Christ. Worship – all of the themes that we've been studying throughout this whole series culminate around the throne of Jesus. "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might, their stewardship; and honor and glory and blessing and I heard every creature in Heaven, on earth and under the earth and in the sea." What is this? "Beast of the field, birds of the air, fish of the sea." They come forward like The Lion King or some Disney epic, singing, "Jesus, Jesus, we love you." It's gonna be awesome.

Mars Hill really needs to get better at singing before this day. We could ruin everything. "Those Mars Hill folks, they just don't sing." "Yeah, well good thing the aardvark's here. He'll sing." "And all that is in them sang to him who sits on the throne." There's the throne. That's God the Father, and to the Lamb" – that's Jesus – "be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever and the four living creatures said, 'Amen' and the elders fell down and worshiped." The worship continues to escalate. The sign of the kingdom is the worship of the king.

Chapter 7:11-12, "And all the angels" – I don't know how many angels there are, but there's a lot. Angels are immaterial beings created by God to worship and serve him and to help us – "All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and around the four living creatures and they fell on their faces" – that's worship. That's worship – "before the throne and worshiped God saying, 'Amen'." That means, "Lord, I agree with you. God, I want your will to be done. God, what you want, that's what I want. What you say, that's what I believe." "Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever and ever and ever and ever. Amen." It's worship of Jesus.

Enthusiastic passion. It's celebration of God the Father and the one seated at his right hand, Jesus Christ.

Go forward. Chapter 15:2. I preached all of the Heavenly scenes. There's a whole series on it, if you wanna get more in depth, but this is the highlight reel, as it were. Revelation 15:2. Heaven opens up again. He gets a glimpse into the kingdom. "And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled

with fire” – great architecture in Heaven. Those of you that are into visual arts, as you read Revelation, you’ll see all kinds of colors. You’ll see all kinds of audio presence around Jesus. It’s a very multi-sensory, beautiful, amazing, creative, artistic place, the kingdom of God is – “and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name standing beside the sea of glass with the harps of God in their hands.” These are Christians who are there with Jesus. They’d been tempted to sin. They’d been opposed by Satan. Their life has not been easy, but they have held true and they love Jesus. And Jesus shows up and he hands them harps. They get to join the band. Some denominations don’t believe in instruments and they will be very bummed when Jesus starts handing them out. I’m sure they’ll change their mind at that point, but Jesus is here handing out instruments. I’ve always wanted to be in the band. I can’t play anything, but the radio and my voice has sounded like this since I was 11. I can’t sing at all, but there will be a day before the presence of God, in my glorified body, that I believe I will be able to sing and play an instrument. That will be a great day.

And here, Jesus is the one handing out the instruments. And verse 3, “They sang the song of Moses” – alright, the song of redemption, “the servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, ‘Here’s a song’.” What I love about this as well, in Heaven, there’ll be new songs. How many of you love music? You love new songs. You’re songwriters. You’re at least appreciators of the arts. In Heaven, there will be creativity and music. There will be creativity and music. That’s one of the reasons that we at Mars Hill love to write new songs. The Bible says, in the Old and New Testaments, “Sing a new song unto the Lord” and the example here is given in Heaven that new songs are being written and old songs are being rewritten forever.

If you’ve ever been to a great concert, Heaven will be tremendous. “Great and amazing are your deeds, oh, Lord God, the Almighty. Just and true are your ways, oh, King of the Nations. Who will not fear you, oh, Lord and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.” The throne of Jesus is just seeing this parade of people – Christians who love Jesus, spiritual leaders, elders and pastors, creatures, angels, gathering around honoring Jesus, singing to Jesus, praising Jesus, worshiping Jesus.

Chapter 19:1. We then read this – everything culminates with this rejoicing in Heaven. “After this, I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in Heaven.” It’s a crowd. “Billions upon billions from the nations of the earth crying out, ‘Hallelujah!’” – which means, praise God. Praise God for who he is. Praise God for what he does. “Salvation and glory and power belong to our God” – no other god – to our God. It goes on, “For his judgments are true and just, for he has judged the great prostitute” – that is false religion – “who corrupted the earth with her immorality and has avenged on her the blood of his servants, the martyrs. Once more they cried out ‘Hallelujah!’”. The smoke from her goes up forever and ever and the 24 elders and the 4 living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne” – there’s the throne. On it is the king. Around it is the worship – “saying, ‘Amen. Hallelujah’ and from the throne came a voice saying, ‘Praise our God, all you his servants who fear him small and great’.” Even the little kids get to participate.

And then, there is a great meal. Let me, at this point, explain to you how your Bible is put together. Beginning, middle, beginning, okay? Most western stories are told beginning, middle, end. Your Bible is put together beginning, middle, beginning. We looked in the first few chapters of Genesis, “That in the beginning was God.” You’ll see at the end of Revelation, the last name is Jesus Christ. God is Jesus Christ. In the beginning, God created. In the end, God will have a new creation. In the beginning, God made a garden. In the end, God will have a new Garden in the new Jerusalem. In the beginning, God had a tree of life and we were banished from it in sin. In the end, God will bring the tree of life back. In the beginning, we ate a meal without God. We ate it with Satan. In the end, we eat a meal with Jesus. The point is, beginning, middle, beginning; that we sinned and that sin has infected, affected everyone and everything. And God, through the death, burial, resurrection of Jesus Christ has conquered Satan’s sin in death and in the end, everything will be restored to God’s original intentions and taken even further.

See, in the beginning, there was a serpent and in the end, he will be imprisoned forever. And in the beginning, there was, after sin entered the world, a curse. And in the end, that curse was lifted. Your Bible is a beginning, middle, beginning story. Certain films are like that – Sixth Sense, Devil’s Advocate, Matrix. Certain filmmakers have made a living using this beginning, middle, beginning storyline form. And here, we go back to the beginning. We were made to worship God and rather than having Jesus as the center, we put ourselves in the center. Rather than living for him, we live for ourselves and in the end, the kingdom of God is about everything be reordered around Jesus, as central, primary. We dealt with this in our doctrinal sermon on worship and stewardship; that it’s all about God being our highest priority, our greatest treasure, our deepest longing, our most profound and passionate joy. And in the end, that’s the new world. And in the beginning, we ate a meal with Satan. And in the end, we eat a meal with Jesus.

We see that in Revelation 19:6. “Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder crying out, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exalt and give him glory for the marriage of the Lamb has come and his bride has made herself ready’. It was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure, for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.” History reaches its apex with the worship of Jesus and that Jesus, unbelievably, steps off his throne and the table is set and we eat a meal with him as friends. It’s called the wedding supper of the Lamb. And at that meal, the church is typified collectively as a bride and Jesus is presented as a loving groom who has passionately pursued his bride. And that the kingdom is typified like a wedding day and that the church, though she is not without sin, including our own, she wears white. The reason that Christian brides wear white is to show that Jesus died to cleanse us from sin and in Jesus, we are clean.

You and I have this wonderful opportunity to sit at the table of Jesus. Isaiah says that, “On that day, there will be the choicest of meats and the finest of wines.” Jesus Christ has set a table for his friends. The kingdom commences with the king throwing a party to feed his friends. This is unbelievable. I can’t prove it, but there’s a little prophet called Zephaniah and he says, “On that day” – and I don’t know what day it is, but maybe it’s this day – “On that day, the Lord God himself”, he says, “will rejoice over us with singing.” I wonder if it’s on that day, after we’ve worshiped and praised and celebrated Jesus with the multitudes, that he sets the table and we are seated as his friends. And there are brothers and sisters from all of history and all of the nations of the earth. I wonder if, at that moment, Jesus won’t stand and sing – and sing. And we’ll just enjoy the presence of Jesus and be absolutely overwhelmed. If your picture of Heaven is heavy set baby with a diaper and a harp on a cloud, you’ve missed – you’ve missed the Biblical snapshot of the kingdom.

That moves us onto the next question. What is the relationship between the kingdom – Jesus’ kingdom – and the other kingdoms? Other nations? Other cultures? Other religions? Other dictators and despots? Other people who have their own following and their own way of doing things? Well, that is

answered in Revelation 19 beginning in verse 11. You ready? For some of you, your picture of Jesus is far too small. You see him as humble, marginalized, Galilean, hippie peasant, in a dress with product in his hair, open-toed sandals, crying a lot, giving out pithy statements and hugging sheep. Okay, let me submit to you that Jesus came in humility. He got off his throne, came into human history in humility. He died, rose, in our place, for our sins, ascended back into Heaven. Today, he's seated on a throne. And were you to see Jesus today, you would not see a humble, marginalized, Galilean peasant. You would see a King of Kings, Lord of Lords. You would see the same Jesus that Isaiah saw in Isaiah 6.

He says, "I saw the Lord high and exalted, seated on a throne, and the train of his robe filled the temple. And around him were angels crying out day and night, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. Heaven and earth are full of his glory.'" In John 12, around 41, John says that Isaiah saw Jesus and spoke of his glory. It absolutely devastates me when Jesus is portrayed as just a teacher, a simpleton, a nice guy, a pithy Zen philosopher, the feeder of those who are hungry or the encourager of those who are hurting. All of that is, perhaps, true, but if you don't understand Jesus as God, as king, as Lord, as enthroned, as ruling and reigning, as centerpiece of history, as centerpiece of scripture, as worshiped object and devotion subject, you've missed everything about Jesus. And here, Jesus is portrayed in all his glory in a way that, in particular, the men can relate to.

I was doing a television interview in Atlanta this week and the guy asked me, he said, "Why do you think that men don't go to church?" I said, "Because the picture of Jesus is a guy they could beat up. It's hard to worship a guy I can beat up." This Jesus, you can't beat up. You can't take him. Revelation 19, one of my favorite sections. Just bear with me. Verse 11, "Then I saw heaven open" – boom, there's Jesus. He gets a snapshot. The curtain is pulled back – "and behold a white horse" – I love this. How many grew up watching westerns? The good guy always rides the white horse. It's Biblical. "The one sitting on it is called faithful and true and in righteousness, he judges and makes war." You know, Jesus will never take a beating again. That was a one shot deal for salvation. That is not an ongoing job for Jesus to take a beating. "His eyes are like a flame of fire." I just love this. This is ultimate fighter Christ. A hip-hop buddy of mine calls it thug Jesus. He's a rapper. "His eyes are like a flame of fire and on his head are many diadems or crowns." He is the King of Kings and he has many crowns. "And he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood." He's wearing a white robe and around the bottom, it's perfectly clean except for a little bit of blood. This guy's curious. You see this guy and you realize, he's wearing white and the only stains are blood. He could take me. That's the big idea.

Some of you think, "Oh, Jesus, no big deal. I'm not worried about him. He's one of the many Gods. There's lots of paths to salvation." You, my dear friend, are gonna stand before this guy. You gotta think about that and you gotta prepare yourself for that day. He goes on. "He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood and the name by which he is called is the Word of God" – right? That scripture is the written Word of God; that Jesus is the incarnate Word of God – "and the armies of Heaven" – all of the angels – "arrayed in fine linen, white and pure were following him on white horses." I've said this before, but any time you show up for a fight and a guy's wearing white and the guys with him are all wearing white, they're fairly confident how that's gonna go.

"From his mouth comes a sharp sword." Yes, your sons should be able to play with swords. They should. My boys do. This is their life verse. Any boy who's three, four, five, if you read, "Jesus has a sword out of his mouth", he'll be like, "Pfft. I wanna get saved right now." That's the alter call verse for a four year old boy. And some say, "Oh, no, they'll grow up and be violent." No, no, no, they don't need to grow up and be violent, but they need to grow up willing to defend and protect those who are oppressed, those who are hurting, those who are taken advantage of. Jesus is here taking down bullies. He's taking down rapists and sadists and murderers and liars and idolaters and despots and those who take advantage of the weak and the marginalized and the helpless and the poor. And he jumps on his white horse and there comes a day when he's just sick of it and had enough and he's gonna put an end to it. And deep down, deep down, that sense of justice, it just rings true. I praise God for the day when he has had his fill and he's just sick of it and he's willing to put it to an end and usher in a new kingdom.

He goes on. "And the armies of Heaven" – verse 14 – "arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horse." Verse 15 – "From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations and he will rule them with an iron rod. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh" – Jesus is all tatted up – "it says King of Kings and Lord of Lords." Do you see this picture? Tattooed up. King of Kings, Lord of Lords, white robe, sword of his mouth, on a horse, riding in to open a can, all of the armies of Heaven with him. You better figure out what team you're on. That's my big idea.

Verse 17 – "Then I saw an angel standing in the sun" – that's a big deal – "and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, 'Come, gather for the great supper of God.'" See, God's people feast at the wedding supper of the Lamb. God's enemies are feasted upon by the birds of the air. Awesome. "That doesn't seem very pacifistic." I know.

Verse 18 – "To eat the flesh of the kings, the flesh of the captains, the flesh of the mighty men, the flesh of the horses and the riders and the flesh of all men, both free and enslaved, both small and great. And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army." Some people are against Jesus. Some nations are against Jesus. Some kings are against Jesus. Some religions are against Jesus. And in the end, when he shows up, they're gonna wanna fight him and they will lose and it's their fault because they have declared war on him.

"And the beast was captured" – verse 20 – "and with it, the false prophet who, in its presence, had done the signs by which he had deceived those who had received the mark of the beast, counterfeit signs, wonders and miracles, and those who have worshiped its image. These, too, were thrown alive" – hear this – "into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur and the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was on the horse" – that's Jesus – "and all the birds were gorged with their flesh." Jesus deals with other kingdoms by crushing them. This is not the church. I'm not arguing for war and we go out and kill people with verses. We live like Jesus did during his first coming – humbly, lovingly, simply, coming to serve, to turn the other cheek, to bless those who harm us and persecute us, to pray for our enemies. That's how we live. I am not here preaching for a militant church. I'm preaching for a church that looks like Jesus during his first coming. But, I am telling you that, upon his second coming, he will not come as humble, marginalized peasant. He will come as King of Kings and he will put to an end all other kings and kingdoms who are opposed to him. There is coming a day of peace and justice. Some say, "No, no, no, Jesus shouldn't do that. He should bring peace." He brings peace by crushing his enemies. That leads to the next question. What is the kingdom of Hell? Many of you believe falsely that Satan rules over Hell and Jesus rules over Heaven.

Jesus' kingdom is over all. When the Bible shows his throne over all, that includes Heaven and Hell. When Jesus is called Lord and sovereign over all,

that includes Hell. Hell is not apart from God. Hell is part of God's dominion. I'll show it to you.

Now, before we do, in Revelation 20, let me give you a few words from Jesus. First of all, Jesus speaks of Hell in the Gospels more than anyone else in the whole Bible. Secondly, on 11 of the 12 occasions that this place called Gehenna is spoken of in the Gospels, it's on the lips of Jesus and Jesus compares hell to Gehenna. Let me explain Gehenna. Gehenna was a place outside of the city where horrible religious practices were done by false worshipers and idolaters. Children were sacrificed to Pagan gods. Ritual sex and orgies of every kind was undertaken and it became a cursed place, a disgusting place. It became that part of town that nobody wanted to go to because it was just vile. Invariably, God's people turned it into the garbage dump. That's where all the feces and the refuse and the decomposing bodies were sent and then the worms would eat everything that was there, including the corpses and the fire continually burned in Gehenna, just consuming all of this rubbish. And they would look out of town and they would see the flame and the smoke and occasionally, the wind would change direction and they would smell the stench of Gehenna. Now, Jesus says that Hell is like Gehenna. It's the place for all people and things who do not love and serve God and are not repentant of sin. That's where they go.

And the language in the Old Testament, including at the end of Isaiah, all the way through the teaching of Jesus, is that it is that place where the worm does not die. It feasts forever. And the fire is not quenched. There is a forever burning and the stench is unbelievable. That's hell. That's hell. It's spoken of here, Chapter 20:7, the final sentencing to hell. "And when the thousand years are ended" – I skipped the millennial kingdom, but there is a reigning spoken of in the verses preceding of 1,000 years by Jesus – "Satan will be released from his prison and he will come out to deceive the nations." You know what? Satan never repents. Even after being crushed. Even after being imprisoned for 1,000 years, he never repents. He never relents. So, you say, "Jesus shouldn't judge people" and "Jesus shouldn't lock 'em up" and "Jesus shouldn't send 'em to hell." What if someone was absolutely devoted to hurting you and everyone you love and no matter what you did or how long you waited or how hard you tried, if they were able, they would destroy you and everyone you love? Justice would require that they be removed. That they be sentenced. That they be sent off to prison and that you and the people you love be safe. That's what's happening here.

After 1,000 years to prison to think about it, Satan says, "I'm gonna kill Jesus. I'm not gonna worship him. I'm gonna kill him." You need to see the patience of God here, giving Satan a thousand years. "And he will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle. Their number is like the sand of the sea." Even after a thousand year reign of Jesus in perfect peace and harmony, unity and love and blessing, as soon as Satan and demons and sinners are allowed, they just declare war on Jesus again. These are not innocent victims. These are the kind of people that if you don't lock them up, they will rape and murder everyone. "And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surround the camp of the saints" – they came after the Christians – "and the beloved city, Jerusalem, but fire came down from Heaven and consumed them." There wasn't even a battle. (Zipping sound) done. Love that.

"And the devil who had deceived them was thrown in the lake of fire" – that's Hell – "the lake of fire and sulphur where the beast and the false prophet were and they will be tormented day and night", for how long? "Forever and ever." Hell is this – conscious, eternal torment forever and ever. Forever and ever. Those who don't love Jesus will be in Hell forever, as those who do love Jesus will be in Heaven forever. "Then I saw a great white throne" – alright, here is judgment day. Final judgment day – "and him who was seated on it. From his presence, earth and sky flood away and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small" – here's the resurrection, right? The soul goes back into the body and everyone stands before Jesus, white throne, the day of final judgment. "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne and books were opened. Then another book was opened which is the Book of Life and the dead were judged by what was written in the books according to what they had done." You need to know this. God is so just that even when he judges people at the end, they are sentenced to Hell with a punishment that fits the depth of sin in their life meaning, the punishment always fits the crime. The punishment always fits the crime. For some of you who don't know Jesus, you are going to Hell. You are, right now, going to Hell. And if you lived a decent life, Hell will be terrible and depending upon what you've done, it may be worse for some of you than others.

Some of you say, "I can't believe I'm hearing this. We're in this tolerant age and I went to college and I know lots of isms. Post modernism and pluralism and perspectivism and what I would say is, "To hell with that." That is the issue. You need to really consider the fact that there awaits you a final, conscious, eternal torment. You need to think about that and you need to prepare for that day of judgment when you stand before Jesus. And I know, in this culture and in this day, I'm not supposed to say that, but I can't stand before Jesus and be condemned as a liar. Hell is real. Judgment is real. Sin is real and we really need to consider that.

He goes on. Verse 13 – "And the sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death in Hades gave up the dead who were in them and they were judged, each one of them according to what they had done. And death and Hades" – that's the holding place for those who die right now and their souls do not go to be in blessing, but rather, in prison are held until the resurrection day when their soul reenters the body and they stand before Jesus – "they were judged according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown in the lake of fire. This is the second of death, the lake of fire and if anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown" – chucked, cast – "into the lake of fire." Hell – that's where you go.

Now, that leads to the next question. What are the primary objections to Hell? I don't expect every one of you to go, "Mark said there's a hell. I believe it now." You will immediately have some objections. I can't deal with all of them, but let me deal with some of them before we close. First, some of you would say, "If God sends people to Hell, that makes him cruel. That makes him cruel." Here's the truth. Hell is self-selected. Jesus welcomes anyone, from any nation, from any culture, who has done anything, to be forgiven. He is willing to embrace the worst of people, who have done the worst of deeds. If anyone goes to Hell, that is self-selected. If you're pro choice, you should be fine with Hell. People chose to go there. The only people who don't get what they want are Christians. God intervenes, grabs them, regenerates their heart, renews their mind, causes them to love Jesus. Some of you still aren't happy about that. Some of you are Christians saying, "I know I'm a Christian, but it's not – I've tried to get out and he just loves me so much, he won't give up on me." There are many Christians who, deep down in their heart know, "I chose Hell. Jesus chose Heaven for me. I didn't get what I wanted, but I'm kinda happy about that", right? Everyone who is pro choice should be thrilled with the doctrine of Hell because if you choose to

sin, you choose to work with Satan. You choose to align with demons. You choose to rebel against God. You choose not to love Jesus. You choose not to repent. You choose not to worship. You choose not to change. Well, you get what you choose. You get to go to Hell.

It doesn't make God cruel. It makes him, actually, very kind to allow you to choose what you want to do. He allows you a choice today. God's not cruel. We're just evil. God's not cruel. We're just determined, like Satan and demons, even if God gave us a thousand years under his rule and reign, with an old heart and an old nature, we'd just declare war on him and wanna fight some more. Everyone gets what they want except for the Christian. They get grace, which is what they don't deserve.

Number two, somebody will say, "Hell makes God intolerant." One thing I would say about intolerance, it's a two way street. I had this argument with a guy recently. He says, "Well, Christianity's intolerant." Now, I do, but I told him, "I don't recycle." And he freaked out. I said, "Are you judging me? You think recycling is right. That's your perspective. I don't think recycling is right. That is my perspective. I have an old truck that gets seven miles a gallon. I just turn it on and let it run for no reason. I'm hoping to open up a hole in the ozone above my house so I can sit out in the sun." Now, I don't do any of these things. I do recycle and I drive very little and I have a small, you know, eco footprint, so – but, he just freaked out. "You have no right to do that. You're ruining everything. Who do you think you are?" I was like, "You're very judgmental and intolerant of my alternative, large carbon footprint lifestyle." You need to know that everyone is a fundamentalist. It's just on different topics. That's my big idea.

Okay, some would say, "Oh, it makes God intolerant" and what I always like to ask is, "Well, what would you like?" They say, "Well, I think everybody should go to Heaven." Okay, so rapists, murderers, thieves, the worst of people, they all get to go to Heaven. They can't die. So, they get to rape and murder and steal forever. Are we gonna be happy with that." He was like, "Well, no." This was my argument with my friend. "No, that would stink. Yeah, okay. So, what other option do we have?" "Well, the good people should go to Heaven and the bad people should go to Hell." I said, "Well, that's very intolerant. That's more intolerant than grace. Intolerance saying, if you're a good person, you get to go. What about all the people that aren't good? What about all the people who lived a bad life and it didn't dawn on 'em 'til the end that they really are as bad as the Bible says they are?" I said, "In your world, only the good people go to Heaven." I said, "The truth is, the Bible says there's no good people. We're all sinners by nature and choice." I said, "Man, if we're saved by grace, then there's gonna be a lot of people in Heaven and if only the good people go to Heaven, then there's only a few, which means that grace is more tolerant than good works as a means of salvation."

Some of you would say, "Hell makes God unloving." That's just, "God is love", right? You know one verse. "God is love and that's not loving." A few things I would say. First, we define by God. We don't define love and then judge God by our definition of love. Our love is a little confused, right? People love pizza. Alright, our definition of love probably isn't as rigorous as it should be.

Number two, by God sentencing some people to Hell so that they can no longer do injustice and evil, that's really loving for his children. Imagine, I'm a daddy, I got five kids – someone says, "I wanna hurt your wife and I wanna hurt your kids." And I said, "Look, you can't do that. You need to repent and you need to apologize. I'm gonna call the cops. You're gonna get arrested. You're gonna go to jail. We're gonna make sure you can't get out and do this anymore, if you keep trying." And I wait for years and I'm really patient and I keep talking to 'em. I keep pleading with 'em. I keep trying. Maybe even, they get locked up for a little bit and I hope they come to their senses. And they get out and the first thing they do is they come to my house and they're gonna do evil. If I did nothing, would that be loving to my wife? To my children? No. That'd be very unloving.

Because God loves his people, he has to deal with those who seek to do evil, injustice, tyranny. He has to. Otherwise, he's not loving. Alright, any dad who lets his kids get harmed, any husband who lets his wife get devastated and any God who just lets Satan, demons and sinners have at his people forever, isn't loving at all. Love requires us to deal with sin and sinners. And you know what's amazing? Thirdly, the love of God is demonstrated at the cross of Jesus. Jesus went to the cross and there is God suffering and dying in our place, for our sins and the wrath of God is poured out on the Son of God and you know what? We don't need to experience the wrath of God. We don't need to be sentenced to Hell. We don't need to die and be separated from God. God punishes himself to give us love. And if we reject that, there's nothing left for us. God is very loving. He's very – he's incredibly – more loving than you and more loving than me. We don't do good for enemies and none of us is gonna lay down our life for our enemy. That's what God did in love.

Some of you will say, "Everyone should go to Heaven. That's what I think. Everyone should go to Heaven." Well, think about that. If people are unrepentant, unwilling to obey God, unwilling to change, do you want them in Heaven forever? You want pedophiles in Heaven forever, molesting kids forever? You want rapists, murderers, thieves, forever? See, in this life, we have prisons and death and it forces some people to stop. Really, you want everybody in Heaven without a changed heart and a changed life? That would be Hell. That would be Hell. Imagine today, if all of the sins of the earth didn't result in death. There was no possibility of dying. People would just do evil all the time. They would live recklessly all the time. See, when you get to Heaven, there will be no death. The result is that if everyone goes there and they don't love Jesus and they won't obey him, they'll do evil continually forever and do it only. That would be Hell.

Secondly, if people don't love Jesus, taking them to Heaven will make them angry. Imagine if you're someone who hates Jesus and I come to you and I say, "Hey, you wanna go to Heaven? You could live forever. You get to hang out with Jesus. We're gonna sing lots of praise songs. We're gonna get to know one another. We're gonna serve one another. We're gonna share our favorite Bible stories" and you hate God. You'd be like, "I don't wanna go. That sounds like Christian camp. I don't wanna go." Non-Christians don't wanna be in Heaven. To force them to go, that would be their Hell. And the way they would act would be our Hell. See, the truth is, some people will criticize God for having a Hell, but no one has a better idea. And every other proposed alternative is far less loving, far less tolerant, far less gracious, far less merciful than the concepts of Heaven and Hell, as found in the Bible.

Last question – what is the kingdom of Heaven? Revelation 21 and 22. Beginning, middle, beginning. As always, I am way over my time. It won't be

like that in Heaven. Revelation 21 – “Then I saw a new Heaven and a new earth, for the first Heaven and the first earth had passed away and the sea was no more.” No more division and separation between people. Here is the kingdom of Heaven. It’s not just an immaterial soul going to live on a cloud and play a harp. It’s a new earth. When sin came into the earth, it effected creation. Romans 8 says that creation is longing for liberation from the curse and the effects of sin. Think of a new earth. I was talking to my kids about this last night and they had all kinds of questions. My four year old daughter had all kind of questions. “Can we go swimming in Heaven?”, right? My six year old son, “Can we climb trees in Heaven?” My eight year old son, total baseball player, “Can we play ball in Heaven?” My ten year old daughter, “Can we have shoes in Heaven?” She loves shoes. And I said, “Yes. It’s not a sin to go swimming. It’s not a sin to play ball. It’s not a sin to climb a tree and it’s not a sin to wear shoes unless you’re coveting other people’s shoes.” That’s what I told my daughter.

Heaven is a physical life on a new earth, with new resurrected, glorified bodies, with everything that we enjoy, but sin. And also, we won’t be married. That’s what Jesus says. My wife, she says, “That bums me out.” I said, “We’ll still hang out. We can still hang out.” ‘Cause I like her. And so, you gotta think of Heaven as this earth without sin and death and the curse, tyranny, injustice and evil, and without any of the effects of sin. How beautiful is that? Do you know that our world is still cursed? Do you know that?

I saw it this week. I was in Vail, Colorado with our church planners that you guys paid for their vacation for them and their wives, who got a retreat for ‘em. I flew in with my wife. It was awesome. We got some time together. We rented a convertible to drive up through the mountains to go to Vail. We’re gonna drive through the mountains of Colorado. Top down, “Thank you, Lord.” It started raining like crazy while we’re stuck in traffic during road construction with nowhere to pull over. And I’m like, “This is not Heaven.” We get there. It’s eight and a half thousand feet up. I get altitude sickness. Did not know that occurred, was possible. I’m 5’10”. I don’t worry much about altitude. And so, I’m sick the whole time with a massive headache and stomach flu. My wife said, “What’s wrong?” I said, “Honey, this is a beautiful place and I’m barfing. This is not Heaven. This is Colorado.” And some day – some day in Heaven, all of the curse and its effects, it’ll – they’ll be gone and we’ll have life without sin and the curse.

So, when you think of – when you think of Heaven, think of the best day you’ve ever had, perfected, right? “And I saw the holy city” – verse 2 – see, Heaven is a city. That’s why we love cities. That’s why we plant churches and campuses in cities. Heaven is a city. “I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem coming down out of Heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with men. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will be their God.’ Heaven is a new creation and God is with us and Heaven and earth come together and we’re with God, forever living in a perfect city. Any of you love the city? You’re gonna love Heaven.

“He will wipe” – verse 4 – “every tear from their eyes.” You’ve been abused. You’ve been abandoned. You’ve been betrayed. You’ve suffered. You’ve wept. Jesus is gonna be wiping tears from eyes. There’ll be no more mourning, no more sin because he says there will be no more death. “And death shall be no more. Neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. And he who was seated on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new’.” He also said – write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true – “And he said to me, ‘It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty, I will give from the spring of water of life without repayment. The one who conquers will have this heritage and I will be his God and he will be my son. But, as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death’.”

If you jump over to verse 22, “And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God, the Almighty and the Lamb.” – that’s Jesus. “The city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives its light and the lamp is the Lamb.” It’s always sunny in Heaven because the glory of Jesus bursts forth. “By its light will nations walk and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. The gates will never be shut by day.” You won’t have to lock the doors on your home. There will be no danger. “And there will be no night there. They will bring into the glory and honor of the nations.” If you’re one of those people who longs for world peace, you need Jesus, the Prince of Peace. “But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.”

Chapter 22, we’ll just read some Bible. “Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.” Underneath the throne of Jesus, comes a river of life. “Through the middle of the street of the city, also on either side of the river, the tree of life” – there it is again. We were cast away from it when we sinned and here it is in the kingdom – “with 12 kinds of fruit yielding its fruit each month, the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. The healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything a curse. The curse is lifted, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it and his servants will” what? What will we do Mars Hill? We’re gonna worship him. Not just by singing, but also by living our lives, loving our friends, enjoying our hobbies, doing the jobs that God has apportioned for us in his kingdom. It’s like the world was supposed to be before sin entered it. We’ll worship God in all of life.

“They will see his face.” Mars Hill, you’re gonna see the face of Jesus. I mean, you’re gonna see the face of Jesus. I promise you. You’re gonna see the face of Jesus. You need to live for that day. The most important face is not the one in the mirror every morning. It’s the one you’ll see in the end in the place where there are no mirrors. “They will see his face and his name will be on their foreheads and night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light and he will reign forever and ever.” Verse 14 – “Blessed are those who wash their robes” – those of you who repent of sin, tell God you’re sorry and ask Jesus to forgive you – “so that they may have the right to eat of the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside, in Hell, are the dogs and the sorcerers and the sexually immoral” – the perverts, the porn addicts, the people that are sleeping with their girlfriends, the people that are committing adultery – “and murderers and idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star. The Spirit and the bride, the Holy Spirit and the church, say ‘Come’.”



We would invite you all today to come to Jesus. Come to Jesus. I don't care who you are. You need Jesus. I don't care what you've done. You need Jesus. And Jesus says, "Come." This is love. This is tolerance. This is diversity. Everyone is welcome to come to Jesus. "And let the one who hears say, 'Come'. You need to respond and say, 'Yes, I will come to Jesus. I will walk away from sin and I will walk to Jesus.'" "And let the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who desires to take the water of life without price." There's enough grace for everyone to be satisfied. He closes with these words. "I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book."

This book talks about Hell and judgment. If you take that out, you're cursed. John says, "This is the last book we're writing in the Bible. No more books of the Bible written after this", which means Islam is wrong and Jehovah's Witnessism is wrong and Mormonism is wrong and the other religions which come in the wake of Christianity are wrong. "He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely, I am coming soon'." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all. Amen.

In Genesis 1:1, we read this, "In the beginning, God"; in the end, we read, "The Lord Jesus is that God" and the final word of the Bible is grace. It's grace. Unmerited favor. Undeserved love. You and I need to come to Jesus. Some of you need to come back to Jesus. And as we wait to see him face to face, you need to understand that we are citizens of his kingdom. He is our king and how we live our life is for his glory. It's an act of worship, so that one day we might take off our crown and lay it at his feet. We do money and sex and power and marriage and relationship differently because we do it out of love for our King. And we do it for the day when we will see him face to face. And we do it in the cultures of the earth to invite others to come and meet Jesus and have a new life that begins the moment that they meet him and continues forever. I appreciate you guys hanging in there for a long series. I'll close our time in prayer.

Father, God, thank you that there is more than this world. There is more than Satan, sin, death, injustice, tyranny, oppression, tears, wars, famine, plague, sickness, suffering and evil. There is Jesus, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, willing to forgive anyone. Willing to love anyone. Willing to serve anyone and able to do it because of his death, burial and resurrection. Jesus, may we see you continually, high and exalted, seated on your throne as you presently are. We long for the day, Lord Jesus, where you crush those who do evil, injustice and oppression. Where you liberate those who are poor and marginalized and weak and helpless and oppressed. Where you bring in a kingdom that lasts forever. Lord Jesus, we long for the day when we shall see you face to face. When you shall wipe every tear from our eye. When you shall make all things new. And where we will share in your joy together forever. For my friends, I pray that they would come to you. For those who have wandered, I pray they would come back. And God, for those who are struggling, I pray they would continue until they see their King face to face. Amen.

You're now welcome to respond, become a Christian, give your life to Jesus. Come forward. Take communion, remembering the body and blood of Jesus, what our King has done. Give of your tithes and offerings as part of your worship of your King. If you need prayer, there will be leaders behind those serving communion, willing to pray for you. And we'll spend our time now doing what? Practicing for the day when we are gathered together around the throne of our King.