

Kingdom: God Reigns

Teaching Transcript

- We started in, the first lecture, in the beginning, God. We started in Genesis, the book of beginnings. We're gonna spend a lot of time here. In the book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, what happens in the end. And that being said, we live in the middle of history between creation and the consummation of the coming of Christ. And everyone pretty much agrees something has gone wrong. Okay. And different people and different ideologies will give different solutions. Some will say, let's just give it more time because we're evolving. How many of you, it doesn't seem that way. It seems like all our technological advances are to take not enhance human life. Some people will say, well, just more education. If people were just more educated then the world would fix itself. No, sometimes it's the most educated people that are the most miserable and sometimes the most evil. Sometimes they use their intellect to cause harm, or to steal or to bring death. And others will simply say, well, you know what? We need to have an election and put it in the right leader. And then they'll fix it. They don't. It doesn't matter what political party you're on. And some will say, well, you know what? Well, they're wrong. We're right. Let's just have war. And once we crush them, then our lives will improve. Well, let me just tell, we've given it time, we've opened schools, we've spent a lot of money, we've held a lot of elections, we've held a lot of funerals, we've had a lot of wars, and the world is still a mess. The world is still a mess. The number one category of prescription medication in America is antidepressants. Not saying that's a sin, but I'm saying to live in this world is depressing. And most people are just trying to medicate to cope with living in this world. And so when we come to the scriptures, we start to see something called the Kingdom of God. And the Kingdom of God is a mega theme of the whole Bible. We're part of the Church of Jesus Christ. But the Church is part of the Kingdom. The Church is important but the Kingdom is most important. And so I wanna start by talking about Jesus, and we're gonna get into heaven and we're gonna get into hell. First is how is Jesus Christ, a lion and a lamb? Okay. Revelation 5:5 and 6. It's the picture of Jesus. "Weep no more, behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, "the root of David, has conquered, "so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals. "And between the throne and the four living creatures," that's the divine council, "and among the elders," those are probably human leaders, "I saw a Lamb." So here, the revelation of Jesus is this Lion and Lamb, "standing as though it had been slain "with seven horns and seven spirits which are, "and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God." So those are divine beings. Servants of God. Seven is oftentimes number of perfection, "sent out into all the earth." The big picture here is of Jesus as Lion and Lamb. So let me ask you this. What does a lion say? What does a lion say? They roar, right? Roar. When my kids were little, we had these little games, what does a pig say? Oink, oink. What does a lamy say? Baa. What's a lion say, boys would take their shirt off, Roar, roars, little game we'd play. Lions roar. They're called the King of what? The whole jungle. You've ever been to a jungle. You're like, there's a hippo. Lions are like, I could take that. That's amazing. There's a crocodile. Lion's like, I could take that too. Do you know what a lion eats? Whatever they want. That's what eat. For them, the whole world is a Costco and it's all free samples. If you're a lion, that's just how it is. They live in prides or packs. They tend to have their female and then their children. And what happens if another male comes around, it's war, it's war. This is my family. And you are not welcome. How many of you see Jesus as a lion? Lion? When Jesus was on the earth, what are some scenes, some portraits, some vignettes, where he was a lion? He was tough. A lion is tough. And a lamb is tender. Just what things come to mind? You say, yeah, in

that scene, Jesus was a lion. Yeah, he goes to the temple and he sees total corruption, and he starts flipping tables over. And I was preaching through John's Gospel here, a year or two ago. And it says, and then Jesus took and made a whip. I was like, I didn't know he knew how to make a whip. And two, he had to be pretty frustrated 'cause it probably takes a while to make a whip. He's looking at them like, I promise you when I'm done, this is gonna go bad for you. So he goes full Indiana Jones on religious leaders. Jesus is often lion with religious hypocrites who are using and abusing people. He's very strong on them. He's very tough with them. Okay. How about a lamb? What does a lamb say? Baa, right? No one is scared of a lamb. When your child can't sleep you tell them to what, count sheep. 'Cause it's the most relaxing thing that could possibly be conceived of. That's why every kid, at some point in their Church's Sunday School, took a cotton ball, glued it on a piece of paper and said, love Jesus. 'Cause he's like that. He's just, he's soft and tender and clean and amazing. And who doesn't love a lamb? Like if you're out let's say, hike here in the wilderness and you see a lamb, you're not worried. You're like, Oh, I'm gonna pet it. You see a lion, not the same reaction. Okay. Here's how lambs are. They run away from danger and they stick together as a flock. They're very social animals, highly social animals. What does lamb eat? Grass. They're vegetarians. A lamb is basically a hippie. It's a homeless, pacifist vegetarian. That's what lamb is. It's basically a hippie. And so, when Jesus is on the earth, are there times that he is a tender lamb, not a tough lion? What are some of the occasions that come to your recollection in the scriptures? Yeah, Jesus was there a tender lamb. Woman caught in adultery, everybody else is like, let's destroy her. And He's like, how about we forgive her? That's tender. Other things that come to mind? The woman at the well. She's been living with guys, she's had a hard life, she's in a crazy culture, she's part of a cult. Jesus sits down and she's like, what are you doing here? I'm here to help. He's very kind. He's direct, but He's kind. My daughter, Alexie, her favorite story, you could tell when you're raising kids, what their favorite story is. 'Cause every night, read that Bible story. So with the boys it was like, David and Goliath. And with Alexie, it was the raising of Jairus' daughter. Daddy, I love that one where the little girl was sick and the daddy loves her and Jesus comes and heals her. She just, that's, to see Jesus healing a little girl. Well, that's about as lamb as it gets. Okay. So let me ask you this, is Jesus Lion or Lamb? Yes, He's both. And different theologies will emphasize him as Lion or as Lamb. And it's really important to see him as Lion and Lamb because Jesus is tough for His people, tender with His people. The experience of those who were enemies of God in hell, all they will experience is ultimately the lion's side of Jesus. But in heaven, what will we experience? The lamb side. This is a crucial insight, especially for men. As men, we wanna be tough for our family, tender with our family. Anybody who comes to hurt our daughter should meet the lion but our daughter should live with the lamb. And most men struggle to have emotional health and wellbeing like Jesus because they see him as Lion or Lamb instead of Lion and Lamb. Okay. That being said, this sets up our understanding, I think, of hell. And hell is where Jesus rules as Lion, heaven is where Jesus rules as Lamb. Okay. So what is hell? Matthew 25:41, Jesus talks about the eternal fire, always burning, never ending, prepared for the devil and his angels. That hell was created as a prison house and a punishment place for those spirits which rebelled against God and were fallen. Some people say, well, I don't wanna go there. You don't have to go there but demons are going there. And you need to know that for a demon and for Satan, there is no possibility of salvation. That's only a gift that God affords and provides for you and me. Revelation 14:10 and 11. Some of you have been told that hell is the absence of God's presence. It's not. It's the absence of the presence of God's grace. But it is not the place of the absence of God's presence. He is there in full justice, not grace. I'll show you here. This is kind

of a shocking verse. Revelation 14:10, 11. He, those who do not know the Lord, will drink the wine of God's wrath. When Jesus was in the garden of Gethsemane, before his life was taken, He's praying, Father take this cup from me. It's the cup of wrath. That when you and I sin, we are just pouring wrath into a cup that then we will drink for all eternity. And if you belong to Jesus, you need to know that when He went to the cross, He drank your cup. He drank it all. He endured the wrath of God. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? So all sin is dealt with either at the cross of Jesus or in the judgment place of hell. But it's all dealt with. And God's wrath is real. "He will drink the wine of God's wrath poured full strength "into the cup of his anger and he will be tormented." This is conscious eternal punishment. "With fire and sulfur in the presence of the Holy angels "and the presence of the," Who's that? That's Jesus. That's Jesus ruling over hell. Some people will say, well, Jesus rules over heaven and Satan rules over hell. When all is said and done, Satan rules over nothing and Satan rules over no one. Everything that God created, He will reclaim to be under his dominion as King. How horrible will it be for all eternity to receive judgment and justice looking at Jesus, knowing that He died for you and if you would have received Him, you would have blessing and not judgment. I mean, it's a little more sometimes than the heart can even bear to consider. But the number one person in the Bible to talk on hell is who? Jesus. He talks about it more than anyone. 13% of His teaching, the majority of His parables, and He oftentimes refers to it in terms and the Bible does, of a place called Gehenna. Gehenna was a garbage dump outside of town where all the garbage would go and the dead bodies would go. And things that were desecrated or demonic or despicable were placed there. And they would just burn. And the smoke would go up day and night and the stench was awful and it was outside of town. And it was a forsaken place where previously demonic worship and child sacrifice and horrible things had likely happened in that occasion. So they put the dump there and they thought that that's the defiled disgusting despicable place. And so it would burn day and night and the smoke would rise day and night. And the picture of Gehenna is articulated in the New Testament as a little precursor, a little foreshadowing, or a little sneak peek of hell. It's like that. It's the burning forever dump. And so it uses the language of fire and smoke of their torment. "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever "and they have no rest day or night." Jesus talks about the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. Let me say this, some people will say, how could God do that? My question is, how could God put Himself in that place for me? I understand if I do something wrong and I get punished. That I do something wrong and Jesus takes my punishment. That's shocking. Justice makes sense. Mercy to me is a bit scandalous. This raises the question. What is the wrath of God? Nobody talks about this by the way. Right. There is no best-selling book on the wrath of God. Here's what Jesus says. And I'm gonna quote Jesus. Whoever believes in the son has what? Eternal life. How long does that last? Forever and ever and ever. Eternal life doesn't begin the day you die, it begins the day you meet Jesus. Whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. It says, there's only really two kinds of people. Those who believe in Jesus, and He endured the wrath. And those who don't believe in Jesus and they have wrath that is awaiting them. Let me talk a little bit about God's wrath. God's wrath is all justice, no grace, no mercy, no exception. God's wrath is inextricably connected to God's holiness. The number one most frequent mentioned attribute of God in the Bible, is His holiness. Because He is Holy, He must justly judge sin. In addition, there are some 20 words, just in the Old Testament, that are a constellation images regarding wrath. It's spoken of about 600 times. Now that's just in the Old Testament. Now what some people will say is, I live my life, I rebel, I do what I want, nothing happens to me. That's God's passive wrath. God's wrath is in two formats. There's God's passive

wrath and his active wrath. Here's how it says it in Romans 1, God's wrath is revealed, and it says, God handed them over to their sinful desires. There is God's passive wrath where God is trying to protect you, He's trying to put things in front of you to stop you, He's trying to internally convict you and appeal to your conscience. And you just absolutely rebel against all of that. And then God reaches a point where He says, like He did to Judas, if that's what you wanna do, I'm gonna let you go do it. So the person who is living apart from God in rebellion and defiance against God is living under the passive wrath of God. All right. For me, I see God as a father. So He's involved in my life and He saves me from myself. But if He's not my father, then He lets me do what I want. And what passive wrath does, is it multiplies what will eventually be active wrath. So what I like to say is people don't get away with anything, they're storing up everything. The image is of a cup and it just keeps getting filled. This is what he says in Romans 2:5, "You are storing up wrath for yourselves "on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment "will be revealed." He talks Romans 1, passive wrath, which is filling the cup, and then active wrath, Romans 2, drinking the cup, enduring the consequence for the sin. Okay. Now, we live in a world that cares a lot about alleviating human suffering. And that's good. But as Christians, we need to also be concerned for the greatest suffering and that's eternal suffering. It's a great thing to feed people and house people and cloth people, and they need that. They also need Jesus because otherwise they're going to be facing the greatest suffering. That's why we preach the Gospel. That's why we tell people about Jesus. Now what happens is, there are some primary objections to hell. I'll read a verse and let me deal with it. Revelation 20:12 and five, "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. "And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, "Death and Hades," that's a holding tank or the grave, "gave up the dead who were in them. "And they were judged, "each one according to what they had done." We'll revisit that in a moment, "Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. "This is the second death, the lake of fire. "And if anyone's name "was not found written in the book of life, "he was thrown into the lake of fire." Let me just say, that's pretty clear. Some people may not like what the Bible says, but you can't really miss what the Bible says. And that is ultimately the most important decision you'll ever make is whether or not you're going to receive or reject Jesus. That's everything. Now some people will say, hell makes God cruel. No, it doesn't. If you don't want to be with God, if you don't want to be like Jesus then you just get what you want. And that's not to be with God in blessing. And that's not to be like Jesus forever. Only the, so let me say this, hell is where everybody gets what they want. Heaven is where God intervenes and He gives us what He wants. So hell is justice. Heaven is grace and mercy. Some will say, hell makes God intolerant. What I would say is, God's actually the most tolerant of all. He doesn't care what you've done. He'll take you. If God only took the good people, well none of us would make it. But that would be very intolerant of us bad people, right? God takes people from all the nations, all the languages, all the cultures, all the tribes, all the backgrounds. He'll take them all. Most religions, their God is for their kind. God is for all kinds. He's a global God. So God is actually the most tolerant. Because he welcomes everybody to turn from sin and trust in Jesus. That's very tolerant. He says, I'll forgive you. I'll take you. You wanna come? My arms are open. My house is open. I'll forgive you and bless you forever. Seems pretty tolerant to me. I'll be honest. God's much better to His enemies than we tend to be to our enemies. How many of you have not opened your home to your enemy? So that they could live with you. So that you could bless them. I mean, I think God is incredibly tolerant. Number three, some would say, hell makes God

unloving. Noah doesn't. If He is Lion and Lamb, tough for, tender with his family, the same reason that many of you, we are in Arizona, right? You've got a door on your house, what's behind the door? A gun. To ensure that if plan A does not work, plan B will be in effect, right? And now I've got some British friends who don't understand all of this. Look I don't understand guns and all this is that's, Here's the deal. If you love the people, then at some point you need to defend and protect from harm. God is not unloving to protect His people from those who hate Him and hate them. What God is saying is, you're welcome in my house. But you got to abide by the house rules. And if you are an enemy coming to harm my kids, you will meet the line at the door. I see this as very loving. If God let all the people into heaven to do whatever they wanted, not submit to his laws, not be born again, not be filled with the Spirit, and let me tell you heaven would look exactly like earth, and none of us would feel loved. Number four. Some say, everyone should go to heaven. My question is why? And furthermore, not everyone wants to go to heaven. I've got non-Christian friends that I love, even family. I'm like, do you wanna go to heaven? They're like, what's it like? Well you're gonna be with Jesus. I'm out. They don't wanna be with Jesus. Are we gonna have to obey God? Yeah, I'm out. They don't want to be there. They don't want to be in the presence of God. And they don't wanna worshipping God. And they don't wanna spend forever with Christians. And so if God did allow everyone into heaven, I'm telling you, heaven would look a lot like hell. Everything would continue and no one would change and nothing would be different. And that's not loving. Here's some false views of the afterlife. Let me roll through these carefully. There are other competing counterfeit claims. Materialism or naturalism is that you have a body but you don't have a soul. So when your body dies, it's all over and done. Jesus says, "Do not fear those who kill the body "but cannot kill the soul. "Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell." Jesus is saying, you have a soul. When you die, you still exist. You don't cease to exist. You're more than just a body. You're a body and a soul. The second is universalism. And that is that somehow, some way, everyone will be saved and go to heaven in the end. John 5:25 through 29, "Truly, truly I say to you, "an hour is coming in is now here. "When the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, "and those who hear will," What? They're gonna live. We saw this with Lazarus, Jesus' friend, shortest verse in the Bible, Jesus wept, when He heard of the death of His friend. And it says that He went to the graveside and He said, Lazarus come forth. One British preacher says, it's a good thing He named him, otherwise He would have emptied the whole graveyard. All right. But there's gonna be a day, like Lazarus, where you hear Jesus and you get up. You're like, cool. I guess we're hanging out forever. "An hour is coming when all who are in tombs "will hear his voice and come out. "Those who have done good," good tree bears good fruit, "to the resurrection of life. "And those who have done evil "to the resurrection of judgment." I mean, Jesus, couldn't be clear. He doesn't say, and I'm gonna call your name. And you're all gonna come forth and go to heaven. I'm gonna call your name. You're all gonna come forth. And some of you are gonna come with me and some of you are against me. And there are two categories. There is life and judgment. Life is what you get in heaven. Judgment is what you get in hell. Number three, annihilationism. This is at some point on the other side of death, you just cease to exist, your soul expires. Eventually there's an expiration date. Daniel 12:2, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth "shall arise. "Some to, what's the two words? Everlasting life. That's without end. "Some to shame and everlasting contempt." Everyone lives forever, the only difference is where. You rise, you're gonna live with God or you're gonna live against God, forever. And so this concept of annihilationism, it negates against words like ever lasting, where it says at the end of Isaiah, it says the torment goes forever and ever. We looked at the words of Jesus quoting that scripture

from Isaiah, it says, the smoke of their torment arises forever and ever. Well forever and ever and everlasting and eternal, now there can't be that you cease to exist. Number four, some teach reincarnation. And that is that you've got a karmic debt to God and you need to come back and then pay God back. And there was a form of this, it used to be taught more prominently but it's still held by the Catholic Church. Many of them are Christians. But the doctrine of purgatory is after you die you don't quite get eternal life. You need to suffer a little bit and finish paying it off. In addition to what Jesus paid, you gotta pay something too. Well, here's what it says, "It is appointed for a man to die once," that eliminates reincarnation. "And after that comes judgment." That eliminates purgatory. God says, you die once, and then you're judged. You don't die a bunch of times or then die. And in a million years after you've suffered then I judge you. It's an instantaneous event upon death. Number five, some will teach soul sleep. If you have friends that are in like Seventh-day Adventism, they will teach something called soul sleep. When the Bible speaks of the departed saints, it does say, for example, in Corinthians, that they have fallen asleep. But what that means is that their body is laying in the ground, but their soul is in the presence of God. 2 Corinthians 5:8, "We would rather be away from the body "and at home with the Lord." My understanding of the doctrine is soul sleep is not only is the body in the ground, so is the soul. What I believe, the scripture teaches, is when the body goes into the ground, the soul goes to be with the Lord. It's not held and contained by the body. We would rather be away from the body and where? Home with the Lord. I love that language of home. All right. I mean, when we get into the presence of God, we're finally home, finally home. And so to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. And then there is also, number six, another erroneous version. This is the cartoonish version of heaven. You've seen this? Cartoonish version of heaven is you're a chubby baby with wings wearing a diaper, sitting on a cloud, playing a harp forever, right? And for most men, they're like, I'll go to hell. I'll just take hell. I don't do diapers. I don't do harps. I don't do clouds. I do chubby. But the rest, I just, I'm not down with. The way that came into being is, if you go to, I think it's the Sistine Chapel, the picture of some of the angels that was painted is that they look like babies. And so it created, for some people, a misunderstanding that when a baby dies, they become an angel or when we die, we become an angelic baby. It's not based on anything in the scriptures but it really does dominate a lot of contemporary thought. Well, here's what it says, To live is Christ, to die is? It's gain. It's gain. It's hard for us to imagine but this is as bad as it will ever be if you belong to Jesus. And if you don't belong to Jesus, this is as good as it will ever get. For the Christian, this is as close to hell as you will ever be. For the non-Christian, this is as close to heaven as you will ever be. "To live is Christ, to die is gain." It says, "My desire is to depart and be with Christ "for that is far better." How many of you are living in this life or maybe suffering physically? You're like, I've seen older saints who love the Lord and as they get closer to their finish line, they're like, I'm ready. I'm ready to be with Jesus. I'm ready to quit my job. I'm ready to have a healthy body. I'm ready to see the people that I love that have gone before me. I'm ready. Because to live is Christ, to die is gain. "To live is Christ, to die is gain. "My desire is to depart and be with Christ "for that is far better." And then 1 Corinthians 15, if you wanna read one section in the Bible on sort of the resurrection and eternal life there in it's 1 Corinthians 15. "So it is with the resurrection of the dead. "What is sown, perishable, "what is raised, imperishable. "It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. "It is sown in a natural body." That's your physical body. "It is raised in a spiritual body." Something supernatural happens to your resurrection body. That it is your body but it is greater and it is imbued with the presence of God to the degree that there is a transformation to where the physical life you live now is not

exactly the same as the physical life you will live in your resurrection body. If there is a natural body, it says there is also a spiritual body. A spiritual body. And this is very different than the cartoonish version of eternal life. It's, we'll deal with this in the moment, but it's a resurrection body. It's a recreated world. It's everything is God intended. And it's gonna be amazing. And I just promise you this. It is not even possible to fully grasp, comprehend, or understand what it's going to be like to be in God's presence in His Kingdom of heaven forever. The Bible says that no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind can conceive of the good things that God has planned for you. So our hearts just need to be opened, our imaginations need to be opened, our future needs to be open to realizing that sometimes what the non-Christian thinks is heaven, isn't really heaven. 'Cause I would submit to you that heaven is not just a place, it's being with a person. And if you love God, then wherever God is, that's where you wanna be. I'll tell you this, Grace, my wife, she's my favorite person. I love her with all my heart. I would rather be in the laundry room with her than on vacation at a five-star resort without her. 'Cause it's not necessarily where you are, it's who you're with. Now, let me tell you this, in heaven, and we'll deal with this in a moment, it's gonna be an amazing place but what it'll make it wonderful is the presence of God and His people. That's what's gonna make it awesome. It's who you're with. So a couple other questions. What is the judgment of unbelievers versus believers? You may understand, okay, unbelievers get judged. Do believers get judged? They do. And those judgments are different. Jesus says, Luke 12:47 and 48, "That servant who knew his master's will "but did not get ready or act according to his will, "will receive a severe beating. "But the one who did not know "and did what deserved a beating, "will receive a light beating." Talking about consequence and punishment and judgment. "Everyone to whom much is given, "of him much will be required, "and from him to whom they entrusted much, "they will demand more." What God is saying is this, the punishment will fit the degree of disobedience. God is just. There are degrees of punishment in hell. The person who had godly parents who raised them in the Lord and shared the Word of God with them and then they just give God the finger for their entire adult life and die. There's a higher responsibility and accountability, because there was for them, a greater opportunity. For the person who's like, I didn't know much. I'm sort of simple about the whole thing. And wasn't really curious. There is consequence, but it's not the same. So God is a just judge. Jesus says in John 5, the father judges no one, but he's entrusted all judgment to the Son. When Jesus judges, the eternal punishment will fit exactly in measure to the level of disobedience and defiance during life. How about for the believer? Believers, Christians, God's people will be judged. Next slide, please. Jesus is talking about the degrees of punishment versus blessing in John 19:11. It says, "He who has delivered me over to you," speaking to Pilate, "has the greater sin." Jesus is saying, everybody here has got responsibility, but somebody has got more responsibility and there'll be a higher price to pay for them. That's why the Bible says, not many of you should presume to be teachers, you'll be judged more strictly, right? That if we take on leadership roles, we're holding ourselves to an accountable standard of greater expectation and consequence. 2 Corinthians 5:10, "We must," and he's writing to the Church, "all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. "So that each one may receive what is due "for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil." Here's what I want you to know. As there are degrees of punishment in hell, there are degrees of blessing in heaven. Some of you have been through a lot. You're gonna be rewarded for that. Some of you have endured a lot, forgiven a lot, swallowed a lot, overcome a lot, you're gonna be rewarded for that. And what's amazing, is that's how we store up our treasure in heaven. That ultimately, everything that you give, everything that you do, every way that you serve, every grievance that you forgive, every hurt that you overcome, there

is not just a reward, but there's an eternal reward. I don't know exactly what these rewards are. The Bible isn't incredibly clear. There's a bit of mystery. But I would submit to you that part of this reward is internal. You just have a clear conscience in the sight of God. You're like, you know what? It's hard but I think I'm doing the right thing. Internal, there is a reward. External, there are rewards. People who will live for the glory of God and good of others, there are external rewards in their relationships or maybe favor at work or some other provision from God. And then those are ultimately rewards that are eternal. So we get a little bit of our inheritance here where God is gracious to us and he blesses us and it's internal and it's external. But know that ultimately, for the child of God, we're all gonna stand before God, and the rewards are gonna be internal, external, and eternal forever in the presence of God. So think about it this way, some people will be like, I don't love God, I don't go to church, I don't read my Bible, I don't pray, but at least I'm a Christian. Well, but first of all, I would say, we don't just assume that, like double check that, I'm not gonna judge you but judge yourself while you're at it. But in addition, if you're given a whole life of opportunity and you do nothing with it, there won't be the same reward for you. This is a lot of Jesus' parables, where it says, these guys came out and they did this work and they were rewarded accordingly. These are a lot of Jesus' parables are Kingdom parables, about sowing in this life and reaping in the eternal life at the judgment seat of rewards. Next question, who is the King and what is the Kingdom? Now we're gonna move. And we're gonna do a lot of scripture at the end of Revelation Revelation 19:11 through 16. Heaven opens up, and he gets to see into the divine throne room and the divine council and the worship of God. "Then I saw heaven open and behold, a white horse." This is awesome. How many of you are like old Westerns? How many of you old guys like Westerns? What does the good guy always ride? The white horse. Here he comes. Okay. Here he comes. "The one sitting on it is called faithful and true "and in righteousness, he judges and makes war." That's the Lamb. He's talking about the second coming of Jesus. The first coming, He came largely as Lamb, the second coming, He will arrive largely as Lion. He's coming to judge and make war. I mean, it's sort of cosmic in scope. It's kind of hard to get your mind around it, but think of Jesus in his resurrection body. You look up and here He comes on a white horse to destroy the nations of the earth. Like wow, I didn't know He was that big and powerful. But that's Jesus in full authority as King. "His eyes are like a flame of fire. "He sees and knows all. "On His head are many diadems." Those are crowns. "He has a name written that no one knows but He himself, "He is clothed in a robe dipped in what, blood" I mean, just see this Jesus. Right. When Jesus shows up again, this is who's showing up. White horse, King, Soldier, Warrior, robe dipped in blood. Goes on to say, "And the name by which He is called is the Word of God. "And the armies of heaven," those would be angelic and human servants from God's divine and human families, "The armies of heaven arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, "were following on white horses." Jesus comes for a military campaign and He doesn't ride alone. "From His mouth, comes a sharp sword "with which to strike down the nations. "And He will rule them with a rod of iron. "He will tread the wine press "of the fury of the wrath of God almighty on His robe "and on His thigh, He has a name written King of Kings, Lord of Lords." I taught this years ago and there was a rapper who referred to this as thug Jesus. So here's thug Jesus. He has a tattoo, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, robe dipped in blood, sword, iron rod, riding a white horse with an angelic host, coming to take over every inch of creation. That's amazing. When my boys were little, they oftentimes played with swords. They would think, let's have a battle and defend the castle and rescue the princess, that's the storyline of the Bible. Jesus comes back with a sword. He puts down the bad guys. He protects the castle. He saves the princess. I'll never forget when our kids were little. My boys had

swords. Any of you who have boys with big sword boys? We had a lot of sword fights at the Driscoll House. And somebody came over and they're like, why do you let them with swords? So that they'll love Jesus. 'Cause when He comes, guess what? It's gonna be a sword fight. And so this is all an internship to join that party. That's what we're doing here at the Driscoll House. All right. Now, let me say this. A lot of guys, when they think of God in worship, they don't think of Jesus in this way. But especially for you men, how many of you are like, I'd worship that guy? 'Cause he can take me, right? He's a King. Yeah. I'll clap for him. Cheer. Yeah. Okay. That's good. See, this is Jesus in all of His glory. This is Jesus in His full unveiled glory as a King ruling over a kingdom and a soldier. And here's what I'll tell you, anytime there's a people that are being oppressed, or they're under some sort of evil dictator, their life is being taken from them, what happens when their liberator show up? Oh, finally you set us free. We got our life back. Well, his name is Jesus. His name is Jesus. What is the Kingdom of Heaven like? Next slide, please. Okay, here it is. Revelation 21, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth "for the first heaven and the first earth passed away "and the sea was no more." So that we will live in a physical world but it won't be necessarily exactly as this one is. New heaven, new earth, new Jerusalem. The God who was there in the beginning, He creates a new beginning and he wants to do that in your life. And this new beginning is a new physical world. Now think of it this way, Romans 8 says that the world in which we live because of sin is straining under the curse, wanting to be delivered. How many of you find our planet stunning? I mean, it's stunning Sunsets where we live in the North, unbelievable. We've been up to the mountains, gorgeous. Went to the Grand Canyon, what a hole. You know, I mean, it's amazing. This is the world in its fallen, cursed straining state. Imagine what the new perfect creation will be like. I think everybody who goes on vacation ultimately wants to go to heaven. I think people are all looking for a safe, quiet, tranquil, peaceable, beautiful place. And their soul really wants to go to heaven. I think everybody going on vacation ultimately wants to go to heaven. "And I saw the Holy City." So God's vision is ultimately urban. There's a lot of people, there's life, there's culture, there's art, there's food, there's activity. It's civilization. It's not just your soul, your body is there. "New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God." Here's what you'll find in heaven. Nothing is there that is manmade. Everything in heaven is God made. We won't take anything with us and God will remake everything and give it to us. "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 man. "He will dwell with them." So all of a sudden God's in heaven, we're on earth. Those two realms unite into one reality. And you and I will live with the angels and other divine beings, literally in the presence of God. Literally in the presence of God. In a glorified, resurrected, perfected body. "He will dwell with them. "They will be His people and God will be their God." One of the great referring of the Old Testament is that God is making a people for His possession. Well, this is when it's all done. God is so loving. He's so fatherly. He's so relational that He's gonna gather us together as His people together forever. You say, well what will it be like? He will wipe every tear from their eyes. Some people will be like, okay, my loved one didn't make it, or they didn't really know Jesus, or I have a memory from my life previously that is grievous. There'll be a morning season. But then there will come a time when, I kind of get the picture of Jesus with nail scarred hands, just imagine that, you're standing before Jesus, entering into the eternal state. Jesus, I'm glad to be here and I love you, but there's some people that didn't make it and there's some things that I regret. Jesus will put out the nail scarred hands and say, let me wipe those tears, welcome home. There'll be a full healing. There'll be a full healing for all the children of God. And Jesus is gonna wipe those tears from your eyes. And death shall be

wiped. Can you even conceive of that? No death, no funerals, no ambulances, no hospitals, no copays, no deductibles, no prescriptions, no death. How many of you are sick of burying people? You are like there will come a day when everyone gets out of their grave and death will be no more. Neither shall there be mourning. In heaven, nobody's really like, this sucks, I wish it was better. Nobody. Nobody in heaven is gonna regret it. Nobody in heaven. Is 100% customer satisfaction in heaven. That's how it's gonna go down. No mourning, no crying, no pain. How much pain do you carry? How much pain do we carry? We carry emotional pain, we carry physical pain, we carry relational pain. No pain. Full, total, complete healing. "For the former things have passed away" and he was seated on the throne said, "behold I am making all things new." All things new. Now let me explain to you the Book of Revelation. The Western Church has tended to see the Book of Revelation as a book of history about the past or prophecy about the future. The Eastern Church tends to see the Book of Revelation as a book of doxology, not eschatology. That is worship, not the end times. And Revelation is both and much, much more. But as you read Revelation, it shifts between heavenly scenes and earthly scenes. Okay. And so, what you'll see in the heavenly scenes is Jesus in all His glory and seated on His throne and being worshiped by the departed saints and the divine council. What you will see in those earthly scenes are war. What you see in the heavenly scenes is worship. What you see in the earthly scenes is war. So the earthly scenes looks at nations and churches. That's Revelation 2, 3, 6, 10, 12, and 13 and Chapter 16 through 19. It's in your notes. The heavenly scenes, Revelation 1, 4, 5, 7, 11, 14, 15, 19, and 21, 22. As you read Revelation, it is the revelation of the end. It's the last book of the Bible because it tells us what happens in the end. But ultimately, as you read it, there are gonna be times you're looking at scenes on the earth. Churches, wars, conflict, rebellion, demonic, it's terrifying. And then you see the heavenly scene. Oh, Jesus is in control. Jesus is a King. Jesus has a Kingdom, the Kingdom of God endures forever. There's a heavenly host that is battling for the goodness of the people of God. And what it does is it basically reveals to us, there's no hope down here. The only hope is up here. And nothing is going to be resolved until what's up here, comes down there. And that's where Revelation goes. It goes from the unseen realm to the seen realm. From the supernatural to the natural. From the presence of God, to the presence of problems on the earth. From worship to war. And then it all comes together. And it comes because Jesus arrives again. And when Jesus arrives, the King shows up, and He brings the Kingdom with Him. How about this one? Revelation 21. Let's just read it, 22 through 27. "I saw no temple in the city, "for its temple is the Lord, God Almighty and the Lamb." In the Old Testament, you had a temple to go be near God's presence, in the Kingdom, you won't need a temple to be near God's presence, you'll be in God's presence. You will have the same access that the high priest did on Yom Kippur the day of atonement in the Holy of Holies. I'm just telling you this. Like you could wake up on Tuesday and be like, I'm gonna go see what Jesus is doing. And you can go see Him. This is awesome. I'll be back tomorrow. That's amazing. Jesus, let me say this, Jesus is a real person who's really alive that you're really gonna be with. "And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it." It's always Arizona. You know what? People get scared at night. And sometimes evil things happen at night and the sun will always shine. "For the glory of God gives it light "and its lamp is the Lamb." As God and Jesus Christ is unveiled in full glory, the glory will illuminate all of the new creation. We won't be lit by the sun, we will be lit by the Son of God. "By its light, the nations will walk, "and the Kings of the earth will bring their glory into it." Kings and rulers and nations will be like, you are the King now, we are not, we are out of the job and we surrender and submit to you. Goes on to say, "But nothing unclean will ever enter it." 'Cause once God sets up the Kingdom perfectly, it's like, is it gonna get

messed up again like the earth did the first time? Nope. Because the Lion will protect and He'll be present as the Lamb who loves. But he will protect. "Nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, "but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life." And to me, that's a strong argument against future salvation. It's like, if you're out, you're always out. And if you're in, you're always in. And anybody who's out, they can't get in. That's how the Kingdom is going to ultimately work forever. And I like to say, it's God's people in God's presence, enjoying God's provision and singing God's praises. That's kind of my little summary of heaven is, God's people in God's presence, enjoying God's provision and singing God's praises. Next one. One more scripture on this. Revelation 22, we're at the end of the Bible now. "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, "through the middle of the street of the city. "Also on either side of the river," what shows back up? You need to see that your Bible is a beginning, middle, beginning story. It's a beginning, middle, new beginning. The first two Chapters of your Bible, angelic beings and human beings are together in a beautiful, wonderful, idyllic environment, enjoying God's presence together. And God's people are partaking of a tree of life so that they will live forever. Once we sin, angels are put on guard, we are cast away from the tree of life. Otherwise we would live forever in sin and death. The last two Chapters of the Bible, they pick up the culmination of God's intention from the first two Chapters of the Bible. So you get to the last two Chapters of the Bible. You're like, okay, the human beings and the divine family of God are all together. They're in the presence of God in an idyllic environment, enjoying God's presence and perfection and partaking of the tree of life. Everything that God did in creation that we undid with sin, God redoes in the Kingdom. So the storyline of the Bible is not beginning, middle, end. It is beginning, middle, new beginning. New beginning. But just think of that, you're gonna know God, you're gonna meet angels. You're gonna see the glory of Jesus every day. All your needs will be met. Everything that God intended and we corrupted, God in the end provides. That's amazing to me. It's one thing to be forgiven, it's another thing to be forgiven and blessed like that. Next slide. What will the Christian be like in the Kingdom of Heaven? Let me just pull back and revisit one thing, you may have heard over and over and over here, the throne. The throne appears, I think it's 196 times in your Bible. I think it's like 65 times in the New Testament. And it's like 41 times in Revelation. I think it's in 17 of the 22 Chapters of Revelation. The throne is one of the central focal points of the entire Bible. And the throne is where the King sits. In their culture, you didn't sit, you squatted or sat on the floor. If you were a King ruling over a kingdom, you would sit on a throne. If you were a soldier who had won a battle, they would honor you by sitting you on a throne. If you were a priest, you would sit on a throne above the people but below God as the mediator. When Jesus sits on the throne, He does so as King, Warrior and Priest. And the focal point of furniture in all of human history, is the throne. So as you see those heavenly scenes, all worship, all praise, all adoration, all glory, all thanksgiving, all goes to the throne and the one seated on the throne. And then all judgment and all provision and all creation comes from the one seated on the throne. That's why in our world, there's this demonic fight to always figure out who gets to sit on the throne. Every family has it. Every business has it. Every church has it. Every ministry has it. Every community has it. I wanna sit in that throne. Somebody wants to sit on the throne. When all is said and done, Jesus will be the one sitting on the throne. He'll be the one seated on the throne. And that's Him ruling over the Kingdom. Now what about you and me? What's it gonna be like for you? 1 Corinthians 2. "What no eyes has seen, nor ear heard, "nor the heart of man imagined." Heaven is not just better than you think, it's better than you can think. We don't even have a category. Perfection, I don't have a category for that. I don't know what it's

gonna be like to have a perfected body and perfected relationships and eat a perfect cheeseburger. I have no idea. But all of that sounds awesome. I can't wait. There's some things in this life that I enjoy. If they're perfected, I will enjoy them even more. "These things God revealed to us through the Spirit, "for the Spirit searches the deep things of God." How about this one. "To the one who conquers," Revelation 3:21, "I will grant him to sit with me on my throne "as I also conquered and sat down with my Father "on His throne." Not only are you going to be in God's presence, singing God's praises, enjoying God's provision, God will give you dominion over all of the new creation. Not only does Jesus sit on a throne, He says that His people will sit in authority as well. I mean, just think of that. I mean, we got little kids back in nursery on Sunday that someday are gonna sit on thrones and rule over nations. 'Cause that's the goodness of our King. How about this one? 1 Corinthians 6:3, "Do you not know that we are the judge angels." Right now, the Psalmist says, that we were made a little lower than the angels, but our resurrected, perfected, glorified bodies, you are going to get a promotion and you will sit on a throne and you will rule and reign in honor of the Lord Jesus, and you will have dominion and authority over all creation and you will even judge angels. That's why the Bible says, there's this little line, I love it, it says, let us only live up to what we have already attained. That's what God has attained for us and we wanna live up to that. So how do we live in the meantime. I will close with this. How many of you you're like, how many of you wanna go to heaven right now? You're like, Oh, I wanna go. This is why Christians are like addicted to books on the rapture and especially, Can we leave yet? Can we go now? Like, are we done yet? Can we please exit. Just read Daniel and tell me I don't have to go to work tomorrow. I mean, we just, if you really love Jesus and you really pay attention to this world, at some point, you're like, ah, I would like to go there. So what do you do in the meantime? Because we are citizens of the Kingdom. We do have the presence of God. We have the beginning of the unveiling of the Kingdom of God, through the Church and the life of God's people. So the Kingdom of God has been inaugurated but it's not been yet fully unveiled and realized. What do we do in the time between the times? "Your kingdom come, "your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We pray so that our hearts remain kingdom focused as we are living amidst a fallen culture. Colossians 3:2, "Set your mind on things that are above, "not on things that are on earth." I always like to say that we wanna live kingdom down not culture up. That ultimately, hell has a culture, and heaven has a culture. And the decisions that you and I make every day, they either invite heaven down into our life or they pull hell up into our life. If you choose forgiveness, you're inviting the Holy Spirit. If you choose bitterness, you are inviting demonic spirits. That the decisions we make are in light of eternity. And it's like, I wanna make kingdom down, not hell up decision. And let me just tell you this, that most of our culture and its value system and decision-making, is it kingdom down or hell up? It's hell up. For the Christian, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 1 John 3, "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, "that we should be called children of God, "and so we are." God loves you with a father's affection. God has committed to you with a father's devotion. He doesn't just endure you. He has endeared himself to you. That's unbelievable. "The reason why the world does not know us "is that it did not know Him." Beloved, you need to know this. You are loved. And when all is said and done, all God is going to have for you, is love. Right. This is why we love weddings. Oh, they love each other. That ultimately is a foreshadowing of Jesus with his people into eternal covenant. "Beloved, we are God's children, "and what we will be has not yet appeared "but we know that when he appears, we shall be like Him." Like him. "Because we shall see Him." What do we do in the meantime? "Everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself "as he is pure." The believer says, every

moment, every day, I'm one step closer to home. And my citizenship is there. My residence is here. But ultimately, one day I will leave this world and I will enter into that realm. I will enjoy God's presence and I will be with God's people. And until that day I wanna live kingdom down not hell up. I wanna live kingdom down not culture up. I want the decisions that I make, the values that I have, the commitments that I devote myself to, to be ultimately ones that honor that King and his Kingdom, no matter what the world might say. And that's the Christian life.