

Revelation 7
What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived
Pastor JD

KAPONO: Would you join me as we pray? Heavenly Father, we thank You so much, Lord. Thank You, thank You, Lord. Thank You so much for the Prophecy Update. Lord, we thank You that You bless us with a place and with pastors for such a time as this, Lord, that speak the truth, Lord, and preach Your word, Lord. So we say hallelujah, Lord. Holy are You, Lord. We bless Your name, Lord.

Would You give us clarity this morning with the message, Lord, as we look to Your word? We pray, Lord, that it would just — we would live and breathe it. We thank You, Lord, for this time. We ask You in Your name only, Jesus. We say, Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. Good morning and welcome. So glad you're here. You can be seated. Those of you online, we're also very glad that you're joining with us. This is our Second Service, and we're going through the Bible book-by-book, chapter-by-chapter, verse-by-verse. And we are in the last book of the Bible, the *Book of Revelation*. And we're almost at the end of *Revelation*. And so I know what you're thinking because I can read your minds. What are you going to do when you complete *Chapter 22*, the last chapter in *Revelation*? I'm thinking that the rapture is going to happen first. That's what I'm thinking. Okay?

Now, our text today is going to be in *Chapter 20*. We left off in *verse 6*, so we'll pick it up in *verse 7* and we're going to make it all the way through to *verse 10*. Three verses at a time. No hurry. I think you'll see why here in a moment.

So we'll begin in *verse 7*. I'll ask you to stand if you're able. If not or uncomfortable, no worries. Just where you're seated is fine. But just follow along with me as I read the text beginning in *verse 7*, where John by the Holy Spirit writes, **“When the thousand years are over, [Speaking of the Millennium, the Kingdom Age] Satan will be released from his prison and [Verse 8] will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth — Gog and Magog — and to gather them for battle. In number, they are like the sand on the seashore.**

They marched [Verse 9] across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people, the city He loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And [Verse 10] the Devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur,

Revelation 7
What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived
Pastor JD

where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

Wow. You okay? Should I just close in prayer and just call it that? Let's pray. Father, thank You. You're — You are holy, God, and we are in awe of You. Holy, holy, holy are You, O Lord God Almighty. This is a really intense passage that's before us today. Clearly. And as such, we desperately, readily admit our need for You by the Holy Spirit to teach us and show us what You want us to see and speak to us what You want us to hear, and minister to us what You want us to heed.

This is a powerful passage that's before us today as well, Lord. So we would just ask that in the power of the Holy Spirit, You would give us understanding. Because otherwise we have no hope of really grasping the intensity of this prophecy. So, Lord, would You minister it to us, not just the prophetic information that we're provided, but the personal application that we can take home with us? Will You do that for us, Lord? We're asking You in Jesus' name, Amen and amen. You can be seated. Thank you so much.

So I want to talk with you today about what we need to know about why we're so gullible and vulnerable to letting ourselves be deceived. That's the key word and that's the reason for the title. 'What I need to know about why I let (Emphasizing "let") myself be deceived.' That changes the whole complexion of everything that we're about to see.

What are we about to see? Well, what we're about to see are what I'll call the big three. What are the big three? The Devil, the world, and the flesh, which is our sin nature that we're all born with, which is why we must be born-again to see or enter the kingdom of heaven. So these are the sources of deception.

But God brings an end to deception. Why? So I can know about deception and why it is that I let myself fall into deception. Now let me just pause here for a moment before we jump in and mention — this is very important — that throughout Scripture, particularly in the Gospels and even in the epistles, you'll find a common denominator when it comes to being deceived. And that common denominator is the aforementioned word "let."

Revelation 7
What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived
Pastor JD

Let's start with the Savior himself, Jesus himself. **"Let no man deceive you."** Wait. You mean I wouldn't have been deceived if I didn't let them deceive me? Yes. Wait a minute. Now you're putting the onus on me. I know. Me too. We let ourselves be deceived. We don't have to be deceived, tricked, duped, if you prefer. But because of the sources, we fall prey to deception and cooperate fully and thus let ourselves be deceived.

Now, God — again I — this is, I realize this is a very intense passage of Scripture. But please, I implore you, do not allow the intensity of it to in any way mar the reality of it. And what I mean by that is the text we just read and the text we're about to go through verse-by-verse, this is more real than the chairs you're sitting on. This is not some, you know — what's the word I'm looking for— some, you know, spiritualized, you know, metaphor or, you know...

No. This is what is going to happen. And we're actually going to see why this is going to happen. Because God, once and forever, once and for all, for all eternity, is going to eliminate the sources of temptation that we let our — and deception that we let ourselves be deceived by.

You've heard the saying, doubtless, that deceived people deceive people. Question: Why do deceived people deceive people? Because they let them. They let them. We hold the key to the door to let them in. And we don't have to. This is going to date me. You younger people, I'm so thrilled that you're here in this God's church. But back in our day, there was a sitcom called Sanford and Son. Remember Flip Wilson? "The Devil made me do it."

Nobody. Okay, well, then, sorry I brought it up.

The Devil did not make you do it. You let the Devil make you do it. Are we good? Are we clear? Because that was my introduction. That's the best I got. So... All right. Let's jump in and let's start with the Devil. By the way, the Devil is a real created being in the spiritual realm. You understand that, right? He's not — and just to clear up a misnomer, he's not wearing red tights with a pitchfork and horns, just so you understand. He's a powerful being, but he's not all powerful.

But the Devil is the master deceiver. And this is what we're going to see here in verses seven and eight. And this is one of the most astonishing two verses in arguably all the pages of

Revelation 7
What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived
Pastor JD

Holy Writ. Now it's important to note the word “deceived” or “deceiving” is found three times in just the first ten verses of this chapter, and it's also why Satan is released from the bottomless pit, the abyss, the abyssos.

Now remember — let's just rewind to *Chapter 19*. Remember when the false prophet and the beast were cast into the lake of fire in *Chapter 19*, and we're going, “Wait a minute, what about the Devil? Aren't You going to cast him in there?”

“Not yet. I still need him.”

“So what are You going to do with him?”

“I'm going to — I'm going to incarcerate him using one angel with one chain and one hand to cast him into the bottomless pit for the entirety of the 1000 years, the millennial reign on earth.”

Now, in *verse 7*, we're told what happens after the thousand years.

“And You release him? Why?”

“Because I'm not done with him. But I will be by *verse 10*. So just be patient. Hang in there.”

So he's released. Why? Because God needs for him to do what he does best, and that is deceive. And notice with me — and this is what I mean by astonishing — he deceives the nations. He goes throughout the breadth of the earth and deceives so many people that John by the Holy Spirit writes, **“their number is like the sand on the seashore.”** That's a lot of people. You know, countless.

“Wait a minute, Pastor, you're really kind of messing me up here. So let me see if I got this straight. So a thousand years have gone by, and the people who survived the Tribulation go into the Millennium, but they don't have the glorified bodies like we do. So they still have this propensity, this proclivity, this potential to sin?”

“Yes.”

“And you're also telling me, or you told us, that the earth will be like it was before sin entered the world?”

Revelation 7
What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived
Pastor JD

“Yes.”

“And you're also telling me that it'll be a rule of righteousness with Christ?”

“Yes.”

“So if they're going to have bodies like Adam and Eve, and Adam lived to be 930 years old, does that mean that they're going to live to be that long too?”

“Yes.”

Isaiah 64 for those of you that want to dig deeper into that. We went through *Isaiah* verse-by-verse and much to say about the Millennium. Anyway...

“So these are people that have bodies like Adam and Eve, and they're going to have children, and their children are going to have children, (Repeating fast “Their children are going to have children”)”

“Yeah.”

That's a lot of people in a thousand years. Think about this. I was thinking about this yesterday as I was preparing this sermon. During the seven-year Tribulation, it's all about the depopulation. During the Kingdom Age, it's all about re-population. I had one brother tell me one time that he did some calculations and came up with an astronomical number of those that would be living after 1000 years, the population of the earth.

So what's the population of the earth now? Let's call it 8,000 — 8,000 (Chuckling) That's what they're trying to get it down to. Sorry. No, 8 billion, right? Am I right? Did I lose you on that one? Okay. 8 billion. I think it's a little bit more. But let's round it off for purposes of discussion. 8 billion people, okay? Wait.

That jump to 8 billion, just within maybe 50 years. Less? We're talking a thousand years, man. And they're living in an environment where there's righteousness. There's no war. There's no shortage of food, the food supply, the supply chain. There's no unemployment. There's no police. No need. For a thousand years. What are you going to do? I'm going to go make babies. And so they did, it would appear. And so the population is going to be this countless number.

Revelation 7

What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived

Pastor JD

And I know it's hard. Believe you me, I share with you in that. It is so hard to imagine that after 1000 years living in this utopia, not dystopia. This utopia where everything, I mean, it's a near perfect world. I mean, we're told — I think it's Isaiah.

It describes the Millennium where the snake, the child will be able to play with the snake, the cockatrice den, or something like that. One of the most deadliest snakes known to man. The lamb will lie down with the lion. Right now the lion is going to eat the lamb for lunch. Lamb chops. Not during the Millennium. All the animals. It's going to be wonderful, beautiful.

And then the Devil is released, who's not been there, by the way, for 1000 years to deceive anybody. Well, we got him out of the way temporarily. He was in solitary confinement 1000 years. But as soon as he's released, he deceives so many people that it's likened to the number of sand on the seashore? It's going to happen.

So what's your point? I actually have a point, believe it or not. Never underestimate — see this is — Satan has been met with smashing success in getting us to go to either of two extremes. We underestimate how powerful he is, or we overestimate how powerful he is. And the balance is always in the middle. And Satan is always in the extremes.

And here's the thing. He is powerful. Don't underestimate the power that the Devil has to deceive you when you let him deceive you. Notice, conspicuously absent is any mention of anybody being deceived for 1000 years while he was in solitary confinement. And then as soon as he's released, he goes throughout the earth deceiving this countless number of people.

By the way, I have to get this out of the way because it's an issue. Don't get tripped up by the Gog/Magog reference. It's only analogous to, but not synonymous with *Ezekiel 38 and 39*. Let me explain. By the way, what we're seeing now — doubtless you heard the reports that yesterday the US, for the first time in history, launched a strike against Iran. And I'm sure you understand and know that Israel has been launching strikes and Iran has been retaliating.

Revelation 7

What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived

Pastor JD

I am of the belief that what we're seeing right now, right now, right now on our News feed, is an on-ramp to the fulfillment of *Ezekiel 38 and 39*, which is a prophecy about an alliance of nations: Russia, Iran, Turkey et al. all invading Israel from the north when Israel thinks she has peace. Very interesting. Watch what happens in the next few days and weeks.

This is not going to lead to World War III. I don't find World War III anywhere in the Bible. The closest I get is Armageddon. And that's not even really a war. All the — all the nations come to battle in the valley of Jezreel. And then Jesus comes back and just goes, Pfft! And then that's the end of it. So I don't think that's much of a World War.

But what the Bible does say is that this will lead to peace, but it will be a false peace. **“Peace and security.”** And that's where I believe it is heading, particularly with Saudi Arabia normalizing relations with Israel and predicating that normalization upon a two-state solution which divides Jerusalem.

And I mean, I've been a student of Bible prophecy since the early '80s, and I have to tell you that I have never seen Bible prophecy fit with precision, as I am now. It is exactly as God in His word said it would be. So why? What's the deal with this Gog and Magog reference? Again, it's an idiom if you prefer, analogous to, not synonymous with *Ezekiel 38 and 39*. So can we just close that file? Okay, I did anyway.

So now this is going to come into clearer focus in a moment when all of them, chiefly the Devil, are thrown into the lake of fire forever and ever. And in so doing, the Devil — think about this — as the master deceiver will never, ever deceive anyone again, forever and ever. Oh, I can't wait.

You know, I think I shared this last week. I wish God would have torched him when he rose up in heaven. But He didn't. He said, no, I got a — He cast him out. I would have torched him up. I would've lit him up, man. No. I cast him out because I got to let sin run its course. And don't I want people serving Me out of fear. I want people choosing Me and serving Me out of love.

So He creates Adam and Eve. They're to subdue the earth. And here comes the serpent. Deceiving. He's the master deceiver. Eve let herself be deceived. You know that, right? The

Revelation 7

What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived

Pastor JD

Devil can't make you do anything. But you can let him make you do anything. So here's what I want us to kind of take home with us from *verses 7 and 8*. The Devil is a defeated foe, which I need to know, that's if I'm to have any hope of not letting myself be deceived by him. See, he appears as an angel of light, Paul says to the Corinthians. Never imagine Satan is going to come up to you and say to you, "Hey, I'm the Devil. I'm here to destroy your life."

As Jesus said, **"The enemy comes only to steal, kill, and destroy."** He wants to steal your joy, kill your hope, and destroy your faith. And sometimes we just let him. We listen to him. We cooperate with him. You know, the Devil cannot read your mind. Did you know that? Only God can. Uh-oh. (Chuckling) Right?

"God can read my mind?"

"Yes. He knows every thought."

"Oh!"

The Devil can't, though. However, he can plant thoughts in your mind. And if we just let him on in, and, you know, it starts to take root and germinate and sprout, we're dead ducks.

Why? Because we let it. **"Take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ."** **"Let no man deceive you."** Let not the Devil, the master deceiver deceive you.

He's defeated. And because he's defeated — and oh, man, did you guys — I did. I put in for reservations. I'm still looking for the confirmation number for front row seating when this happens. No, for real. I mean, finally, finally. Forever and ever.

Here's the second one. Now, we got the Devil still till *verse 10*. Wait. The world is powerfully deceptive. The pull, the world's pull. You cannot love the world and love God at the same time. You're in the world but not of the world. But see, the world has a s-seductive [*Effects added*] deceptive pull that just kind of lures you in. Worldly riches. Like with the Devil, the world: Don't underestimate the power and the pull that the world has in deceiving us and us letting the world deceive us.

What does the world — example: What does the world — how does the world deceive?

Well, you see it all the time. These ads. I'm just gonna take car ads since I know a thing or

Revelation 7
What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived
Pastor JD

two about the car business. Have you ever seen more beautiful people in all of your life driving that brand new car with the biggest smiles you've ever seen in your life? They're the happiest people you've ever seen in your life. Why? Because of that brand new car.

So here's the deception. And it's so powerful and it's so effective. Maybe if I buy that brand new car, I too will be as happy as them. That was maybe a poor example. If you've got a better one, let me know. I'm happy to use it.

So here in *verse 9*, John writes that they marched across the breadth of the earth. That's the whole world. Then he also writes that they surrounded God's people, the Jews, and God's beloved city, Jerusalem, the city that He chose to write, literally, His name on. We've talked about that before. His name of ownership. He owns the title deed. He gave it to the Jews. It's leasehold.

So the Devil has deceived these countless people after they had marched across the entire breadth of the world. Picture this with me. Here's uncle and auntie and brother. And they're kind of catching wind of what's going on, and they're like, "Hey, did you hear?"

"What?"

"The Devil's been released."

"No way!"

"Way!"

And then there you go. Peer pressure, social media pressure. What the world — listen, the world hates you. Jesus said the world hates you. Why? Because the world hates Me. And by extension, they — the world hates you because you're associated with Me. So stop sending them a friend request. The world is not your friend. James says, if you're friends with the world, you're at enmity with God.

But I get — I get that. I know that. But the problem is, is that the world has this allure, this draw, this pull, this attraction, this seduction, this, you know, it just kind of draws you in. And, you know, everybody's doing it and you know...

Revelation 7

What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived

Pastor JD

Worldliness is synonymous with carnality. What does that mean? We're going to talk about that in a moment. Carnal is fleshly, worldly. And dare I say, and I'll just briefly, parenthetically say that the church has become more like the world, and you would be hard pressed to tell the difference.

I've heard of — well, I know of, even, churches that have a really hot band performing, and light shows. These guys are good, man. And then I guess there's a pastor, and he comes up and he puts a verse on the screen, and then that's it. He doesn't really talk about it. They're not — they might refer to the Bible, but they don't teach through the Bible.

So listen, when I got saved and came to Christ, a very long time ago, I — I didn't step foot in a church until I read the Bible all the way through, from Genesis to *Revelation* for the first time. It took me about six months. And the first time I stepped in church, I thought this is different than the world that God just saved me out of. Well, fast-forward to today, and you go into a church and wait. I just — I just came out of that world.

So the church, under the banner of wanting to win the world by becoming like the world, becomes like the world and there's no difference between them and the world. So what's the point? So I go into a nightclub — I don't. This is hypothetical, theoretical.

I go into a nightclub. Okay. And then I go into a church. I'm going, hey, that's the same guy who was playing in the band at the nightclub the night before. And he's — hey brah! How's it? And the music kind of has a similar tone and tune and feel and vibe. Wait, am I at church? No. You can — it's like with the Israelites. God delivered the Israelites out of Egypt, but now He had to get the Egypt, a type of the world, out of the Israelites.

So here's where I'm going with this. You've got these deceived people that let the Devil deceive them. Countless multitudes surrounding God's people, God's beloved city of Jerusalem. And what does John tell us? God immediately brings fire down from heaven and devours them, ending once and for all the world, then, as we'll see shortly, the Devil in the next verse. And actually, God brings an end to the big three: the Devil, the world, and the flesh for all eternity. And I can't wait. I can't wait.

Revelation 7

What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived

Pastor JD

Okay, now, the Devil; the world, which was a near perfect world for a thousand years. We still got one more in the three, the big three. And it's the flesh which is the heart of deception. Now, here John writes that it was the Devil who deceived them. How did he deceive them? Why did they let them deceive them — let him deceive them? Because they still had the sin nature in their hearts, that lets themselves be deceived. I'm going to, by way of an illustration — the Devil and the world are like magnets that bring out and pull up the metals of the sin nature in my heart, which *Jeremiah 17:9* says, **“is desperately wicked and above all deceitful.”**

Are you following me here? So we didn't have the Devil for a thousand years. So he's out of the way. So there's one down, two to go. But then we still got the world and then we still got that sin nature inside of us. And by the way, when somebody says, “oh, they have a good heart,” just read them — do it nicely — read them *Jeremiah 17:9*. Actually, no you don't. And don't ever listen to somebody say, “Just follow your heart.” Don't do that. Because it's desperately wicked and above all, deceitful. That's self-deception. You know that you can let yourself — let yourself be deceived, yourself?

Let me try that again. This is why I should stick with my notes. But you know that you can — you can lie and deceive yourself so well that you believe your own lies. Self-deception. You let yourself be self-deceived. That's the sin nature in all of us.

So now what's God going to do? Well, He's going to take care of all of that. And He has actually already taken care of all of that presently, and this by way of a new heart and a new nature, which only happens when I'm born-again. When I'm born-again, the old sin nature in my heart and my flesh passes away.

Let me draw your attention to what Paul wrote to the *Corinthians* in his *second letter*, beginning in *Chapter 5 verse 16*. **“Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh, even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ [*Born-again*], he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing**

Revelation 7
What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived
Pastor JD

their trespasses to them, [*Instead, they're His righteousness*] and has committed to us the word of reconciliation."

Now stay with me, please, and I'll be done, almost. Here, you had the Devil incarcerated for a thousand years. No propensity for letting myself be deceived. I'm living in a near perfect world. This utopia. I mean, I got this, you know, my uncle's grand kid is playing with that deadly poisonous snake, and that vicious lion is lying down with that lamb for a thousand years. So the Devil's kind of been temporarily removed from the equation. The world and the lust therein, the pride of life, that's kind of been removed from the equation.

But what still hasn't been removed from the equation is the sin nature. It's the metal shavings that are dormant until the magnet of the Devil and the world pulls it up, brings it out, and we let it. So you know how the argument in the political and social arenas has always been?

Well, it's their environment. You know, they grew up in a bad home. You know, then you got a contrast where, you know, they grew up with the, as we used to say, the silver spoon in their mouth. And you know, so, you know, they never really stood a fighting chance. Single mom, drugs, gangs. No wonder.

Wait a minute. We have 1000 years on record where people will live with no gangs, no drugs. That alone, by the way. No need for prescriptions. No for real. Now for us, we're in our glorified bodies. I mean, we're ruling and reigning with Christ. I know that's hard to wrap your mind around. But they have bodies like Adam and Eve, but they don't need medicine. There's no sickness. None of that.

So what's the conclusion? It's not the environment. It's not the child — you know, well, I grew up in a dysfunctional family. Who didn't? No. I'm asking who didn't? Are you kidding me? I mean, so what, we're going to lay the blame on that for how you're acting now? "Yeah, it was childhood, man."

No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. And the Devil didn't make you do it either. No. You let it. And now you're blaming that instead. So let me bring it in for a landing. We don't actually

Revelation 7

What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived

Pastor JD

— you know, I say, humorously, I quip, “I can't wait.” Which I can't. But actually I don't have to wait because this is all available to the born-again Christian now.

Do you realize that your eternal life started the day you put your trust in Jesus Christ? Think about that. Let that sink in. I love it how when Paul to the Corinthians, he taunts death and the grave. “Hey, death! Come here! Hey, where's your sting now? Hey, grave! Come here. Where's your victory now?” Ha! Sanctified. That's available to us now because we're a new creation, a new nature.

“Well, wait a minute, Pastor, I still sin, and I'm born-again.”

“I know. Here's the cool thing. You'll never be sinless. But if you have the Holy Spirit indwelling you and are born-again and are a new creation, you will sin less.”

You want to know why? Because when you're born-again, you don't want to do anything that would hurt and grieve the heart of God, sinning against God. Yes, where did sin abound, there did grace much more abound. But that's not a license to sin. It's actually the opposite.

How about *Romans 2:4* where we're told, Paul by the Holy Spirit, that **“It's the kindness of God that leads a man to repentance.”** Not the justice of God, the judgment of God. No, the kindness of God. Here's what that looks like. You blow it bad. I'm not looking at anybody. I'll just look at myself. You blew it bad, JD, really bad, man. You sinned, you messed up.

And I confess my sin, *1 John 1:19*, the Christian bar of soap. And He is faithful to forgive me and cleanse me of all my unrighteousness. Okay. So as long as I have the sin nature, I'm going to sin.

In fact, Paul writing to the *Romans*, *Chapter 6* or *7*, somewhere in that neighborhood says, *[Notice who]* **“O wretched man that I am!”** This is the Apostle Paul. You're wretched? What does that make me? **“Who [Not what] who will deliver me from this body of death?”**

The wages of sin is death. I hope I'm not — let me see — okay, let me bring it back. Are you with me still? Did you check out already? Okay. The sin nature resides in us and will. But it does not have victory over us because we are more than conquerors, not just conquerors.

Revelation 7
What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived
Pastor JD

I love this. *Romans 8*. You are more than conquerors. So here comes a conqueror.

“I'm a conqueror.”

“Cool. I'm more than a conqueror. How about that?”

The grave has lost its victory. Death has lost its sting. Why? Only — and who? Only to us that are born-again. Okay, I want to close with this whole born-again thing. Now I had to dig deep into my archives, and I found this graphic. I know it's old, but it's really good and it's simple, and I think it kind of wraps the whole thing up.

Okay, so God takes care of the Devil, the world, and the sin nature. Now it's eternity future. But how do I be born-again so that I can go to heaven? Because Jesus said, you cannot enter heaven or see heaven unless you're born-again. See, we're born the first time physically with the sin nature. And that's why we need to be born-again, anew, with the new nature. So this is a childlike simple — I don't mean to insult anybody's intelligence. I mean, you got to admit it's a pretty cool graphic, right? I thought it was. Okay. In the beginning, God and man were together. But through Adam, sin entered the world and separated man from God. That's the bad news.

Don't you hate it when somebody comes up to you and says, hey, I got bad news and I got good news. Which one do you want to hear first? I only want to hear the good news. And then after that, the gooder news. I don't want to hear bad news. Well, this is really bad news. Well, you ready for the good news? Because you see, the badder or the bad news is the gooder the good news will be. I know that's not proper English. Don't email me.

But because sin entered the world through Adam — this is the good news — Jesus entered into the world as the second and final Adam to die for and paid for in full for all our sins. Good news! Do you realize that if you're not born-again, you will die in your sins and spend eternity in hell? We just got done reading it. You're on death row, man. You don't need to be. You can be set free because whom the Son sets free is free indeed.

And that's the Gospel. That's what the word “Gospel” means. Good news, brah. The “brah” I added. Your death sentence has been paid by another in full. You're free to go. Man, I'm running out of there. Here I am on death row. And now you're telling me that somebody is

Revelation 7
What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived
Pastor JD

going to go to my death for me, and that I'm free to go? You've never seen me run so fast. You're free. That's what the word "gospel" means. Good news. Your debt has been paid. Who paid it? Jesus. What did it cost Him? Everything. His life. His blood shed in our stead. And He said it is finished. Period.

"Wait a minute. Come on. That's too easy. Isn't there something I gotta do?"

No, he did it all. He paid it all. There's nothing you can bring to the table of salvation. He did it for you instead of you. And the finished work of the cross and the resurrection of the Christ bridged the gap, as Paul just got done saying, "reconciling man to God." Jesus said it this way: **"There is no way to the Father except through Me." "I am the way, the truth, and the life."**

Can I just ask you a quick question? And we're almost done, this time for real. Don't do you find it rather striking, interesting that you never hear anyone say the name Muhammad in vain, or Buddha? Why do they — you can ask him that. Be nice. Why do they take the name of Jesus Christ, the only name above all names given among men, whereby we must be saved? Because He's the true and living God. He's the only way, the only truth, the only life, eternal life.

One more along those lines and I'll — I'll be merciful to you. So have you ever seen a counterfeit \$70 bill? You know why? There's no such thing as the genuine. So the genuine is authenticated and validated by the counterfeit. That's why you see they counterfeit \$100 bills. Why don't you see false Buddhas, false Muhammads? You only see false Christs. These are counterfeit Christs. You're only going to counterfeit the genuine.

And it further reinforces that Jesus is not "a" way; the way, the only way; the life, the only life. The truth. Boy, in a day and age where — truth? You know that saying, "I can't believe my eyes"? Good. Because what your eyes are seeing might be AI, which looks more real than the real. So don't believe it. Besides, it's not seeing is believing. Jesus said, believe and you will see.

Okay. I'll close. Every single one of us, myself included, will stand before God one day. And the decision to grant us access into heaven will be predicated upon our new birth and our

Revelation 7

What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived

Pastor JD

new nature in Christ. That's the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. So help me God.

So to the question of how to be born-again, I simply receive the gift. I don't reimburse it. That's a purchase. I don't regift it. Are you kidding me? I'm not going to regift that. That? Maybe. But eternal life? No way. I receive the gift of eternal life that Jesus paid for in full by believing in and putting my trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of all my sins.

"Now wait a minute, Pastor, before you close. I believe in God."

"That's not what it is."

"I believe in Jesus."

Jesus said, the demons believe in God and tremble. It's not just, Yeah, I believe God. I believe in God. I believe in God. No it's the — did you like the — Anyway, give myself a headache. It's not I believe in God. It's I have surrendered and yielded and trusted and believed in the person of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of all of my sins. So that when I'm standing before God — and by the way, next week, for those of you that read ahead to stay ahead, beginning in *verse 8*, we get into the judgments, the Great White Throne Judgment.

Trust me, you still want to be there. It doesn't end well. So when I get there, Jesus is going to be right there. And they're going to have the, you know, iPads — I don't know, whatever — lists, you know. I'm old school. And they're going to look for my name in the Book of Life, Lamb's Book of Life. "How do you spell that again?" Flipping the pages. Scrolling the screen. "Oh, there you are, right there. Yeah. Oh, okay!"

Jesus comes up, goes, "Yeah, he's with Me. He's in Me. Enter in. Well done, good and faithful servant."

Why? My own righteousness? No. His righteousness. It's been said, I think so rightfully so, that when God sees us as born-again Christians, He sees not our sin, but His Son. Why? Because **"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever would believe in Him would not perish, but have everlasting life."** John 3:16. The most well-known verse in all the world. That's why.

Revelation 7
What I Need To Know About Why I Let Myself Be Deceived
Pastor JD

I'll close in prayer. In fact, Kapono, come on up. Stand up. But I think I would be grossly remiss if I didn't — just between you and the Holy Spirit right now, right here, settle this if it's unsettled. Because by the looks of things, it ain't gonna be very long.

Like (long pause) — I won't say it. Let me rephrase. The rapture, the pre-tribulation rapture of the church is sooner than any of us, myself included, could ever even begin to possibly imagine on the authority of the more sure word of prophecy. Translated: Everything is going to blow up but we're going to go up soon. You need to settle this right now. This is the most important decision of your life for eternal life and tomorrow's not guaranteed. Okay. I'm done. Let's pray.

Father, thank You. Oh, thank You, Jesus. Jesus, thank You. Oh, how You must love us so. There's no greater love that any man has than that he would lay down his life for another. And that's what You did for us in Your love for us. Lord, please, I pray that You'll take this that we've seen today, and as only You can, make it real, especially to those who have never put their trust in You. I pray that today would be the day of their salvation. Today, today, today. Please, Jesus. Thank You Jesus. We love You, Jesus. It's in Your name, Jesus, we pray. Amen.