

Revelation 1:1-3
Jesus is Coming Quickly
Pastor JD

KAPONO: Would you join me in a word of prayer? Lord, we rejoice. We rejoice in You this day, Lord. Lord, would You focus us this morning? We thank You so much that we get to come to such a place, Lord, this beautiful place that You have given us, that You've blessed this church with Lord, a place to gather but most importantly, a place where we can hear Your word.

So, Lord, would You be with Pastor JD? Protect him, watch over his family, keep him safe, Lord. Continue to give him courage and the strength to stand up and preach Your word in this Your church. And everybody said amen.

PASTOR JD: And amen. Good morning and welcome. You can be seated.

O happy day! It was a happy day.

[Laughter]

Thank you again, Kaponu, very much. Whatever you want now, up to half of my kingdom. He knows I love that song. Give me just a moment. I'm still singing it in my heart.

[Laughter]

All right. Well, good morning and welcome again. Those of you online, we're so glad that you're joining us. We today begin our verse-by-verse study through the Book of Revelation. (Said with a growl) Yeah!

[Cheers and applause]

You got to say it with a growl, right?

[Laughter]

No, not the Book of Revelation! (Said fearfully)

Yes. But we're going to take it slow, (Chuckling) three verses. What?

[Laughter]

It's a happy day, remember?

[Laughter]

If you're able, I'll ask you to stand. You can follow along as I read. If not, where you're seated is just fine.

We'll begin in verse 1 where John, the Apostle John, writing by the Holy Spirit, says, **"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John, who testifies to everything he saw — that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.**

Blessed [Verse 3] is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near."

Off to a great start. Let's pray. If you would, join with me.

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Father in Heaven, thank You so, so much for washing our sins away. O what a happy day it is! Thank You so, so much for Your word and this portion that we have here in Your word, this amazing Book of Revelation opened up to us for You to speak through it to us because the time is near. And You are coming.

So, Lord, would You, as only You can by the Holy Spirit, get our attention, hold our attention? Because we don't want to miss anything that You have for us here today. All those distractions, all the cares and the affairs of our busy and stressful lives, please, Lord, this is our time together, one with another, but more importantly, with You and Your word, so we want to protect that time and not be distracted in this time. So enable us, as Kapono prayed, to focus and concentrate that we might be numbered amongst those who not only read and hear this, but take it to heart. In Jesus' name. Amen. And you can be seated. And thank you.

So as we begin our verse-by-verse study through the Book of Revelation, it's going to become abundantly clear in no uncertain terms that Jesus is coming quickly, key word, quickly, which is the title that I'm choosing and using for today's sermon as we begin this amazing book.

Right out of the chute in just the first three verses, we're going to see how it is and why it is that A) we have this book in our Bibles and B) why we have this book at the end of our Bibles. Simply put, it's because it reveals Jesus Christ at the end and what happens both before and when He comes in the end.

You know what's sad? Many a Christian — true — I'm not talking professing Christians — I'm talking born-again Christians stay as far away from this book as they can under the banner of oh, it's so apocalyptic! (Said fearfully) And they say it just like that, by the way.

[Laughter]

We're going to talk about that in a moment. We're going to clear that up actually in a moment. But when you — just the mere mention of the Book of Revelation brings with it this freezing up, this shutting down, and oh, that's a — that's a hard book to understand. It's full of symbolism, and, you know — I — no — who can understand the Book of Revelation? (Said with reverb) You got to put that on the end, a little reverb. Uh. (Reverb sound) What if I told you that the Book of Revelation is actually one of the easier books to understand?

[No comment from congregation.]

That's what I thought. So let me try that again. What if I told you that the reason why it's written so cryptically, for lack of a better word — you know what I mean by cryptic, with all the symbolism? It's because of the unspeakable persecution at the time that this letter was inspired and written. And this — we call it the Book of Revelation — it's actually a letter that was written to seven churches in Asia Minor at the time. We know it today as the modern-day country of Turkey. Seven churches were the recipient of this letter we call the Book of Revelation. And because of the Roman persecution at that time, it had to be written in such a way so that they would even receive it. Because it would be intercepted and read. And the Romans would have gotten this first to make sure that, you know, like in an institution, in a — when someone's incarcerated, and you send them a letter, the — the prison has to

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read it first. And then they read the letter go, yes, oh, another one of those — just he's one of those crazy Christians. Just give it — give it to them. Nothing to see here. Let's move on. Well, that's what they were doing.

So here's these letters. And they would have never gotten to these churches. And God, in His infinite wisdom and sovereignty, inspired John to write what he wrote, the way he wrote it, in all of its cryptic symbolism, because it would have passed through and gotten to the people it was to get to.

And here's the other thing. Many, many years ago I was privileged to get to know Chuck Missler of Koinonia House. My first church I planted was in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, a stone's throw away from Post Falls, Idaho, where Chuck Missler was. And I had known him before, but he started coming to my church. And he would sit in the front row.

[Laughter]

And I'm just young in the ministry. I'm up there perspiring my own blood, trying to teach the Bible. And I'm looking over at Chuck going, can you come up here, please? I'll sit there. He said no, this is my church. You're my pastor. Preach. Okay, all right. (Said nervously) Is that right? Did I do that right? (Said worriedly) Did I say that right? Was that in the Greek? (Said anxiously)

We would go to lunch. We, whenever he was in town, which wasn't very often, but we tried to do it every two weeks. And oh, my goodness, I miss that brother so much. He was so, I mean, brilliant, obviously, but he was just such a loving, gentle, humble, genuine, down-to-earth brother in the Lord. And God used him mightily in my life.

Well, on this particular occasion we're having lunch, and I started engaging with him concerning the Book of Revelation. And he made a comment to me that — it has been recently — now this is — understand over — oh, my goodness, 20-plus years ago. He said recently we've been able to identify that there is a larger percentage of the Book of Revelation that is directly referenced in the Old Testament.

Now see, prior there was 404 — is this too much? Are we okay so far? We'll get to our study. Don't worry. I'll have you out of here by 3:00. He said — now — there are 404 verses in the Book of Revelation. You can count them this afternoon on your own time, not now. Of those 404 verses in the Book of Revelation, it was believed at the time that 276 of those 404 verses were references to Old Testament Scripture. Now, why do I point that out? Because the recipients of this letter we know as the Book of Revelation would have got it. Oh, he's talking about Isaiah chapter and verse! So it was cryptic.

Here's an illustration, I mean, just for whatever it's worth. If you don't want people to find your money, hide it in a Bible. They'll never look there.

[Laughter]

Now let me expound on why I use that example. They don't know the Bible because they're not in the Bible. But the recipients of this letter did. So they knew the Scriptures. So when John was inspired to write this letter this way, they would a got it. Like, wow, I know exactly what he's talking about!

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I feel so sorry for the Romans that were on duty that day. Seven lampstands? The seven spirits? Yeah, just let them have the letter. What in the world is that? It makes no sense to me. Good. It will to them.

So that was my introduction. (Chuckling)

I wanted to preface what we're about to see here today that way because it's important to understand that — and don't let the enemy do this to you. This is perhaps better said. Don't let the enemy bring in preconceived notions concerning this book. Please, let's start with a clean slate, as they say. It's like we talked about last week. We have to sometimes unlearn in order to learn. Please do not bring to the table of this study through the Book of Revelation any preconceived notions about the Book of Revelation because it will be a tremendous hindrance to you. Because what will happen is you're already going to have a normalcy bias or even a cognitive dissonance. This is Romans 12:1-2, by the way, the renewing of your mind. Don't be conformed to the world because see, the world —

I mean, if you think about it, and we'll talk about it in a moment — of all the books in the Bible, what book do you think the Devil doesn't want you to read? Would you agree that he's been met with a large measure of success in this regard? Christians are terrified of this book, which is ironic because if you really understand and take to heart what's in this book, you won't be terrified. You're going to be excited. It's not terrifying; it's exciting because we're not going to be here for most of this, (Chuckling) which makes you very grateful. Therein lies the blessing in part. Oh, the blessing? Which we're going to talk about.

Pastor, why don't you just talk about it?

Okay, let's go.

The first part of verse 1 Jesus has revealed himself. We need to clear something up before we go any further. It is the Book of Revelation. Please, and I just don't want to look at anybody right now when I say this, but please do not refer to it as the Book of Revelations-s-s. It's the Book of Revelation. It's not Revelations. I'm not angry, but it bugs me. Because there's not revelations of Jesus Christ. No, it's THE — that's... There are revelations? No, it's THE revelation, singular, of Jesus Christ. Don't be putting that S on there because now you're going to open it up to "what are the other revelations?" No, it's a revelation, THE revelation of Jesus himself.

Now we've got to clear up something else, and this is a biggie, okay? We talked about it a little bit in the Prophecy Update today. But the word "revelation" in Greek; it's the Greek word "apokálypsis" from where we get our English word "apocalypse."

Now, watch what just happened. What came to your mind when I said "apocalypse"? A movie? Some of you older people know which one I'm referring to.

Let's bring this more broadly. Let's go broader here. Oh, that's so apocalyptic. (Said gravely) Ooh! Ooooha! It's about — oh, how about these genres on TV? Don't they have TV series, and they have the tags, and they'll say, "apocalyptic thriller." Apocalyptic thriller? Wow! Well, that's quite revealing. What do you mean? Well, that's what the word "apokálypsis" in the Greek means. "Revealing."

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Watch this. I know this deeply profound. Revelation: Reveal-ation. Come on, please, let me have that one. It's a revealing; it's an unveiling of that which was heretofore covered up. Now the cover has been removed. It's been unveiled, uncovered revealed. The Book of Revelation: so it's kind of a oxymoron when you say — you know what an oxymoron is? Jumbo shrimp.

[Laughter]

How about this one? My favorite. I heard somebody. This is not my original. I totally plagiarized. Microsoft works.

[Laughter]

I'll give you a moment on that one. What an oxymoron, directly, diametrically opposed one to the other. So when you say apocalyptic thriller, well, that is thrilling because what you're telling me is that it's going to be a revelation of something that's going to be very thrilling. That sounds like the Book of Revelation to me.

But no, Satan doesn't want anyone reading the book of — how would you like it if there were a book written about you and how it ends for you, and it doesn't end well for you? It has a very bad ending for you in this book about you. I wouldn't want anybody to read it. I mean, we don't want people reading posts that people post about us on social media that is, you know, slanderous or... Well, Satan doesn't want us to have this revealed to us. He wants to keep it covered up. It's a cover-up. He wants to keep it hidden. He doesn't want it to be out in the open, exposed, revealed.

It has recently been revealed.... What? Sounds salacious. That's what the Book of Revelation is. Well, what's being revealed, unveiled? Ah! That's the best part. Jesus Christ. It is a revelation, an unveiling of Jesus Christ. That's what THE Revelation is. It's not what; it's who is being revealed. Jesus Christ is being revealed.

I think we do err greatly when we misunderstand, or getting back to Romans 12:1-2, get forced into the mold of the world, being conformed into the pattern of the world. And we adopt and embrace the world's definitions. And I think we do err greatly not to just take a step back and say, wait a minute. That's what the world says, but what does the Word say? You say that the Book of Revelation can't be understood. The Word says it can and should, and you'll be blessed when it does.

I'm kind of getting ahead of myself. I've got — how many of these do I have? Oh, 23. No, I'm just kidding. I only have five. See, I made it sound bad, so that five doesn't sound so bad. You learn these things over the years.

Number 2, in the second part of verse 1, it's a revelation not just of Jesus Christ who reveals himself, but it's a revelation that Jesus is coming, key word, "quickly."

I love this word. We've talked about it in our Prophecy Updates over the years often. (Chuckling) I hope you don't tire of me talking about this word "quickly" in the original, but this word "quickly" or in some of your translations, it's rendered "soon," and by the way, this is the reason word. The blessing comes to those who read it, hear it, take it to heart. Why? Because I'm coming quickly. That's why.

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Here's another illustration. Why not? I'm on a roll. You know how it is when you know how it ends? You're calmer. Let's take a series. Of course, I know that you don't watch these, you know, binge on these Netflix series. Let's just say, you know, for the purpose of, you know, theoretically, hypothetically, that you do. And, you know, there are seven seasons. And so in Season 1, Episode — we'll call it 5 — the hero is in dire peril. But you're okay because, you know that he's still there —

[Laughter]

how am I doing? — (Chuckling) he's still alive in Season 7. Calm down. Oh! Whew!

[Laughter]

That's what the Book of Revelation is. See, you already know (Ha!) there is a Season 7, the number of completion, which, by the way, is only viewable in heaven, Season 7.

[Laughter]

That was no extra charge.

[Laughter]

And so when you're in the peril of Season 1 and 2 and 3 — oh, my goodness! This is horrible! Yeah, but I know how it ends. Oh, and it's good! I'm blessed.

This is one of the reasons why. Because Jesus said, "**I'm coming quickly.**" I'm going to reveal to you, a revelation to you that I'm coming quickly. What is this word "quickly" in the original language of the Greek New Testament? It's the word tachos. Are you hungry for Mexican?

[Laughter]

Not tacos. I love tacos. Don't get me tacos. I have plenty tacos. Tachos. T-A-C-H-O-S if you were to spell it phonetically in English. It's where we get the English word for tachometer.

Now, this is not just a guy thing. A tachometer is a gauge on the instrument panel on the dashboard of an automobile. I'm just trying to communicate this as simply as I can. It is also known as R-P-M. RPM stands for revolutions per minute. Notice this. It's a set time. One minute. It's not gauging that. What it is gauging is the revolutions per minute.

So when Jesus inspires John to use this word tachos as quickly, I'm coming quickly, what Jesus is saying is I'm coming at a time when things are revved up. Doesn't that change the whole complexion of it? I mean, is that chicken skin or what?

Can I just ask you a question? I guess it's rhetorical in a way. Are things revved up?

[Congregation says, "Yeah."]

Are you kidding me? Revved up!

You know guys know this. This is — car stuff (Revving sound) You're going to red line. Let me explain what red line is. I think it's about 6000 RPMs. The tachometer has a red line. Anything over 6000 RPMs you run the risk of having that engine blow up.

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And that's what I'm talking about. Watch this. Jesus said, I'm coming at a time when things are revved up, tachos, and they're going to be so revved up that things are going to blow up. And when things blow up, you're going to go up.

[Congregation says, "Amen."]

Did that work?

[Congregation says, "Yeah."]

That wasn't very convincing. I tried my best. I'll let the Holy Spirit take it from there.

[Laughter]

So if I just said to you, well, Jesus is coming soon. Okay, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. What's for lunch? Tacos.

[Laughter]

Sorry. It's been one of those weeks again.

No, but doesn't it just kind of — it just — ah, what's the word or phrase? For lack of a better one, it just — it guts it out. It just removes from it the power of it. Yeah, Jesus is coming soon. Okay, praise the Lord. But when you say Jesus is coming when things are going to be so revved up... Wait. Forget lunch. We need to talk about this. This is urgent. Yeah, we're already past the red line. It's just a matter of time. This thing's gonna blow, and we're gonna go. Can I just have one more of those? Cause that's exactly what's going to happen. And that's what this is a revelation of.

And what a blessing! Does that not just settle your heart and bless your heart to know? I mean, for some — let me just talk very candidly and openly. Not that I don't talk candidly and openly. And I'm speaking to someone. I won't look at anyone. But for those that are just going through the trial of your life, and this trial is the likes of which you have never experienced before. It is so painful. It is so difficult. Your heart is so unsettled. In fact, truth be made known, your heart is filled with fear. You're paralyzed with fear, gripped by anxiety. You can't remember the last time you had an actual full night of sleep without getting up and not being able to go back to sleep, thinking about what just happened or is happening in your life. You know what I'm talking about? For that person, this is such a blessing.

If I could be so personal, and I've shared this before, and this isn't hyperbole. This is literally. Were it not for this truth, that Jesus is coming at a time when things are revved up — and things are revved up — I would go out of my mind. Knowing this is how I'm able to put my head on the pillow and sleep at night, and knowing this is how I'm able to get out of bed in the morning, which some mornings is not an easy do, especially when that alarm clock goes off.

There are no alarm clocks in heaven. Be encouraged and be blessed. No need. No need. They're of the devil.

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Now why do I bring this up and point this out? Because don't you think that these Christians at that time, being on the receiving end of this revelation, experiencing unspeakable persecution, don't you think this would have been just such a welcomed blessing to them, an encouragement to them? See, when I know what I have to look forward to, it makes whatever I'm going through easier to get through.

You know how it is, especially when your kids, you got some to look forward to? Isn't it true if you flip that around, that it's when you got nothing to look — I got nothing to look forward to. No, we got this to look forward to. Are you kidding me? Are you kidding me? When you think about Jesus coming at any time, quickly, when things are revved up — and things are revved up — does that not put whatever it is that you're going through in your life into perspective, into its much-needed perspective? Because as Paul would say it, the sufferings of this life — and this life is grief and suffering — not even worthy, not even — not even to be compared with the glory that awaits.

So maybe this is for somebody here today or watching online. And you're — you're really going through it, and this is really hard. Be encouraged because Jesus is coming quickly. And by quickly, I mean quickly.

Number 3, the third part of verse 1, Jesus has made it known. Jesus has revealed himself. Jesus has revealed that He's coming quickly. And Jesus has made it known. How so? Well, John — notice first that we're told that this is for His servants. You know who that is? It's you and me. Notice it's "servants," not believers. Notice that delineation. I want to be careful here, but it's those who truly serve the Lord with all of their might, all of their heart, all of their soul, all of their mind that are the ones that are the most blessed.

So this revelation is for His servants, but John specifically is identified as the servant to whom the angel is sent in order to reveal and make known that Jesus is coming quickly. I mean, you could almost put a caption on the Book of Revelation with the title that I've chosen for today's sermon. Book of Revelation, caption, 'Jesus is Coming Quickly.' Here's why. (Chuckling) And then you go, wow! Wow! Why is this detail important that He has made it known by sending this angel to John, His servant, to make this known? Why is it important? Because, John, as we'll see in the next verse was — stay with me — a living apostle of and an eyewitness to the Lord Jesus Christ being crucified, buried, and resurrected. Now, I want you to hang on to that.

It's believed that John is well into his nineties at the time that he receives this revelation, and we're going to see that in a moment. Actually, when we get to verse 19, this part, this third part of verse 1 will be key by virtue of how that John is given what one has affectionately referred to as a divine outline. That's when we get to verse 19 in like three months from now at this rate. But this is this divine outline where John is — and it's very organized — there's parenthetical passages and prophecies replete throughout the book, but there's a chronological order to the book, a divine outline to the book.

It can basically be broken down into three parts. I'm giving you — this spoiler alert stuff. I'm giving you the divine outline ahead of time, okay? You ready? Wait for it. John is — verse 19. Don't look at me like that. John is told to write that which he has seen — past, that

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which is now — present, and that which is to come here after — meta tauta in the Greek. Meta - after.

Ask Zuckerberg about Meta. He needs to get his own material. After — beyond. You know because that's their whole thing is living forever, beyond, after, the afterlife. But it's Satan, a lie, AI lie. Anyway, I digress. We talked about that, devoted a whole Update to that, 'The Lie of AI.' It even rhymed.

So write that which you have seen, an eyewitness of — now stay with me on this — an eye witness of what you have seen, what is now present tense, Church Age, Chapters 2 and 3, and that which is meta tauta, after these things, future.

So here's the Book of Revelation Chapter 1 — past. Chapters 2 and 3 — present. Chapter 4 all the way on through Chapter 22 — future. Divine outline.

But it's a hard book to — who can really understand the Book of Revelation? That's pretty simple to me. I get that: Past, present, future.

Now, why is this important? Because as we're going to see now in verse 2, John is the eyewitness. He's — let me rephrase. He's a living witness who can testify. Uh-oh. He got to go.

You've heard about jury tampering or witness tampering? Well, if you've got a witness that's going to testify against you, you need to kill them. I know that's strong, but that's exactly what they tried to do vis-à-vis the demonic and satanic powers at force and at work. We got to take this guy out because this guy can testify against us.

So the Lord had to put John in witness protection. Am I taking it too far? What do you mean?

Well, this is really interesting. The evidence points to John writing this in the year 95 A.D. Why is that important? Because it's at the time when Domitian was emperor over Rome, who like Caesar Nero before him — you know about Caesar Nero? Oh, man, they — well, might as well. Caesar Nero would take Christians — first of all, they'd throw them into the lion's den. Those of you that went to Israel with us, we drove past some of arenas where these Christians were thrown into for entertainment.

You know, when Paul was put on that prisoner ship bound for Rome and was shipwrecked in Malta because there was a layover there, and God wanted some Malta Islanders and locals to get saved, so they shipwrecked. And that's what happened, you know, by the way. You're still looking at me like that, but...

So then he ends up making his way to Rome because he's going to testify before Caesar. He was on a prisoner ship. Why didn't they just — why did they send him to Rome? Why couldn't he just stay where he was at and they hand down the sentence and persecute him and kill him there? Oh, because the Colosseums, the Roman Colosseums were in Rome. And they wanted to entertain the people by feeding the Christians to these wild animals who would then, in turn, rip them to shreds. No, this is good. We can make a lot of money on this guy. Get him over here. Put him on the ship. Bring him over. We get some new meat,

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fresh meat. Is that too raw? (Chuckling) Should we go back to tacos? I like it medium rare, but...

So who is this Domitian guy? Well, this Domitian guy is literally hell bent on killing John. We got to get rid of the evidence. And in order to get rid of the evidence, we got to kill the witness who can testify. So what does he do? You ready for this?

By the way, this is evidenced in historians' records, and it's corroborated by Scripture that John was banished to the island of Patmos. Where is Patmos? Patmos is about 50 miles off the coast of modern-day Turkey, then known as Asia Minor. And the seven churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Sardis, Thyatira, Pergamon, Philadelphia, and Laodicea were all in a postal route on the mainland.

Here's John on the island. And by the way, this is no Hawaii island. This is where they would send people to die. It was a barren island. And they got to kill this guy because they can't kill this guy. They tried to kill this guy. He won't die, this guy. How did they try to kill this guy? They threw him into a cauldron of boiling oil. He didn't die! God's like, nice try. He ain't going to die. I still got a plan for him. That's my apostle. So I already know because I know everything because I'm God, and I'm all-knowing that after he miraculously —

could you imagine being on duty that day? Okay, who's going into the oil today? Oh there's this guy John. Yeah, I heard about that guy. He was one of those disciples of Jesus. Yeah. He's going into the oil today? Whoa! Wow, that's too bad for that guy.

So they throw him into this big, enormous cauldron of boiling oil. I mean, man, just — can you just shoot me instead? Cause what a horrible way to die. And they were selling tickets. This was great entertainment for these guys, I guess. And so they throw him in. He's like, well, thanks for the sauna and the Jacuzzi. I've never had an oil Jacuzzi before. They're like —

I think about Nebuchadnezzar because we're in Daniel, right, Thursday nights now. I think about Nebuchadnezzar going, you're supposed to die. We threw you into this seven-times-hotter fiery furnace, and you won't die. Die! Why won't you die? In fact, we're not going to die because Jesus is here. And here's Jesus with John.

I imagine — like with Daniel in the lion's den — you're supposed to be dead. You're not dead. He's alive. I like that typology. Jesus is — can you imagine Jesus over there to the lions going, hey, this is Daniel. He's My guy. I created you lions. I know you're hungry. Don't worry, you'll get plenty to eat. But you're not going to eat Daniel.

I know there's clinical terms for people like me who have illustrations like that, but this is how I see things. And it's just a reminder that God has a sense of humor.

And I think the same thing about John. Here he is in that oil Jacuzzi. I'm sure Jesus is in there going, John, how cool is this? No pun intended.

[Laughter]

So they get him out. They're like, what are we going to do with this guy? I know. Let's banish him to the island of Patmos to die. And he still didn't die on Patmos. I'll let you read

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the rest of that story. It is so cool; again, no pun intended. But here he is on the island of Patmos, banished. And that's where he receives the Revelation of Jesus Christ. God protects him because he's an eyewitness, a living witness who will testify.

Oh, would to God that there were more witnesses. Because you can still be a witness but unwilling to testify. You know how that works, right? I don't want to get to legal beagle here, but if you're an attorney, whether you're the prosecutor or the defender, and you've got a witness in a trial, and you approach that witness and you say, listen, we need you to testify. I'd be like I ain't going to testify. Why? For fear of retaliation. If I get on that stand as a witness, they're going to kill me. They're going to start by trying to throw me into a cauldron of boiling oil first. And then when that doesn't work, I'm gonna get banished to the island of Patmos, and you're gonna have to put me in witness protection. So, no, I'm not going to testify. Yeah, but you're a witness. I don't care. I'm not going to testify. Not John.

Did you get — some of you got that illustration. You did?

John is a witness, not just a witness, but an eyewitness. Now, I understand that eyewitness testimony is not always reliable in a court trial, but this guy was there and witnessed it. What did he witness? He witnessed Jesus Christ crucified. He was there at the crucifixion.

Remember when Jesus, in His dying words, says to this John — and John's always, in his gospel — I guess he got the green light from God inspired by the Holy Spirit — because he always talks about, in the third person, John, the disciple Jesus loved. And then you could tell that they had a kind of a tense relationship, between Peter and John, because in John's gospel, he includes details. Again, he must have got the green light from God because when on that early morning when Jesus was resurrected —

by the way, I know next week is Resurrection Sunday. I should have probably started off with that and cleared that up because some of you are going, what's up with you?

Well, first of all, I'll never call it by its pagan name ever. And for those of you that are wondering why we've never had a sunrise service, that's because the Book of Ezekiel, which we finished recently, talks about a pagan ritual where they would worship the sun and the sunrise. So I'm sorry. We're just not doing that.

Well, excuse me, Pastor, but are you going to at least celebrate Resurrection Sunday? You better believe it. Well, why haven't you said anything about it? You got to come next week, and you'll know.

[Laughter]

I'm not trying to be cute or coy. I think we make a — and this is another one — might as well. What have I got to lose at this point? You know, Palm Sunday. Okay, cool. I know the account in the Gospels where, you know, they're waving the palm branches. You know, **"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord."** And they try to shut Him up. And Jesus is like, no, you can't. Even if you did, the rocks and the mountains would cry out. So no can, and... But it's paganism and Catholicism that has taken this day and made it into something it was never intended to be.

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I'm going to take it one step further because I'm already in deep kimchi. So we got kimchi and tacos for lunch now and rare steak. Good Friday? (Chuckling) Oh, I'm so sorry. What if it wasn't Friday? Okay, let's move on now to verse 3.

[Laughter]

No, I'm serious. We talked about this in First Service in the Update concerning the upcoming eclipse and how it will pass over — Passover — seven, the number of completion, cities and towns named Nineveh. Nineveh.

And when Jesus was confronted by the scribes and the Pharisees, hey, teacher, just to prove who You say You are, we need a sign from You. And Jesus' response? Whew! **"You wicked adulterous generation."**

It's at moments like that where you wish you would have never asked.

And He goes on. He says — this is a very loose paraphrase — let me have it. You want a sign? (Jack Nicholson voice) I'll give you a sign! The only sign you're gonna get is Jonah. No, not Jonah! (Said fearfully) What do you mean? That's the only sign? Yeah. As Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days, so too will I be in the belly of the earth for three days. And the greater than Jonah — the sign that you seek is standing right in front of you. And you want to see a sign?

How ludicrous — I'm not angry. How ludicrous is this? I mean, the absurdity of this. The scribes and pharisees; you got to know their pompous pride. Teacher, we need a sign from you. (Said arrogantly) You need a sign from Me? I am the sign. I fulfilled the sign. What does a sign do? It points to. That's what a sign does. It's a sign, points you to your final destination. I am the final destination that the sign that you're seeking points to.

Man, it's so good that I wasn't there. I would have tried, like Peter, to help Him out. Jesus: I got this. I'll take care of this. Where's my sword? Where's Malchus? I find his... I'll get his ear. I'll chop that thing off. You'll never ask a stupid question like that again.

[Laughter]

Okay, we're nearing the end. You can tell. So this is the last one in verse 3, and I mean, the best for last, as they say, the icing on the cake, if you prefer.

Verse 3, Jesus promises a blessing. Again, what if I told you that the Book of Revelation is the only book in the Bible that promises a blessing to those who read it, hear it, and take it to heart? No other — there's 66 books in the Bible. All 66 books — the other 65 books of the Bible — no promise of a blessing for reading that book, hearing that book.

And you have to understand that the pastor, who's the messenger, you know, because we're going to get to Chapters 2 and 3 — **"to the angel of the church in Ephesus."** The angel is the pastor,

[Laughter]

the messenger. He's an angel. He's the pastor. So you have to come when we're in Chapters 2 and 3 because I'm going to use that again. This letter was written to the pastor

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who would read it to the church. So the church wasn't hey, like, can you make copies of that? Can you email me a PDF so I can read it? No. The pastor would receive the letter, and he would read it in the hearing of the church. **"Hear, O Israel." "Faith come off by hearing and hearing the word of God."**

There's something, especially for oratory learners, there's something about hearing. That's why when I read the Bible, sometimes I do it out loud, so I can hear myself reading the Bible because I need it to go in through the ear gate. Again, I know they have clinical terms for this condition as well, I'm sure, but I need to hear it.

This is why I'm the guy in Costco in the aisle, assuming I can get a parking spot in Iwilei. And I'm the guy talking to myself in the aisle. I'm talking audibly, out loud, reminding myself, so I can hear, so I can remember what it is that I needed to get. So when I get home, my wife doesn't say, "You forgot."

Anyway, so the only book in the entirety of the pages of Holy Writ that promises a blessing, and Christians don't want to read it, stay away from it? So notice the threefold blessing that's here. It's not just the pastor who's reading it. He's blessed. It's the people in the church who are hearing it. They're blessed.

But then it gets even better because it's anyone who not only reads it and/or hears it but more importantly heeds it, takes it to heart, applies it to their lives. And the reason why again? Do I need to repeat it? Here's why you will be blessed if you read it, hear it, and take it to heart. Why? Because I'm a coming! I'm a coming soon and very soon, sooner than you can possibly imagine I'm coming. And I'm going to set it right. And I can't wait. Can't wait for that trumpet to sound. When you really let it sink in and really take it to heart — think this through with me. This is — a trumpet is going to sound, the trumpet call of God.

There's a difference between angel's trumpets for Israel, the trumpet of God for the church, by the way, and the first trumpet and the last trumpet — the first trumpet for Israel, the last trumpet for the church. Make the distinction on the trumpets. This isn't a teaching on trumpet, but I guess it was — concise, condensed.

The trumpet is going to sound, and we who are alive and remain — that's us — will be caught up after the dead in Christ rise first. Now we haven't even scratched the proverbial surface. These are the people, those loved ones that died in Christ. Their bodily resurrection will happen first.

And when — it's a twinkling of an eye — Paul, writing of the Corinthians Chapter 15:51-52 — not the blink. Make that distinction. A twinkling is like an immeasurable sparkle that is so fast. It — I — somebody —

God bless these mathematicians that figure these things out for us because I'm like, whoa! I mean, I'm still in my multiplication and division phase in life, but they have calculated that this is an almost immeasurable Milla-Milla-Milla-millisecond. It's not even really a millisecond. It is that fast.

In the twinkling of an eye, the dead in Christ are going to rise first. All those loved ones are going to get their new glorified bodies. Their spirit is where? In the presence of Lord. **"Absent from the body, present with the Lord."** My daughter Noelle, my mommy: Their

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bodies? Here. Their spirit? With the Lord. Trumpet sounds. They get their new bodies first. That's okay. And then we who are still alive and remain will —

it's metamorphosis in the Greek. I forget the Greek word, but it's where we get metamorphosis. It's the word for the caterpillar that turns into a butterfly. It's a metamorphosis, only way faster. In the twinkling of an eye, we put off this old body — that alone, that alone!

[Laughter]

We put off corruptible, and we put on incorruptible in an immeasurable span of time. A second would be way too long to use it as a measure. We're going to get our new bodies. And we haven't even got started.

And then we're going to be caught up, raptured, rapturous in the Latin, harpazo in the Greek. I know I get a lot of, you know, backlash when I pick on the word harpazo. It just sounds slow to me, you know, har-paz-o.

[Laughter]

So anyway, I just like rapture because that sounds quicker, doesn't it? Please don't email me. Please!

[Laughter]

So we're going to be caught up in great force at great speed to meet them in the air (Whew) and be with the Lord FOREVER!

[Applause]

Wow!

[Applause]

I'll take it. Thank you!

Why do you think, Paul, in 1 Thessalonians Chapter 4 — by the way, the first letter he ever wrote had the Gospel, the first mention of the Gospel, and in the Gospel as he presents it for the first time — not the Corinthians, not Chapter 15, 1 Corinthians. That's later. The first time Paul writes about the Gospel it's Jesus died, He was buried, He rose again on the third day, and He's going to rapture us one day. That's the gospel, the good news.

So he goes through this, and these poor Thessalonians are like, wow, Paul, you got ran out of town. You were here for like three months. We love you. We know you love us. And you're not here; we know you want to come back, but you can't. So you started this church. You led all of us to the Lord, and you taught us. This is crazy. We're new believers, young in the Lord, infants in Christ, and you taught us Bible prophecy. Yeah! Yeah, but they're just baby Christians. They're just new in the Lord. That's meaty stuff.

No. When I came to Christ over 42-plus years ago now, I immediately — well, first I got grounded in the Word cover to cover. It took me six months. Read the Bible for the first

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time. And I started studying Bible prophecy at the ripe old age of one year old in Christ. That explains a lot, doesn't it?

Anyway, what's my point? Here's my point. That's just in the instant, the twinkling of an eye? Um, maybe I'm going to take a second look at this book and take this to heart to settle my heart. Because if this is what I have to look forward to very soon, well, that changes everything. That changes my whole perspective on everything. Jesus is coming quickly. There's no time for that. Why would I waste my time on that?

Last illustration — I'm sorry — and then we'll close. You're renting a house. Are you going to invest the time and the money and the energy to remodel something you're not going to be in very long?

You want a better one? Let me know. I'll use it.

You're renting a car. Are you going to buy accessories for a car that you're not going to drive very much longer? No. We're just passing through. This isn't our final destination. Don't get your roots dug down too deep into the temporal soil of this world. Because Jesus is coming very soon to take you out of this world. And when He does, can you imagine?

This is — okay, this will be the last illustration. I mean, you're holding on to this world, the things of this world. And the trumpet sounds. It's kind of like, okay! You're like, wait! No. No. Too late. Man, I was almost done, too, with a project.

It's kind of like when my wife and I were courting before we got married, and I prayed, and I said, Lord, don't let the rapture happen until after we get married. Come on. You did that too, right?

We couldn't have children for ten years. We had what they called unexplained infertility, which means your infertility is unexplained. And so we finally — I shared this on Thursday night, by the way. But ten years later, finally, miraculously, our firstborn son is born. It was a very specific, prophetic word from the Lord that He would give me a son. But I prayed before he was born don't let the rapture happen until after he's born. And then he was born. I'm like, Lord, come quickly, please. No! What was I thinking?

This actually is a very important matter that I need to address at some point in the not-too-distant future, sooner rather than later because a lot of young people are messed up when you talk about the rapture because they've got plans. And well, I wanted to get married and have a family and live happily ever after. And so the Rapture and Jesus coming is not necessarily as welcomed as it would be for someone like us, you know, and you know who you are. There's more in the rear-view mirror than in the front. And then they'll even say as much. Oh, easy for you guys to be excited about the Rapture. You've already lived your lives.

Like I said, I got to address this at some point. I have in the past. But this is a real thing, and it's a good question, and it deserves a good biblical answer. And the best answer I have for that, and I hope it's not an oversimplification, but if you say that and believe that and see it like that, you are making some assumptions that have no basis in reality.

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You're assuming that first you will get married, and that if you do get married, you'll be happy in that marriage. I just lost half the room on that one. And third, if you have children, that you're not going to have problems with those children. I mean, you're painting a picture of your future that does not resemble the reality of life in this fallen world. So you're making assumptions.

And the way I end it is I say also, there's not going to be anybody after the rapture that is going to be going, aww! Let me try that again. I think I can do better. I mean, nobody's going to be in heaven after the rapture going man, I wish He would have waited another five years. I think it's going to be the opposite. Lord, why didn't You come five years earlier?

Man, that was brutal. Okay, now I'm done. Kapono, come on up. A very smooth ending. Stand up, please. This is your lot in life. If I'm your pastor and this is your church, it's not a lot, but it's life.

Lord, thank You. You are the life, Lord. Oh, Lord, the blessing from the reading, hearing, and taking to heart that which is written in this book is ours for the receiving.

And so Lord, I pray now as we have begun this study — it doesn't mean that You can't still come now because that's fine. I don't have to prepare any more teachings in Revelation. But Lord, if You tarry, we're really looking forward to our study through this amazing book and the blessing that will ensue.

Lord, take this that we've seen today just in these first three verses bless it to our hearts, Lord, settle our hearts, apply it to our lives, Lord, so much so that we view everything in our lives through the lens of the revelation of You, Jesus, and how that changes the whole complexion of everything. Thank You, Lord. We love You so much. In Jesus name, Amen.