

Prophecy Update
Troubled About What's Coming Or Excited About Who's Coming
Pastor JD

KAPONO: Would you join me in prayer? Lord, thank You, Lord. Thank You for the song that comes out of *Psalms 34*, Lord. Blessed is the man who trusts in You, Lord. And would we trust in You today, Lord, and trust in You at this very moment, Lord, that You would speak to us in and through Your word, Lord, that Your word may grow and live and thrive within us, Lord. We thank You so much for this time together. Lord, would You bless Your word Lord to our lives? We ask this in Your name only, Jesus. We say Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. And good morning and welcome. And you can be seated. So glad that you're here. Those of you online, we're so glad that you're joining with us. If you don't mind, we're going to just get right to it. We're going to start in *Chapter 21* of *Revelation*, today, in our verse-by-verse study through this book, the last book in the Bible. And we have really reached a turning point, for lack of a better word, such that up to this point we have perfectly studied verse-by-verse through this divine outline that John the Apostle was given by God in *Chapter 1*, recorded in *verse 19*, where he's told to write that which is now — pardon me. It's been a long week. You're going to have to really be — I need a lot of grace.

That which was = past; that which is now = present; and that which is about to happen = yet future. So there's your divine outline. So let's just close in prayer.

Chapter 1 = past. Jesus Christ, whom John was an eyewitness of, if you might remember. Crucified. Buried. Resurrected. Glorified. Seated at the right hand of the Father: *Chapter 1*. Chapters 2 and 3: Seven letters to seven churches. That's what's now. We're living in the last of the last drops of the last of the last churches. How am I doing? Okay. The church of Laodicea, the lukewarm last days church. Because here's why that's present. We're presently Chapters 2 and 3, us, now, here. We are on the cusp, and I mean the cusp of *Chapter 4:1*, which is yet future on through to the rest of the book.

Verse 1 of *Chapter 4*, John hears the trumpet and the call of God to come up here. That's the rapture, pre-Tribulation. And *Chapters 4 and 5*, where's the church? In heaven, pre-Tribulation. In *Chapters 1, 2, and 3*, the word "church" is mentioned 19 times.

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Did we do this last week? You're giving me that look. I know that look. Okay, you're going to be tested on it next week. So listen up. The church, the word "church" is mentioned 19 times in *Chapters 1, 2, and 3*, but not after *Chapter 4:1*. Why? And why, by the way, yet future in this divine outline in *Chapters 6-19*, which is all about the seven-year Tribulation, do you not find the word "church"? Saints? Yes. Different than ecclesia, the church. You don't find the word "church" one time in *Chapters 6-19*, which is all about the seven-year Tribulation. Why? Because the church is not in the seven-year Tribulation.

So we finished *Chapter 20* last week. If you missed it, you missed the Millennium and the Great White Throne judgment. So I don't know what to tell you. But *Chapter 20* = Millennium. *Chapters 21 and 22* = The new heavens and the new earth. Eternity future. Forever and ever. You know how long forever and ever is? Forever and ever.

So we're doing this. For those that are able, no worries if not, or uncomfortable, remain seated. But if you wouldn't mind standing for the reading of God's word, I'll ask you to do so and just follow along. Only three verses. Now keep in mind John is obeying the command to write that which he sees. So he's writing that which he sees.

In *verse 1* he says, **"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, [Died] and there was no longer any sea. [Hang on, surfers]**
[Verse 2] I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
[Watch this] prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. [That's a chicken skin
verse right there] [And verse 3, lastly] And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,
"Now the dwelling of God is with men, and He will live with them. They will be His people,
and God himself will be with them and be their God."

Can't wait. Let's pray. Father, this is wow! Just wow! This is real. This is not some fantasy or fiction or far off in the future. No, this is nearer than any of us could even begin to imagine.

And thank You, Lord, for inspiring the Apostle John to record this for us. Because we need to know what awaits us. Because things down here are getting pretty ugly. So thank You for a glimpse and what a glimpse just these three verses are.

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So now will You take this portion that we have before us here in Your word today? We know it won't return void. You said so. It will accomplish its intended end. You said so.

But Lord, our prayer is that You would personally, by the Holy Spirit, apply it to each and every one of our Christian lives in a powerful way, unmistakable way, so much so that we know that was You in and through Your word ministering and speaking to me personally.

Will You do that for us, Lord? We're asking You for this, Lord. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen and amen. You can be seated. Thank you so much.

So what I want to talk with you about today is a truth that is so important to our lives in this world that it could change our lives forever. I'm not trying to be sensational. Those of you who know me — I mean, I'm dramatic. That's different than sensational. But I'm animated, demonstrative. Yeah, that's different than sensational. I'm not trying to be sensational. I'm just telling you that this portion of scripture, these first three verses in *Chapter 21* of *Revelation* have the propensity to powerfully change our lives now and forever.

And let me explain and expound on why I would open with that. In a word, better said, a name: Jesus, our soon to be husband, forever, who, in John 14, promised and could never break a promise. God's word is God's word. He can't go against His word. He said in His word, and He promised to His disciples then, and us now, that He goes to prepare a place for us. And He's very clear in no uncertain terms that this is a bridal chamber He's preparing.

And if it were not so, He would have told us.

But He goes to — and this is where it gets very, for lack of a better word, explicit. Probably the wrong word. Specific, better word? He says, "**So that where I am...**" Where is He? In the Father's house, seated at the right hand of the Father. "**Where I am, there you will be also.**"

That's the pre-Tribulation rapture. That's a bridegroom talking to His bride. And they would have got it, especially being from the Galilee region. Because once the engagement of the couple was completed, a covenant, "ketubah" in the Hebrew, a written covenant of marriage — that's what marriage is, a covenant — then the bridegroom would leave after drinking from the cup and breaking of the bread.

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You see the typology there? And he would leave, and he would go to his father's house and prepare a bridal chamber. And then when the time comes, the father says, "Okay, it's time." And the best man, or the equivalent of, is to sound the trumpet. And then the bridegroom goes — He doesn't come to the earth. He comes and appears in the air and catches us up to meet Him in the air, to take us to that place He prepared for us.

Are you following me? That was all the introduction to the reason for the title of today's Sermon, which you see on the screen. And it's a fair question/title: 'Why Hold On And Invest In A World That's Dying And Will Very Soon Be Burning?' I'm just convicted reading the title of my own sermon.

Well, Pastor, what are you hoping to accomplish with this sermon? Well, by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, what I'm hoping to accomplish is redirect all of us, myself included, to our final destination of our eternal home in heaven with Jesus forever. That alone, stand alone, can really change the complexion of whatever trial it is you brought with you to church today, whatever pain and struggle and suffering and difficulty and hardship.

Doubtless you've heard that saying, "Christians can be so heavenly minded they're of no earthly good." You've heard of that? Just nod and say yes. Well, I respectfully disagree, as they say. It is patently false. My Bible teaches me that it's the opposite that's true. The more heavenly minded we are, the more earthly good we'll be and do. Why? Because our eyes are on the prize. Isaiah: "**He will keep him [Or her] in perfect [Perfect] peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee.**"

You know what Satan does, is he knows this, and as such gets us to focus on the here and now: this life, this world, the things of this world. Well, listen, we were not created for this world. We were created in the image of God to be with God for eternity. But Satan, knowing that too, wants to blur that focus and get our focus off of Jesus and His soon return for us. He wants us to be earthly minded, not heavenly minded because He knows what happens when we're heavenly minded.

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I think it was the Apostle Paul who wrote about the language of heaven. You know, it's like a lingo. It's a different dialect if you prefer. It's not just being heavenly minded. You know the language. You — your focus is on eternity, not this world that is dying and is soon going to be burning.

By the way, *2 Peter 3*; this is your homework. You'll be tested next week. Probably one of the most descriptive passages of how the earth is going to be destroyed. I mean, it's pretty intense. An intense fervent heat is going to melt the very foundation of this earth. It's going to completely be consumed. And we've become too attached to it, too invested in it, too in love with it. When a born-again Christian as, by the way, a citizen of heaven — Did you know you might be a *U.S.* citizen?

I became a *U.S.* citizen, when I was older. Actually, it was official at age 18 because of my parents. I was born in Beirut, Lebanon. Don't tell anybody. And we immigrated legally — tell everybody — to America when I was nine months old, and they had to work and strive for five years. And I'll never forget that day. I was a little boy. I probably couldn't have been more than maybe seven, eight years old. And I'm watching my mom and my dad, with tears streaming down their face, as they were receiving their *U.S.* citizenship, which meant something.

And they had to jump through some hoops, I'll tell you. And in so doing, I had an option at age 18 to retain my Lebanese citizenship, or automatically — they did all the work for me — become a *U.S.* citizen. Well, where I come from, they call that a no brainer. "No, I want to retain my Lebanese citizenship." "Okay, here's an AK 47. Bye."

[Laughter]

It was a no brainer. And the debt of gratitude I owe my parents for coming to America. But understand, the America that they immigrated to is not the same America today, sad to say. But they left, fleeing Islamic oppression in the Middle East, to come to this country. And I will be eternally grateful.

So we still have a problem here. You'll forgive the emotion. We still have a problem we gotta deal with here. Because a lot of Christians get messed up on this whole thing. So

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we're still in this world, have the things of this world, but we're to focus on the eternal world that is being prepared for us. And also, by the way, this matter of, you know, having things in this world doesn't necessarily mean that I love the things of this world. John speaks to that.

We covered that verse-by-verse *1st, 2nd, 3rd John*. In summary, have the things of this world. But don't let the things of this world have you. Nothing wrong with having them, them being the things of this world, but don't let them have you, because you're not of this world.

And I mean, Scripture is so replete with numerous passages, starting with the Savior himself in *Matthew 6*, well-known 'Sermon on the Mount.' Sometimes I like to refer to it as the sermon on the amount of treasures we lay up here on earth where moth and rust can destroy, and where the IRS, I mean thief, can break in and steal, instead of laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust cannot even get to or access and thief can absolutely not steal.

You know, you — Job said it best. "**Naked I came into this world, naked I leave.**" When you leave, what do you leave behind? How much? Everything. Now, you can send it ahead, lay it up, up there. That's a great investment. You know what's not a great investment? In fact, if I could be so bold, it's a stupid investment.

Illustration: Okay, you're renting a house. Are you going to invest in remodeling it? Why? You're just renting. Could you imagine that? Well, let's just say you're the landlord. We'll give — I'm going to kind of spice it up a little bit, this illustration, revise it slightly. You're the landlord, and you found these tenants, and you're like, you know, they go through, they check out. And so you rent them out your property.

And then you drive by one day and you notice that they've got, you know, a couple of trucks, contractors there. And you're like, what's this? And so you go to the front door and you're like, hey, what's up? They're like, hey, we're just going to remodel the kitchen. You don't own it. Why are you putting your money into it? That's kind of stupid because I could evict you tomorrow. What a waste. Oh, it appears that you've become a little bit attached to it.

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You're kind of falling in love with this world and the kitchen things of this world, if I can say it like that.

No, we're sojourners. We're renters. We're — some translations render it aliens. I can't use it anymore because that has a whole different connotation. But we're nomads. Even in my culture, you're just — you're just passing through, baby. Don't get too settled. Don't dig your roots down too deep in the temporal soil of this world. Because it's all going to burn. It's already dying.

What do we say when somebody is dying? They're passing away. What do we say when someone's died? They passed away. Hello. Even us as new creations — watch this — outwardly, our flesh, our mortal bodies is passing away. You don't have to do anything but look in the mirror every day and you realize that outwardly, you're decaying day by day. There's hair where there shouldn't be and no hair where there used to be. And I won't take it any further than that. But it's just a — these are temporary tents.

But inwardly, we're being renewed day by day because we're a new creation. So now we've got a new creation, and now we're going to have our glorified bodies, which we get at the Pre-Tribulation rapture after the dead in Christ receive theirs first and we meet them in the air. And then here's our glorified bodies, sinless perfection, new creation.

And what perfect timing with the new earth and the new heavens. Why? Why new heavens? Because that's where the first sin took place. It wasn't in the garden. It was in heaven. It marred it. It introduced sin into sinlessness perfection. Maybe it goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway. This isn't a remodeled, restored, renovated, re-branded — I can keep going. No, this is brand-spanking new. Brand new.

Before we go any further, I'm going to approach this in a different way, asking the same question, but in a different way. And all of us, again, myself included, not only need to ask ourselves this question, but we need to ask the Holy Spirit to search our hearts concerning this question.

If you had an investment opportunity, and you started doing your due diligence and researching it, and you learned with a certainty that this investment in this, let's say,

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company was dying and soon would crash and burn, would you invest in it? I know it's rhetorical, but I wouldn't. I don't think you would either.

Okay, Pastor, I get it. Can you move a little faster? I'll try. However, we still have a problem. What's the problem? There are many who would still and do still. And the only plausible explanation is — and I — please know my heart. The Lord knows my heart.

I don't mean to, you know, be derogatory or condescending in any way. I'm just trying to in some way make sense of why would a born-again Christian invest in the things of this world because of their love for this world, when they know God's word — assuming they know God's word — says it's gonna burn, baby. This is the only plausible explanation that I can come up with is that they must not truly believe God's word of truth and/or they still — and this is a biggie, by the way — they still think, "Oh, we still got hundreds of years."

No, we don't. I mean, I — you know, what's the kind of world we're going to leave to the next generation? What next generation? We're the final generation. I know that might come off as harsh and blunt. But the truth oftentimes is the hard truth. But it's still truth. There's one generation, that last generation, that chosen generation at the time of the return of Jesus Christ to rapture, pre-Tribulation, His church. And we are that generation. And on the authority of God's word and the more sure word of Bible prophecy, I can say with 100% certainty that this is it. So if you're trying to push this off into the far, far, far future, future, future — effects added — you do err greatly.

Okay. Hang in there with me. How are you doing? Not very convincing, but I'll keep going. So why do I start out this way? Because of what God's word of truth says about that which is prepared for us and awaits us in the new heavens and the new earth. In other words, if this world is not my home, which it's not; and I'm just passing through, which I am, then what in the world? What reason would I have to hold on tightly to it, instead of having a light touch on it?

Thank you for your grace, patience with me. But if you were to ask me what I thought was one of the biggest reasons, if not the biggest reason, for why the pulpits in the last days church today are conspicuously silent about the end, I would be left with no other choice

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other than to answer this way: They don't believe that it's going to happen anytime soon, and they are — you'll forgive me. I'm just echoing the words of the Apostle Paul. So don't give me stink eye. They're ignorant. They're ignorant. They're not teaching the whole counsel of God. They won't touch Bible prophecy. Why? They don't know it. They know about it. They don't know it. How are they going to teach it?

And here's the other reason. This is so sad. It's *1 Timothy* 4. Is it *2 Timothy*? No. *1 Timothy* 4, where Paul, his last letter — actually, *2 Timothy* was — where he says, this is what will mark the last days, the last hour. **“Perilous times will come.”** And he goes on to list 19 things. And then at the end of that list, he says — and this is for any pastor, just heartbreaking — **“they will not put up with sound doctrine.”** They will not attend a church that speaks the truth in love because of love. They will absolutely not go to a church that's teaching Bible prophecy. Why?

Because they don't want to hear that. They'll go to the church where the pastor will tell them what their ears are itching to hear. That's a prophecy unto itself. Enter today's text. You didn't think I'd get there, did you? The reason I preface our study today, which we'll get to and through, don't worry, is because it is so powerful in serving as a much-needed reminder of the futility and the folly of holding on to and investing in this fallen, dying world that will very soon be burning and consumed completely.

Put another way: The new heaven and the new earth refocus us, redirect us, thus will take our eyes off and grip on this earth because of the new earth. And that's what we're going to see in our text today. Three refocusing truths, again, not be sensational, life-changing truths, truly life changing. Game changers, if you prefer if that's better, softer, easier, more palatable.

Because it starts now. Because see, if I live my life now in light of eternity, it's going to change how I live my life now, here on this earth. Why? Because I'm heavenly minded. I'm still on earth, but I'm heavenly minded. Where's your treasure? In heaven. Where's your mind? In heaven. Where's your heart? Jesus said, where your treasure is your heart is.

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So my hearts there. Home is where the heart is. It ain't here. Where's your focus? Heaven. If that were to truly sink into every fiber of our Christian life, I assure you, on the authority of God's word, it would change every aspect of your Christian life. I'm including myself in that. So let's look at these three quickly. You like that word "quickly," don't you, especially this far into the introduction?

First one in *verse 1*. How about this? We'll be with Jesus in the new earth and the new heaven. This isn't just words on the pages of our Bibles. This is a promise that is sure and true and amen. You know what amen means, right? So be it. Done deal. When John writes that he sees the new heaven and new earth, and then tells us why, it's because the first heaven and the first earth — (Stumbling over words) first earth, first heaven. They're gone.

What happened? They died. What did you do with the body? We turned it to — we cremated it. Turned it to ashes. Consumed it. Okay, we got to talk about the end of *verse 1*, where John writes that he also — what he didn't see: the sea, the ocean. Please know that I am keenly aware of how surfers struggle with the end of this verse. No ocean? No waves?

Wait a minute. I'll do my best to, in the finite, answer that which will only and ultimately be answered in the infinite. You're going to be worshiping, not surfing. And that doesn't necessarily mean you won't be surfing. But if you do go surfing, God has perfect waves in unfathomable ways.

Listen, nobody's going to be in heaven going, oh. (Sad) No, we're going to be going, oh! (In awe) Am I right? So are you surfers, good? Body boarders, wind surfers? Did I get everybody? Did I cover everybody? It's going to be way mo better. Is that better? Second one. See, I told you. Quickly.

This is what we're to refocus on, keep our eyes on, redirect our attention to. We'll be with Jesus in the New Jerusalem from heaven. Now, this is going to get — become clearer. But this New Jerusalem that descends from heaven is going to be suspended. Don't ask me how. God can do anything.

But in my study of Scripture over the many years, it has been discussed and with scriptures to back it up that this New Jerusalem, which we will have the measurements of, when

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calculated would be enough room for every man, woman, and child ever alive, from Adam to the present. What does that say about God? What it says is what God says: That it's not His will that any should perish. Hell was never created for man. It was created for the devil. Heaven was created for man.

So let me see if I got this straight. Because John's description here in verse 2 about the New Jerusalem being prepared as a bride, beautifully dressed for her husband, sounds like he's talking about us. Could it be that when Jesus, in *John 14:1-4*, promised that He would go to prepare for us that place, that He was talking about the New Jerusalem? I would suggest, yes.

So for those of you that wanted to go to Israel or go back to Israel — I mean, I got to confess: the times I've been there, when I go to Jerusalem, there's something very spiritual and supernatural there. We just learned Thursday night in *Zechariah Chapter 2*, the only time in the Bible where you read the word "Holy Land" describing Jerusalem. Why is it the Holy Land, the Holy City? Because the Holy God inhabits it. That's what makes it holy. And that's, by the way, what makes us holy. The Holy Spirit indwelling us, inhabiting us. The Christian I feel the most pity for is the one who tries to live the Christian life in their own strength, in their own power, in their own might.

When we get to *Zachariah 4*, Lord willing, in two weeks, if we're still here with the way things are going, we're going to read a very well-known verse that is profound. "**It's not by might, it's not by power, but by My Holy Spirit says the Lord.**" In other words, your will power, your strength, your — the energy of your own flesh, your own power, forget about it. Ain't going to happen.

Well, then how's it going to happen? It's going to happen only one way. And that's going to be by way of the Holy Spirit who empowers you to live a holy life. You know when I do weddings, which I haven't done, recently for a reason. I have amazing assistant pastors who do them now, whom I love very much and appreciate so much. But on occasion, I'll do — officiate a wedding, or a celebration of life, a memorial service.

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But when it comes to a wedding, I'm always with the bride and groom's permission, I always go to *Ephesians 5* because it talks about — Paul, by the Spirit, talks about three times, **“Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her.”** (Sigh) 2) **“Husbands, love your wives as you love yourself.”** (Painful sigh) 3) **“Husbands, love your wives as you love your own bodies.”**

You know you're checking yourself out in the reflection as you're walking by. Come on guys, you know how it is, right? And you're like, here's the groom. I'm doing the wedding. And I — I've done this. It worked out well in the end. Don't worry. I just, I look at the groom, and I said, “How are you going to do that?”

I had one groom respond by just — “I don't know!”

I said, “I'll tell you how you're going to do it. You're not. The Holy Spirit is because that's a tall order, isn't it?”

“Yeah!”

How are you going to do that? The only way you can love your wife as Christ loved the church, is by way of the indwelling and empowering and enabling of the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Holy Spirit = Love. That's the source of it. What, are you trying to muster it up on your own? How's that working out for you? Is that why you're sleeping on the couch? I'm just asking. Well, there's another.

You know, I had one guy ask me. It was adorable. It was really well phrased. He just said to me, he said, why is it so lopsided? You know, like three times, **“Husbands love your wives...”** **“Husbands love your wives...”** **“Husbands love your wives...”** What about the wife? What about her, the woman You gave me? Oh, yeah. **“Wives, respect your husbands.”**

Are you kidding me right now? Wives respect your... Four words? Four words? That's it? Yeah. That's it. How is that even fair? I'll tell you why. Because I wired your wife to respect you proportionate to how you love her. I have yet to meet a man that doesn't want his wife to respect him. Respect me, woman! Some of you guys mess up, and you go, **“Submit to me, woman!”** You need to read *Ephesians 5:20* because that comes before *Ephesians 5:21*. I

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know, deeply profound. **“Submit yourselves one to another.”** God did not create your wife to be under you or over you, but He created a wife, a helpmeet, for Adam from his side, to be by his side, joint heirs with him.

We were talking about this on Tuesday night at the prayer meeting. You know the one passage in *1 Peter 3*. You'll forgive me. I, my bandwidth has been maxed out for two weeks now and counting. It's the only one. Husbands, you realize that your prayer life is predicated upon you dwelling in understanding, lovingly, patiently, compassionately with your wives? I want to say *1 Peter 3:10*. If I'm wrong, someone lovingly rebuke me and correct me after, of course.

So where are you going with this, Pastor? Because you're kind of like all over the place. You're talking about weddings. Yeah, this is our — this is our — this is our wedding destination. Beautifully dressed bride for her husband in the New Jerusalem. Let's go. What are we waiting for? Oh, we're almost there. We're almost there.

2 Peter 3, again, I mentioned this. It fills in a lot of blanks, but one of the blanks it fills in is this matter of why does it seem like the Lord is taking so long? **“He's not slow concerning His promise, as some consider slowness.”** And then Peter by the Holy Spirit explains it to us. A thousand years for you is like one day for God.

Think about that. They estimate that it's been approximately 6000 years from the creation of Adam to the present. 6000 years. Then the 7000th year is the Millennium. We just finished last week, that some of you might have missed. That was the number of completion that completed the age. And then after that 1000 years, *Chapter 20*, now it's eternity future. But he says a thousand years for you is like one day to God. Wait. That's the closest you're going to get to what they call anthropomorphism, which makes me sound smarter than I really am. It's God using terms that man can relate to and understand.

So wait, so a thousand years? Wow man. So that means if that, by those calculations, that he created Adam last Monday. You didn't get that, did you? Should I do it over? A thousand years — 6000 years is six days to Him. And a thousand years is like one day to Him. So it's been about 6000 years. So six days ago He created Adam.

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Does that just like, change the whole complexion of that? Why is He being...? Oh, that's not slow at all. Last Monday, six days ago You created...? And okay, I guess just — And then he goes into, appropriately so, guided by the Holy Spirit, inspired by the Holy Spirit to then dovetail into how. I mean, we get some like, TMI details on how the earth is going to be destroyed. And there's even a verse in there where he says that people "deliberately" — this is a conscious decision on their part.

They deliberately forget that God created the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that in them is. And He destroyed the world at that time with water, speaking of the flood. But this time He's going to destroy it not with water, but with fire. You gotta say that with a growl.

Well, if you're anything like me, and I would suspect that you are, I really want to be in this New Jerusalem with Jesus. I can't wait to be there. And by the way, you know, the 1000 years, the Millennium in between? Some people, you know, have commentaries about, man, we got a thousand years to wait. It'll seem like one day. You know that expression of how time flies when you're having fun? A thousand years are over. We're going to be, oh, whoa! That was fast!

And then now, we read in *Chapter 19* last week at the Great White Throne judgment, the heavens and the earth fled away. It's at that point that most believe that they are completely destroyed, utterly consumed in order to make way for the new.

Last one. Number 3. And this is a biggie. Not that they're all not biggie, but this more so only because we live in a day and an age where especially young people are the loneliest they've ever been. But they have 10,000 friends on social media.

In *verse 3*, you're promised that we'll be with Jesus — and don't miss this — belonging to Him and He belonging to us in heaven forever. Does that change things a little bit for you? I mean, to me it's among the most profound promises in the entire Bible, that sadly, many dismiss and/or miss. And here it is describing our eternal home with Jesus. And you don't want to talk about that? You don't want to teach on that?

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Why? You know, I'm going to ask the question. Why not? I'm on a roll and I'm almost done anyway. I think it's because the church today, the last days, lukewarm, Laodicean church has become too much like the world under the banner of trying to win the world, that there's no distinction between the church and the world.

When I came out of the world and God took me out of the miry clay, in some ways, quite literally, I was at the bottom of the bottom. And I heard the Gospel presented on a cold winter night on the mainland in January of 1982, and it was presented so simply and so clearly, like it was just for me. And God broke through, and I realized, wow, the Gospel is so simple.

Because I'd seen it complicated, like you had to do something. You gotta repent first. What does that mean? Make penance. You know, you gotta clean up your act. No, that's not the Gospel. And that's not repentance. By the way, repentance in the Greek is *metanoeō*. It means change of mind. Change your way of thinking. I don't have to do anything. He did everything.

And so I'm in the world. I love the world. In love with the world. And I mean, I try to come out of the world, and thank God, and I praise the Lord that when I stepped foot into a church, a Calvary, at that time, 43-plus years ago, thank God that they weren't trying to be like the world. Because I was trying to come out of the world. Why would I come out of the world to go to a place that's just like, or competing with the world?

I need the church to be the church of Jesus Christ. I need to hear the word of Jesus, the words of Christ taught. I'm a baby. I'm craving some milk here. I'm going to grow and teethe and start crawling, then walking, then running as I grow in grace and mature in Christ, and I'll go from milk to meat. Can't wait because I love meat. If you're a vegan, we love you. God bless you. But not even milk. You don't even get milk.

And these poor people are starving. I feel so sorry for them. Because when life hits, and life hits, and life is going to hit in ways unimaginable, they will have not built their house on the solid rock foundation of putting God's word into practice, because they didn't know God's word to begin with, because they never heard God's word taught to begin with.

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I hope I'm not sounding overly critical. But again, it's the only explanation, plausibly, that I can come up with. And the number one email we receive has to do with and is along the lines of is there — do you know of another church in our area that teaches verse-by-verse and Bible prophecy? No. They're so voluminous we can't even respond.

So what was so huge about this particular promise in *verse 3*? In a word, belonging. What if I told you: You belong to Him, and He belongs to you? You know, we were wedding rings as husbands and wives. What are we saying? I'm off limits. Not that that makes any difference these days, I guess. I belong to someone else, and she belongs to me. That's what John is describing.

And I think I would be remiss were I not to point this out, because even throughout Scripture, you read it and it's so moving. "My God." You know, when we say, "Our God," it's broad. When you say, My Jesus, Jesus, You belong to me, and Jesus I belong to You, that just, I mean, oh!

I'll end because this is the only thing that will matter in the end. There are only two types of people in this world. Not liberal, conservative; not red, blue; not Democrat, Republican; not black, white. None of that. Stop that rubbish. I say that in love. Either you're lost or you're saved.

And would to God that we would see people that way. Man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart and knows the heart. You don't know the heart. But when you're out and about and you see people and they cut you off in traffic — this is, you know, this is my — I've confessed this. You know that, right? I've been forgiven of this. God's cleansed me of this. I'm getting there.

You know, it's still — traffic's still — I'm an upright, abiding citizen of the law. You know the speed limits, usually. That person that just cut me off! What am I going to do? Pull up next to him. There's another lane! What? And they go — it's deliberate. They go slow. Don't they know that I'm in a hurry?

So what do you do? You — not you. Me, what do I do? I used to pull up alongside and give them that look. Stink eye. Just let them know you know, so they know they cut you off.

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And then you speed on past them, and you pull in the church. You know, this is my recurring nightmare, right? I've confessed this all. This is all taken care of. It's been forgiven by the blood of Jesus. So I'm — there is no longer any condemnation. That's been paid for in full. And I have the receipts if you want them.

And they pull in right behind you, and you're like trying to hide under the car. And they look at you and go, oh, you go to this church? (Sigh) I'm the pastor of this church. Just so you know, that's not happened, by the grace of God. And I pray it never happens. Would you pray that that never happens to me too, please? Instead of pulling up next to him, giving him stink eye, pulling off, why don't you pray for him? You don't know.

Here's how I pray for people that I see out and about. Because they're so lost, especially the ones with their faces glued on their devices. I'm surprised are not getting hit by a car or run into a, you know, signposts or telephone pole or whatever. I just pray, Lord, You know their heart, I don't. If they're not saved, would You bring someone in their life who is, that would be the vessel in their life? Because they're lost. And this is their destiny, absent salvation. I tell you; it changes the way you treat people, look at people, talk to people.

And please don't think for a second, I stand before you as one who has arrived. Far from it. I'm like Paul, the chief of sinners when it comes to it. But He who began that work in me is faithful to complete it. And He will. You better hurry up. I'm a work in progress. So are you.

Kapono, come on up. Why don't you stand up? We'll close. Lord, this is good stuff. But hard. This is true. But it's hard to swallow, hard to understand, hard to embrace, hard to grasp, even for the Christian who knows You and belongs to You and You them. They'll never hear what's recorded in *Matthew 7*, "**Depart from Me. I never knew you.**" You never belonged to Me. I never belonged to you.

But not to us. We belong to You, and You belong to us. It doesn't matter how many friends we have on social media. You said we can call You friend and brother. And if You're my friend, I'm good. I have need of no other.

So Lord, I just pray that I — I know I probably fumbled and bumbled through this. But now, would You by the Holy Spirit, take it from here, please? Begin that process, and it is a

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process, of making this real so it's not so far off, distant and disconnected. Bring it home, close to home. Because it is. Please, Lord. Thank You Lord. We love You so much, Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.