FBCPANHANDLE

SERMON REFLECTION GUIDE

Doctrine, Part 15: God Reigns Forever and Ever (The Doctrine of Eternity)
Revelation 19-22 - November 15, 2026

SERMON OUTLINE

Intro - New ways to hurt myself< chaos in the world < widespread injustice
Cormac McCarthy and our innate human desire for resolution and justice.

The End of the biblical drama begins with the ***parousia*** - the glorious return of Jesus. (Rev. 19)

A. The End is Coming (Rev. 19)

- The return of Jesus (*Advent #2*) is presented as an antithesis to his initial arrival (*Advent #1*, or the birth of Jesus). Majestic, not humble. Powerful, not weak. Obvious, not hidden.
- WHEN WILL JESUS RETURN?
  - 2 Peter says that God is patient, and Jesus says that no one knows the day in Matt. 24.
  - Whole denominations have formed out of failed predictions of Jesus's return.
- WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DIE?
  - Everyone, living & dead, is awaiting the resurrection of the dead (1 Thess. 4)
  - Intermediate state? Heaven, Sheol, Hades… - spiritual transition
  - What about *cremation*?

B. The End as Victory & Judgment (Rev. 20)

- Leaving behind controversies and difficult interpretations regarding the millennium and the tribulation, Revelation is mostly concerned with *the decisive demise of evil*.
- The build up to the great collision between God and Satan is almost anticlimactic as Satan's defeat is described in a verse and a half. (Rev. 20:9-10)
- Afterward, all people will appear before the judgment seat of Christ.
- WHAT ABOUT HELL?
  - Those in Christ will not be condemned, but will be judged for how they lived.
    - The bible also speaks of rewards for those who served well. (Matt. 6:20, 2 Tim. 4:8)
  - Those apart from Christ will be condemned to eternal separation from glory.
    - **Hell** is a godless place, where humans will descend into inhumanity apart from God.
- Too many people spend time preparing not to die, and too few prepare to stand before God.

C. The End as a City (Rev. 21)

- Revelation pits "Babylon" (the city of man) v. "Jerusalem" (the city of God)
- Babylon stands for Rome, but also every empire that would stand solely on its own power apart from God.
- The New Jerusalem is the city that represents all of the new heavens and the new earth.
  - It needs no sun, because Jesus is its light.
  - It needs no temple, because Jesus is the temple, and there is no longer any sin to atone.
    - Not only that, but the city is a CUBE (Rev. 21:16), just like the Holy of Holies.
- WHAT IS LIFE LIKE IN THE NEW JERUSALEM?
  - It will be living "with God", and free from all the brokenness of sin. (Rev. 21:2-5)

D. The End is Not the End (Rev. 22)

- The end of the Bible doesn't feel like a finale, but like a permanent new way of existence.
- Repeated refrain of the book of Revelation:
  - "Forever and ever…"
- We will only go "further up, & further in"
  - CS Lewis's take on the end of all things in "*The Last Battle*"
  - "At last they were beginning Chapter One of the GREAT STORY which no one on earth has read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before."

FBCPANHANDLE

SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What about the world makes you want to stay here forever? What makes you wish it would all be over?
2. Do you believe that Jesus will return in your lifetime? Why or why not? Does it matter?
3. What is surprising about Revelation's description of the demise of Satan?
4. What about the doctrine of hell is hard for you to believe? Ultimately, how does hell fit with what we know about the holiness and justice of God?
5. Why is it better to speak of "resurrection" or "the new Jerusalem" than to speak of "heaven"?
6. What about the last two chapters of Revelation appeals to you the most?