The Great Day of God — Delivery Transcript

Revelation 16:1–9 (CSB) · Wes Terry · Sunday, May 15, 2022 · *The Day of the Lord*

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Revelation chapter 16. And if you're new today, our church has been working through the book of the Revelation for about a year now, a little over a year. We typically do books of the Bible, line by line, chapter by chapter. That way, if you don't like what the sermon is, you know I didn't pick it on you. We just go on to whatever's next. And we're at a place in the book of the Revelation where it's pretty tough sledding. And so just a disclaimer before I preach the sermon, for those of you who are like really into theology and speculative stuff and love all those kinds of charts and all that stuff, you're going to love today's sermon.

For those of you who can't stand that stuff, there will be something for you. You just get to wait a little while to get there. Not every sermon's like this, but this one's going to be a little bit different. I know it's summertime and it's so hot. I hate summer. I don't know about you. I just can't stand it. I get hot around 73 degrees. And so you can imagine 100 degree weather is not my forte. But as much as I don't like summer, I love fireworks and I love anything having to do with gunpowder or anything explosive.

My nickname when I was growing up at our family reunions was Kaboom, because I had taken my Daddy Bob's thing of gunpowder that he used to reload his bullets and like a dummy I lit a match and threw the match into the gunpowder just to see what would happen. And in God's grace, he gave me an opportunity to come to my senses and start running before the match— and I don't even know how that happened. It must have been a miracle. The match didn't immediately blow it up, but then it ended up blowing it up in this big kaboom.

First and only time I'd ever heard my grandmother call me stupid. She goes, Are you stupid? I said, I guess I am. You know, I just thought it'd be fun. So anyway, I love fireworks, love kaboom, you know, anything kaboom. And the best part of a fireworks show is not the beginning or the middle, right? What's the best part of a fireworks show? It's the end. Does anybody know what they call the very end of the fireworks show? It's the grand finale, that's right. And that's how you should probably think about today's text.

It's the grand finale of God's judgment on the earth. Now you think, Well, we're right in the middle of the book of the Revelation. How's it already the grand finale? That's just the way the book of the Revelation is written. It's like it gives you what it's going to give you and then it explains it even more after the fact. But this really is the climax. Everything has been building up to this point in the book of Revelation. We've talked about it before, how Revelation is broken down into three sets of seven.

There's 21 judgments. Seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls. And we today are getting to Revelation 16, which talks about the bowl judgments. And we're going to look at the first four this week and then the last three next week. We have to split them up because the last three are so crazy it takes a full sermon just to even scratch the surface. It talks about the Battle of Armageddon. Has anybody ever heard the Battle of Armageddon? Yeah, they make movies about it and all that. You're going to get all about that next week.

But because these bowl judgments are so climactic and kind of what we've been waiting for, I've got to do a little bit of work reviewing Revelation so you can kind of see where we've been and especially for those of you who are new, you've got to know the book of the Revelation— not everybody agrees about how it's supposed to be preached. There are all sorts of different views and all sorts of different debates. And even the people who generally agree on stuff, they don't agree on how to break down the book of the Revelation.

And so I need to put my cards on the table to tell you how I'm interpreting it, because not everybody does it like I do it. And you may hear a different sermon on this same text and it'd be a totally different kind of deal, and, you know, maybe they're right, maybe I'm wrong. But if you're taking notes, I'm coming from a perspective that's called a futurist perspective. And all that means is I believe the prophecies that are contained in the book of the Revelation deal with the future. Or at least the majority of the prophecies deal with the future.

That's not what everybody thinks. There are views called— there's a preterist view, which thinks that the prophecies in the book of the Revelation were future to the author, but that they've already been fulfilled in the first century. And so they think it was written very early, around AD 70, and that the prophecies talk about the fall of Jerusalem and the fall of Rome. And there are really good arguments for that view called the preterist view, and some of them are very, very compelling, but I don't think it answers all of the questions, and so that's why I don't hold that view.

There's another view called the historicist view. It sounds like what it is. It believes that the prophecies in the book of Revelation have been fulfilled throughout history. And it's really pretty interesting talking about the fall of the papacy and all kinds of stuff. It's not as widely held today as it used to be, but kind of an interesting view. And then there's what's called the idealist view, and the idealist view deals with the ideals of Revelation— not necessarily about the future or the past as much as they are about the ideals, the symbols, the metaphors, the spiritual truths that undergird the prophecies.

And there are a lot of people who take that approach as well. And even in my preaching I've kind of pulled from some of their applications and their points of view. But the reason I hold to the futurist camp is because I think the futurist camp enables you to pull from the preterist camp and pull from the idealist camp but still maintain what I believe to be true, which is that these prophecies in the book of Revelation deal with the future that there will come an end of days one of these days, and that end-of-days time will be characterized by certain events and certain characters and certain things going on in the cultural landscape of the day.

A lot of those things pertain to today. We're in the last days in some sense, but that there will be a literal fulfillment of these things during the final years prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ. Now within that— think of the futurist as the big, big umbrella. Under that big umbrella is what's called premillennialism. You'll say, What's millennial? Sounds like a chocolate candy bar. Is it tasty? No. It's not a chocolate candy bar. This *pre*, of course, just means before, and this word millennium or millennial deals with the millennium.

And we haven't talked about it at all in this series because it doesn't come about until the very end in chapters 19 and 20. But you need to know that my view, because we're getting close to that, is that I believe Jesus will return pre or prior to that millennium. You say, What's the millennium? The millennium is this utopian vision of a new heavens and a new earth and life on earth the way it's always been meant to be. Jesus will re-create everything, and there will no longer be any brokenness.

The Bible talks about the lion lying down with the lamb, children playing with snakes, swords being beaten into plowshares, all of this kind of language talking about this peace and prosperity and awesome life with Jesus on the throne. It's what we think about when we think about heaven in a lot of ways. The Bible says there will be a thousand-year reign of Christ where he's over that millennial kingdom. I believe that Jesus comes to the earth, he visits the earth, prior to that. In other words, he comes to earth to inaugurate it or to bring it about.

Others would say, no, no, no, no, no. There are two different views. There's a view called postmillennialism, which says Jesus comes after that thousand years, and it's our job to bring it about. And so we're in the thousand year reign right now. There's another view

called amillennialism, with the Greek prefix *a*-, meaning no, so there's no millennium. In other words, there's not a literal thousand-year reign, it's just a spiritualizing of the rule and reign of Jesus. And so we are kind of under the millennium now in a spiritual sense. And the reason I don't hold to amillennialism is because some of the things in Revelation don't make sense to me as spiritual only.

It's certainly partially spiritual, but there seems to be literal fulfillment. And the reason I'm not a postmillennialist is because if this is the millennium, it kind of stinks, right? It ain't all that good right now. And certainly could be a lot better, but you know, different people have different views. But that's why I hold to premillennialism. Now, big umbrella, what's it called? Futurist camp. Little umbrella. We're in the premillennial camp. Other views— I'm not saying they're wrong, I'm just saying that's where I'm coming from. But within that premillennial camp, there are other camps.

And we've talked about them before in Revelation chapter six, and I'm going to expose you to them just a little bit today because what we're talking about with these bowls, you need to understand it. And all of these views are trying to make sense out of four facts nobody can get away from. I put them on your note sheet. The first is what's called the abomination of desolation. This describes that during the end of days there will be a figure known as the antichrist, which maybe you've heard of before. He will make a peace treaty with Israel, but he will break that treaty at three and a half years and he will desolate the temple.

And that event triggers what Jesus describes as the great tribulation, which is the second thing. This is in Matthew 24, Luke 21. Jesus said that tribulation will be so great that there would never be anything like it before and will never be anything like it again. It's terrible tribulation. After that is what's called the day of the Lord. This is talked about throughout the scripture, Old Testament and New Testament. It's this day of judgment. This day of deliverance for God's people and judgment on God's enemies. And then finally, there's what's called the rapture of the church.

Now you maybe have heard the rapture talked about, you know, just because the most popular view is a view called the pre-tribulation rapture, which says the rapture is going to happen to Christians before the antichrist or before the great Tribulation or before any of those things. That's not the only view of the rapture. That's one of four different views. But everybody has to deal with it because the rapture is talked about in the scripture. Paul's writings; Jesus talks about it in John chapter 14. It's this idea that the church or God's people will be caught up to meet Christ in the air when he comes again.

Different people put that at different places. We talked about earlier about this seven years. That seven years doesn't come from the book of Revelation first and foremost; it comes from a prophecy in Daniel. You've got to understand, if you want to understand the book of Revelation, you really need to understand the Old Testament book of Daniel because John

pulls from Daniel more than any other Old Testament prophecy. And in Daniel chapter 7,[1] you have this figure known as the antichrist who makes the covenant, breaks the covenant, and then is desolated by Jesus or the Messiah when he returns.

Different views put the rapture at different places in these seven years. And the only reason I'm bringing this up is because it pertains to the text that we're looking at today. There's a view called pretribulationalism. This is what I just talked about. They say the rapture happens before there's any tribulation. There's a view called midtribulationism that says the rapture happens right at the middle point after the antichrist breaks the treaty. There's a view called posttribulationism, which puts the rapture at the very end, simultaneous with the second coming of Jesus. And then there's what's called the pre-wrath rapture.

This is the view that I actually hold. I believe the church will be on the earth during the great tribulation, but we're saved or delivered from the wrath of God. I don't think we're delivered from the wrath of Satan or the wrath of the antichrist. And so it's similar to posttribulationism in that Jesus returns, the day of the Lord is inaugurated, but that the day of the Lord is an extended season of several days, and that the church is caught up as Jesus unleashes judgment on the earth with the wrath of God.

Now I'm not going to unpack all of those. If you want more details, you can go listen to the rapture sermon online. I just expose you to that because the passage we're looking at today deals with this— well, it's gone now— but it deals with that day of the Lord section, that judgment of God falling on the earth and I think we're probably out of here during that time. Now when you talk about the day of the Lord, if you're taking notes, day of the Lord is talked about all the time in the Bible.

It is frequently addressed throughout Scripture. I wish we had time to go through all of these references. There are so many, but it's not always called the day of the Lord. Sometimes it's called the day of the Lord's sacrifice, the day of the Lord's wrath. Sometimes it's called these days, those days, the day, the great day. Any of those kind of language talking about the day of the Lord, judgment day, the great day of God. On and on we could go: Isaiah chapter 13, Zechariah chapter 14, Matthew 13, Matthew 24, Luke 17, Luke 21, Romans 2:5, Philippians 1:10, John 12:48.

What you need to know about the day of the Lord is that it is a day of judgment for those who reject God, rebel against God, want nothing to do with God. But it is a day of deliverance for those who depend on the Lord, trust in the Lord, and follow Jesus. It is both. It's not just judgment, it's not just deliverance, it's both. It's deliverance for God's people, judgment on God's enemies. And that's what we're looking at in this series. That Jesus returns, he executes judgment on those who reject him and delivers those who believe and follow him.

Before we read our passage, just because some of you love the charts and just to kind of situate where we're at today, I want to throw this chart up on the screen. It's very overwhelming, okay? So please don't get super overwhelmed. All of this stuff, we talked about this in Revelation chapter 6, the six seals. We're not going to do any of that today. Revelation chapter 8 and 9, that's these seven trumpet judgments here. The seventh trumpet contains what are called the seven bowls, and that's what we're looking at today, the seven bowls of wrath.

And that's these here, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven. And as you can see, this view is what's called the pre-wrath view. That's the view I hold. When Jesus returns, the church is taken up before the trumpets. Between the sixth seal and the seventh trumpet, I think the church is taken up. Jesus is executing judgment with these trumpet judgments and then returns and pours out these bowls of wrath. We're going to talk about that today. Alright, so let's read Revelation chapter 16, starting in verse 1. John says, "Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, 'Go and pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth.' The first went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and severely painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped its image."

That is the antichrist. So these are people who worship the antichrist, who bow the knee. Maybe they don't worship him as God, but they're bowing the knee, submitting to his rule. And they took his mark and they worshipped its image. We don't have— Revelation 13 talks about all that in detail. "The second poured out his bowl into the sea. It turned to blood like that of a dead person, and all life in the sea died. The third poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water." So seawater was the second, fresh water is the third, and the fresh water becomes blood.

"I heard the angel of the waters say, You are just, the Holy One, who is and who was, because you have passed judgment on these things." And why did God judge? Because they poured out, they being the antichrist and his people, they poured out the blood of the saints and the prophets. So since they did that, "you have given them blood to drink; they deserve it!" "I heard the altar say"— the altar is the prayers of the martyred saints, those who've been killed because of their faithfulness to Jesus. They're saying, "Yes, Lord God, the Almighty, true and just are your judgments."

"The fourth poured out his bowl on the sun. It was allowed to scorch people with fire, and people were scorched by the intense heat. So they blasphemed the name of God, who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent and give him glory." Now this text is so thorny and it's got so many different issues. Instead of going straight to application, I need to spend a little bit of time answering some very basic interpretive questions like how do we make sense out of this passage. So I want to put them under headings of when, what, why, and who.

And they're broken down in your notes. When are these judgments? What are these judgments? Why do they happen? And then who receives them? Now when it comes to the question of when do these judgments happen on the earth? That's a little bit of a debated question, but the people who are trying to answer it can't necessarily answer it from within the book of Revelation, because the book of Revelation doesn't say, other than that it happens after the trumpets. So what people do is they go to the book of Daniel because Daniel talks about that final seven-year period for those who understand it to be a seven-year period.

And in Daniel chapter 12, it says that there's not just a seven-year period, but that there's a little bit of time after those seven years where the kingdom is reclaimed, where Jesus kind of rebuilds his kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. I'm going to throw a chart on the screen just to show you this. So here are the trumpet judgments in Revelation 8 and 9. When the seventh trumpet is blown, it contains the seven bowls. Now, if you look under those seven bowls, how many days does that say?

That's right. It says 30 days, followed by 45 days. Now where in the world do they get that? Because that's not in the book of the Revelation. And as you can see, if you look at this chart, it's coming from Daniel chapter 12, verses 11 and 12. Now I want to show you that because, to me, it's really interesting. We see in the book of the Revelation this phrase, this number repeated over and over and over again: 1,260. Sometimes it refers to it as 42 months, but on a 30-day month with a 360-day calendar, which was the calendar for them back then, that's three and a half years.

Which is half of seven years. So Revelation pulls from Daniel nine over and over again, but some suggest that these bowls are not a reference to that seven-year period; that seven-year period ends with the trumpet judgments, and a new reclamation period begins with the bowls. Now I want to show you that passage in Daniel chapter 12. Daniel 12, verse 11 says, "From the time the daily sacrifice is abolished"— Now what would that be talking about? That's talking about the abomination of desolation. It's talking about the antichrist saying, No more offerings in the temple, desolates the temple.

"And the abomination of desolation is set up." So we're at three and a half years. From that time "there will be 1,290 days. Happy is the one who waits for and reaches 1,335 days." Now, I don't know if you've been paying attention, but there's a difference between 1,260, 1,290, and 1,335. Your eyes are all glazed over. What's wrong with you people? All right. Let's do some simple Roby math. 1,260: that's Revelation 11, Revelation 12, that's antichrist crushing the saints all throughout the book of Revelation. We've already seen that. Revelation 11, Revelation 12, 1260.

What's the difference between 1290 and 1260? Can anybody give me a quick math? Thirty. All right, that's where they get the 30 days. Because of the difference between the book of

Revelation and Daniel chapter 12. Now what's the difference between 1,335, which is the second number he gives in Daniel chapter 12, verse 12, and 1,260? 75. No, no, no, no. Yeah, yeah, yeah. 75. So yeah. Now if you take that full number, 75 days, minus the 30 days, that's the forty-five days. That's where they get that 45 on the charts.

You got thirty days Jesus reclaiming the kingdom, pouring out these bowls, which are horrendous in nature— boils and water turning into blood and the sun scorching people. That's that 30-day period after the final seven years ends. So here's a simple chart for simple minds like myself. Four boxes, all right. Is that what's next? What's the next chart? No, no, no, no, not that either. One more. That's not a simple chart. Yeah, there it is. Okay. So here's seven years. And again, this is just the premillennial view. There are different views, all right?

But seven-year tribulation. It's cut in half. Three and a half years, great tribulation. That ends. Trumpets are blown. The final trumpet culminates the seven-year period, unleashes the bowls of wrath, which are these 30 days, which is what we're talking about today, followed by some stuff we'll talk about later. All right. That's when it happens. Throw that crazy one back up there just for kicks. Here's how it all fits together. And again, this is the pre-wrath view. You've got the first three seals, that's the beginning of birth pains, false christs, wars, famine, all that stuff in Revelation six.

Then you have— I'm not going to talk about that. Then you have seals four, five, and six. That's the people having authority to kill the saints, the martyrs crying out in the fifth seal. And then the cosmic signs and wonders in the sixth seal. The sun turns black, the moon turns to blood, that announces or proclaims, here comes the day of the Lord. The day of the Lord happens with the blowing of the trumpets. Day of the Lord's wrath. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. When the seventh trumpet is blown, it unleashes the bowls of wrath, which we're looking at today during that 30-day reclamation period from Daniel 12.

And then the 45 days, restoration of the kingdom we'll talk about later. Regardless of the timing, here's what you need to know. And if you're taking notes, note this. The reason why these bowls are unleashed on the earth is to establish God's justice and to vindicate his saints. That's the main reason. He establishes his justice and vindicates his saints. It is so easy for us when we see suffering on the earth and brokenness to question, Is God good? Is he powerful? Why does he let these things happen? And what Revelation 16 is saying is he is patient not wanting anybody to perish.

He's giving time for people to come to know him, but those unjust deeds will not go unaccounted for. Now let's look at the what question. The question of what. When is after the trumpets. The what? I want to show you the similarities and the differences. There are crazy similarities between the trumpet judgments and the bowl judgments. You can go back and read them. Revelation 8 and 9 talks about the trumpet judgments. Both judgments pull

from the story of the exodus. You've got plagues in the Exodus like water turning to blood, the sun going black, boils, all that stuff's in the Exodus.

Even frogs and stuff which we'll see next week. He's pulling from the Exodus. There's lots of similarities. There's also similarities in how they happen. In the trumpets it was the earth, the seawater, the fresh water, the sun, the moon, and stars. In the bowls, it's the same thing. It's people or the land. Seawater, freshwater, sun. Similarities. Some would say the trumpets and the bowls may have some overlap, but the trumpets are kind of partial and the bowls are complete, but they're very similar. The fifth trumpet and the fifth bowl both involve darkness.

The sixth trumpet and the sixth bowl both involve enemy hordes coming from the east or the Euphrates. So there's a lot of similarities, but the differences I think are more important than the similarities. What are the differences? The differences are that the trumpets are partial. In the trumpet judgments, it's one-third of the earth, one-third of the sea, one-third of the fresh water. In the bowl judgments, it's different. In the bowl judgments it's all of the water, all of the land, all of the seawater. So the differences are significant and important.

With the trumpet judgments, the aim is soliciting repentance. With the bowl judgments, the aim is completing judgment. With the trumpet judgments, people are indirectly affected; with the bowl judgments, people are directly affected. So there's a lot of similarities. Some say they are the same thing happening from different perspectives. I think they are not the same thing, but they're intensifications. It begins with the trumpets, intensifies with the bowls of judgments. So what are they? The first one is what's called severely painful sores. You say, Well, I got a severely painful sore.

I got a little fever blister. That's not talking about a fever blister. He's talking about a skin abscess. Think of a big old boil. Painful pus oozing out. That's this word. So how do I know? Because I looked it up. It's a nasty word, a stinky word. In fact, in Revelation chapter 16, the King James Version— I got to show you this. The King James Version says it was "a noisome and grievous sore." And that just sounds bad, doesn't it? Noisome and grievous. It means it kind of smells. Have you ever had a boil?

You ever smelt your boil before? It's not very pleasant— I don't have a boil. I don't know what it smells like. But these skin sores, they can't get rid of them. Now some people say, Well, these are literal skin sores. Yeah, I don't know, it could be literal. It's based on the mark of the beast, so maybe when they took the mark it gave them some kind of a skin sore. Maybe it's just symbolic. You know, different people take it different ways depending on your interpretation. The point is they are painful.

They torment the people who have them and they can't get rid of them. The second one and the third one are water turning to blood. First the seawater turns to blood, and then the fresh

water turns to blood. Revelation 16, verse 3: "The second poured out his bowl into the sea. It turned to blood like that of a dead person, and all life in the sea died. The third poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood." So first the seawater and all the fish in the sea, and then the fresh water.

You ever cut open a dead person to see what's in there? Any morticians in the house? No. I looked it up— which, by the way, don't Google that without SafeSearch applied on your internet. It's kind of crazy, nasty stuff in there. But there's this thing that happens when you die, when your heart stops beating blood. It's a condition known as livor mortis. Anybody ever heard that word before? Livor mortis is where the blood in your body, because it's no longer being circulated, kind of settles down into the dependent regions of the body and it turns this purplish, bluish color.

That's the picture. It's kind of sludge. There's no more motion, it's just kind of sludgy, and it causes the sea life to die. Now, is that literal? Again, people disagree. Some just say it's talking about the economy going bad, because their economy was sea-based fish and trade, and then they couldn't have any fresh water and so it's talking about your basic goods and necessities are trashed. Kind of like in the seal judgments, there's this big inflation, and wheat costs a ton of money, or bread costs a ton of money. I don't know.

It could go either way. Could be literal, could be figurative. But it harkens back to the exodus, where the water was turned to blood by Moses. The fourth bowl is the fourth angel pours his bowl out on the sun, and as a result the sun begins to scorch people with fire. So verse 8 of chapter 16: "The fourth poured out his bowl on the sun. It was allowed to scorch people with fire, and people were scorched by the intense heat. So they blasphemed the name of God, who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent and give him glory."

So what's that talking about? Well, yeah, I don't know. It could, like, be a literal solar flare that releases incredible heat and torches people. Like they literally get burnt. Some think that's global warming. Here it comes. Some say the sun— and there's reason for this— some argue the sun is symbolic of political power, because there is warrant to suggest that the idea of a sun describes power and authority. And so the idea is that the beast or the antichrist, this godless ruler who is in charge during that time, he becomes incredibly ruthless and oppressive to everyone in his kingdom.

He promised peace and prosperity, but then he just crushes them. And maybe that's what it's talking about. I kind of like the idea of the sun burning people. I don't know. It's not that I enjoy that, but I think it makes more sense. You know, I think of that Wicked Witch: I'm melting! That's one of the things I think of when I read that. It would be funny if it wasn't people being tormented by these judgments, which is the third question. Question of when, question of what, but why? Why does God do this to people?

God is loving, he's merciful, he's compassionate, he's not willing that any would perish. But yet here he is, torturing people to death, and everybody watching it saying, Yeah, they deserve it. How do you square that with your vision of God? Because this is the God of the Bible. And I think this forces us to deal with the reality of God's holiness and our sinfulness. There's a tendency, especially in the West and in the church, to kind of water down our sin and as a result we cheapen God's grace. Because we think that God is not seriously offended by our sin, because we're not seriously offended by our sin.

When the fact of the matter is, God is seriously offended by our sin. Both big, big sins, like Hitler-level sins, and your own sinful rebellion and unbelief. And for God to be just, for him to be a God worthy of worship, he must punish sin, which means he must punish sinners. Now in God's mercy and grace, he sent his Son into the world to pay the penalty for our sin. Jesus died in our place, bearing the wrath of God. Jesus received this wrath into his own body on the cross, so that in God's mercy we could be rescued.

We don't have to experience this judgment that will come one day. But there will be people who say, no thanks, hard pass. Don't want God. Don't want anything to do with God. I'll do things my own way. If this antichrist doesn't want God, then I want him. I want to do things his way. I want to bow the knee to that. And to those people who want nothing to do with God, he will say, Then here's nothing to do with me. Here is the just penalty for your rebellion and sin.

And they will be destroyed. And so what does that look like for us today? Well, for us today, we need to answer the question, who is atoning for my sin? If you're here today and you're a Christian, the answer to that question is Jesus. Jesus died in your place for your sin. If you're here today and you're not a Christian, today's passage is a reminder or a foreshadowing of what you will experience on the day of judgment. You may not be physically on the earth when all this stuff happens, if it even happens this way.

You know, maybe the other views are right, but you will stand before God one day in judgment. And what will you say to God in his holiness when he says, why should I let you into heaven? Will you say, Well, I tried my hardest and I did a lot of good things. Will you say that to a God who is perfect in his holiness, perfect in his righteousness, who says, No one can enter into my kingdom unless they too are perfect? Why would God allow any kind of sinfulness or blemish into his perfect kingdom?

Those answers are not good enough. The only answer that's sufficient is to say, Don't let me in because of what I've done; let me in because of what Jesus has done for me. He was sinless. He was spotless. He lived the life I couldn't live. I've repented of my sins. I'm trusting in him. He bore the wrath so that I don't have to. That's the only answer in which you can have absolute confidence on the day of judgment. And if you've not received the miracle of salvation into your life, if you've never become a Christian, then today, if the Holy Spirit is

working in your heart saying, Believe, repent and believe, then today can be the day of salvation.

There's no magic words, no magic prayer. A recognition is all you need. A recognition: I can't save myself, and Jesus can save me. That God has sent Jesus into the world to save me. For those of us who are Christians— if you're not a Christian, then I would invite you to believe on the Lord this morning when the team comes back up. In fact, team, you guys can go ahead and come back up and lead us in a time of response. But if you're here today and you're not a Christian, I want to challenge you to believe on the Lord.

And if you want to start that process and talk about it later, just come up and say, Hey, I want to talk about it later. For those of us who are believers, as we take the Lord's Supper, as we get ready to take the Lord's Supper, what an awesome reminder of what Jesus Christ went through on the cross. His death was not just physically painful. He bore the wrath of God. He received into his body some of what we're seeing in Revelation 16. Not because we deserved it or earned it or anything like that, just by God's grace, just because of his mercy.

And so as we take the Lord's Supper and we think about the body being broken for us and his blood being shed for us, be reminded that he is, through that death on the cross, delivering you from wrath. The wrath that was to come, the wrath that is to come. You will stand before God in judgment, so give thanks to Jesus Christ that you don't stand in your righteousness, but you stand in his perfect righteousness. It's also a reminder as God's people that there are people in this world who are lost, dying, who will die and spend eternity separated from God and face him in judgment.

And if we really believe the God of the Bible exists, then those people will spend eternity separated from him, some just because they never had an opportunity to hear. They won't spend eternity in hell because of their lack of opportunity to hear. They'll spend eternity in hell because of their sin. But we have an opportunity to go and share and go and tell. And in proclaiming that good news, people who otherwise would have spent eternity separated from God will have an opportunity to repent and believe and spend eternity with God in heaven.

And so it's a reminder as people of the book who are committed to missions, committed to evangelism, that we don't just do this because Jesus said we ought to do it. We do this because the love of Christ compels us. Because we don't want anyone to perish and spend eternity without God. And so this morning ask the Lord to renew in you a zeal for missions, a zeal for evangelism, a joy in your salvation as we prepare to take the Lord's Supper. So, Father, we thank you for this time. As we prepare to take these elements, I pray that you would open our eyes to see what we need to see.

Forgive us for cheapening your grace and your holiness and our sinfulness. It's just human nature to try to justify ourselves to make ourselves look better, and in so doing, take away

from your glory and your holiness. And so as we respond, would you help us to see the truth? Holy Spirit, would you illuminate the Scriptures, Especially for those who are lost in their sins, that they would hear your voice inviting them to come and receive the Lord Jesus Christ and receive the salvation and forgiveness of sins that is in his name because of what he has done.

And we pray these things in Jesus′ name. Amen.

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1. Transcript note: spoken as "Daniel chapter 7"; the covenant made "for one week" and broken "in the middle of the week," with the abomination of desolation, is Daniel 9:27 (Daniel 7 describes the little horn). Wording left as spoken. Source: Daniel 9:27 (CSB), BibleGateway. ↩