Remembering Revelation — Delivery Transcript

Revelation (CSB) · Wes Terry · Sunday, December 18, 2022 · *The Returning King*

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> ⚠️ ***AUTO-GENERATED TRANSCRIPT — verify against the audio before quoting publicly.*** *Produced from a Descript transcription of the Broadview Church sermon recording and lightly cleaned (filler words removed, obvious mis-hears of names and Scripture references corrected). No timestamps. A closing review of the church's years-long series through Revelation (reading: Revelation 1:1–5). The posted recording is the same service as the 11:00 a.m. YouTube livestream (linked at the start of the message). Scripture readings follow the CSB wording Wes read in this series. This is not a publication-ready manuscript and it is not Wes's exact words for print. Check any line against the recording before it goes on a graphic, in an email, or in a book.*

Well, thanks to the team for leading us this morning. Last week, if you were here, you know we finished a years-long journey that our church had been in the book of Revelation. It was quite the journey, going from chapter 1 all the way to the end of chapter 22. And as I was reflecting on this week's message, knowing that we had only one week left of Advent, and that we were going to be lighting the angels' candle and reflecting on the theme of God's peace, I was expecting to move on from the book of Revelation and preach a classical Christmas text on the theme of peace.

And ultimately the passage in Luke chapter 2, which talks about the angels—the whole point of the angels' candle comes from Luke chapter 2, verses 13 and 14, where they make the announcement to the shepherds: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to the people he favors." I always think it's interesting people leave off that last part, the "people he favors" part. On the Christmas cards and the coffee cups it just says, "Peace on earth, goodwill towards men." But there is one last piece: on whom he favors. So today's sermon is not about that part, but I just think it's interesting.

But as I was reflecting on the announcement of the angels, my mind kept drifting back to the book of Revelation. I think Revelation more than any other book talks about angels—more than any other Old Testament book or New Testament book. It describes angels, gives us a theology of angels, and so what better book as we light the angels' candle than the book of Revelation to think about peace? And it's interesting if you go through the book of the Revelation, which we're not going to do the whole thing this morning, but if you were to go and do a survey of what angels do and where angels show up, it literally is all over the place.

They show up in chapter 1, they give the message of the book; they show up in chapters 2 and 3 giving the message to the churches. Each church has an angel that receives the

message and gives it to the people. Some think that they're pastors, but it says angels: "To the angel of the church in Ephesus." In chapter 4 and 5, the angels are centered around the throne. They're worshiping God. They are in chapter 6—or chapter 7—they're restraining the four winds of judgment that God's about to unleash on the earth.

The angels of course enact judgment in chapter 8, unleashing the trumpet judgments. They fight alongside of Michael the archangel. We could go through this entirely, which we're not going to do this morning. I just find it so fascinating as we light the angels' candle, that Revelation, more than any other book, talks about angels. But the reason we're going to do one more final message on Revelation is because the first angel in the first chapter of the first verse in Revelation gives John a message that John describes as a message of God's grace and peace.

And I think it's important for us as we walk away from Revelation to not just remember it as a book of eschatology or a book of angelic theology or a book of controversy and debate, but to remember Revelation as words of God's grace and peace to us. So let's read Revelation chapter 1, verses 1 to 5, and see the words of this angel and what John does in response. And then we will have a final, final message on Revelation. Think of it as the memorial service for the book of Revelation in our church.

And then we will move on. Revelation chapter 1, verse 1 says, "The revelation of Jesus Christ that 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 testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, whatever he saw. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, blessed are those who hear the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who keep what is written in it, because the time is near."

And here's John's takeaway, chapter 1, verse 4. John, writing to the seven churches in Asia: "Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who was, and is to come, from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth." So notice the flow of the text. God the Father has a revelation that he gives to God the Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ takes that revelation and makes it known to his servant John, but he makes it known to his servant John through what?

Through an angel. The angel gives the message to John. John delivers that message to the churches, and John's big takeaway from the entirety of the visions that he receives about the future and the entirety of the book of Revelation, he says to the church, These words are words of God's grace and peace to you. Now, when people think of the book of Revelation, a lot of them don't think God's grace and God's peace. They think controversy, some of them think debate, some of them think cuckoo for Cocoa Puffs, some of them think a lot of different things, but not many people think of Revelation as a book of God's grace and peace.

And if there's anything I want for you as your pastor as we leave this book of the Bible, it's for you to remember Revelation as words of God's grace and peace. And if we can remember Revelation the way that God originally intended it to be understood and received, then they will in fact be words of great peace and comfort in our hearts. And so that's what I want to help us do this morning. Remember Revelation as a book of God's grace and peace. And in summary fashion, I want to put it under four headings: number one, how we see the future; how we see our suffering, how we see our world, and how we see our Lord.

How we see the future, how we see the world, how we see our suffering, and how we see our Lord. And this is just a— Think of it as a bird's-eye view of the book of the Revelation. It's not any one particular text. I don't have my TV this morning, so if you're watching online, you don't have the notes in front of you, but you're going to want to take notes this morning. And if you're watching online, you can get the notes on the app. Just click Fill-In Notes because there are some slides that kind of summarize the entirety of this book.

So as it relates to the future, the thing that I want us to take away from Revelation, the thing that we need to remember, if God's words are going to be words of God's grace and peace, is to remember that Revelation was not written to promote fearful speculation, but that it was written to promote hope-filled sanctification. And this is maybe the most important takeaway from the book, especially for a younger audience. Because when I was growing up, the book of the Revelation was kind of described as the no man's land of the Bible.

Did anybody else have that experience growing up? When you first became a believer: "Read the Gospel of John. The Gospel of John would be really good, but stay away from the book of Revelation." You know, well, it's the same guy who wrote both books. What's so scary about Revelation? And when they tell you, "Stay away from the book of Revelation," what's the first thing you always do when someone tells you don't do something? You go and do it. And I remember reading Revelation and just going, "Wow, this is really crazy and wild, and I'm not even sure I'm a Christian anymore, because that's kind of crazy."

I don't know if I can factor all that in. I didn't know how to understand apocalyptic literature and it would just seem so fanciful and so sci-fi and that's what a lot of people take when they read the book of Revelation, even scholars, even serious-minded Christians they take the book of the Revelation and they use it as a textbook to speculate about the future and certainly it describes future events. We're not understanding Revelation as just past or some spiritual idealized state of things. I believe it talks about the future, but the purpose of Revelation— It was not written to speculate about the future.

It was written to promote holiness in the lives of God's people. And so much of the reason why I didn't want to preach through the book of Revelation as a pastor is because I didn't want us to get into those debates. I don't know if you know this about me, but I don't like people to not like me. It's one of my great flaws—a people-pleaser type of person. I don't like

for people to disagree with me. I don't like people just to disagree in general. I try to harmonize everything. It's another character f— I guess it's a strength in some ways, but it also can be a flaw.

So I thought to myself, let's not go through the book of Revelation. I'll preach through the book of Revelation when I'm about to retire. That way, if I make everyone mad, I'm financially secure. You know, you can fire me, I don't care. I'll say what I want to say, kind of like a tenured professor. I was so wrong, and I really repent of that mindset because this book has— It has produced the opposite. What this book has produced in our church is a renewed affection and love for the Lord Jesus Christ and a renewed power and motivation to live holy lives.

Because in seeing Christ and in seeing his glory and seeing his promise of the future, it has instilled hope in our life. And in particular there have been young families in our church who have just come alive—a handful of personal eyewitness testimony that I've seen—have just fallen in love with Jesus, some of them for the first time, falling in love with his word because of this book. It was not given to promote speculative views about the future or divisive debates. It was given to promote holiness. And so the application, the takeaway is for us to not debate timelines and charts and the particulars of the rapture, but to live holy and godly lives as we together wait on the Lord.

2 Peter makes this point. He says in 2 Peter chapter 3, since you know these things are about to be dissolved—you know the end's coming—"it is clear what sort of people you should be in holy conduct and godliness as you wait for the day of God and hasten its coming." In other words, Jesus is coming soon. What's the application? Not speculation and debates and timelines. It is: live a holy and godly life. "Dear friends, since you know this in advance, be on your guard, so that you're not led astray"—or away—"by the error of lawless people and fall from your own stable position.

But grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and to the day of eternity." So takeaway one, if you're going to remember Revelation so that it's a means of peace in your life, remember it as a book that doesn't promote fearful speculation, but promotes hope-filled sanctification in your life. And if you'll approach it in that way, it will be a great ministry to you and a great source of God's peace in your life. The second thing that we need to remember about Revelation relates to how we see our world.

How we see our future is one thing, but it also gives us a great filter or lens through which we can understand our world. And the big takeaway from Revelation is that this world in which we live is a world filled with brokenness and deception. The world is broken. I don't think anybody debates that, even if you're not a Christian person. G. K. Chesterton said original sin is the one Christian doctrine that you don't need proof of because you can read its

evidence in the newspaper every single day. I think everyone agrees this world is jacked up, if you just watch the news or read the newspaper.

It is not the way that it's supposed to be. It is broken and it is filled with deception. But the book of Revelation promises that God through Christ is bringing something better. He's making something new. And when we receive that and when we remember Revelation along those lines, then it becomes a means of God's grace and peace in our life. So when I say world, what I mean by world— John, in his letter, he talks about the world as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

So you might think of the world as this system of unholy desires, a counter-system to the kingdom of heaven. The virtues of the world are the opposite of the virtues of God's kingdom. The values and inner goings of this world are kind of the opposite of what goes on in the kingdom of heaven. The world is motivated by greed and jealousy and pride and ego, and that world, this world system in which we live, it is deceiving people all the time. And it's not just deceiving unbelievers. What you see in the New Testament and in the book of the Revelation is that even Christian people can be duped and snookered by this system of the world.

You see this in chapters 2 and 3 with the letters to the churches. Paul—or not Paul—John rebukes, Jesus rebukes these churches because of a worldly spirit that had infiltrated the church. Again, there's a— This is a little chart you can take. If you like taking notes but you don't want to take all the— Like, that's a lot of things to write down. Just go to the app and the graphics will be on there. You can just save them to your phone. But if you do a quick review of the churches, you remember that in Ephesus there was a worldly spirit of kind of lovelessness, a displaced love for God.

In Smyrna, they were suffering. The church did not have any necessary sin in them or in their midst. But these Jewish synagogues were persecuting them and slandering them because of that spirit of worldliness that was at work around that church. Again, inside the church, when it came to the church in Pergamum, there was a spirit of compromise. In Thyatira it was a spirit of worldly tolerance. In Sardis, it was a spirit of duplicity and arrogance. Philadelphia, again, were not rebuked for sin in the church, but again, outside the church, just like in Smyrna, you had these Jews who were Jews in name only, according to John, they were a synagogue of Satan.

They thought they were holy, but they weren't holy. They were persecuting the church in Philadelphia. And then finally there was a spirit of worldliness and apathy and indifference that had infiltrated the church at Laodicea, and Jesus rebukes them for it. So the warning is, even for God's people, even for Christian believers, the warning is the world is deceptive. And it can play on your weaknesses and appetites and insecurities and can draw you in

under the guise that everything's fine, and "I'm just kind of— Maybe it's a dry season in my life, and I'm not really sinning.

I'm just kind of not loving Jesus as I used to love him." And before you know it, the world has you in a state of brokenness and spiritual neutrality and ineffectiveness because you were deceived. So it's a warning to the churches. And then that worldly corruption in the church is contrasted with chapter 4, where you have this vision of heaven. And God, not man, is at the center. And people from every nation, tribe and tongue are worshiping Jesus around the throne. So you see something better. The world is broken, filled with deception, but then something better in Christ.

You see the same dynamic in chapter 6. The world is broken. This world leader promises peace—peace and prosperity— but he doesn't deliver. Instead you have poverty and death and persecution. That's this world. It's broken, filled with deception. The contrast in chapter 7 is something better. Something better is Jesus around the throne, the mark of God on every forehead of the 144,000. It says in chapter 7, they were no longer hungering, no longer thirsting, no longer the sun beating down on them. They drank from the water of life freely and they were restored.

So it's a contrast to chapter 6. Chapter 6 is just the world broken, deceiving people, not delivering on the promise. Chapter 7 is the alternative. The presence of God, the absence of hostility and physical comfort. Same thing, chapters 8 and 9: trumpet judgments. The world is unraveling. Demons are torturing, people are suffering. You see the judgments of God in 8 and 9, the trumpet judgments, but then you get to chapter 10: the promise of God's kingdom is coming. No longer will there be a delay. And then in chapter 11, the kingdom of this world, this broken, deceptive world becomes the kingdom of our God and his Christ.

And there's something better that's on the way. You see the same thing in chapters 12 and 13. The horror of this world under the sway of satanic ideology—the Babylon, the great harlot, chapter 17 and 18, luring people in, deceiving them, forcing them to drink the cup of sexual immorality. Then you see the contrast in chapter 14, chapter 19, chapter 20, and 22: it shows the splendor of the king and the kingdom that is to come. Victory belongs to Christ and his bride. All things are made new. Chaos brought into order.

Death is destroyed and suffering ceases, and God's city descends and fills the earth. Do you see the dynamic? You see what Revelation is doing one time after the next, after the next, after the next. It's saying this world is deceptive. It is broken. It says one thing and does another. It promises peace, but it never delivers. Don't live for this world, because there's another world, a better world that Jesus is bringing. This world, you will no longer thirst, you will no longer hunger, you will no longer be physically uncomfortable. Its glory will outshine the glory of Babylon.

Even the very best that this world has to offer isn't even all that good when compared to the glory of the city that is to come. This world is broken. But God in Christ is bringing something better. So what's the practical application? I think the takeaway for us as God's people, number one, is remember that this world will never satisfy your deepest longings. Your greatest, deepest desires will never be satisfied by the world, even though there's a temptation to use the world to satisfy those longings. There is a mindset that says pursue as much money as you can and pursue as much pleasure as you can and find as much happiness as you can, and maybe if you're lucky, you'll get it and you'll be okay.

And what we see even in people who get that, they get all the money and they get all the pleasure and they get all the accolades and they get all the prosperity, many of them, at least the ones that we have insight to, they write songs about how miserable that they are and they make movies and have little hints that drop how depressed that they are, because this world never satisfies that deepest longing. There's an itch that only God can scratch. There's a thirst that only God can quench. And when you look to this world to satisfy those things, those desires, you'll find that it never really does the job.

So as God's people, don't look to this world to satisfy those desires. They're broken cisterns. God, through the prophet Jeremiah, says that "my people have done a double evil." They've left me, the source of living water. That's sin number one. But then they also built broken cisterns that really can't hold the water that their souls really thirst for. They thirst for me. They've left me, the source of living water and they've built these other cisterns and that's what our culture is. It is a landscape of broken cisterns and a multitude of people who are trying to drink living water from those cisterns, and walking away depressed because it didn't satisfy.

This world will never satisfy. It'll deliver pleasure, it will deliver degrees of happiness, but it will never satisfy that deep longing in your heart. Second thing we need to remember is that our greatest problems will never be solved by this world. I don't know if you notice this. In chapter 6 of Revelation, it's this horseman, it's a white horseman who promises peace. He goes out to conquer and he creates peace on the earth. And then in chapter 13, what you see is this beast come up out of the sea who comes from Satan.

And this beast is basically representative of consolidated state power that has kind of grown evil and authoritarian in its application. So one of the things that Revelation is making explicitly clear, it uses pictures like beasts and horsemen to describe it, but what it's saying is there is a limited application for things like government and politicians and human saviors. So he's warning the people of God, and he's warning people in general. Do not look for politicians and political administrations to solve your biggest problems, because they can't solve your biggest problems. In fact, what happens when you look to human authority to

solve those kind of problems, you entrust them with an authority that really belongs to God alone.

And when you put government in the place of God, you give government a power that corrupts the government and abuses the people under its authority. And you can see this throughout history. These godless authoritarian governments that have cropped up throughout history, whether it's Hitler's Germany, which abused Christianity to create a godless empire of anti-Semitism and hostility or Mao's China or Stalin's Russia or Soviet Union. You have today authoritarian communist China. You have the false religion of the Islamic caliphate, that Islamic godless ideology that oppresses its people because they're looking for government to do what only God can do.

Now don't get me wrong, there is a place for government. God instituted government. Government can do certain things really well. But Revelation is warning us to not trust in government to do what only God can do. There are certain problems only God can fix. Psalm 146:3 says, "Do not trust in nobles," or "a son of man, who cannot save." The cultural decay that we have happening in our culture right now can't be fixed by the government. It doesn't matter if it's a right side politician or a left side politician. The racial discrimination, the racial problems that we have today can't be fixed by the United States government because it's a problem of the heart that only God can fix.

The cuckoo-for-Cocoa-Puffs redefinition of marriage and redefinition of gender and the separation of biology and gender, all of that stuff that's just eroding what we know are basic truths about human biology, that stuff can't be legislated away. It's something that only God can do. It's a solution that happened because we went and drifted from God, and it's a solution that will only be applied when we return back to him. Certain things government can't do. So don't fall for the stump speech, don't fall for Babylon, don't fall for the sensual pleasures and insatiable lust for more and more and more, the promise of material prosperity and satisfaction and security.

"Do not love the world or the things in the world." Everything in the world—"the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh," the pride of possessions—that's "not from the Father, but" it's "from the world," and the world's "passing away, but the one who does the will of God remains forever." So when it comes to the future, remember Revelation is a book of hope-filled sanctification, not fearful speculation. And when it comes to this world, remember it's broken. Certain things this world just cannot do for us. As good as this world is, certain things it cannot accomplish that we should not look for it to accomplish, because they can only be accomplished by God alone.

And God is bringing that better thing if we will wait. The third thing relates to how we see our suffering. This is early on in the book of Revelation. We need to remember that in this world we will have trouble. But in Jesus Christ we'll overcome. I think this is a particularly

relevant truth for us to remember as Americans, because in America we sometimes get surprised by the sufferings that we experience for the cause of Christ. And it is shocking because we live in a country where there's supposed to be freedom of speech and freedom of religion and freedom of association.

And some of those things seem to be being applied differently than they were in the past, but it should not surprise us in the least because Jesus told us, In the world you will have trouble. They persecuted me; they are going to persecute you. Maybe we had a little temporary relief because of where we live and the place that we live at the time that we live. But don't expect it to last forever because the nature of this world is to create tribulation for those who belong to Christ. Jesus said in a gospel—in John's Gospel, in fact, John 16:33 —"I've told you these things that you may have peace," talking about the Holy Spirit and the cross and the resurrection.

I've told you these things that you'll have peace, but you need to know: in the world you'll have trouble. In me you'll have peace, but in the world you'll have trouble. Even though you're going to have trouble, take heart because I've overcome the world. In the world we'll have trouble, but in Christ we will overcome. You see this early in Revelation chapter 1, verse 9. John describes himself as a partner in the affliction that is in Jesus Christ. So if you're going to be a Christian, John says, get ready for affliction.

It's not a health and wealth prosperity gospel. In the letters to the churches, you see that the concluding words to every letter, to every church is to the one who overcomes. If you will persevere, if you will overcome, there's a promise, there's a blessing. You see the triumph of Christ over suffering as the theme of the song of the heavenly host in Revelation 5, verses 9 and 10 and 12 to 13. You see perseverance through persecution highlighted in the seal judgments in chapter 6. And you see that picture of heavenly rest in chapter 7 for those who persevere and endure.

You see the same pattern with the trumpet judgments and the bowl judgments. God protects his people so that they can persevere through tribulation and he vindicates their suffering by destroying evil and entrusting them with a better world. You see it in chapter 12 with the rage of Satan and he's persecuting the woman and he's persecuting her children, meaning Israel and the church. But those who persevere, God says they overcome. They overcame him. They conquered him by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony. You see the same thing in chapter 13.

Satan rises up the beast, the Antichrist, and he rises up the false prophet, and they use their power to lead people astray and to alienate the saints and to persecute them and kill them and pressure them to deny their faith in Christ. And it says it calls for endurance, and it calls for a wisdom from the saints. But then those who persevere, chapter 14 opens with a victory. The victory of the lamb and the victory of God's people standing with the lamb and the

triumph of the gospel as angels proclaim the gospel from one side of the earth to the next, and a harvest of God's salvation, even as God brings judgment and vindication.

The saints who endure, the saints who persevere, will receive vindication when the timing is right. Same thing in chapter 17 and 18. Mystery Babylon leads people astray, forces you to drink the wine of sexual immorality, judges the saints, alienates the saints, makes fun of the saints for holding fast to Christ. But then at the end of chapter 18, when Babylon falls, it says, "Rejoice over her"—rejoice over her fall—"O heavens, and you saints," because the judgment she poured out on you is now being poured out on her. And that culminates in chapter 19 with the triumph of the lamb and the return of Christ and the people of God ruling and reigning with Christ on his throne for a thousand years.

It's a theme. It is a consistent theme in the book of Revelation. Don't be surprised by suffering. It's coming. If you're going to follow Jesus, "all who desire to live godly lives in Christ Jesus will" suffer. But take heart, persevere, overcome, use wisdom, use patience. Don't allow your suffering to overcome you. Don't allow evil to overcome you, but overcome evil with good. Our suffering is real, but it's temporary. It's unjust, but it is not unseen. You have a heavenly father who knows what you are going through. You have a heavenly father who hears the slander and the false representations.

And you have a heavenly father who will come and vindicate you in his righteous judgment someday. So don't be overcome by evil. Overcome evil with good. Finally, as it relates to the way we see our Lord, we need to remember, remember Christ in all of his glory. He alone is worthy. This is my favorite thing for us to remember from the book of Revelation. As we walk away from this book, may we never forget that the main point of Revelation, the word apocalypse, means a revealing. What is Revelation revealing? It's not just revealing the future.

It's revealing Jesus in all of his glory, in all of his splendor and majesty, he alone is worthy. Revelation opens with a picture of the glorious Jesus Christ, and it closes with a picture of the glory of Jesus Christ. He is fully human, identifies with his church in their humanity, in their suffering. He too suffers, but he's also presented as fully divine: one with the Father, Alpha and Omega, Lord of Lords, first and last, beginning and end. If you go to Revelation chapter 1, I hope you'll never forget this chapter.

It's right there at the end of chapter one. It presents Jesus as the promised Son of man from Daniel chapter 7. He has got this golden sash around his chest,[1] presenting him as the great high priest. He intercedes for us. He makes atonement for us. He is our great high priest. It shows his hair as white as wool, showing his infinite wisdom and his eternal age. He is infinitely old. It shows his eyes like flaming fire. Do you guys remember this? Eyes like flaming fire, meaning they penetrate throughout the entirety of the earth.

There's nothing that escapes his gaze. He reigns over all. He has feet like burnished bronze, chapter 1, verse 15, meaning his judgments are pure and righteous. He has a voice, chapter 1, verse 15, like cascading waters. His words thunder with authority. He is Lord of the church. He has his stars in his hand. He is sovereign over the churches. He is unrivaled in his glory. He has a double-edged sword coming from his mouth, words that penetrate the heart—bone and marrow, soul and spirit. Nothing escapes his gaze, and he unearths the secret motivations of the heart.

He has a face that shines like the sun, verse 16. His glory is unmatched in all of creation. He is the first and the last, the living one. He was dead, but now he is alive forevermore, and he holds the keys to death and Hades. If that vision of Jesus doesn't get you up in the morning, then you ain't living right. That's the Jesus of Revelation and that's how we need to remember him. But here's the deal. It's not just how the book begins, it's how the book ends. You remember chapter 22 presents him as the long-awaited groom, the promised hope.

He is the groom of the bride who's been eagerly waiting for the wedding supper and the consummation. He is the great lamp and temple of God's city. They don't even need a sun because the light of the lamb is its light. He is the Alpha and the Omega. He's the first and the last. He's the *archē* and the *telos*, the beginning and end, the source of all things, and the purpose and fulfillment of all things. He is the root and descendant of David. He is the bright morning star. From Revelation 1 to Revelation 22, the glory of Christ is on display.

You go to chapter 5: he is the only one worthy. He is the lion from the tribe of Judah. He is the lamb that was slain. But he's not a slain lamb lying on the ground. It says, "I saw a slain lamb standing." He was surrounded by people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. His worship was universal. There was people from all over the place worshiping the lamb. His work is unforgettable. They were singing, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain." You made us a kingdom of priests and servants to our God, and his worth is undisputed.

John says, I looked up, I looked down, I looked throughout the heaven, I looked under the heaven, I looked throughout the earth, I couldn't find anyone worthy. And I began to weep, but then I saw the lion from the tribe of Judah, I saw the lamb who was slain. He is worthy. Revelation 12, through his birth, he destroyed the schemes of Satan. And through his death, he defanged our enemy and demolished every accusation he might throw at us. And finally, in chapter 19, he is the one who is faithful and true in all that he says and does.

Many crowns adorn his head, and much mystery surrounds his name. He conquers God's enemies and he purifies God's people. He speaks God's words. And he reigns over all. He will shepherd them with an iron rod. He is king of kings and Lord of Lords, and nothing compares to him. It's like the book of Revelation presents this amazingly glorious picture of Jesus Christ. Talks about suffering, talks about promise, talks about Jesus again. Talks about

suffering, talks about promise, talks about Jesus again. Talks about suffering, talks about promise, talks— This is the one who will bring about these things.

These are not pleasant promises— These are not light platitudes to hopefully make you feel a little bit better. These are promises from a God who is able to do what he says that he will do, and that God is the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm going to finish with this quote from Dennis Johnson. He says, "When you think of Jesus Christ, do you see him in all the ways that Revelation's images portray him? When you think that you have hidden your sins well from others, do you remember his eyes like flames?

When fear grips your heart, fear for yourself or for your family or for Christ's church, do you fight that fear with the picture of the rider on the white horse, against whom the devil's worst, last weapons are impotent? When you are confused, not knowing whom to trust or which path to take, do you hear the voice of the faithful witness ringing in your ears? These words are faithful and true. And do you turn expectantly to his words to find your way? And when the accuser, though disbarred from heaven, renews his prosecution against your conscience, do you stand with John in awestruck wonder, gazing at the slain lamb who poured out his blood to wash you clean, and robe you in his own fine linen, bright and clean, to make you—yes, you—God's precious treasure?"

Oh, that we would see the glory of Christ, and the promise of a future with joyful hope and see our suffering in light of his coming and this world for its brokenness and deception. If we would but remember Revelation for these truths, then they will in fact become words of God's grace and peace to you. When we forget these words, those are the times where we grow anxious and weary, compromised by the world, and loveless in our affections for Jesus Christ. And so remember, remember, remember. Remember these words of God's grace and peace to you.

As we enter into a time of response, I'm going to ask Taylor to come up and play for just a few moments. If you're here this morning and you're not a Christian and the Holy Spirit and that vision of Jesus Christ has quickened your heart to realize that you're not ready to stand before this God in judgment, because you don't belong to him and he doesn't belong to you, because there's never been a point in time in your life where you've repented of your sin and you've put your faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

Maybe you were depending on some past decision you made as a kid that was just a formality. Maybe you thought your baptism was going to save you, but if you're honest with yourself, there's no relationship there. You don't have a true relationship with Jesus as Lord, and He's calling you to put your faith in Him this morning. You can come and do that and make that public by coming down to the front and saying, "I need to give my life to Jesus." For the vast majority of us in this room, I think it's just a call to remember Jesus gave us the Lord's Supper so that we might remember.

He gave us baptism so we might remember. Because we have a tendency to forget. And so he's given us Revelation to remember these truths that we are so prone to forget. And so as we respond, would you ask the Holy Spirit to help you remember, to help you leave this season of this book with the seed of the word planted deeply in your heart, so that it might never be plucked up or uprooted or fade away, but that instead it would bear fruit in your life —a fruit of holiness and godliness and joyful hope and anticipation as you wait on the Lord.

I'll give you just a few moments to respond right there where you're seated as Taylor plays. Heavenly Father, we thank you for this time and your word, and we do thank you for this book. I thank you for what it's done in my life and what it's accomplished in our church family. And as we leave this season, as we leave this book, we do so full of gratitude for what you've done and ask you to help us remember it as words of your grace and peace in our life. And we pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen

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1. Transcript note: spoken as "a golden sash around his waist"; Revelation 1:13 describes the Son of Man "with a golden sash wrapped around his chest." Source: Revelation 1:13 (CSB), BibleGateway. ↩