

## Introduction

We have covered a lot of ground in [Revelation 20](#).

We watched Satan get bound with a great chain and thrown into the Abyss. We sat with the saints on their thrones and watched them reign with Christ for a thousand years as priests and kings. We watched Satan get released, gather an army numbered like the sand of the seashore, march against the beloved city, and get consumed by fire from heaven in nine words. And then we watched him get thrown into the lake of fire where the beast and false prophet were already waiting. Day and night. Forever and ever.

The dragon is done. The rebellion is over. The beast, the false prophet, and the dragon are all in the lake of fire together.

But the story is not finished yet.

There is still one more scene in [Revelation 20](#). And it is the most sobering one. Not because it is dark for its own sake. But because it is final. What happens in verses 11 through 15 has no appeal. No reversal. No second chance. This is the last judgment. Every person who has ever lived stands before a great white throne. The books are opened. And everything comes to its permanent conclusion.

We are going to sit with this passage honestly today. We are not going to soften it or rush past the hard parts. But we are also going to find that even here, in one of the most weighty passages in all of Scripture, the grace of God is still on the page. The Judge sitting on that throne is not a stranger to us. He is the Lamb. And if your name is in the Book of Life, everything that happens at the great white throne is not your story. It is covered. Completely and permanently covered.

## Read the Text: [Revelation 20:11–15](#) (BSB)

**Revelation 20:11–15 BSB**

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and the One seated on it. Earth and heaven fled from His presence, and no place was found for them.

<sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. And there were open books, and one of them was the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their deeds, as recorded in the books.

<sup>13</sup> The sea gave up its dead, and Death and Hades gave up their dead, and each one was judged according to his deeds.

<sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death—the lake of fire.

<sup>15</sup> And if anyone was found whose name was not written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

## Walking Through the Text

### 1. The Great White Throne (v. 11)

*Then I saw a great white throne and the One seated on it. Earth and sky fled from His presence, and no place was found for them. — Revelation 20:11 (BSB)*

John has seen a lot in this book. He has seen the throne room of heaven in chapter 4. He has seen the Lamb open the seven seals. He has seen bowls of wrath poured out and the rider on the white horse. But this throne is described differently from anything that has come before it.

It is great. It is white. And the One seated on it commands a presence so complete that the earth and sky flee from it.

The Old Testament background here is deep. [Daniel 7:9–10](#) is the most direct:

*"As I watched, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His clothing was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before Him. Thousands upon thousands attended Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened." — Daniel 7:9–10 (BSB)*

Thrones set in place. Court seated. Books opened. Daniel saw this scene coming from hundreds of years away. John sees it arriving. The Ancient of Days taking His seat in Daniel's vision is the same moment John is describing here. The great white throne is not a new idea. It is the fulfillment of what Daniel saw.

Isaiah 6:1 gives us another angle. When Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, the train of His robe filled the temple. The seraphim covered their faces. The doorposts shook. And Isaiah's immediate response was: woe is me, I am ruined, for I am a man of unclean lips. The holiness of God in Isaiah 6 is not a gentle thing. It is overwhelming. It undoes the person who encounters it.

The great white throne carries that same weight. White speaks of absolute purity and perfect justice. There is no corruption on this throne. No bias. No favoritism. No possibility of a wrong verdict. The One seated on it sees everything, knows everything, and judges with perfect accuracy.

And the earth and sky flee.

This is not poetic decoration. It is a statement about the nature of this moment. The created order itself cannot stand in the presence of this judgment. Revelation has already told us in chapter 6, at the opening of the sixth seal, that the kings of the earth and the mighty men hid themselves in caves and called on the mountains and rocks to fall on them and hide them from the face of the One seated on the throne. The instinct to flee from God's holy presence in judgment runs throughout Scripture. Here the creation itself does what every unrepentant human heart has always wanted to do. It tries to get away. And there is no place found.

No place was found. Nowhere to run. Nowhere to hide. Every dark corner. Every secret place. Every hidden deed. All of it is fully exposed before this throne.

Who is seated on the throne? John does not name Him here directly. But the rest of Scripture is clear. John 5:22 says the Father has entrusted all judgment to the Son. Acts 17:31 says God will judge the world with justice through the Man He has appointed, meaning Jesus. And Revelation itself has been building toward this. The rider on the white horse. The King of kings and Lord of lords. The Lamb who was slain and found worthy to open the scroll. He is the One on the throne.

The Judge is Jesus. And He is not coming to this moment as a stranger to human suffering. He entered the world He is now judging. He lived in it, suffered in it, and died in it. The One on the throne bears the marks of the cross. And that changes everything about what this judgment means for those whose names are in the Book of Life.

## 2. The Dead Standing Before God (v. 12a)

*And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. — [Revelation 20:12a](#) (BSB)*

Every person who has ever lived stands here.

Great and small. That phrase is doing a lot of work in one sentence. It covers every category of human existence. Kings and peasants. Emperors and slaves. The famous and the forgotten. The powerful and the powerless. None of them are exempt. None of them have a status that gets them out of this line.

The sea gave up its dead. Death and Hades gave up their dead. No one is missing. The ones who drowned. The ones who were buried. The ones whose bodies were never recovered. The ones who lived thousands of years ago. Every single person who has ever drawn breath stands before this throne.

[Romans 14:12](#) says plainly:

*"So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God." — [Romans 14:12](#) (BSB)*

Each of us. Not each church. Not each nation. Each of us. Individually. Personally. The judgment at the great white throne is not a group event where you can hide in the crowd. It is personal. You stand before God and you give an account.

[2 Corinthians 5:10](#) reinforces it:

*"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." — [2 Corinthians 5:10](#) (BSB)*

All. Each. Whether good or bad.

There is something worth pausing on here. The great and small standing before the throne is not just a statement about who shows up. It is a statement about the nature of the judgment. Earthly status means nothing here. The Roman emperor who demanded worship and the slave who refused to give it stand in the same line. The celebrity and the person nobody ever heard of stand before the same throne. The one who seemed to get away with everything and the one who was falsely accused of everything face the same judge.

Every inequality of this life is leveled at this throne. Every person who was overlooked, dismissed, or crushed by someone with more power will stand on equal footing before the One who sees everything. And every person who used their power, their wealth, or their status to avoid accountability in this life will find that none of it follows them here.

Great and small. All of them. Standing before the throne.

### 3. The Two Sets of Books (vv. 12b–13)

*And books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to their works, as recorded in the books. The sea gave up its dead, and Death and Hades gave up their dead, and each one was judged according to his works. — Revelation 20:12b–13 (BSB)*

John sees books opened. Then another book. The distinction is important and it is worth taking time here because it is the theological center of the entire passage.

#### **The Books of Deeds**

The first set of books is plural. These are what theologians call the books of deeds. Everything is in them. Every action. Every word. Every thought. [Matthew 12:36](#) makes the scope of these books clear:

*"But I tell you that men will give an account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken." — [Matthew 12:36](#) (BSB)*

Every careless word. Not just the big things. Not just the dramatic sins. Every careless word spoken in a moment of thoughtlessness is recorded. If every careless word is in there, everything else is in there too. Every kind act. Every selfish one. Every moment of integrity when nobody was watching. Every moment of compromise when you thought nobody was watching. All of it. Written down. Accurate. Complete.

[Ecclesiastes 12:14](#) says:

*"For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether good or evil." — [Ecclesiastes 12:14](#) (BSB)*

Every hidden thing. The books of deeds do not record what people saw. They record what happened. There is no gap between the two at this throne.

#### **The Book of Life**

Then another book was opened. Just one. The Book of Life.

This book has a long history in Scripture. It is not a new idea in [Revelation 20](#). It runs through the entire Bible as a thread pointing toward this moment.

Exodus 32:32–33 is the first place it appears. Moses is interceding for Israel after the golden calf incident and says to God: "Please forgive their sin. But if not, then blot me out of the book You have written." God responds: "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot out of My book." The book existed at Sinai. Names were in it. And names could be blotted out. Moses understood this and offered himself in place of his people. It is one of the most striking moments of intercession in the Old Testament.

Psalms 69:28 says: "Let them be blotted out of the book of life and not listed with the righteous." The book of life is the record of the righteous. To be in it is to be counted among them.

Philippians 4:3 has Paul referring to his fellow workers "whose names are in the book of life." It is not just an end-times concept. It is a present reality. Names are in it now.

Revelation 3:5 is where Jesus speaks to the church at Sardis and says:

*"The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels." — Revelation 3:5 (BSB)*

Two things here. First, Jesus promises He will never blot out the name of the one who overcomes. That is a promise of security for the faithful. Second, the implication is real. Names can be blotted out. This is not a comfortable truth. But it is an honest one. The person who genuinely walks away from God, who turns their back completely and returns to the pollution of the world as 2 Peter 2:20–22 describes, is not automatically protected by a past profession. The book records who is truly His. And Jesus Himself says He will acknowledge their names before the Father.

That last part is everything. Jesus acknowledging your name before the Father. This is the advocate language of 1 John 2:1:

*"My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One." — 1 John 2:1 (BSB)*

An advocate. An attorney standing before the Father on your behalf. When your name is in the Book of Life, Jesus stands before the Father and says: that one is mine. That one is covered. Whatever is written in those other books, it has been dealt with. The blood covers it.

If your name is in the Book of Life, the books of deeds become irrelevant. Not because they are inaccurate. But because everything written in them has been covered by the blood of

Jesus Christ. As far as the east is from the west. Cast into the depths of the sea. Remembered no more.

The Book of Life is the only book that counts.

### **The Books of Life Through Revelation**

It is worth noting that the Book of Life appears six times in Revelation alone. [Revelation 3:5](#). [Revelation 13:8](#). [Revelation 17:8](#). [Revelation 20:12](#). [Revelation 20:15](#). [Revelation 21:27](#). John keeps coming back to it. He wants his readers to know it exists, to know their names can be in it, and to live with the urgency of that reality. It is not background information. It is the point.

## **4. Death and Hades Thrown Into the Lake of Fire (v. 14)**

*Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.*  
— [Revelation 20:14](#) (BSB)

Before John tells us about the people thrown into the lake of fire, he tells us that Death and Hades are thrown in first.

This is one of the most stunning moments in the entire passage and it is easy to move past it too quickly.

Death and Hades have been present throughout Revelation. Back in chapter 6, when the fourth seal was opened, Death was the rider on the pale horse and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a quarter of the earth. They have been a pair throughout the book, moving together, representing the domain of the dead and the power of death over human existence.

And now they are thrown into the lake of fire.

Paul anticipated this moment in [1 Corinthians 15:26](#):

*"The last enemy to be destroyed is death." — [1 Corinthians 15:26](#) (BSB)*

The last enemy. Not the beast. Not the false prophet. Not even Satan. The last enemy is death itself. And here it is being destroyed. Thrown into the lake of fire. The thing that has stalked every human being since [Genesis 3](#), the consequence of the fall, the one thing no earthly power has ever been able to defeat, is itself defeated and thrown into the fire.

[Isaiah 25:8](#) promised this moment:

*"He will swallow up death forever. The Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from every face and remove the disgrace of His people from the whole earth. For the LORD has spoken." — Isaiah 25:8 (BSB)*

He will swallow up death forever. The God who is life itself swallows the thing that has been swallowing His people since the garden. Death dies. It is one of the most glorious reversals in Scripture.

Hosea 13:14 adds:

*"I will deliver them from the power of Sheol; I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O Sheol, is your destruction?" — Hosea 13:14 (BSB)*

Paul picks up that exact language in 1 Corinthians 15:55 and turns it into a declaration of victory:

*"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" — 1 Corinthians 15:55 (BSB)*

The sting is gone. The victory is gone. Death is in the lake of fire. The last enemy has been destroyed.

For everyone in this room who has stood at a graveside and felt the weight of death pressing in, this moment is the answer. Death is not eternal. It does not get the last word. The One who rose from the dead on the third day does not share His universe with death forever. He throws it into the lake of fire. And it never touches His people again.

## 5. The Lake of Fire and the Second Death (v. 15)

*And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. — Revelation 20:15 (BSB)*

If anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Before we talk about what the lake of fire is, we need to sit with the word anyone for a moment. John 3:16 says that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. That whosoever is an open invitation. Wide open. Anyone who believes. Anyone who comes. Anyone who puts their trust in Jesus. That whosoever is the greatest promise in Scripture.

This whosoever is different. If anyone's name was not found. Anyone. No exceptions. No special cases. No last-minute arrangements. If the name is not in the book, the destination is the lake of fire.

You want to be the right whosoever.

## What Is the Lake of Fire? Understanding the Bible's Language About the Afterlife

When people hear the word hell, they usually picture one thing. Fire, darkness, suffering, permanent separation from God. But the Bible actually uses several different words that get translated as hell in English, and they do not all mean the same thing. Collapsing them all into one concept creates real confusion about what the Bible is actually teaching. Here is a clear breakdown of the key terms.

### Sheol (Hebrew)

Sheol is the Old Testament word most often translated as hell, grave, or the pit in English Bibles. But it does not map neatly onto what most people think of when they hear the word hell.

In the Old Testament, Sheol is the realm of the dead. It is where people go when they die. Both the righteous and the unrighteous. It is not primarily a place of punishment in the Old Testament. It is simply the place of the dead. A shadowy, below-ground existence that stood in contrast to the land of the living.

Psalm 16:10 says: "For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol, nor will You let Your Holy One see decay." That is a verse about the righteous, specifically pointing forward to the resurrection of Christ. David was not describing a place of torment. He was describing the realm of death that God would not leave him in permanently.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 says: "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in Sheol, where you are going, there is no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom." Sheol here is simply where everyone ends up after death. It is the default destination of the dead.

The Old Testament picture of Sheol is not the full picture. It is the early picture. As revelation develops across the canon of Scripture, the understanding of what awaits the dead becomes clearer and more detailed. Sheol is the starting point, not the ending point.

### Hades (Greek)

Hades is the New Testament equivalent of Sheol. It is the Greek word for the realm of the dead and it appears in several important New Testament passages. Like Sheol, it refers to the

intermediate state, the place where the dead exist between death and the final resurrection and judgment.

But by the time of the New Testament, the understanding of Hades had developed significantly. It was understood to have distinct regions for the righteous and the unrighteous. The clearest picture of this comes from Jesus Himself in [Luke 16:19–31](#), the account of the rich man and Lazarus.

In that account, the rich man dies and finds himself in torment in Hades. Lazarus dies and is carried by angels to Abraham's side. There is a great chasm between them that cannot be crossed. The rich man can see Abraham and Lazarus. He is in conscious torment. He asks Abraham to send Lazarus to dip his finger in water and cool his tongue. Abraham says it is not possible.

This is not the lake of fire. This is Hades. The intermediate state before the final judgment. And already there is conscious experience on both sides of that chasm. The righteous are comforted. The unrighteous are in torment. But this is not yet the final destination. It is the waiting place.

In [Revelation 20:13–14](#), Hades gives up its dead so they can stand before the great white throne. Then Hades itself is thrown into the lake of fire. That sequence is important. Hades is not the final state. It is the intermediate state that ends at the great white throne. After the judgment, Hades is no longer needed. It is thrown into the lake of fire along with Death.

## Gehenna (Greek)

Gehenna is the word Jesus used most often when He talked about hell. It appears twelve times in the New Testament. Eleven of those are from Jesus Himself. And it is different from both Sheol and Hades.

Gehenna comes from the Hebrew Ge Hinnom, which means Valley of Hinnom. This was a real physical valley just outside Jerusalem. In the Old Testament it was the site of some of the most horrific idolatry in Israel's history. Kings Ahaz and Manasseh sacrificed children there to the god Molech. King Josiah defiled the site in his reforms to make it unfit for worship. By the time of Jesus, the valley had become a garbage dump for Jerusalem. Fires burned there constantly. Worms fed on the refuse. It was a place of perpetual burning and decay.

Jesus used this image to describe the final place of judgment. When He says in [Mark 9:43](#): "It is better for you to enter life maimed than to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire," He is pointing to something permanent and terrible using an image His listeners could picture

immediately. The fires of Gehenna never went out. The worms never stopped. And Jesus says the fire of final judgment is unquenchable in the same way.

Gehenna in the New Testament corresponds most closely to what Revelation calls the lake of fire. It is the final destination of the unrighteous after the last judgment. Not the intermediate state. The final state.

## Tartarus (Greek)

This word appears only once in the New Testament, in 2 Peter 2:4:

*"For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell, delivering them in chains of gloomy darkness to be held until judgment." — 2 Peter 2:4 (BSB)*

The word translated hell here is Tartarus. In Greek mythology, Tartarus was the deepest region of the underworld, reserved for the worst offenders. Peter uses the term to describe the place where certain fallen angels are being held until judgment. It is not a destination for humans in Scripture. It is a holding place for fallen spiritual beings.

## The Lake of Fire

The lake of fire is the final destination described in Revelation 20. It is not Sheol. It is not Hades. It is not even the intermediate place of torment Jesus described in the rich man and Lazarus account. It is the final, permanent, post-judgment state.

Here is the sequence that helps clarify everything.

When a person dies right now, before the final judgment, the unrighteous go to Hades. They are in a conscious state of torment as the rich man was. But this is not yet the lake of fire. It is the intermediate state.

At the great white throne judgment, Hades gives up its dead. Every person who was held there stands before the throne. The books are opened. The Book of Life is opened. And those whose names are not found in the Book of Life are thrown into the lake of fire.

The lake of fire is therefore worse than Hades, not the same as it. Hades was the waiting place. The lake of fire is the final verdict executed permanently. It is what Jesus called Gehenna. It is what Revelation describes as the second death. It is the complete and permanent separation from God with no possibility of change or reversal.

And then Hades itself is thrown into the lake of fire. The intermediate state is dissolved because it is no longer needed. The final state has arrived.

## One More Thing Worth Saying

For the believer, the intermediate state is not Hades at all. Paul says in [Philippians 1:23](#) that to depart is to be with Christ, which is better by far. And in [2 Corinthians 5:8](#) he says to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. The righteous dead are not in a shadowy underworld waiting. They are with Christ. That is the promise. Stage one for the believer is not Hades. It is the presence of Jesus. And stage three is the new creation, which has no lake of fire, no second death, and no more separation from God of any kind.

### **Eternal Conscious Torment**

The question of what the lake of fire actually involves has been debated among Bible-believing Christians. Some hold a view called annihilationism, which teaches that the unsaved are ultimately destroyed and cease to exist rather than suffering forever. This view is held by some sincere students of Scripture and should be treated honestly.

But the weight of Scripture points clearly in a different direction. The historic position of the church, and the position we hold, is eternal conscious torment. The unsaved exist permanently in the lake of fire in a state of conscious suffering that does not end.

The primary texts make this case plainly.

[Revelation 20:10](#) describes the torment of the devil, the beast, and the false prophet as "day and night forever and ever." That is the same phrase used in [Revelation 4:8](#) for the eternal worship of God around the throne. The worship of God does not end. By the same language, the torment in the lake of fire does not end.

[Revelation 14:11](#) says of those who worship the beast:

*"And the smoke of their torment rises forever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name." — [Revelation 14:11](#) (BSB)*

No rest day or night. Forever and ever. That is not the description of something that burns up and ends. It is the description of an ongoing, conscious, unending state.

[Matthew 25:46](#) draws the sharpest parallel:

*"And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." — [Matthew 25:46](#) (BSB)*

The same Greek word, *aionios*, is used for both punishment and life. If eternal life is genuinely unending for the righteous, eternal punishment is genuinely unending for the unrighteous. You cannot make one temporary without making the other temporary as well.

Daniel 12:2 describes some waking to "shame and everlasting contempt." Everlasting contempt is not the language of something that ceases to exist. It is the language of a permanent conscious state.

We should be honest that this is one of the hardest truths in all of Scripture. It is meant to be. Jesus talked about hell more than almost any other subject in the Gospels. Not to terrify people into mechanical compliance, but because He loved people enough to tell them the truth about what was at stake. The lake of fire is real. It is permanent. And the urgency of making sure your name is in the Book of Life flows directly from that reality.

### **The Hope That Stands Against It**

But here is where the passage turns for everyone whose name is in the Book of Life.

The lake of fire is the second death. And John has already told us in verse 6 that the second death has no power over those who share in the first resurrection. None. No power. No claim. No jurisdiction. The thing being described in verse 15 has nothing to say to the person whose name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Because Jesus already stood in their place.

He already faced the separation from the Father so they would never have to. On the cross He was absorbing the second death on behalf of everyone who would ever put their trust in Him. The wrath. The separation. The full weight of what the lake of fire represents. He took it. Completely. Permanently.

And now He stands before the Father as their advocate. Their attorney. Their name is in the Book of Life. The books of deeds are covered by His blood. And He says to the Father: that one is mine.

That is the hope that stands against the lake of fire. Not wishful thinking. Not a vague hope that things will work out. The specific, blood-bought, legally secured advocacy of Jesus Christ on behalf of everyone whose name is written in His book.

# Key Themes

**The judgment is universal and personal.** Great and small. Every person who has ever lived stands before this throne. No status, no wealth, no reputation, and no religious activity gets anyone out of this line. The only thing that changes what happens when you get to the front of it is whether your name is in the Book of Life.

**The books tell the whole story.** The books of deeds are complete and accurate. Every word. Every action. Every hidden thing. Nothing is missing and nothing is wrong. But for the person whose name is in the Book of Life, those books are covered by the blood of Jesus. The advocate has already stood before the Father on their behalf. The deeds are real. The blood is more powerful.

**The Book of Life is the only book that counts.** Your pastor said it plainly and the text says it plainly. Church membership does not count. Good standing in any organization does not count. A history of religious activity does not count. The only thing that determines your destination at the great white throne is whether your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

**Death itself dies.** The last enemy is destroyed. Death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire. The thing that has been following humanity since [Genesis 3](#) meets its own end here. Isaiah saw it coming. Paul declared victory over it. And John sees it arrive. For everyone who belongs to Jesus, death is not the end. It is a door. And the One who rose from the dead is standing on the other side of it.

**The Judge is also the Lamb.** The One seated on the great white throne is the same One who was slain before the foundation of the world. The same One who wept at Lazarus's tomb. The same One who said whosoever believes in Me shall not perish. He is not an impersonal force of judgment. He is the Lamb. And He is the advocate standing before the Father for everyone whose name is written in His book. The judgment is just because the Judge is perfectly holy. And the hope is real because the Judge is also the Savior.

## Application

1. Your name is either in the Book of Life or it is not. That is the most direct question this passage asks. Not are you a good person. Not have you been to church. Not have you done more good than bad. Is your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life? If you are not sure, that uncertainty is worth taking seriously today. Not tomorrow. Today.

2. The books of deeds record everything. Every word. Every action. Every hidden thing. Not to make you live in fear, but to take seriously the way you are living. If you know your deeds are being recorded, how does that change the way you treat people when nobody is watching? How does it change what you say, what you do, and what you allow yourself to think about?
3. Jesus is your advocate before the Father. That is not a passive role. He is actively standing before the Father on your behalf. When was the last time you lived with that awareness? What would change about your daily walk with God if you woke up every morning knowing that Jesus was already at work on your behalf before the throne?
4. Revelation 3:3 says to remember, hold fast, and repent. Salvation is an everyday relationship rather than a one-time transaction. What does that look like practically for you right now? Where do you need to repent? Where do you need to hold fast? Where have you drifted from the closeness you once had with Jesus?
5. Death has been thrown into the lake of fire. The last enemy is destroyed. Is there grief you are carrying right now over someone you have lost who belonged to Jesus? Let this passage speak to that grief directly. Death does not win. It never did. The One who conquered it on the third day has now thrown it into the fire. The separation is temporary. The reunion is coming.
6. There is someone in your life whose name is not in the Book of Life. You know who it is. This passage makes the urgency of that real in a way that is hard to look away from. What is one specific thing you can do this week to move toward that person with the gospel?

## Closing

John saw a great white throne. The One seated on it commanded a presence so complete that the earth and the sky fled from it and no place was found for them. The dead, great and small, stood before the throne. The books were opened. Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, they were thrown into the lake of fire.

This is the final judgment. It is real. It is coming. And it is permanent.

But the One seated on that throne is not a stranger. He is the Lamb who was slain. He is the One who entered the world He is now judging, lived in it, suffered in it, and died in it so that everyone who trusts in Him would never have to face what this passage describes. He is the

advocate standing before the Father right now for everyone whose name is written in His book. He is the One who said the second death has no power over those who share in the first resurrection.

The books of deeds are real. The blood of Jesus is more powerful. The lake of fire is real. The Book of Life stands against it. The judgment is coming. The advocate is already interceding.

Where is your name?

If it is in the Book of Life, then everything this passage describes is not your story. It has been covered. Completely and permanently covered by the blood of the One who loved you enough to take it all on Himself.

And if you are not sure, today is the day to make sure.

Next week we turn the page into Revelation 21. The judgment is behind us. The lake of fire is behind us. Death is behind us. And what is in front of us is something John could barely find words for. A new heaven. A new earth. The holy city coming down out of heaven like a bride adorned for her husband. And a voice from the throne saying: look, the dwelling place of God is with man.

The best is still ahead.