

Who Is Jesus

Pastor Mike Connell



Audio Transcripts of Sunday Sermons

Smashwords Edition

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Who is Jesus (4 sermons)

The focus of Revelations is a revelation of Jesus Christ - His person, His characteristics, His purpose and plan for us. Jesus as Bridegroom; King of Kings; and Judge

[Who is Jesus \(1 of 4\) Revelations](#) The focus of Revelations is a revelation of Jesus Christ - His person, His Characteristics, His purpose and plan for us. Overview - Jesus as Bridegroom; King of Kings; and Judge

[Who is Jesus \(2 of 4\) The Passionate Bridegroom](#) The gospel story revealed in the context of a Jewish wedding.

[Who is Jesus \(3 of 4\) Sovereign King](#) Rev 19:11-16 Symbolism brought to life. How should we respond to a mighty conquering king?

[Who is Jesus \(4 of 4\) Jesus the Righteous Judge](#) If you loved someone passionately, had great power, and saw injustice - would you not step in and make it right? Get to understand what Justice and Judgement really mean.

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The focus of Revelations is a revelation of Jesus Christ - His person, His Characteristics, His purpose and plan for us. Overview - Jesus as Bridegroom; King of Kings; and Judge



How many know it's in your spirit you worship God? You know, you make a decision that you're going to give yourself to Him, you'll be surprised as you give yourself how the flow comes and you don't want to stop. So I've just been praying and thinking about where to go for just ministry on Sunday mornings and I felt I'd start a series called Who is Jesus? Who is Jesus? I want to speak primarily from the Book of Revelation, but we're going to open up some other aspects and I want to encourage you to let God talk to you and bring a revelation to your own heart of who this Jesus is.

The Bible's full of Jesus, the great revelation of Jesus, so I'm going to confine myself to three aspects of who He is, and one of the works of the Holy Spirit is to make real Jesus to us. In John 16 Jesus said: the Spirit of God will take the things that

are Mine and reveal them to you, so even though I teach you today, you can walk out totally unchanged. You can just have another great message - that was nice, what do I do next? I'll go and have McDonalds. You see? Or we can ask the Holy Spirit to speak to our heart, and when the Holy Spirit speaks to our heart the revelation changes us, so what I want to do is give an introduction today and just open it out, and then in the next three weeks I want to open up three different aspects of who Jesus is, and encourage you to think how to let the Holy Spirit bring revelation to you along these areas.

Some of you may only know Jesus in one kind of way; some of you may know Him in a different way. We've all got aspects of Him, but here's the key foundational conflict that will be in the end times, it's over the person of Jesus Christ. It's not which church you go to, it's not what doctrine so much. It's who is Jesus. This is the great controversy that will be in the world, and will become increasingly an issue globally, and I'll show you why shortly, because we will see as we look into the Book of Revelation how Jesus will trigger off a global war, and how He will actually - and the issue will be who is He, and how will we respond to Him. So I want to just go and have a look, start off first of all in Matthew, Chapter 16, because the Bible tells us that we all have a race to run, and we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, so what does He look like, and how do I keep my eyes on Him?

Those are good questions to ask. Do you know how to keep your eye on Him? Or do you get caught up with everyone, and everything else, caught up with this one's things, and that one's things, offences, anxieties, worries? Or have you learnt how to run your life keeping fixed on Jesus? We're going to help you to do that, and give you some practical keys over this series. But let's just start here in Matthew, Chapter 16, one you're very familiar with, Verse 13. When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples: who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? And some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, some Jeremiah or one of the prophets. And He said: but who do you say that I am? I would love to be able to just sit with each of you and ask you this question; who do you say Jesus is? What revelation do you have of Him? That's very important, because the way you see Jesus will determine how you relate with Him. It'll determine how you run your life, and I'm absolutely convinced of this, that the revelation you have of Jesus currently, if you'll be open to the Holy Spirit, He will increase the knowledge of who He is.

He is like a diamond with many facets. You just can't come along and think well I just know who He is; He died on the cross for my sins. There's much more than that, and we want to open up some of that. Now this challenge took place in Caesarea, it's the centre of the Roman Empire in Palestine, so it's situated right there at the foot of the Golan Heights, and it was a place where there was worship of Pan, half goat, half man. It was a place of idolatry, a place of emperor worship. It was a place where there was conflict over who Jesus was, and Jesus asked the question: who do men say I am? And so they began to say well, some say Elijah. Well why Elijah? Because Elijah was full of passion and prayer, confronted controlling spirits and idolatry. And some say well, He's John the Baptist returned from the dead. Why? Because John was a fiery preacher who preached repentance, so they thought that looks just like John was.

Then some say Jeremiah. Jeremiah was a prophet of great compassion, who wept over the nation and its difficulties, so people picked up different impressions about what Jesus was like. They likened Him to people they knew; someone passionate, they must have seen Him preach passionately; someone compassionate, someone who was fiery in confrontation. Those are the things they saw in Him. We get a weak, wishy washy watered down Jesus. You

need to know that He's passionate and fiery, and I want to show you some aspects of Him - so Jesus then put the question of well, who do you say I am? Who do you say I am? He said: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Now notice what he says: You are the anointed one, the Son of the living God - not a dead God, you're the Son of the living God, and Jesus said: you didn't figure this out by being smart, or going to a message. You got this by revelation of the Holy Ghost.

Now if you're going to know Jesus, you need the Holy Spirit. If we don't know how to commune with the Holy Spirit, listen to the Holy Spirit, let Him speak to us, how will we ever get to know Jesus, because that's the Holy Spirit's job description - reveal Him to us. So we'll touch on that a bit more. So let's go now and have a look into Revelations. The Book of Revelation is a great book. Now most people look at the Book of Revelations, they get caught up with beasts and antichrist and marks and numbers, and overall very negative. This of course is not the focus of the Book of Revelation. It's included in it, but it's not the focus of it by any means. Let's have a look at that, the Book of Revelation. Here it is, Book of Revelation, Chapter 1, Verse 1. Here it is.

It says: the Revelation of Jesus Christ - so what's the Book of Revelation about? It's about? [Jesus Christ.] It's about? [Jesus Christ.] It's not the anti-christ and the beasts and the tribulation, all the other stuff and marks and stuff like that. It is about Jesus Christ! Get it right, it's about Jesus. Now what is it about Jesus? It's about the person of Jesus, who He is, and what He's like. It's about His purpose, and how He's going to unfold it step by step by step, and it's about His plan for us, and the part we would play in it. In Revelations 1, 2 and 3, where it talks about the churches, there's at least 24 different descriptions of what Jesus is like. You could just go through the first three chapters, and have a look where Jesus reveals Himself, and begin to get an idea what He's like. Now here's the thing. If you don't know what He's like, how can you relate to Him, and know Him?

To know Him, or to become intimate with Him, is to get to know who He is, not someone else's idea of Him. That requires the Holy Spirit to help us, so the Book of Revelation is the revealing or unveiling of Jesus Christ and His plan for the church, not to run away, not to be caught out of it all, but to bring the grace and the glory and the goodness of God to all nations in the earth! I don't know if you've read the book, but the last part of the book is very clear, that all of the nations will walk in the light of the church, the house of the living God. This is a great book to read. Not only - look, look what it says here. It says: the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him, to show His servants things which must take place shortly, and He sent and signified this by His angel, to His servant John. Now notice what it says, Verse 3: Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things. Notice it says: there is a blessing if you will read the Book of Revelation - even if you don't understand it all. There'll be some things you can understand and respond to, and this is what He said.

If you read it, hear it in your heart, and respond to it, you'll be blessed. It's the only book in the Bible that says you'll be blessed if you read that one. Why? Because it's important to the end times, it's important to us in this day. Notice what it says, Verse 7, look at this: Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him. So what Jesus is about to do in the end time, is not going to be hidden away, or a secretive thing in a building down Omahu Road. It'll be something global! Every eye shall see Him - so what Jesus is planning to do, is to impact all nations, all people, the whole earth. You are part of a global ministry, and you're called, each of us are called, to play our part. Now notice this - what will our part be? Well I'm not going to go into this aspect, I want to focus on Jesus, but have a look in Revelations 5:10. It says: you have redeemed us to God by Your blood, out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and made us kings and priests to our God; here it is, Verse 10 - and we shall reign on the earth. We shall reign on earth.

Now notice what it's telling us. The Book of Revelation reveals who Jesus is. It's on a scale that will affect the whole of the world, and there's a vital part we play in it. Now you have to get your thinking right, otherwise you withdraw from our great call, our great commission, to change the world - not retreat from the world, but to change the world, one soul at a time, one soul at a time, one life at a time, change this world. So I want to show you three aspects in Revelation 19 of Jesus, who He is, and what He's like, and then we'll unfold each one, how it works out. We're going to ask the kinds of question like this: Who is this Jesus? What does He do, or what are His characteristics? How do I need to respond? In other words, it's a great thing to know, but you know the devils know about Jesus too, they just tremble and go to hell see? So knowing this stuff doesn't do you any good. It's how you respond, so at the end of the meetings, I'll give you an opportunity to think: Holy Ghost, what did You say to me? How shall I respond? What are You telling me to do? Getting the idea?

Okay, let's have a look in Revelation, Chapter 19. There's a lot of stuff in Revelations I don't understand at all, and I've seen charts and tables and all kinds of things, and they're all proved wrong, so I think there are many things though that we can know, and we should act on if we know them. So let's have a look at three ways that God reveals, or Jesus is revealed, in the Book of Revelation, so Revelation, Chapter 19, here it is in Verse 6 through to Verse 9:

And I heard as it were, the voice of a great multitude, the sound of many waters, and as the sound of mighty thunders, saying Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Oh, that's a great sound isn't it? Let us be glad and rejoice - now it's involving us - and give glory to Him. Why? Why should we be glad and rejoice? Because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. And Blessed are those called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!

Here is the first picture of Jesus, and I'll unfold it next week in greater detail. He is presented as the bride groom, so one facet of Jesus is He is a bride groom. Now I want you to think about it. Notice it says, it talks about a marriage that has not yet taken place. It talks about a feast that's not taken place, it talks about a bride, so if we just take the picture out there, this is how Jesus presents Himself. He is a passionate bride groom who loves you! That's the first thing to know about Him. Now He doesn't just love you. See a lot of people stop there. He is a groom. Now each one of us has different aspects to our life, for example I am two people - a son, but I'm also to someone else a husband. I am to some others a father, and to some others a grandfather, to others a teacher, and to others a minister of God. So I am known in the world to different people in a number of different ways, and all of those ways are right, but it's only when you bring them together, you see who I am.

So it's when we bring together the pictures of Jesus that we get the proper picture of Him, and you'll see if you've only got one aspect of Him, you get a distorted view of Jesus, and it will affect how you live your life and represent Him. Think about that. See, if someone only knew me as a teacher they'd have no idea of the whole sphere of life I have as a global minister of God. They'd have no idea at all, so they say: oh well he just taught physics and maths, that's what he did, and he was quite good at teaching, and we did pretty well. But their concept is completely limited, so if they had to tell someone about me, they wouldn't really even tell them half the story. They'd have been missing out 20-30 years, do you understand that? That's why you need all the facets of it - so the first thing to see is, He is a passionate bride groom.

Now I'm going to use the word bride groom, rather than just that He loves us. We need to get up above that. He is a groom. Now here's some things about the groom. From the Bible perspective, the number one, He pursues us. You didn't suddenly have a good idea to come to Jesus; He sent the Holy Spirit to activate some people to pray for you, and pursue you, so the first thing about Jesus, He pursues people. Why does He pursue people? Because He's passionately in love with us, and He just puts His love into action, came out of heaven, came into the earth, and then He began to pursue people. Not only does He pursue us, He initiates a unique kind of relationship called covenant. That's why you need to know Him as a groom, not just Jesus, your saviour. He is a bride groom. A groom is a person who initiates covenant with a woman. Understand that - we've got a great couple over there. Kess and Steve, you're going to be getting married in about a week, is that right? And who proposed to who? [Laughter] You proposed to her, good man. See, I wonder why he did that? Because it's biblical; for the man, to initiate connection, relationship and pursue with love the woman. Why? To bring her into a covenant relationship with himself.

God has got no casual relationships. He just has what's called covenant, so you either are in covenant with God, through receiving Christ as your saviour and the lover of your soul, or you're not in covenant with Him, you're not connected to Him. If you are in covenant with Christ, which most of us here are, then the issue really is, are you a covenant keeper with God, or are you an adulterer with God? Well, there's only one or two isn't it? We either are covenant keepers, and understand what it means to keep covenant with Him as the groom, or we're an adulterer. There's no in between in it. Think about that. Jesus said in the Book of James, the word of God comes out. He said: you are friends of the world, you are adulterers, and you find yourself in hostility with the one who covenanted with you to love you.

See the relationship God has with us, He is a jealous lover. Now I don't know with you, but there was a time when I was going through a very difficult stage in my relationship with Joy at university, and she broke off with me, and she started to date someone in the same class. [Laughter] I won't spend much time describing how I felt. [Laughter] But I do understand jealous lover! [Laughter] And all the feelings that go with jealousy over someone! A jealous lover, so the Bible portrays Jesus as jealous. He's jealous over you. Paul writes of it in 2 Corinthians 11. He says: oh, I've espoused you. I've engaged you to Him, and I'm jealous over you. I want you to be in intimacy with Him, and faithful to Him, and in love with Him, and walk with Him, and have a covenant with Him, and represent Him as husband and wife in the earth. So the church is called the bride of Christ, and we become the bride of Christ by entering covenant, and by keeping covenant.

So not only that, in order for us to become the bride, He has to rescue us. Now everyone loves a story where the woman has been trapped or captured or kidnapped, and the man comes and rescues her. I love stories like that, great stories like that. I saw a movie called Taken. Oh I enjoyed that movie. The guy's daughter got taken by these

traffickers, and the guy with an unusual set of skills got her back! Oh it was gripping! It was a gripping story - but there's something in us, loves that kind of story. The fairy stories are all full of it; it's about the woman being rescued by the man. It resonates with our heart, because God came to earth and the person of Jesus to rescue us, save us by beating up that old devil, and paying the price of the redemption, and getting us free! What a great story - He's a lover of our soul, so the question is: how will I respond to His love?

We love Him because He first loved us, so love is your response. So we need the Holy Spirit to reveal the depth of Jesus' love for us, and the first way He reveals Himself is the lover of your soul - but wait, there's more as they say. [Laughs] Wait, there's more! So here's the second one, Revelations 19, let's go again and read Verse 11 through to 16. Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, so he's in the spirit having the same vision, but he's seeing it develop, and seeing other aspects of Jesus. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, in righteousness He judges and makes war. Notice that, judges and makes war - and His eyes were a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. We know it's Jesus. And the armies of heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth went a sharp sword - the words - that He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them, the nations, with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

So here is the second one. The second thing you see is, He is a sovereign king. Now you may not think Jesus is a sovereign king, because you don't see it. You see instead a world where the devil still runs amok in people's lives, where sin goes unchallenged many times, and we don't appear to see the sovereignty of God. Nevertheless Jesus is sovereign. He said: all authority in heaven and earth is given to Me. There's no one greater than Me. When He was on the earth He demonstrated that sovereignty, so here's another way we could recognise Jesus is a king, and now you relate to a king different to a husband. If you only know Jesus as someone who likes you, or loves, you or died on the cross for your sins, we just come away every time you feel you're sorry for your sins, and ask Him to forgive you. But if you know Him as a groom, then intimacy, connection, relationship, hearing Him is everything - but now to be revealed that Jesus is also a king, now that means I have to understand, this is not a democracy I've been put in.

I've been translated out of the kingdom of darkness, and put into the kingdom of His beloved Son. I'm now in a kingdom, with a king, a servant king but nevertheless a king, and a king has a will. A king has rules and principles that govern his kingdom. A king gives directives, and the king has a desire to advance his kingdom. Jesus' message was the kingdom, so He demonstrated His sovereign power. Think of all the different ways He demonstrated it. We'll touch on some of them later, but here it is. He healed the sick; He delivered people; He raised the dead; He calmed the storms; He spoke to trees and they died. He demonstrated complete sovereignty over all creation, and so He is king, and that requires you relate differently.

Now most of us come in, and we think like this; we're used to a democracy, and so well we just sort of argue with God over stuff. He's king and His word is final. The question is, whether you'll relate to Him as a king or not? To relate to Him as a king means I need to yield to His design for my life in every area: finances, marriage, personal life. I need to discover what He's designed me to be and to do, and then begin to co-operate with it and align with it, otherwise I'm operating out of the kingdom of darkness, not in the kingdom of His Son. I can only find that by the word of God. Now for me, the revelation that Jesus was king came when one person preached a message on the kingdom of God. I've looked at the message since. It looks so shallow and empty I don't know how I got anything out of it, but on that moment the Holy Spirit revealed to me that this king has authority, and I needed to bow the knee.

From that point everything in my life began to shift because revelation of a kingdom and then it began to unfold as time went by - and a king. So you and I can come to Jesus and He's intimate and loves us. We come to Him as the husband who loves us, but we also need to come to Him as the One who has a purpose, a destiny, direction for us, and He wants to direct your life. The question is will you yield? Whether we will yield, whether we will respond, and one of the issues of responding is recognising His authority in different spheres of our life - so He's a king.

Okay, here's the last one. Here it is, we've already seen it. We'll read the same verses, and it says: He judges and makes war. Well that's a bit tough isn't it, because we like gentle Jesus. He's lovely and He's sweet, and He loves us and forgives our sins. We come to church and half-heartedly sing, and we go home and run our life the way we want, and that's it. I'm sorry, that is not it, because He is a judge. God has appointed to Him to judge all the earth. He is a just judge, so we see Him, He's the passionate lover, He's the sovereign king, and He is a just judge. Now what does that mean, that He judges? It means that whatever's unfair in the world, He's going to sort it out. It means wherever there's wrong government, He's going to displace it, and put in His own righteous government. It means that

wherever there's been crime and sin, and things have gone wrong, He's going to intervene and bring judgement on it, and that judgement sometimes means people die, because many would rather die than bow the knee to Jesus.

Now He may have come as a servant, a shepherd, a lover of our soul, and demonstrated His kingdom, but when He comes next time, He's coming in power. He's coming in glory, and He's coming to judge the earth, nothing surer. So when we look at the tribulation, and all the things that are in there that look so horrible, guess who's responsible for all of that? It's Jesus, and the saints triggered it off by their praying. He is going to introduce something that will affect the whole globe, and disrupt everything as we know it. You have to understand that, that He is a judge. He judges the intents of hearts. He judges our actions, and He calls us to account. That's what it means, He calls us to account.

Here's the good side of it: He rewards those who labour and serve Him. Here's the down side of it: He also calls us to be responsible for what we've done with our life and gifts. Not only that, if we're not saved, He will bring us into judgement. Now see this is a struggle the church is having globally, because it doesn't want to talk about hell. Hell is a real place, people do go there, have gone there, are going there, will go there. It's a real place. You should not negate or minimise that something in all of us wants justice. Now we often get it wrong in the way we do it in our spirit, but He is a righteous judge, who's able to sort this whole thing out, so He is the judge of the whole earth. So if I was to relate to Him as a judge, what does that mean? It means He is going to treat me fairly. He's going to treat me fairly. He's going to honour me, and value me, and reward me for my labours and services, even if no one noticed, and I was treated unjustly. I don't have to worry about all the injustices in my world. I just need to let them go, because He can sort it out, He's the just judge.

What I need to do, is to learn how to lean on Him and trust Him. I need to learn how to be faithful. I need to learn how to open my life, and allow Him to inspect my life regularly, and call me to account. Now a lot of Christians hate this. They struggle with being called to account for their behaviour, their words, their actions - better to be called to account by someone you can see now, and deal with the problem, than wait and suffer significant consequences over your life by not doing that. It's better we welcome someone to speak into our life, than we resist all attempts to correct us. Why? Because the Bible's clear; all of us will give account. No one escapes, no one. I think that's great news. That's great news. That is GREAT NEWS! Now you see most people get caught up with the heavy side of the thing - ooh, what's going to happen to me? Hey, I don't have to worry about that. I'm in love with Him, I'm yielding to Him, I'm walking - I don't have to be worried about what will happen. I'm looking forward to the reward!

It's those who are sinning that have got a problem! They're the ones who need to be worried - but you see He's not just the judge. He's the lover of our soul, and He'll rescue us. So you see you start to get all three put together. Now Jesus Himself taught this, John taught this. See, you think about Matthew 25. Jesus taught the parable of the Groom and the Virgins. He taught following that the parable of the King and the Kingdom and the Servants. Then He taught following that, He was the judge of the whole earth, that called the nations to give account, so Jesus Himself taught that He fills each of these roles. A bride groom and a pursuer of your soul, to rescue you, redeem you, love you, forgive you, bring you into intimacy, make you clean, present you to Himself a wonderful person. He's also the king, so He calls us to grow up, align, begin to find a place of function and serving. If we fail and fall, He's the lover of my soul.

And He calls us to be accountable with our life, our words, our actions, behaviours, because one day we will all have to give account. But if I fail, He's still the lover of my soul. I can come to Him as the lover of my soul, so all three things bring a great balance in your life. He loves, forgives, blesses. He pursues, He won't ever let me go. He will do all He can to get me where He wants me to get, but He's also got a kingdom. He won't bend, I've got to bend. It's my knee that has to bow, not His one, see? And then He's going to call my life into account in some kind of way, so better to become accountable now. That's why the Holy Spirit's given to us. Why? It's really simple. The Holy Ghost wants to reveal how much you are loved, and Jesus is your lover; two, that there is a kingdom, and it's time to get aligned, not just so that you come under His direction, but so you can bring His kingdom into the earth; miracles, signs and wonders, and bringing the presence of God to people. You can't minister that power unless you submit to the king.

Then finally, He wants us to be accountable, to open our life so we allow people to speak in, we allow the Holy Spirit to speak in, and we become safe. That's how you become safe. So here are the questions to finish. Here's the thing to finish with. If you only know Jesus as the lover and the bride groom, you become sentimental and wishy washy. If you don't know Him as the king and the judge, you just become sentimental: Oh Jesus, oh if you love me... come on, grow up. There's a kingdom to advance. It's not that that's wrong, it's just it's absolutely out of order, if that's all you've got in your revelation of Jesus. It ends up with a wishy washy, God forgives everything, God loves everyone, everyone gets to heaven, you can sin and God will forgive you. That actually despises the Spirit of God, so that's why I need the balance of the other with it, that He's the king, and there's order, and there's principle and balance in your

life. So if you know Him only as the king, and you don't know Him as the lover of your soul, and the just judge, if you only know Him as the king you'll think He's authoritarian, telling you what to do, and you'll be in conflict with God as an authoritarian God.

Now if you only know Him as the judge, then you'll think that He's harsh, and He's judging you, and He's out to get you on everything, so many people, the revelation they have is not the biblical revelation. They've got some kind of harsh thing from their background. I had that for years, a harsh thing that constantly sinning, constantly wrong. I was living under a spirit of judgement, and I had a misconception. I had a partial thing of Jesus, and I didn't see He's the lover of my soul. That's a great revelation. I didn't get that for years after I was a Christian. I responded to the gospel, but I had no real revelation how much He loved me, and I want to show you about that next week and how we can enter that.

So here are the questions that just, I want you to close your eyes, and just consider right now. Just consider them right now. Here's the first question: Who is Jesus to you? Who is Jesus to you? When you think about Him, what do you think of? When you close your eyes right now, who do you say He is? What words just quickly come up to your mind right now? See, just think, don't speak it out loud. Just think about it, and then ask yourself, what does that really mean to me, see? Here's another thing to think of then: What of those three aspects of Jesus that we saw today most impacted you, or challenged you? The lover of your soul, the groom, the king and the kingdom, governing, ruling, authority, dominion, power, or the judge calling us to account, seeing into every aspect of our life, rewarding good, judging and dealing with those things that are wrong, bringing us into discipline in our life, so we'll be productive? So which aspect do you feel the Holy Spirit is challenging you on? The groom and your relationship with Him; the king and your yielding to Him; the judge and your openness to His seeing eye?

Here's the last question: What will you do about what you just realised? As the Holy Spirit speaks to you right now, what will you do about what God spoke to you today? If you're here and you're not a Christian, don't know Jesus Christ, here's what you need to do. Jesus said: to everyone who received Him, made Him welcome, put their trust in Him, He gave power to become a child of God. Jesus has been pursuing you with love for years, probably sent people into your life, invited you to church, talked to you about Jesus - but here you are right now. I can tell you now He loves you deeply and dearly, and seeks a relationship with you. You say well there's too much mess in my life. Don't worry, the thing about the groom is He just loves His bride, and He'll do everything He can to make it right.

So here's the decision you have to make if you're not a Christian today: I will receive Jesus Christ. I will turn from living a life without God, a life of sin, a life without God. I'll turn to Jesus Christ, receiving Him as my saviour, inviting Him to become my lover and friend. You know when they have a wedding, the bride comes down and makes a commitment, and so what I'm asking you to do is to make a commitment. Until the words are spoken, the commitment made is not real. There's an engaging one with another one, so here's what I'm asking you to do. If you don't know Jesus just raise your hand and say: I want to become a Christian today. Anyone here wanting to become a Christian today, right at this point, just raise your hand quickly, raise your hand quickly. Is there anyone here wanting to become a Christian, wanting to come to Jesus, give your life to Him?

How many people today felt challenged about Jesus being the groom, a covenant keeper? How many felt Him speaking to you about that today? That's wonderful - forgiving you and loving you. How many people felt challenged about Jesus being a king today, He's the king? Wow, that's quite a few, God bless. How many felt Jesus challenging you that He is also a judge, and He calls us to account? How many felt that challenge there? Praise the Lord. I won't ask how many people didn't hear the Holy Spirit speak at all, because if you didn't hear the Holy Ghost speak to you, you've got to ask yourself this question: How long since I last heard God speak to me, and what was He trying to tell me?

Father, we just thank You for every person here. We thank You that You are over this next month, bringing an increased revelation of Jesus in all His wonder, all His beauty. We thank You that we are called to be part of a great and mighty church, part of a great kingdom, a global kingdom, a kingdom that will prevail, a kingdom that does prevail. We thank You Lord today for Your hand on our lives. Everyone says [Amen.] Amen. Come on, let's rise and give Him a clap shall we? [Applause] Let's give the king of kings, Lord of Lords a clap. Let's shout to Him, He's our God, He's our king. We shout to You today, You're the lover of our soul, You're Almighty God. We honour You and thank You today, You're our coming king. You're the judge of the whole earth. We honour You and bless You today.

Summary Notes

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1. Introduction

- Heb. 12:1-2 "...Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith"
- Each of us is called to keep our eyes fixed upon Jesus – He is the One we must follow.
- Key: Foundational issues that is at the heart of conflict throughout the world.
- 1) Who is Jesus? 2) How will I respond to Him?
 - Mt.16:13-17 "Who do you say I am?"
 - Location Caesarea – centre of Roman Government, place of worship of god Pan, near Golan Height.
 - Pharisees knew Bible – but missed Jesus – He didn't come as they expected.
 - Crowd thought Jesus was: Elijah (Passion), John (Passion), Jeremiah (Compassion).
 - Peter had revelation by Holy Spirit: You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.
 - How you see Jesus affects how you relate to Him – Holy Spirit's work is to reveal Him. (Jn.16:14).

2. The Three-Fold Revelation of Jesus

- Rev.1:1 "The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him to show His servants ..."
- Main Theme of the Book of Revelation is the person, power and plan of Jesus Christ. Jesus is returning to take leadership of the earth in partnership with His people.
- Rev.1:7 "Behold He is coming with the clouds and every eye shall see Him".
- Rev.5:10 "You have made us Kings and Priests to our God and we shall reign on earth".
- Rev.1:3 - There are 24 distinct aspects of His Kingly Majesty and Glory.

(a) Jesus is a Passionate Bridegroom

- Key Questions we want to ask?
 - (i) Who is Jesus? (ii) What does He do? (iii) How will I respond?
- Revelation uncovers Jesus to be: Bridegroom; King; and Judge.
- Rev.19:6-9 "...the marriage of the lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready".
- Jesus is the passionate bridegroom!
- He is passionate in His love for people.
- He pursues us to reach out in relationship and intimacy.
- He proposes and initiates a covenant relationship with us.
- He rescues us from sin, iniquity and bondage.
- How will you respond to Jesus the Passionate Bridegroom?

(b) Jesus is the Sovereign King

- Rev.19:11-16 "He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords".
- Jesus has sovereign power and authority to rule.
- Jesus will intervene and overthrow unrighteous government.
- Jesus is a King – He rules a Kingdom not a Democracy.
- No one will be able to resist His power and authority.
- He will establish righteous government in the earth.
- How will you respond to Jesus the Sovereign King?

(c) Jesus is a Righteous Judge

- Rev.19:11-15 "...in righteousness He judges and makes war".
- Jesus is a righteous judge who calls all men to account.
- He will confront and overpower every hindrance to love and justice.
- He sees to the root of issues and will both punish and reward people.
- How will you respond to Jesus the righteous judge?

(d) These three Aspects of Jesus are Revealed throughout the Bible

- e.g. David wrote on it (Ps 2:8-12)
- John Baptist preached on it (Jn.3:29-31; Mt.3:1-12)
- Jesus taught on it Mt.25:1-13 - The Bridegroom and Virgins
- Mt.25:14-23 - The King
- Mt.25:31-46 - The Judge

3. We need Revelation of All Three Aspects of Jesus' Nature

(a) Partial knowledge leads to deception

- People tend to focus on the aspect they like.
- This distorts your view of who Jesus is – really is.
- This misleads and misrepresents.

(b) Balance is needed

- Jesus as Bridegroom without King or Judge = sentimentality, (Rom.6:1), Compromise.
- Jesus as King without Bridegroom or Judge = Authoritarian, hard, (Mt.25:24).
- Jesus as Judge without Bridegroom or King = Harsh, judgemental, (another spirit Lk. 9:54).

(c) Application

- Who is Jesus to You?
 - Which of the three aspects of Jesus most strongly impacted you?
 - How will you respond to Jesus?
-

Who is Jesus (2 of 4) The Passionate Bridegroom

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The gospel story revealed in the context of a Jewish wedding.



I want you to open your Bible with me in Revelations, Chapter 19. We just started a series last week called Who is Jesus? This is a good question: Who is Jesus, because a lot of people have got a lot of ideas. Jesus was talking with Peter, and He said to Peter: who do people say I am? They all come up with different ideas, and today it's the same. People come up with different ideas about who Jesus is, and if you don't really know who He is, how can you connect and relate with Him? How can you enjoy the relationship if you don't really know who He is, and out of who he is, how to connect with Him?

So the Bible talks about the riches of His glory. In other words, there's a great dimension. He's unsearchable. You could spend all your life trying to get to know Him but there's still more, so we've got to find some way that we can see what He is like. Jesus said to Peter: well who do you say I am? You will live out of who you say Jesus is, that's the reality. You will live out of the revelation you have of Jesus, so if your revelation is very light and superficial, your Christian life will be fairly superficial as

well, so we want to grow in the knowledge of Jesus. Our relationship, or our walk with God, is about a relationship with the person, Jesus Christ. It's not about all the things we do. They are the fruit, and the flow of the connection to a person, and so we look in the Book of Revelation, and we are reading now in Revelations, Chapter 19 and in Verse 7.

This is yet to come, and John's got this vision. He hears the voice of a great multitude, and this is what they're all saying. Oh! A great multitude, I love that. Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb - that's Jesus Christ - has come, and His wife or His bride - that's the church - has made herself ready. And to her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. And he said: Blessed are those called to the marriage supper of the Lamb! Then when you go on, you find in this passage, in Revelations 19, there are three pictures given of Jesus Christ. This one presents Him as a bridegroom, a passionate bridegroom. The next one presents Him as a sovereign king, coming to conquer and subdue the earth, then the third one presents Him as a judge, calling every man and woman and child to account for their actions.

Now which is the right picture? The answer is they're all part of the picture, and there are many other pictures in the Bible, for example in Psalm 23 there's a picture of Jesus being a shepherd. So there are many facets to Him, so we're looking now in the Book of Revelation, where three distinct aspects of Him will be revealed. The Book of Revelation is about the revealing of Jesus Christ in the end times, and so these three aspects are quite important. So we're going to look today at Jesus, the passionate bridegroom, the passionate bridegroom, and there are in the New Testament about 23 different references to this, so it's not just something that appears in Revelation. There's about 23 distinct references to Jesus being a bridegroom. Now for a guy that's not so easy to handle. You know, Jesus the bridegroom, and the bride, give me a break! That's not - give me the king stuff next, I'll come along next week and get the king stuff. That's my thing there. So for men this is not such an easy thing to do, but it'll help you if you understand this, that each of these represent - it's just a picture. It's a way of representing someone, and an aspect of what He's like, see?

So each of these is a picture. It's a representation to help you understand invisible things, which you can't understand just easily see naturally, so if I try to relate to Jesus, what am I going to think of? Am I going to think of sort of, someone tall, blue eyes, long hair, long robes? What am I going to think of Him? I need to know what He's like, and so the word of God reveals Him, and the different aspects of Him. The Bible tells us concerning this particular Book, you are blessed if you read it and do what it says, so for us to understand Jesus the bridegroom, and to understand how to respond to Him, what that means to us if He's a bridegroom, and how should I respond? How should I respond? How should I live out my life, in the light of that revelation - that's what we'll look at. So to do that, you've

got to understand a little bit about the Jewish wedding, because if you and I think of a bridegroom and a wedding, we think immediately from our western mind set. So immediately you think of a church setting, there's three guys up here in black suits, the bride comes down, and we do some things and so on, so that's what we think of.

So if we're going to understand Jesus the bridegroom, we do have to understand a little bit about how the wedding ceremony took place, in the Jewish context. You need to know what it was like when Jesus - when the Book was written, the people understood exactly what He was talking about, because He was writing to their culture. He was writing to their culture, so for example if we said that the local tribe had called a hui, for many people they wouldn't have a clue what that's about, but for the local tribe they'd say we know exactly what that's all about. Do you understand? So you have to have a bit of culture to pick it, so let's just go through it.

The Jewish wedding consists of two parts, two primary parts and there's a bit in between. We're in the bit in between. The primary parts are what's called the betrothal, and then the actual wedding itself, the betrothal, and then the wedding. I want you to look with me, and you'll find this referred to in Matthew, Chapter 1. We're going to look first of all just quickly at the main aspects of a Jewish wedding in Jesus' day, and then we're going to see how Jesus - what He is to us, and how to respond, because the Bible's very clear on what the bride had to do.

There was a part the bride plays. There's a part we play. Okay, let's go - in Matthew, Chapter 1, Verse 18. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was like this: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph - the nearest thing we could say is the word 'engaged', but if I use the word engaged, you'll have a different concept, so we use the word 'betrothed' - before they came together, she was found with child by the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make a public example of her, was thinking or pondering about divorcing her. So notice the word divorce is connected to someone who's engaged, so their concept of betrothal is different to ours - so here's how a Hebrew wedding went. There's a family, you can imagine a family, and they've got the father, and got a young daughter. The father's concerned that the young daughter get married, and the common practice there, number one, was the arrangement which is called in Hebrew language Shiddukhin.

Now what happened was, it took place one of three ways; either the father of the groom came and negotiated with the father of the bride, which happened to Samson. Samson's father negotiated - or he sent someone. He sent an agent on his behalf to the family, and negotiated with the father, but there's always the negotiation first of all. So of course in the story of Abraham, you remember how Abraham sent Eliezer to negotiate for a bride, so these pictures are scattered through the Bible - or the son himself would come, and he would do the negotiation. So the first part was the arrangement, or the initiating the prospect of a marriage, and so the young man would have to bring with him a lot of money, and he would also bring with him a wedding contract, and he would bring with him some wine. He would go - and you could imagine this day when a man turns up at the house, and it's obvious from how he's come that he is looking to set up a wedding. You can imagine the excitement in the house.

Now at this point the girl goes out, and the men negotiate, so there's a negotiation takes place, and what is determined in that negotiation is the next thing, the bridal price. What is this? What do I need to pay for the bride? How much do I need to pay, because the family is losing their daughter. They're losing, or there's a loss in the family, and there's a gain in the other family, so there was always a bridal price paid. They did a negotiation until they agreed upon the price that would be paid, and of course the higher the value of the bride, the higher the price that was paid, so if you got 10 oxen that's very, very - ooh, that's impressive! So the bigger the price, the more value is placed. So there's a negotiation takes place to purchase the bride, and once the price has been paid, once the money is all agreed and been paid, then the woman is then no longer going to be part of the family. She is now freed to become part of the new family, so this is a big deal, the bridal price.

The third thing that happens is the wedding contract, the wedding contract. It's called ketubah, ketubah, the wedding contract. What would happen is the girl would then be, after the men have had the arrangement, the woman would be brought in, and then he would propose to her. This was the opportunity for him to present his desire, and she had the right of refusal. She could refuse. Remember in the day when Eliezer came to Rebecca, they did all negotiations with the father, and there was all the gifts of gold and silver and jewels given. Then she had to give her consent, so the bride must give consent. The bride must give consent. Now once the bride's given consent, then they draw up the wedding contract. The wedding contract, the ketubah was very, very important.

We have a little piece of paper which we sign, you know, you sign the marriage register, and you sign a little bit of paper, but this is a different bit of paper. It's not like here. This is a different bit of paper. In this piece of paper, it outlines a number of things. One of the things it outlines, is the bridal price. It makes it very clear what's going to be paid. The second thing it outlines is the details of the wedding, how big the wedding is going to be, what's going to happen in the wedding, and then the third thing it outlines, is the provision that the groom promises and undertakes to

make how he will provide for the bride. Now you can imagine the excitement. Here's someone come into the house, talked with dad, there's a price been sorted out by the men, and now she's got the opportunity to enter into this marriage contract.

Now if she agrees, then they sign the marriage contract, and they drink wine together, and now they're betrothed. They're betrothed. That word betrothal there is as good as married, they're as good as married. In fact the only way you could break a betrothal was by divorce, so legally the betrothal actually meant they're now husband and wife. Now notice what it said in Matthew 1, Verse 18. It says now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, so they're betrothed. Now the next thing that would happen would be that the groom would have a bridal gift. He'd have a gift, it's called matan - and he would gift up - they drank the wine together, and they'd written and signed the documents. He would give a gift to the bride, and the gift to the bride, sometimes it could be a few coins. Often she would make the few coins into a band and put them around her head, hence the story or the parable of the Woman Who Lost the Coin. It possibly was the wedding gift, so that's why she really, really went everywhere looking through that house trying to find that coin.

So she had that, and now she's ready to be married. She's got the wedding gift. She's got the wedding gift, they've worked out the price, worked out the contract, got all the details about everything, all the promises are going to be made, and now they're as good as married. They're betrothed. Then the husband would say, the bridegroom would say: that I'm going now to prepare a place for us to live together as husband and wife. It was understood that's what he would do, and so there would be a period of separation which could be a year or two years. Quite interesting, in Singapore, housing issue is so major for young couples, that they go and have a service in a registry office so they're legally married, and then they wait a year to two years until they can get accommodation. Then they have the official wedding. It's quite interesting to see that they do that - think whoa, that's not easy, two years, my! So anyway but there it is.

Now the bride of course, and the groom, there was some things happened during the betrothal period, and during the betrothal period, which is an important period, it was the period of preparation, period of preparation. So the betrothal period is not just hanging around waiting, it's a period of intense preparation. The first thing that we find is that the groom, he went to his father's house, because he would take his bride to the father's house, so he had to prepare for her, and the normal thing they did was to add an extension onto the father's house. So he would build onto the house that existed and make new rooms for her. The new rooms would have within it the bridal chamber, and where they would live as a couple, so they would be part of the father's house. While he was away doing that and making that preparation, then the bride's responsibility was to get herself ready, so she had one to two years. Now she knew approximately when he's coming, but she didn't know the exact details, so here's the thing.

She never knew as the time went by, which was the night he's going to come.

Now you can imagine - you know when Christmas is coming, and the frenzy that gets just before Christmas. Got the lights, I've got everything up, presents under the tree, that anticipation of it all coming is all part of it all. The anticipation of Christmas coming is immense! The kids get so excited they can hardly sleep the night of it. Now of course with this, you never knew when he was coming. You knew approximately when he was coming, didn't know exactly when he was coming, and so therefore that required that she be always ready. So she had this intense process, where now she's having to deal with all the spots, all the wrinkles. She's got to deal with her skin, and get her skin all beautiful, so now is when you get Botox, and now is [laughter] when you get to the beauty place. That's when you get yourself all done up, get rid of every wrinkle, every spot, everything that says - you wake up and there's a little bit of pimple, oh no! He might come tonight, so there'd be a frenzy to get everything right.

So it was incredibly important that first of all, that her body was presented well, and then also she focussed on getting the wedding garments, so she would work to get beautiful wedding garments ready, and she would either use the family jewels, or borrow jewellery from neighbours and friends, so that when the time came, she could instantly put on the wedding garment. She could put on the jewels, and she could go forth to meet her husband, so that's the period. Now during that period, it was expected the bride would be faithful. In other words, they're as good as married. There's no other lovers, there's no other boyfriends. All boyfriends are gone, that's the end of all boyfriends. This is one lover, one person I'm committed to, and he is coming, and we've got a great wedding day, and a life together, so that's the betrothal.

Now you can understand the problem that Joseph had here, when he's got this season of betrothal, he hasn't got to the wedding, and his wife's pregnant, and he hasn't had a part in that. That is a problem. [Laughter] That is a big problem - small town, big problem. [Laughter] Small town. Small town mentality, the atmosphere's full of judgement, and comparisons, and everyone looks at everyone else. Everyone's watching everyone else's business, minding

everyone's business, so for Mary to get pregnant during the time of betrothal, either Joseph did it, or she's been unfaithful, so he's thinking whoa, what am I going to do? Now it says that he's a just man, and he's thinking: I wonder if I could have a quiet divorce. I don't want to shame her publicly, so he had a good heart to her. Imagine how he felt. He loves her, paid the price, done all the negotiations, got the thing he's looking forward to the wedding and she's pregnant? That's not easy for a man to find his wife's pregnant before they're married - and he wasn't involved. [Laughter] Just think about the internal struggle he had over that.

Being a just man, he did not react with retaliation. He decided what he would do would be to try to quietly divorce her, because of her unfaithfulness apparently, it was as good as over. However the angel revealed to him, this is actually a divine intervention, don't do that thing. Keep her, and it says - notice this - it said: he did not know her, until after they were married. In other words during that betrothal, no sexual intimacy, faithfulness, and he kept her until after she'd had Jesus. So you see it there in the Bible. Now of course the next phase of course is the actual wedding ceremony itself, which is called nissuin (marriage), which means to carry away. Now we get this thing of carrying the bride across the threshold. That's where it comes from, out of the Bible. It all comes out of the Bible, but mostly it's so changed these days we don't understand it - so you see then the return of the groom.

So the bride is aware of approximately when it might happen, but not exactly when it will happen, and so the time is determined by the father. The father decides when the son's got everything all ready, and when he's got everything ready he says: okay, time for the wedding, and they would have the whole house all prepared for the wedding. The guests were all ready to come, guests were all invited, and now they're ready to have the wedding, so the son would go out, and he would have friends with him. They would have the shofar (trumpets), they would have lights, they would have a noise, they would shout, there would be a tremendous shout, the shofar (the trumpets), the sound and they would make a great din outside. Now you can imagine if you are waiting, and you don't know which night this is going to be - and suddenly you hear the shouting!

Now of course they're not coming in a car, so they've got to quickly get ready - if you're awake! [Laughter] I can imagine she's not going to bed early any night. Just put yourself in the picture, don't want to miss this. Not going to miss out on this - immediately she hears a - oh, and all the attendants run around, quickly and suddenly getting into her garments, she's already got everything. All the make up's all ready, she's all ready, she's into the garments, and they're ready to go out and meet the groom. They meet the groom, and they go to the father's house, where they have the final part of entering the bridal chamber, which is called chuppah. There there's the consummation of their wedding, and then the celebration or party with all the guests for seven days. Isn't that fantastic? Isn't that great, seven days, isn't that amazing?

Now how does this relate to us? Well the first thing we see is that the Bible tells us Jesus presented Himself in many different ways as the groom. I want to just show you several verses just related to that. The first thing is, He pursues us, because He loves us. He loves us passionately. The deepest need in the heart of every person is to be loved unconditionally, and God loves you. John 3:16, God so loved you, He sent His Son into the world. What did He send His Son into the world for? Why did He send Him? That He might enter into a marriage covenant with us, and to do that He had to do some things. Number one, He had to negotiate what the price would be, and here's what the price would be: His own life. 1 Corinthians 6:20, you are bought with a price; 1 Peter 1:18, you're not purchased with silver and gold or things like that which perish, but with incorruptible things, the precious blood of Jesus Christ. So when Jesus entered the world He knew He would pay the ultimate price. Greater love has no man than he lays down his life.

So out of this immense love, Jesus enters the world to pursue you, and not just you; to pursue every person in our city. He came to pursue us. Why? He loves us. He wants a relationship. He wants to bless us. He has many things planned, and your destiny can only be fulfilled if there is that connection. How wonderful it is, isn't this amazing? So He pays the price, and we see at the cross Jesus paid the price. He said: it is finished, which is the exact words that the groom would say to the bride when they're doing the arrangements for the betrothal. After it's all signed up, it's finished. The price has been paid, contract's been signed, it's as good as done. The next thing we find is this; He invites us into covenant with Himself. Look at this in Matthew, Chapter 26, Verse 27: Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying drink all of this, for this is the blood of the new covenant, or the new marriage, which is shed for many for the remissions of sins. And I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now, until the day I drink it with you in My Father's kingdom.

Now you've got to realise that they are having a supper together. Now the order of this is a little different. What they understood completely is He is now offering a covenant. Now interesting in the Old Testament, the old covenant also worked out exactly like this thing of a marriage arrangement. You find Moses went to Israel, and invited Israel to come into the wilderness unto the Lord, into marriage relationships. Then they paid the price, the blood was shed by

the lambs in order to set them free. Then they went out and they get the Holy Spirit, the glory, the provision, everything came, and then they came to Mt Mount Sinai, and that was the day they should have come into their covenant relationship with God. That's the day when what was given? The law was given. What's that? The katubah. That is the marriage covenant - if you will be this, if you will do this, I will be your God, you'll be My people.

So in the Old Testament, the disciples understood completely what He's doing. He's now presenting Himself as the bridegroom, saying I have a new covenant with you. I want you to enter in, and as you eat and drink with Me, you are entering covenant. That's why we do communion. It's to remember we have entered covenant. Covenant is not convenience. Covenant means I am loyal, I am faithful, I am committed. This is the one I've given my life to, to live for. This is the one who gave His life for me.

It is a marriage thing, so when we have a communion service, you may kind of get distracted by the fact you've got this little wee thing here, a cup and a little wee bit of bread and whatever. It looks so small, but actually, what it's to do is to call to mind, we're covenanted with God Almighty! Isn't that something else! Now what about the gift? Well how about that, I'm glad you asked about the gift, because He promised. This is what He promised. Now notice this, it tells us in Ephesians 1, Verse 18, it says: He has given to us, the earnest of the spirit, which is the down payment of our full inheritance. So He's given us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Now this is the important one, is to understand the gift He's given you. In Acts, Chapter 1, Verse 8, you shall receive power from on high, and shall be witnesses unto Me - so this is, you have to understand, the gift is really significant. The gift is the reminder that you are in marriage covenant with the Lord, and the gift will empower you to prepare for His coming.

This gift God has given us, is the most precious gift of all. It's the gift of the Holy Spirit, the indwelling Holy Spirit, that leads, guides, convinces of sin, that helps us know we belong to Him. You know that what the witness of the spirit is, that we belong to another. We're already committed. Want to look at my wedding ring? I belong to another. I belong to another. That's why you wear a wedding ring. It's like you belong to someone. People go out on the dating scene, they look around and see the wedding ring - oops, belongs to another. So you are given the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit in you is visible to the spirit world. Demons recognise you are a believer. They understand you are joined to the Lord. They understand you are in covenant with the Lord, you belong to the living God. You have received the mighty Holy Ghost, and gift of God!

You'll see something else that He does in a moment, which is the bit we really want to get to - and so this is so exciting. I got so excited about all of this, I think it's wonderful. He gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Now John, Chapter 14, you know this familiar verse. Of course it doesn't mean a lot unless you understand the context of the wedding - Verse 2. Pick it up at Verse 1 - Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions, or dwelling places. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go to prepare a place for you, chuppah, the bridal chamber for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am - where is He? In intimacy with the Father - there you will be also, in that same place of intimacy with God. Where I go, you know the way that I go.

So you see here, this is the language of a groom, because the groom would say, as they finished up the betrothal: now I'm going to my father's house, to prepare a place for you, and I will return. So when Jesus said this, we've got to remember the context of this is, Jesus is having His last meal with His disciples, so everything He says has got more significance than almost any other place. The significance of this is He's saying: I'm about to leave you. They didn't understand that. I'm about to pay the price to purchase you - they didn't understand that. I will rise again from the dead, and I will ascend into heaven, and I will give you a wedding gift before I go. I will return, and I'm going to prepare a place for you, so all of this is the language of the marriage. In their culture, their mind would be racing, that just as God of the Old Testament covenanted with the people of Israel, now Jesus - God is revealing Himself in Jesus, saying I have a covenant not of law, but of love. I'm about to lay My life down for you all, and then to take of the spirit in Me and put that spirit in you. You and I will be one. We will be like husband and wife. Isn't that fantastic?

This is the language of it, so when it says: He's coming as the groom, this is all that it implies there, it's in these things here. He promises to return, and we saw that in Revelations. Now Jesus has made it absolutely clear, He has gone to be with the Father, to prepare for us, so He's already in the process of preparing, and He's preparing places of intimacy, dwelling places of relationship with God, that all of us are called into. Now the key to it happening is the Holy Spirit. The key to all of this is the Holy Spirit, because the bride is called to prepare herself, so just as the husband went to prepare the place that they would consummate their marriage, and get the feast all ready, the bride had to prepare herself. Now I'm going to give you four scriptures about the bride preparing, and each one of the scriptures contains a truth about what preparation looks like for you. The thread that flows through all of it is, it has to do with the work of the Holy Spirit in your life. You can't prepare yourself without the work of the Holy Spirit. We need

the Holy Spirit to help us. I'll show you how to help us in just a moment, so let's have a quick look at it. I won't take long. Let's have a look.

So how can I respond to what Christ has offered? The first two things are simple, and we'll talk about the third one in a bit more detail. The first is simple: receive Christ. Receive Him! He died on the cross for you! Why live without God? Why live a life without destiny and purpose? Receive Him, and receive Him today! The second thing is, if you're not baptised in the Holy Ghost, and haven't received the power of the spirit to live out a great life, then receive the Holy Ghost today! Get filled with the spirit, and the gift of tongues! Oh, a sign to who? Unbelievers. What of? That I am in covenant with God. How wonderful. Then the last part is this, is that we're called to prepare ourselves. Now let's just quickly look at the scriptures, very quickly. I'll just highlight them. You can search them out, and go through them yourself.

Here's number one. Number one is found in 2 Corinthians 11, Verse 2. Paul says: I have espoused you to one spouse. There it is, Verse 2. I am jealous with a godly jealousy. I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I'm afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunningness, your minds might be corrupted from the simplicity, or pure simple devotion to Jesus Christ. Number one, the work of the spirit is simply this: to help you grow in your love relationship and devotion to Jesus Christ. This is number one. I love Him! That's why we have worship. I love Him! And this is why you get into the word. I love Him, and I want to hear from Him, so the first thing is, loyalty to Jesus Christ. Now what that really means is, He's number one in your life. You can't have a husband and a boyfriend. [Laughter] It's true. It doesn't work anywhere in life, because when the husband finds out, he'll be very jealous.

So Paul's saying: I'm really jealous, because I see how easy it is, having fallen in love with Christ and received Him and responding to Him, to then get your life filled up with other stuff. How much other stuff is filling your life? How many other things have got first call on your time, your life, your heart, your attention, your affections, your thoughts, your worries? Where is your life going? What place does Jesus Christ have in your life, number one? Number two is found in the Book of Esther, in Esther, Chapter 2, and Verse 15. There's a whole thing of its own. I got so much studying all of this, but I can only do one thing on it, so here it is, Esther. Now look at this. Now remember Esther had the opportunity to become a bride to a king. The picture is the bride to the king, and so the king sends out and says we're going to buy lots of pretty girls, and what we want to do is get all the pretty girls to come, and they'll all dress themselves up, and get themselves looking good.

They'll come in and the king will try them out, and if he likes them they're the queen, and if he doesn't like them they're gone. They're just one of the concubines, another one out there. Now I know that's pretty primitive, but that's what life was like in those days, and that's what actually was happening to her. Now here's the key thing about Esther. Look at this. Everyone else of course did what they thought was right in their own eyes. Every one of them dressed up the way they thought they'd look pretty. Every one of them did their make up the way they thought would be right, but look what it says about her. It says Esther, Verse 15, when the turn came for Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Moredecai, who had taken her as a daughter, to go in to the king - look at this - she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And she obtained favour in the sight of all who saw her.

Now who is Hegai? The custodian of the women. The custodian of the women, his role was to get the women ready to be the wife to the king. Whose role is that? The Holy Spirit. Notice it said everyone else just did what they thought was right; this is what she did. She required nothing except what the Holy Spirit directed her, so this speaks of a surrendering to the leadership of the Holy Spirit daily in our lives. Listening to the voice of God, listening to the Holy Spirit, letting Him show you what God likes, what God doesn't like. Have you ever stopped to ask Him, what is it You like? What is it You don't like? Is there anything in my life You don't like? And then listen until you hear the reply. When you start to ask those questions, you hear all kinds of things, very specific things: I don't like this. I don't like that, it grieves Me. So the Bible says we can grieve the Holy Spirit. We can upset the one who knows Jesus, the holy spirit doesn't speak of Himself. He just finds what the Father wants, and He reveals what the Father wants. The Bible tells us that in the Book of John.

Not only that, it tells us in the Book of John that the Holy Spirit will take the things of Jesus and make them known to us, so now what Jesus likes, the Holy Spirit can put on your heart. So don't follow tradition, don't follow your old ways, don't follow what you think is best. Start to listen to the Holy Spirit, because those who are led by the Holy Spirit are the sons of God, or they will be the bride prepared for the husband. The moment that she went in she was immediately favoured, because she let the Holy Spirit prepare her, so yield to the Holy Spirit.

Here's the last two now. Matthew 25, there's one found there. Look at this, Matthew 25 Verse 10, and it's about Jesus teaching about the end times. He says look, the kingdom of heaven is like a wedding, and guess what's happening in the wedding? The virgins are chosen, five wise, five foolish, and the five foolish of course didn't have any oil. Then the midnight cry came, Verse 6, and the bridegroom is coming, go to meet him, and all the virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, Verse 8: give us some of your oil, our lamps are going out. They said no, lest there's not enough, you go and buy for yourselves.

While they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready, went in with him to the wedding, and the door was shut. Oh, we won't go into all of that. I have taught on that before, but here's what this says. You notice it says: those who were ready? Those who were ready had paid a price to have oil for their lamp. Now you are the lamp, you are the light of the world, but what ignites you? Huh! Oil, Holy Ghost! Oil is always a type of the Holy Ghost. You and I need to be full of the Spirit of God! Excited by the Holy Ghost! Praying in tongues, letting the Spirit of God energise you day by day. He said: there's a price, it just doesn't happen. You get up, and you pray. You set discipline in your life and pray, begin to arise and ask God to empower you to pray, and you pray. You spend time in the word of God, and as you spend time in the word of God - the word of God by the way, it says it's like a mirror, that when you look into it, oh, you see what you're really like. The Holy Spirit points out where you need to change - and so notice this. Some were ready, some were not, so while all were invited, some prepare, and some do not.

Let me ask you, what is happening in your life? Are you preparing your life? Are you in connection, communing with the Holy Spirit? Are you letting Him talk to you about your life? Are you letting Him put the finger on things which don't make Him happy at all, but rather grieve Him, things like anger and bitterness and resentment and jealousy, pettiness and small mindedness, exclusivism and all that kind of stuff, pride? All those things grieve Him. Are you letting the Holy Spirit in - are you building a prayer life? What a great - why don't we this year make a decision, we will prepare ourselves, for the new things that God has? And here's the last one, I'll finish with that, and go back to where we started in Revelations 19 and Verse 7: And His wife has made herself ready. How about that? She made herself ready, so don't leave it all up to God. There's something you have to do. It requires a choice.

I've had God speaking to me about the use of my time, about using time carefully, because time can be spent, but not regained. You can get money again, but you can't get time. For many time is running out, so how are you using your time? What is wasting your time? You'd be surprised if you watch the news every day, how many hours a week that will amount to. You'll be surprised if you spend a lot of time watching this and that, or doing this and that on games, how your life disappears, and you cannot get it again. You cannot get it again - so what are you doing with your time? Here it is. His wife has made herself ready and - Verse 8 - she was arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. I see here's the last thing that makes us ready. It's not just about our prayer life, and our intimacy with God. It's not just about spending time in the word. It's about our life becoming beautiful with acts of compassion and kindness.

Notice it said: she was arrayed in fine linen, which is the righteous acts. The words righteous acts means things you do out of your relationship with God, and in the Old Testament the word righteous was the word tzedakah, meaning to have compassion on people, to be generous to people. So here it is. You can see it all there. We see the different aspects of preparation, making yourself ready: your relationship with the Holy Spirit, your response and yielding to the Holy Spirit, you're building a life of prayer, a life where the Spirit of God moves easily and quickly through you, and you let it overflow to the reaching of people in our community, the people around you; acts of kindness, acts of mercy, acts of evangelism, acts that reach people, and let them know there's God that loves them. And to her it was granted she would be arrayed in fine linen, which is the righteous acts of all of the saints.

So we have some choices to make today. Why don't we just close our eyes just quickly now, and I want to just ask you to consider how you will respond to Jesus Christ. How will you respond? How will you respond to Him being the groom? How will you respond? Number one, if you don't know Jesus Christ, the first response you could make would be to receive Him as your saviour. Jesus said to everyone who received Him, made Him welcome in their life, He gave power to be a child of God. If you're here today and never made the decision to personally commit your life to Christ, to put your trust in Him - church can't save you. Works can't save you. The only thing that can give a relationship with God is faith in Christ. Is there any person here today at that place of decision, please raise your hand and let me know I want to receive Christ today. I want to receive Jesus.

Okay, the second decision for you to make, are you filled with the Holy Spirit yet, do you have the Holy Spirit baptism, speak in a new language, starting to flow with the Holy Spirit, because He's the one who prepares you. He's the one you'll be listening to. When did you last speak in tongues? Have you got that gift? Why not open your heart today and receive it? Is there anyone here just at that place of decision to receive the Holy Ghost?

Here's the last decision I want you to consider. I wonder today what you are doing this year to make yourself ready, to prepare yourself? How is your devotion to Jesus Christ? Are there things in your heart, other lovers, other friends, things that have taken away that simplicity of just enjoying walking with Him? What are they? How about your prayer life, your time in the word and prayer, building a daily time and also listening and being empowered and filled by the Spirit of God day by day? What's happening there? What about the area of just yielding and surrendering to the Holy Spirit, letting Him talk into your life. When did you last hear Him speak? You need to make decisions about reordering your life, and what are you doing to extend the gospel, to build the house of God, and extend the kingdom? If there's nothing you're doing, then that would be a great place to make yourself ready this year.

This is what we'll do now, just as you're thinking about what it is you need to respond to, we're just going to stand in a moment, just each who person put their hand up to receive Jesus I'd like you to make your way to the front, stand in a row in front of me. I want to lead you in a prayer to receive Jesus. It'll take about a minute, two minutes and then we'll pray for you. Everyone is going to appreciate and value you made this decision. It's a great decision. So ready church, let's all stand together, one, two, three, stand, come on, let's give them a clap as people who put their hand up come.

Summary Notes

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1. Introduction

- The key question Jesus asked Peter: Who do you say that I am? (Mt.16:15-16)
- The main theme of the Book of Revelation is the revealing of Jesus Christ. (Rev.1:1)
- Rev.19:7-9 "...the marriage of the Lamb has come and His wife has made herself ready".
- Rev.19 Reveals Jesus as:
 - (i) A Passionate Bridegroom – coming to fulfil His Wedding promises
 - (ii) A sovereign King – coming to conquer His enemies and rule
 - (iii) A Righteous Judge – coming to call all men to account
- Each picture reveals a different aspect of who Jesus is and how He relates to us.
- N.T. has 23 different references to the Bridegroom aspect of Jesus.

2. The Jewish Wedding – Key Elements

- The Jewish wedding consisted of two distinct parts: Betrothal and the Wedding.

(a) The Betrothal (Kiddushin) (Mt.1:18-19 Joseph and Mary)

(i) The Arrangement (Shiddukhin)

- Either the father of the groom arranged the marriage (Samson), or the father sends an agent in his place (Abraham), or the young man comes by himself to the girl's father to arrange the marriage.
- The young man brought money, a wedding contract and a flask of wine.

(ii) The Bridal Price (mohair)

- The two men discussed and agreed upon the price that would be paid to purchase the bride. It changed her status, freeing her from her father's house.

(iii) The Wedding Contract (Ketubah)

- The groom then proposed to the bride and if she consented the marriage contract (Ketubah) was written up and signed.
- This binding document called a "Ketubah" was kept in the bride's possession until the consummation of the marriage.
- The wedding contract laid out all the groom's promises of provision for his bride and details about the wedding arrangements.

(iv) The Bridal Gift (Matan)

- Once the proposal was agreed, the price paid, and the wedding contract signed they drank wine together. In the drinking of the wine the bride commits to the groom – they are now betrothed and considered married.
- The groom gives a bridal gift to his bride, a reminder to his bride of his love for her and his coming to receive her as his wife.

(v) The Betrothal Period (Kiddinshim – set apart, holy)

- After the betrothal the bride was considered to be married although still living separate from her bridegroom. It would take a divorce to break the betrothal.
- The Groom – went to his father's house to prepare a bridal chamber and home for the bride to live in – by extending the Father's house.
- The Bride makes preparation during the period of separation from the groom.
- She prepares herself and her wedding garments
- She had to be ready and watchful as her groom would come at night
- She wears a veil to indicate she belongs only to the groom.

(b) The Wedding Ceremony (Nissuin = to carry)

(i) The Return of the Groom

- At a time determined by his father the Bridegroom returns for his bride.
- Since the exact timing was a surprise the bride had to be ready.
- The groomsmen run ahead of the groom to sound the Shafar and shout.

(ii) The Bridal Chamber (Chuppah)

- The shout warned the bride to go out with her bridesmaids to meet the groom and return with him to his father's house.
- On their wedding day the Bride and Groom are called King and Queen.
- The Groom and the bride entered the bridal chamber and consummated the marriage once the ceremony is complete.
- Then the guests celebrate together for seven days.

3. Jesus Our Bridegroom

- He pursues us with passionate love and longing for us (1 Jn.4:19)
 - He has paid the full bridal price – His life (1 Cor.6:20)
 - He invites us into covenant relationship with Him (Mt 26:27)
- He gives us His Word – the Bible outlining the covenant.
- He gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit (Eph.1:13-14)
 - He promises a place in his father's house (Jn.14:1-3)
 - He promises to return and complete the marriage (Rev.19:7)

4. Our Response to Jesus

(a) Receive Christ and His Offer of Covenant Relationship

Rev.3:20 "Behold I stand at the door and knock – if any man hears my voice and open the door I will come unto him. I dine with him and he with me."

(b) Receive the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:8 "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and be witnesses to unto me".

(c) Prepare Ourselves for Jesus Return

- (i) 2 Cor.11:2 Personal devotion and loyalty to Jesus.
 - (ii) Esther 2:15 Yielding to the Holy Spirit to shape our attitudes and behaviour
 - (iii) Mt.25:10 Prayer/Word – pursuant of God's presence and power.
 - (iv) Rev.19:7 Acts of compassion/generosity that spread the Gospel
- Righteousness = Acts of righteousness.
O.T. Righteousness = Tsedagah = Acts of compassion.

How will You respond to Jesus Christ?

Who is Jesus (3 of 4) Sovereign King

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Rev 19:11-16 Symbolism brought to life. How should we respond to a mighty conquering king?



I want you to open your Bible with me, go into Revelations Chapter 19, and I want to carry on with: Who is Jesus? That's what we're looking at, Who is Jesus? We're looking in the Book of Revelation. Of course the Bible abounds in insights to who Jesus is. In John 5, Jesus said to the Pharisees, He said: you searched through scriptures, and you think in them you find life. He said you go right through the Bible looking to find life. He said they all talk about Me, and you won't come to Me, that you might have life, so the Bible is full of the revelation of Jesus Christ. From Genesis to Revelation, Jesus is there, and you're going to say well: I didn't see Jesus in the Old Testament. Well listen, in the Book of Genesis, He's the Father of faith. He's the promised Son. In the Book of Genesis He's the deliverer that delivers the nation. He's also the lamb that sheds His blood. You go through each Book - in Exodus He's the one who brings the nation

out, He's the rock that provides the water, He is the bronze serpent that hangs on the cross so that people could be healed.

When you go into Leviticus He's the High Priest. He's also the offering. Every book of the Bible Jesus appears. In Joshua, He is the triumphant warrior king, who possesses the land and conquers the enemies, and makes a provision for God's people. In 1 Samuel He's the prophet, whose words never fall to the ground; in 1 Kings He becomes the king, the shepherd king, who saves and builds a nation. In the Book of 2 Kings He becomes the wise man who builds the temple, and then we go through; in Ezra He's the one who restores the temple, in Nehemiah He rebuilds the walls, so Jesus is found right through the Bible. You've just got to look for Him in the Bible. That's why Jesus said: you search the word and you're looking for life in the words; they speak of Me. You've got to come to Me, that's where life is found. It's in the relationship, the flow of a dynamic relationship, not just in lots of laws and principles. And so we could go right through the Bible. It's interesting isn't it? You know, He's the shepherd. He's the one who purchased the prostitute, and then redeemed her. He's everywhere in the Bible.

The Bible is about Jesus. It is the revelation, and we get to the Book of Revelation, and now it's the Revelation of Jesus Christ, and certain things are revealed. Firstly of course it's revealed what He is to the churches, but I want to follow and go through to the last part of Revelation, and this has yet to unfold. We saw there are three aspects of this; one, He is the bride groom, who loves us. Now remember these are just pictures of Jesus to help you know what it's like, and then show you how to relate, so as the bride groom we saw, He loves us! A passionate love. He wanted to come and save us! He pursues us. He wants to forgive us. He wants to enter into covenant with us, and so we see Him as the one who offers a covenant, love, a life long eternal relationship. What a wonderful thing. Our role is to submit, receive Him and enter that relationship, and live like someone married to the king.

Then now we want to look today at Him being the king. Well that's an awesome one isn't it? Revelations 19, Verse 11, and He said: now I saw heaven opened, and I saw a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. Sounds pretty serious doesn't it? His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name was called The Word of God. The armies of heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses also. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe, and on His thigh, a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

So now we see He's revealed not just as someone who loves you intentionally, and forgives you, and will pick you up and care for you, nurture you, that gentle loving side of Him, now we see another facet of Him. It is the same person, but here's another facet of Him. He is a sovereign, all-powerful king. Now most people like to relate to Jesus as the one who died on the cross for their sins, and loves them, and is always going to be there. We love the words of comfort, but we need to grow up and understand: He is a king. Essentially around that - I'll come into opening these passages in a bit. I want to just lay several things out about Jesus being king. Firstly He is king over a kingdom, not a democracy. It's not about my ideas and what I think, I think this and I think that. Jesus is king over a kingdom, a realm of rule, and the only place in all creation that is rebelling against that rule is this planet we're on. The contention globally is about who will rule. Jesus said in Matthew 28:18: all authority in heaven and earth is given to Me. You say well I don't see it. That doesn't mean He doesn't have it. You don't see the air either - doesn't mean it's not there.

What we haven't seen is the exercise of that authority, in a global scale. We've seen it in a local scale, but not in a global scale - so Jesus came as the servant king, but now He will come as the conquering king. So the Jesus you read about that came the first time, don't think He's coming that way the second time. It's not true. It's not how the Bible reveals Him. The second thing about Him being a king is, He's established a government. There is a government in the heavens, and He's delegated government to angels. He's delegated government in the heavens and in the earth, so every time you engage, every time you encounter an authority in the earth, you are encountering the government of God. You say well I don't like some of them, they're not nice. That's irrelevant. The core issue is your heart attitude to authorities, wherever you are in life. If you understand He's the king of a kingdom, and you're in the kingdom, Romans 13 says: submit yourselves to those in authority, because God has ordained or put them in these places.

So therefore, every time you meet a person in authority, whether they act well, act badly, whether they do their job well, or don't do their job well, you are encountering the authority of God. Keep respect for that delegated authority, because you are respecting God. Think about that. Getting the idea? Okay then. The third thing about it is that in His kingdom, Jesus has established protocols, which are ways of doing things, and order. In other words Jesus' kingdom is incredibly ordered. The planet is quite ordered. It runs by laws and rules and principles, which God set in place, but

His kingdom, both invisible and visible, also has order and protocols. There are ways of doing things in a kingdom. You know if you want to go visit the king, there are ways or protocols of accessing the king, and so it's the same in the kingdom of heaven.

The Bible tells us for example in Acts 4:12: neither is there salvation in any other, for there's no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. That is a protocol. That's a way. There is no other way to get saved but through faith in Jesus Christ. Now I know we would like to be tolerant of everyone, and everything, and all the other things in the world, but there is no other way a man can be saved, except through Jesus Christ. God has set His protocols in place. He's set His order in place. Here's the protocol for salvation: acknowledge Jesus Christ. There is no other way. He said: I am the way, the truth and life. No man comes to the Father except by Me, so God has set things in place, and not only that, He has set the way you can access God. There's a certain way to access the presence of God. If you don't follow God's way, you don't enjoy the access to His kingdom benefits and privileges.

Associated with that, there is a way of ordering our relationships. The husband is the head of the wife. We may not understand what it means, and how to outwork it, but it's an order God set in place that the spirit world operates under. God has set things in order. He's set principles in place for us to govern our life, principles for your finances. Now the problem is, we get saved in a democracy, we come into a kingdom, and then don't understand there's a major reformation needed in our thinking, to change our lifestyle, to live as a kingdom person - and there's a reason for that as we'll see shortly. Here's another thing too about this kingdom, is that Jesus has absolute standards in His kingdom. Now the liberals and humanists don't like these absolute standards, but the kingdom of heaven has absolute standards: lie/truth; holiness/uncleanness. There's absolute standards in His kingdom, and this is the issue that humanism has brought, is to dilute down absolutes until you're wishy-washy, and it's: well I feel this, and I think that in this circumstance, this in that circumstance, all this whole area of humanistic thinking.

There are absolute standards, for example God makes it very clear if you just read - here's an interesting example - if I just read in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 6. I'll just read a little bit of a verse, look at this - Verse 9 - He says: do you not know the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom? Be not deceived. In other words don't get this one wrong. Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, sodomites, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortionists; none of them will inherit the kingdom. It's simple. If you're doing those things, you won't inherit things in the kingdom, it's as simple as that. In other words God has some clear absolutes, that we don't negotiate over to suit ourselves. There are non-negotiables in the kingdom.

Finally here's the last one - you'll love this. He has the power to call all men and all nations to account for what they did. He has got the power. Just because you haven't seen Him exercise it, doesn't mean He doesn't have it. He has as sovereign king, the right and the power to call every person, every government, every nation to account, and He will do it. That's an interesting thing. In Revelations 20, Verse 12: I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened. And all were judged, small and great. The President of the United States, the Queen of England, it doesn't matter who you are, everyone gives account, so that is the nature of a king in his kingdom. Now let's go and have a look here and see how Jesus is revealed in Revelations 19, and I want to give you some simple ways that you can just respond to this revelation. Getting the idea?

Revelation 19, okay, first of all I saw heaven open, so John is getting a vision. He's getting revelation from heaven, about something that has not yet happened, and he said: I saw a white horse, and someone sitting on him. So the first thing you see is His transport. Now don't look and think of horses; think back there if someone was on a white horse, they were a military commander and they were on their way to a battle, so probably if we were to put it in today's language you'd say: I saw an F15, It was armed to the teeth, and He was sitting there driving it! That's probably more the language that we would have, and so the first thing you see is the white horse, it's a military picture of a conquering king, so when Jesus returns, He will return as a triumphant king to conquer the world, to subdue the world. That's got to be good news hasn't it? He's coming to subdue it.

Notice the second thing, they tell us about His character; He is faithful and true and righteous. In other words, He's faithful, He fulfils what He says He'll do. Not only that, He is true to His word. He's true to his character. He never ever goes outside what He says He'll do. He's true and His righteousness, the decisions He makes are right. Now you think about why is Jesus going to do all these things. Very, very simple, you'll see it in a moment - notice the thing about His eyes. His eyes are a flaming fire. Now of course you look at it, you've got to think about this spiritually. When you see someone whose eyes are blazing, what do you know is going on inside them? There is passion! Ever seen an angry person? Whoa! Nostrils flaring, and of course they've probably got devils flaring out their eyes, but He's got something else inside. He's got this passionate, zealous love for His people, and He's about to enter and do something to make the world a different place with them, and through them, and for them.

So when His eyes are ablaze, it's because there's passion inside. Have you ever seen a person whose lost all their fire in life? Their eyes are dull, and what it's really saying is He is full of life, and passion that flows out of the heart, that's ignited with love and fire and holiness! Isn't that something else aye? Glory, that's what He's like - and not only that. They see right through you into where you are, and every little thing going on inside you. You can't hide. You get one look from Jesus and you're undone. [Laughter] It's like He took off all your clothes and there you are, and everything is there. You can see everything. You cannot hide from His gaze! His eyes go right through to the core of your soul. Today we all dress up and look pretty, but before Jesus, He looks straight through who we are.

The second thing, the next thing you notice is His head. On His head are many crowns. The word crown is that of a victor, someone who's fought a battle and triumphed - and on His head are many crowns. What you've got to realise is that is a picture that He has fought many, many battles and in every one, He has triumphed and won the victory! You want to follow someone, follow someone who won, not someone who lost. He's won the victory! He's won the victory in battles. He's skilful at war, and winning battles. You got a financial battle? He's won that. Got a marriage battle? He knows how to handle that, He's having them all the time with His bride. [Laughter] Think about that. Come on. He's having them all the time. You got a battle with people? He had many of them. He knows how to conquer battles with people. You got people rejecting you? Oh, He knows how to conquer that battle too. You're feeling depressed and down and rejected, oh oh! He knows how to deal with that.

You have some devils getting on you, like a monkey clawing into your ears? He knows how to conquer that one. I would want to follow someone who's won the battles, and so He's portrayed, oh oh! many crowns! Halleluiah, and that's why it says: when you come before Him - here's the protocol of heaven - when you come into His presence you know what you do? You take your crowns, and throw them at His feet, in other words acknowledge you got the victory, and He gets the honour. See, the picture language is to help us engage with heaven, engage with God. So this is this wonderful king, man oh man, and His clothes - notice this, His names. No one knew His name except Him. You think well what does that mean? I know His name. His name's Jesus. No, no, no. Listen. What it says, no man knew His name, this is what it's meaning. The name speaks of the nature, what a person is like. So when it says: no man knew His name, this is what it's saying: there are things about Jesus you can't even find in the Bible. Only He knows them, and He's going to make them known in the end times. You will be surprised.

He is unsearchable, there's so much to be known about Him. Not only that, He is also known as the word of God, because everything He does is in harmony with the word of God. He never departs from the word of God. That's why it says: in the beginning was the word, the word was with God, the word was God. His life shows what it means to live out the written word of God. His name is the word of God. What else is He called? The king of kings. He's the sovereign ruler over everyone. You met a king? He's the king over them. You think someone's important? He's over them. You think someone's got some power? He's over them and more powerful. He's the king of kings, and like to repeat it, the Lord of Lords, so He's over the whole deal. You've got understand, this is the One that we are working with. This is the One we are connected. This is the One who loves us.

It says here about His army. Oh, look at His armies - armies, more than one. There's an army in heaven, angelic army. There's an army on earth, saints of the living God, His armies. Oh I love that, and His armies. Let's see if I can find it, I'm getting excited here. The armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. So it tells how they're clothed. It says first of all, they're in heaven, in other words they have learnt these are people who are mobilised to flow together for a military purpose of conquest, to advance a kingdom in the earth. They are in heaven. That means that they are connected by the Holy Ghost. You are already connected to heaven, and all you have to do is learn how to enter and stay in that realm of the spirit, and you are part of the army of God in heaven, following this conquering king, who wants to advance His kingdom through the world. It's an absolutely amazing picture - and they're clothed in fine linen, which the Bible tells us is the righteous acts.

It is the right doing of the saints. White speaks of the glory of God, the life and nature of God, clean and white, white and clean. Clean means purity, so now we see very clearly that Jesus is not just coming alone, He's coming, and He has mobilised people with a certain purpose, and this is what the purpose is: take over the earth. Take over the earth. We're not to get out of it, and abandon it, we're to transform it, but at this stage we're transforming it by the proclaiming of the gospel. When He comes, it'll be with the raw power of God as well as the gospel, and oh my, when the raw power of God comes, you want to read your Bible and find out what happens to people who stand in the way - not good. You know the God of the Old Testament is still our God and when people stood in His way, there's some horrible things happen. Angel Lord come on one army, and a couple of hundred thousand died overnight; came on another couple of guys, and fire came from heaven on them. You see God is not limited in His power. Just because He doesn't use it, doesn't mean He doesn't have it, and it doesn't mean He won't hold back forever. This is exciting.

You don't have to look at the world and say oh, it's so bad, it's getting worse. Oh my, read the Book of Revelation, who we are following and what He is like and what He will do. Look at what it says. It says His clothes, His robe. His robe was dipped in blood. He was clothed in a robe dipped in blood. Now I'm not too sure, didn't say whether it's His blood or not, so probably it's like this. If you are a - I guess - you're writing there to a group of people who are used to military combat, where soldiers carried shields and swords, and they got into face to face, close quarter combat. Now if you ever see someone come back from that kind of battle, they are covered in blood, someone else's blood, so to me it just seems to speak very, very clearly that He engages at close quarters. He's not going to do this from a distance. He will engage in close quarters in addressing issues in the earth. He will be engaged, personally. He'll also be engaged through His body.

Here's the next thing it says, it tells something else about His actions. What does He do? Here are three things that He does: number one, He judges and makes war. You say it doesn't sound like the Jesus we knew. You're right, but it's still Him. He came as a servant king and everyone missed Him. Why? Because they were looking for a king who'd come and take over and conquer Rome. Right till the very end, the disciples thought He was going to come and set up an army and conquer the earth, and they got it wrong that time. Why did they think that? Because the Bible tells us He will do that, just not that time, but next time. Next time. Next time. Next time. Don't have to look and be in panic about ooh oh, you know, the Muslims are spreading through the world, and this is happening... don't live in fear! Ooh oh, what's happening, have you read the news, quick, get the latest concern about what's happening in the world. Listen, get into the Bible, and see what it says, and align with heaven and the purpose of heaven! That's a much better plan I would think. [Applause]

So He judges and makes war. That means He intervenes to put things right. Now why is He doing this? Because He is a passionate lover of people, and He will not stand back forever, and allow evil to triumph. He will finally come and say: I'm putting an end to this now. He will judge it; that is evil and wrong, repent now or you're finished. He'll make war. War means a conflict between two governments, as who will rule and be in charge, so He will judge. He'll look out of love, out of righteousness, and see what is right and what is wrong, and He'll sort out those things by confronting them. It says He'll strike the nations. Now that's interesting. I can't develop all of these, but here's an interesting thought: the nations. That's all the nations, so whatever He's going to do, will affect all the nations. There will be confrontation over government, over the nations.

It says in one place all the kings will be gathered together at battle, and they'll all be wiped out in one day. God is going to shift governance in every nation of the earth. [Applause] Every nation of the earth will experience change in governance, right government, He will root out corruption. He will root out injustice. He will root out the things that are going on, that grieve any good person. He will root them out, and He'll replace people who won't repent, with those who will fulfil His will, and rule righteously. He will have a righteous government. You say well I find that hard to believe. Listen, there was a day, in David's day, when there was a righteous government in the earth, in a nation, and it was there to let all the world know how good it is when there's godly government, how blessed the nation is. The Bible says: righteousness exalts a nation; sin is a shame for any people. Laws like this [Homosexual Law Reform] are a shame on our nation, and also a huge problem for us. Make no mistake, you will find once that law if it's passed, it will increase demonic activity of a perverse nature in the nation, because it'll be legally allowed by the representatives on earth. That's a perversion.

Okay, well we'll carry on, move on. We need to get some hope in here. Notice the last thing it says, that I picked up there is: out of His mouth goes a sharp sword to strike the nations. Ooh, so it's not like He's got a sword in His mouth, and He's got a long tongue or anything like that. Listen, this is the word of God, very sharp, very powerful, very quick, and when God speaks, something happens. Jesus spoke to the tree: no more fruit, and it withers and dies. Jesus spoke to the storm: silent! And it was silent. That's the sharp sword. What it means to say sharp sword, it means the word He speaks is spirit, and life, and is empowered by heaven, and it always does not return and avoid. It does what it's called to do, so if He's going to smite nations, He's going to speak prophetically into nations, and consequences will come. Now you think well I don't know, I don't know whether I can go along with that, seems all a bit much. Okay, read Jeremiah.

Read Jeremiah, and then go to the history and ask where are all the nations He prophesied against, and what kind of end did they come to? Where are they now? They are exactly where He prophesied. You see these things are all through the Bible. The Bible is the revelation of Jesus Christ. It's whole centres on Jesus Christ. Okay, so how can I respond to all this? What should I do? Isn't this exciting, getting some things out of the word like this? But what can I do, what do I do, what do I do? I need to know what to do, not just get excited about the word. Number one, I need to acknowledge Jesus' right to rule. Bottom line is, at a personal level, if you are here today, and you are not a Christian, you've not given your life to Christ, you're living your life your own way, you're a rebel against heaven. You're a rebel against the order of God, you're a rebel against God's government, your life is out of order and you are suffering

immensely. Not only are you not in the kingdom of heaven, you are under the rule of another kingdom, a demonic kingdom called the kingdom of darkness. It rules your life, and torments you, and seeks to steal from you continually. The first thing is to acknowledge: I have run my life my own way. Jesus, I come to You as the one who loves me, and I submit to Your right to rule my life. I acknowledge You as Lord.

Notice what it says in Romans 10:9; if we believe in our heart, and confess Jesus Christ is Lord or king, then we'll be saved. This is an issue of governance, living in one kingdom, coming into another kingdom, and re-ordering my whole life. It's not just well I come to church, that's the end of it, nothing like that at all. The second thing, what do I need to do? Well, because I'm called into His kingdom, I now need to learn how to live in His kingdom. I need someone to help me and empower me to do it. I need to receive the Holy Ghost, the power of the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues, which is an entrance into a spirit world. Acts 1:8, you shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost has come on you. I need to get filled with the spirit, because I can't live in the spirit dimension with God. I can't live a kingdom life without the power to live that life, and that power is given to me. He's the Holy Ghost. He's a glorious person. Halleluiah, maybe some of you are at that point now.

Here's the third thing I need to consider. I need to consider aligning my life into God's order, aligning my relationships with God's order. Now you start to think about it, it starts with your personal heart. Jesus said in John 14, Verse 21: He that has my commandments and keeps them, he's the one that loves Me, and My Father and I will come and manifest Ourselves. If you're not getting much of God perhaps there's commandments of God you're ignoring. Now notice what Jesus said: if you keep My commandments, that's how you demonstrate you really do love Me. This is not a legal thing. This is what this is. I looked and thought oh man, that's a tough statement. If you keep My commandments, then you love Me. I think if you do what I tell you, then you love Me - it sounds incredibly hard doesn't it? But it's not meant to be like that. In fact that's actually not what it's about.

What He's saying is something like this: all your life you've thought that doing it your way you would have your needs met, and it's not worked. So I want you to repent, and recognise that the ways you've tried to run your life, and manage your life, and control your life, do not work at all. There is a need to turn from them, and in faith believe that aligning with Me will get what you were looking for, see? And so what I need to do if there's a mess in my life, the first question you'll ask is, where do I need to align up with God and His ways? Repentance and faith is the foundation for living in kingdom life. You say well, I repented years ago. Ooh, I think you should repent before you go home. Listen, repentance is the continued process of recognising when I'm living out of my own strength, my own way, my own ability, my own ideas about life, and coming to realise it's not working, and it never was going to work, and re-centring, getting rid of the idols, and re-centring on the king and His kingdom, letting my life be aligned with God: your finances.

That's the most vulnerable place. Everyone - finances, money. You think oh, don't talk to me about money. No, because you want to stay not aligned with heaven, but God wants to talk about your money. Why? Because He wants to bless you. He wants you to be aligned with heaven, so He can increase blessing in your life, and the flow of blessing that comes through divine alignment. This is true of every area of life. This is what God is saying to the churches at this time. Alright then, here's the last one. I'd love to develop this more but I don't have the time, so I'm just going to put it out to you. Here's the last couple of things. We need to learn how to enter and experience kingdom realities. I need to learn how to enter and experience kingdom realities. What do we mean by that? I'll give you a few things now.

I need to learn, for example in Hebrews 4, Verse 16, it says: let us come boldly to the throne of grace, and obtain mercy and grace to help. So I need to learn how to, in my personal prayer life, come near to God. I have to learn that it's by faith, that just in a moment of time, I can just access and step into His presence immediately, and feel Him and engage Him, so I need to learn how to do that. It's done by faith. It's done by boldly coming into His presence, and believing I'm forgiven. It's done through repentance. It's done through praise and worship. There's a number of protocols the Bible says how to enter His presence. Let me tell you this: it is normal for every believer to enjoy access to heaven's presence, the presence of God, and the reality of His kingdom. It's a normal thing. If it's not happening, there's something you need to learn to do, and something you need to align up in your life, in terms of priorities. Now that would be normal.

In relationship I need to learn how to enter the presence of my God, and how to present myself. Do you know how to present yourself to Him, that day by day we're called to present ourself. There's various parts of you to present to Him. Have you thought about that? And have you thought about when you stand in the presence of a king, how you stand? See, that's what the Bible teaches us, about how to stand in the presence of the king of kings, because He is the king of kings, He's calling us to be a king, or to rule, or have authority in our own area of life. Here's another thing

to think about. He's called us to see and hear, why? Because that's how Jesus lived His life, so it's normal for us, as part of this kingdom, to learn how to see in the spirit and hear in the spirit. We have courses to help you with that.

Here's another thing that would be normal to learn to do, how to receive from God, how to step into His presence, and begin to imbibe His peace, because the kingdom of heaven is peace; how to imbibe His joy, and to begin to feel it and draw it around your life. That would be something all of us are called to do, because we're in a kingdom now, and we have access. Here's another thing you could learn to do, and that is, as you've come into the presence of the king and worshipped Him and love on Him and done these things, then He wants to teach you how to arise as a king representing Him, and speak over your situation, speak over your life, speak over your relationships, make decrees of the word of God, that heaven will back up, to bring your life, and those things around you, so that God's able to manifest in them. This is exciting, the kingdom side of Jesus.

Finally, we're called to share and advance that kingdom with others, to win people to Christ. Go make disciples of all nations. Well there's got to be something for everyone in that lot. There would have to be something for everyone in that lot. I just want you to close your eyes for a moment, and just think and let the Holy Spirit challenge you. I want to just quickly ask you, in what area God spoke to you? It helps instead of saying boy, that was enthusiastic, now let's get over to Art Deco and out there the afternoon, before you do that, just make a decision what God said, and how you'll respond. So close your eyes right now. This will only take about three minutes to do this, but this is the important part for you.

I can feel His presence just so strong right now - hard to stand up actually. It is, I'm really finding it hard to stand, because I can feel His presence so strong right now.

Here's the first question: Have you given your life to Jesus? Have you come into His kingdom? Have you come to the one who loves you, and desires to lead you, who has demonstrated His love by dying on the cross for you? Have you come to Him? He wants to lead you, to show Himself as the lover of your soul, and the one who will lead and govern your life, and make you blessed and prosperous, fulfil your destiny.

Here's the second question. Have you received the Holy Ghost, and got filled with the spirit yet? Be a great step for you to take. Is there anyone here needs to be filled with the spirit?

Here's the third thing: we need to align our life with God's word. Is there some area that you know you're fighting God, you've got out of order and maybe it's a relationship, maybe it's some character area, it's a sin issue in your life, you say God, I need to repent today. Just raise your hand, say that's me, God's speaking to me about an area to put right. Maybe it's a relationship you need to put right. What about entering the presence of God, and living in kingdom life. How many of you felt the challenge today to learn how to enter in God's presence more consistently day by day? How many felt that - God bless, many hands.

How many felt you need to learn how to present yourself to God, each part of your life to Him? How many felt that today? Quite a number, very good. How many felt the challenge that I need to learn how to see and hear what God is saying and doing? How many felt that - oh many today. How many felt God speaking to you, you need to learn to stand up and speak and decree His word, start to exercise spiritual authority? God bless. How many of you felt God speak to you, you needed to be more proactive in advancing the kingdom of God by sharing your faith with others? God bless, so many.

Father, I thank You today that You are speaking to our heart. We feel Your sovereign presence right now. We're going to pray a simple prayer, we're going to talk to Jesus. When we pray, He will hear and He will respond, so I want you all to just help these ones at the front, as we come and we pray together, and open our hearts to Jesus. Are you ready? Listen to me and follow me in this prayer, make it your prayer. Father in heaven, I come to You in Jesus' name. Father in heaven, I come to You in Jesus' name. Thank You for loving me. Thank You for sending Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. Lord, I have lived my life without You, doing it my own way. Today I turn to You. Jesus, I ask You to forgive all of my sins, to make me clean inside. I receive Your spirit into my heart. I receive You as my saviour and Lord and I give You my life today. Before heaven and earth I declare Jesus Christ is my saviour and king. Amen.

Who is Jesus (4 of 4) Jesus the Righteous Judge

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If you loved someone passionately, had great power, and saw injustice - would you not step in and make it right? Get to understand what Justice and Judgement really mean.



changing in our life.

I want you to open your Bible with me in John, Chapter 5 and we're just concluding our series we've been doing on Who is Jesus, and this is number four. We looked at Jesus as revealed in the Book of Revelation. The Bible tells us, Jesus spoke in John 5 verse 39, and He said: you're searching the scriptures, hoping that in them you'll find eternal life, yet these speak of Me, and you won't come to Me, that you'll have life. So the scriptures, one end to the other, reveal who Jesus is, and when we know who Jesus is, it changes how we relate to Him. So as we increase in the revelation of Jesus, it changes how we live our life, so we don't want to live in yesterday's revelation, we want to grow. So the questions we've been looking at: Who is Jesus; and how should I respond to Him, what should I do, because any revelation of Jesus, any new insight in Him, must lead to something

So this is what Jesus said, and we looked in the Book of Revelation, and we saw Jesus revealed. We saw Him revealed as the passionate bride groom, the one - and remember these are just pictures. They're pictures to help you understand a person - and so He's portrayed as the passionate bride groom, someone who just loves people. If you love someone deeply, what would you do to rescue them? If you loved your child deeply, what would you do to help them, if they're in a mess? You'd do all you could.

Secondly, we see Jesus revealed as a king, and so as a king He has great power. So if you loved someone, and you had great power, would you not use your power to rescue the one you love? Okay then, so we saw He's revealed not just as a bride groom who loves us and pursues, and gave His life for us; as a powerful king who has power to heal and deliver and transform our lives; but we see also He is a righteous judge. This is an aspect of Jesus people don't like, or don't feel comfortable with.

But that means often it's because we don't understand. When we think of judge, we think of being punished. For many people the only thing they think of judge, they think when they appeared in Court, because they had a fine of some kind, and it was a horrible experience and they got punished. That's what we tend to think - judge, we tend to think of punished. Yet there's far more to it than that, so let me just rephrase it again. If you really loved someone passionately, and had all power available to help them, and you saw them in a place of great injustice, would you not step in and make it right? So when it says that Jesus is the judge, He's the one who steps in, with all power to make things right, to fix it up. So as we're looking at that, we're going to help you understand a little bit about what God is like, and I want to particularly apply it, because revelation without anything to apply in our life, it doesn't do us any good at all. It's just a lot of knowledge.

So let's have a look in Psalm 89. Here's the thing I want you to get the first grip on, is that God loves justice and judgement. He actually loves justice and judgement. We live in a world which is full of injustice; turn on the news, you'll see injustice and oppression. Everywhere you go you see injustice. You see the injustice in nations, the injustice in governments, the injustices - injustice is all through the world. It's because the world is fallen, and ruled by oppressive demonic spirits, and so the world living in sin is a terrible unjust place. So wherever you look in the world, you'll see and hear examples of injustice, and you shake your head at it, you think that's terrible, or if you experience injustice, you get really angry. You say that's not right! There's a great sense - have you ever noticed with kids there's a great sense of justice in them? You give one strawberry too many [laughter] and you'll know whether that's in them or not. Immediately those eagle eyes, that's not fair! Kids have a greatly developed sense of justice when they're quite young.

Some people in their personality have this great sense of justice, right and wrong, but it actually comes from the nature of God. Look what it says in Psalm 89, Verse 14: Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face. If you look at it in King James version it says: justice and judgement are the habitations of your throne. The words there are 'justice' and 'judgement', so everything needs a foundation to uphold it, so there are four foundations uphold the throne of God - or putting it another way, God's kingdom is established on four key pillars. Here's what they are. The first one is justice; the second one is judgement; third one is mercy; fourth one is truth. So when you want to extend the kingdom of God in your personal life or in any part of your world, you've

got to remember it's built on four foundations. It's built on justice, judgement, mercy, truth, so these are foundational to the kingdom of God.

Not only that, it tells us in Hebrews 6, it says about the doctrines of Christ, the foundational doctrines of Christ. It says: we want to go on to maturity, and we will go on to maturity if God permits us, so in other words it's impossible for you to mature as a believer, unless God permits you to mature. He won't permit you to mature unless certain foundations are laid properly in your life. Those foundations are found in Hebrews 6; repentance from dead works, faith towards God, the doctrine of baptisms and laying on of hands, resurrection from the dead - now get this one - eternal judgements.[See series: Foundational Principles] So judgements and understanding about judgement is a foundation in the life of a believer. You can never mature if it's not properly laid in your life, so I can't teach all of that today, but I want to give you an insight to God being a judge and some aspects of what it means, how it would apply to our life.

So this is foundational. It's not some new big revelation. This is actually quite foundational for a believer, and people don't like to hear terms like God is a judge or God judges, unless it's in terms of accusing the church, or accusing God in some way. But God's kingdom is clearly established on justice, what is right; judgement, seeing what is right and putting it right; and mercy, extending mercy to people; and on truth, so that's how God builds His kingdom. Now let's have a look. So we see the kingdom is established that way, so when the Bible talks about justice, the kingdom is established on justice, that word is the word tzedakah, means to be right or to be just or fair. Also the word can be interpreted generosity and compassion to those who are poor, so one of the pillars of the kingdom of God is what is right, justice, and showing generosity to people who are troubled or in difficulties of some kind. That is a pillar of God's kingdom, to show generosity to people who are poor. Why? Because that's right in God's eyes.

So when we help people, widows, orphans, people who are afflicted, when we are involved in social justice, we are doing what is right in the kingdom of God. So generosity to the poor is one of the foundations in the kingdom of God, because it is what God calls justice. It is justice to do that. The second word there is judgement. The word judgement means - it's a word to deliver someone out of a situation, so the Book of Judges who delivered people out of oppression; it means to rule over, the judges ruled over Israel, and it also means to sit and to make a decision as a third party. So two people are in trouble, and the third party sits, listens to both sides, and makes a decision what is right and gives direction what to do, then sees it takes place. So that's what it means when it says judge. It's not all about punishing. It's about seeing to the root of issues, and making things right. That can include that people are punished, or have consequences for their behaviour, but in essence it's looking right into the root of something, and making a decision: this is what is right, and this is what will happen. Get the idea?

So now this is what God's kingdom is built on. Now notice this - in Jeremiah, Chapter 9 - look what God says in Jeremiah. So we see the kingdom is established on those four pillars, and justice and judgement are key parts of that. Now look what it says in Verse 24. It says: let him that glories, glory in this, that he understands and knows Me. So He said if you're going to rejoice, don't rejoice in your giftings and your successes and be boasting of all kinds of things. If you want to boast in anything, boast in the Lord, that you know Him. Then it says that I am the Lord, exercising loving kindness - that's mercy - judgement - there it is, there's that word again, justice and judgement, and then righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight. So there it is again, so God delights in kindness or mercy. He delights in justice, and He delights in judgement, doing things that are right. Notice God delights in that, He loves it. He is passionate about it. It pleases Him when something is done right.

When parents lead their families, and they do it right, and they discipline their children right, it pleases God. These things please God. When leadership leads well, and leads with righteousness, or leads in a right way, decisions are made which are right, this pleases God. Why? Because His kingdom is established, He loves what is right, and He loves judgement. He loves these things, because they bring what is right to people who need something done on their behalf. Notice the next scripture - and that word delight means to bend towards, be pleased with, be jealous over, or attentive to, so God is absolutely pleased when we act rightly, when we do justice and judgement. Think about that. When you help someone, even if they don't respond to you, you help someone who's in need, it delights God. He loves it. In fact in Matthew 5:25, He divides the whole world up into those who do rightly, or do justice and those who don't do it. When they say: how do we do this to You, He said: when you did this to the poor, when you fed the poor, when you clothed those who were naked, when you visited those in prison; this is what is justice to Me. This is right before Me. You do it to them, you're doing it to Me - so God is totally attentive to social justice, to things that are wrong being put right, to injustices being fixed up.

He is very attentive to it. He delights in it. Ultimately He will reward it as well. Interesting isn't it? Pentecostal churches tend to minimise this aspect, while proclaiming the need for a personal relationship with Jesus. Now we do need a personal relationship with Jesus, to address the root issue, but that does not mean we shouldn't deal with the

injustices done to the poor. The church has been the champion of hospitals, of schools, of orphan work. Everywhere in the world, the church is the one who initiated and made these things happen. Why? Because this is in the kingdom of God. That's the nature of the kingdom of God. Church has withdrawn and let governments do it, but this is the kingdom of God to do these things, so the church will have to move back out that way again.

Have a look in Jeremiah 22, Verse 16 and it says: He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then was it well. Was this not to know Me says the Lord? You know what God says? To know Me, if you say you know Me, this is how it shows up in your life: you do kinds acts, or acts of compassion to the poor, justice. You minister to the broken hearted. You help those who are afflicted, you visit people in their distress. This is what He's saying - this is what it means to know God. The revelation you have of God is very little, if all it does is ends you up with hands in the air worshipping, and it doesn't flow out in kindness and mercy to people who are in desperate need. It's the very nature of God. If we encounter this God, He says: to know Me, means to do these things, so that's why Jesus said: we'll sort the church out, not on the basis of how much they prayed, but we'll sort it out on the basis of whether there was an overflow of the river of My heart and kingdom to those who are in need.

It's quite challenging isn't it, quite challenging. This is what is justice and judgement, so when we're looking about judgement, don't just think about punishing. Think about this whole area of putting right what is wrong, and because God is a passionate lover and has the power, He has the ability to put right what is wrong. He can fix this stuff up. Now that's a great revelation to have, because it frees you from having to fix it all up. You can just now respond. You don't have to get angry, don't have to pay back, don't have to get vengeful on anyone. You can put it in God's hands, and let Him sort it out. You can just get on with your life, and enjoy doing what He wants you to do, instead of being screwed up with some injustice that you've had. Most people come into the church messed up with some injustice. Come to the cross, the greatest injustice of all, where the innocent, the creator, was hung on a cross!

So the Bible is very clear, that God is concerned about injustice and oppression and poverty and these kinds of things. At Jesus' first coming, Jesus came - everyone thought He come as a king to put it all right. He came to deal with the root issue, so when He came the first time, He came to deal with the root of sin, to pay the penalty, lay His life down, demonstrate the aspect of loving kindness of God, and the mercy of God over judgement, and so He died, Jesus died on the cross for our sin, so we can be free of the power of sin, live like God intended us to live. But when He comes the second time, I'm sorry, it's not going to be so nice. He will come the second time to put things right. He'll come the second time because He's concerned about His people, and how they've been treated over centuries. Don't mistake God's patience for His tolerance of things. The Lord is long suffering, not willing any perish, but all come to repentance. So we think because judgement is not executed against evil work, that God doesn't seem to care and it's alright, but it isn't alright, as we'll see in just a moment.

Okay then, so the Bible says in Genesis, it says: shall not the judge of all the earth do right? So we see that God has committed judgement into the hands of Jesus Christ. We see that judgement and justice go together, they're about doing right, and dealing with injustice in the earth, and putting it right. So we see that God will do it, He'll put it all right. Now that's a fantastic, hopeful thing isn't it aye? God will put it right. God will put it right, it's the putting right that counts isn't it? Okay then, so I want you to look with me in Revelations, Chapter 8, then we'll just apply this into our life, what can we do. Revelations, Chapter 8. We need to go to Revelations, where we can see Jesus again, as He's revealed in the Book of Revelation. It's interesting in Isaiah 26 and Verse 9; it says: when your righteous judgements are in the earth, all the inhabitants will learn righteousness. So if 2000 years of kindness didn't solve the world's problems, a little bit of stick might make a difference? [Laughter]

So we have 2000 years, two millennia of the kindness of God being shown, and God will continue to show kindness, because that's His nature; mercy is always greater than judgement. God's always looking for a way to get us right, right before Him, and right living. Now when we look in the Book of Revelation, we find - we'll just look firstly in Revelation 19, just at the verse we were looking at last week, Verse 11: I saw heaven opened and a white horse, and He that sat on him was called Faithful and True, in righteousness He judges and makes war. Verse 2; For true and righteous are His judgements, because he has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her sexual sin; and He has avenged on her the blood of all the servants shed by her. Without going into all the details of it, when Jesus comes, He will judge all systems in the earth, governmental or religious, that have persecuted and martyred His people. There are more martyrs in this Century, than in all the history of the earth, more martyrs!

People are being martyred for their faith in India, in Pakistan, in countries all over the world. This is a day when the blood of the saints is being shed, and God hears that, because the blood cries out. He will do something about it, so let's have a look what He does, and of course people don't always necessarily like this part of it. I don't even understand all of it, but let's just read in Revelations, Chapter 8 and read a few verses there, then I want to get focussed on just how we should respond in the light that Jesus is a judge. Now remember John saw this, this hasn't

happened yet, and what John saw - Verse 1 - He opened the seventh seal, and he saw seals open, and he saw some bowls released. There was silence in heaven for about half an hour, and I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints, upon the golden altar before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.

So notice the first thing you see is incense. Incense is the prayers of God's people. Now notice what happens when God's people pray, so it's picturing that in the end time, there will be a revival of prayer in the church globally. The church will begin to rediscover the power of prayer, and arise to pray, and some things are going to happen that the only parallel in history is in Egypt, and you can read that in the Book of Exodus, where God literally brought judgements on a nation, so He could release His people and get them free into the Promised Land - so read Exodus again if you want to see what God's judgements look like. Try to put yourself in it, and imagine the fear of it all, the horror of it all. But the Bible is very clear in Exodus 12:12, God was judging the Gods of Egypt. He was dealing with the idolatry and spiritism of Egypt, and the way it manifested in the culture. He was addressing the spirit world, to tear down and humiliate it, and show His sovereign power. All who responded to Him, whether they were Egyptian or Israeli, who responded and believed were saved.

He didn't make any distinction. On the way through the judgements, He distinguished between His people and the Egyptian people, and that some of the curses that came on the Egyptian people never came on God's people at all. They were in the middle of it, and untouched by it. Now that's a great thing and hope for us; you can be in the middle of something, and untouched by it. In the midst of all those judgements, God still extended mercy, that all who believed were saved. Isn't that a wonderful thing? So no matter what it tells us here is going to happen in the end times, there's a couple of things you can be sure of, if we look at the first situation in Exodus. One is, God's people will have His hand on them - if you're walking with Him - and secondly, that there be opportunity for all people to be saved in the midst of these difficulties. You've noticed how tragedy has a way of softening hearts, and people tend to turn to the Lord; it's unfortunate, but it's the hardness of man's pride.

So you notice then it says: the trumpets sounded, in the Bible. Whenever a trumpet sounded, it spoke of a message. It was a prophetic message, and the trumpets were used for a number of things; one was used to declare war, another it was used to announce a king's enthronement, so it says: the trumpets began to sound one after the other, seven trumpets. Each trumpet, as it sounded, something happened in the earth. Now have a look at this. This hasn't yet happened, and it will happen, and it is progressive, and it gets more serious as it goes on, but it ends in great victory. That's the best part of it. Look at it, it says - He said the angel took the censer, filled it with fire, threw it on the earth, and there were noises, thunderings, lightnings and an earthquake. Wow! So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

Now if you read through this in Verse 7, the first angel sounded: hail and fire followed, mingled with blood. It sounds like Egypt and the exodus doesn't it? And they were thrown to the earth, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the grass was burned up. So what He's saying is: globally, an impact and judgement on the vegetation and food supply. Look at the next one, second trumpet. It says the second angel sounded: something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, a third of the sea became blood. A third of the living creatures in the sea died, a third of the ships were destroyed - so a judgement on trade, and on food supplies. These are all natural things. Then the third trumpet: The third trumpet sounded, great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, fell on a third of the rivers, and on the springs of water. It was Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, or bitter. Many died from the water because it was made bitter - water supplies.

The fourth trumpet: The heavens were struck. The fourth angel sounded, a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, a third of the stars, a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. So you notice there cosmic disturbances, perhaps meteor showers. Who knows what it all is. I don't understand what it all means, but I know when it happens, you know that's what that meant. That's how prophecies seem to be. Now you notice this is not hidden in a corner, this is global. This is on TV all over the world. This is everywhere. This is more impacting than all the disaster movies you've ever seen. This is the real thing. The others were imagining what could be, so you've seen the last few years, these disaster movies, and there's been an increase in temperature of the earth, there's been the sun blocked out, there's been cosmic showers. There's been all kinds of dilemmas come to the earth, and it's all Hollywood imagining it, but often Hollywood's imagination is not so far off sometimes reality, it eventually becomes reality.

Anyway, this is what the Bible says will happen, and you think well that's enough, we've had enough. We'll all repent then. No, no, no, there's a bit more to come, two more. He says the fifth angel sounded, I saw a star fallen from

heaven to earth. To him was given the keys to the bottomless pit, and he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and air were darkened because of the smoke. Out of the smoke locusts, to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power, and they tormented people so they wanted to die. So here's the fifth thing that'll happen; there'll be an unleashing of demonic activity in the earth like you've never seen before. Church doesn't even, half of it doesn't even believe in deliverance. Want to read Revelation, they're all going to be released in a massive way at the end times, a massive way at the end times. You think well and people seek to die it says. In other words, suicide and distress and hopelessness, despair will abound in the earth. These are the things God is bringing on the earth before He comes and sets everything right, overthrows all governments, and establishes His own government in the earth. It's amazing to see these things.

Look what else it says. It says in Verse 11, there's another thing happen there and it says, Verse 13, the sixth angel sounded: I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar - that's the incense altar. This is released because of intercessory prayer - saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates. And they were released, they were prepared for that hour and day and month and year, and were released to kill a third of mankind. Now that's pretty serious isn't it? Perhaps you have another Bible. Perhaps you don't like to read this. The Bible says: blessed are those who read the Book, and do the things in the Book. Now so you as a believer, you can look at the things happening in the earth and say hey, you ain't seen nothing yet, you want to see what God's about to do! Want get onside with Him, this is going to be something else. It's not going to be hidden. Getting the idea?

So God is a righteous judge, then finally it's the seventh - now what you're seeing here is God is bringing judgement on the Gods of this earth, to prepare for what will come, which is the establishing of His kingdom. So when the seventh trumpet sounds, and it tells us there in Chapter 11 and Verse 15, the seventh angel sounded: There were loud voices in heaven, saying: the kingdoms of this world have now become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. He shall reign forever! So there is a mighty end time demonstration of the power of God, and a manifestation of Christ Himself, with His people, that will start to put right everything put wrong. All governments will be changed, unjust systems will be altered, financial systems will be altered, governmental systems, educational systems. Over the period of 1000 years, everything will be altered to make it right. That's pretty good isn't it? Don't sound very impressed - I'm very impressed. I think well that's a very powerful God, and God will do it.

Why will He do it? Because He will be tired of seeing His people martyred generation after generation, and time will have come to actually demonstrate He's not just merciful, He's also righteous. This is fantastic - so we see then that God is merciful, He is truthful. We see He is just, and He judges, He sorts things out. So what do I need to do, if that's the Jesus that I have never met, and that's the Jesus of the Bible, because He's the one who will come to do this? It's Him coming to do this, so the Jesus that we like to see in the manger, is also the Jesus who subdued the elements around Him, overcame the storms. He's also the Jesus who died on the cross and rose again. He's also the Jesus who will come with great love, great power, and He will put things right. That's a great thing for us to be aware of, a great hope.

People look around the world, they get worried about the antichrist, worried about this and that, ooh oh! The kingdom of our God is about to come, and we're about to be a part of that! So what do I need to do? How could I respond? What can I do? Well I'm glad you asked, there's a whole heap of things you can do. Let me give you a few of them that you could do that would help there. Number one is, I want to be on Jesus' side would be the first place to start. It would be a great thing to receive Jesus Christ, open your heart and life to receive Him, and to acknowledge He died on the cross for your sins. You don't have to experience judgement for sin. You can actually be free of all of that, and have a new life God intended, by receiving Jesus Christ. John 3:16 through to 18; God so loved you He gave His only son, that He died on the cross, you'd live and not perish but have eternal life. God did not come, Jesus did not come to condemn the world, but the world through Him might be saved. He said: I didn't come to judge, I came to save. The second time round He come to judge, so we're in the time when we can get saved easily. It's a good day to get saved. What a decision to make right now, if you don't know Jesus, to make your decision to put your life right before the one who loves you, and gave His life for you.

Secondly, here's the second thing we need to do. You need to take responsibility for your life, and stop thinking like a victim, and blaming everyone else for why you are where you are. Why do I need to do that? Very simply this: because in Romans 14 it tells us in Chapter 14, Verses 10 to 12: every one of us will stand before the judgement seat of Christ to give account of our life, everyone. Fortunately I won't have to give account for you, I'll be giving account for me. You'll be giving account for you! You'll be standing alone. Your mates won't be around you, you'll be there all on your own, and Jesus will be enquiring of your life. Now if you're a non-believer, the issue for you is then: what did you do with Jesus? Did you receive Him, or reject Him? That's the core issue. If you rejected Him, then there is nothing more for you. There's actually eternity of suffering, but if you're a believer, that's not the issue for you.

The issue, the question Jesus will be doing is this; when He judges you, He is not judging you to condemn. He's saying: I want to look at your life and see how you lived your life, and is there anything that would be fair and right to reward and acknowledge in how you've served me? I really have got rewards. You've been doing your internship, so we're evaluating your internship for eternity. You've now just graduated, and so how have you been running your life? What have you been doing? What kind of love has been in your life? What did you do about your character? What did you do about the people I brought into your life? In what ways did you represent Me well, so people saw Me? I am looking to reward you. I'm so looking forward to this, now can we talk over your life? He zips the button, and the whole video screen plays, and there it is, everything, what you did and why you did it. So the first thing is: take responsibility. Stop blaming anyone else. Don't blame your past.

We have a tendency to blame others because we feel treated unjustly. You've got to realise God sorts out the justice thing, you just do what He wants you to do, stop blaming, take ownership, and say: my life is mine, I'm with the Lord. Now I'm going to do all that I need to do, going to own my life. I'm not going to blame anyone, ever again, for anything. It's about me being responsible for my choices. Isn't that good? That's good. Tell someone you need to hear that. Stop being a victim. So you know there's heaps of people around like that.

Okay, here's the third thing you can do. Here's the third we can do. Third thing we can do would be become accountable. Oh, I don't like that word - but there it is. We need to become accountable. We need to become accountable to someone else with our life. That's why we have small groups, so you have a group, within which you can grow and deepen your Christian life. Why do we need to be accountable? Because you grow better when you are sharing what God is speaking to you in front of others, who can then call you to come and to hold you to what you've actually said you're going to do. Everyone needs that.

We all grow best when someone else speaks into our life, and the Bible in Hebrews 13:17 says to submit, or to yield, or to yield under those who have leadership over your life, whoever that is, so that you can let them speak into your life, and help you adjust and grow and mature. Many Christians can't stand that. In fact the moment you try and speak into their life about something that's immature, or something that's lacking, they react. So here's the question: do you have anyone in your life that gives you feedback honestly out of love for you, and concern for you? Secondly, how do you respond to that? So you have to be in a group. You know, if two people form a group, you get three, four, it starts to get a bigger group. Now you get more people in a group; that's a place you can grow. I've observed that people in groups grow better. They grow better because they're interacting and sharing life, and there's an accountability comes. It's not a legal thing. No one can hold you accountable easily. You actually have to decide, I want to share what God is doing in my life with you, so you'll help keep me on course if I look like I'm going off it.

There's nothing like at the end of a week, you know, someone in your small group saying how did your prayer life go this week? You said: I'm going to pray every day, but you lasted two days. Someone asks you: how did you get on? You say well I didn't do too good this week, so why don't we pray with you, and stand with you and believe. We'll believe that God will help you just to grow to three days next week, then just make it more steady. See, it's that kind of encouragement and nurture, that's part of the kingdom and it's just part of the whole nature of the kingdom. So here's the next thing we could do. That's a good one - it got real quiet. No one's getting excited about this. I'm excited about it, but no one else. [Laughs] Here's another thing we can do, don't judge by appearances. Learn to listen to God, and ask a lot of questions. Don't judge by appearance. If we judge, we'll be judged; so our tendency is as believers is, we tend to judge by what we see. We tend to quickly come to conclusions and assumptions, without actually asking the questions and listening.

Jesus made a couple of interesting statements, and He said in John 5, Verse 30 and John 7:24; He made two interesting statements. He said: My judgement's not My own, it's what I hear from the Father. He said: I don't judge according to appearances, what looks to be, but what I see and hear, and so of all the mistakes I've made in assessing everything, most of it's been about judging by appearances. It's the most chronic thing. I think about the difficulties we've had in communication in our marriage. That could all be boiled down to just one problem: making assumptions. Well I thought you meant, or I thought, I thought, I thought. You never stop to enquire, you just come to a conclusion, which is a judgement. So one of the things that would help our lives, is to not jump to conclusions about anything; ask questions until you've found out. Just enquire - and listen to God, because things aren't always what they seem to be. What looks bad can sometimes be quite different in the light of God's presence on it. Whoever's firm in their own course seems right, so when someone comes to you and tells you how badly they've been treated by a leader, how bad they've been treated by this one and that one, remember they seem right because the first to speak up. Wait until you hear the other side of the story. Oh, different.

See, a neighbour comes and it's a different story when you hear the other side of the story. It's a huge discipline not to judge by what you first hear, but to keep calm, and wait until you've heard the whole story, and help people do

what God wants them to do. That's learning judgement. Ooh, this is too deep isn't it really. Here's a simpler one then. I'll give you the last couple. [Laughs] The last couple that you could do, and then we'll finish. Here it goes. Generosity to the poor. That's got to be a response to Jesus being just, and being a judge. Is that our heart, we learn He is generous, and He loves generosity to people who are in need? He loves it. He actually demonstrated - He came to earth to people who hated Him, rebelled against Him, there's no one saved, and He came to all of them, and He showed generosity in extreme. That is the nature. Why? Because He's a just God. That's what justice looks like - but you say: that's not fair. That doesn't seem right to me. No, it isn't, but it's what God is like. He will give to people when they don't deserve it, and He calls that just.

You think ooh, this is hard for me to get a handle on. No, just be generous, and be kind, and when you see people in need, show generosity before anything else. Show kindness to them before anything else, and you'll extend the kingdom of God. They will see what the kingdom of God is truly like. Isn't that amazing? Aren't those great keys to learn, great and simple keys to learn? And here's the last one that you could do, the last one you can remember is this: whatever you do, serve the Lord passionately, and do it well. Why? Why would I need to do that? Why can't I just come and cruise? Why can't I just come and cruise, you know? That suits me more. It suits my lifestyle, you know, I'll come if I like, and don't come if I don't like. I'll do if I want, and don't do if I don't want, give if I want, don't give and if I go on the internet, and if I argue with them and disagree here - getting into all of that kind of - why? Why? Why? It's very simple.

Colossians 3:23; whatever you do do it fully, passionately, from the heart to the Lord. Why? Because you know something. What do you know? From the Lord, you will receive reward, inheritance, that it is eternal. Now this is one, this is the whole doctrine of eternal judgement. It's not about just doing things right. It's about God's justice in rewarding His saints. Now God has got every one of us here on an apprenticeship for eternity, so how are you conducting your apprenticeship? Who is speaking into you, to help you with that? How are you treating people? What are you harbouring in your heart, and are you serving passionately? Why? Because there is a day when I'll cross that line. If He hasn't come before then, I'll cross it into well done, enter into the reward I've prepared for you, because I'll leave everything else behind. It doesn't matter how fancy it is, you'll leave it all behind, but the things you've sown in the kingdom, oh, you carry on into eternity, for a reward that is everlasting. That's why we're motivated.

That's why we serve Him passionately and fervently. That's why, because He loves us. He's done right by us, and we'll do right by Him, and live for Him passionately, in a love relationship with a bride groom lover. We'll surrender to a king who has a kingdom, and knowing there's a day of reward, and living in respect and reverence for that God. That's what gives you the balance of the end time life to live. It's seeing each of those aspects of Him, and aligning your life around each aspect; not just one aspect, but all the aspects. I'm loved! I'm in a kingdom with a king, and I have a role to play, and He will judge righteously, I will give account for my life. Then He's merciful, so you live in the revelation of all three, and it produces something deep in your life, and substantial in your life, that helps you build a great life with God. We say Amen.

Come on, let's just close our eyes right now. I wonder is there any person here, and you haven't yet become a Christian, haven't yet received Jesus Christ. You haven't in your heart made a decision to receive the Lord. You're living your life without God, separated from the wonderful life He has prepared for you, separated and not even knowing what your destiny is, where you're going. That could change in a moment. For every person who received Jesus and believed on Him, He gave power to become a child of God. Is there any person here right at that place, I want to become a Christian, would you raise your hand right now? Just raise your hand right now and say oh, God is speaking me. God is touching my heart. I want to come to Christ today. I want to come to Christ. Would you raise your hand right now?

I want to receive Jesus today. Who here today is at that place? Make that decision. Perhaps you've walked a long way from God, and there's no reality of Him in your life. Things have come around you and sunk you a bit, but today you say: Jesus, I want to come back to You. I've been touched by what you've spoken into my heart today. Today I want to respond to You. If that's you raise your hand just right now, come back to the Lord, want to walk with Him, want to walk humbly with God. Perhaps there's some of us today, as I just shared how we respond to that revelation, perhaps God was speaking to you, just about one aspect of it. If God spoke into your heart about one aspect, you say: man, I just need to allow the spirit of God to build that in my life. I'm going to begin to focus on building that part of my life. Is it generosity? Is it withholding judgement, and learning to listen and enquire?

Whatever it is you say God, help me to build this dimension in my life. Help me to get a hold of this, and begin to grow, so I become Christ-like. If you had God speak to you an area of your life today, won't you raise your hand, say God's speaking to me today - God bless, God bless, God bless, many hands going up. Father, I just thank You for each person that's responded today. Father, I pray revelation of Jesus as bride groom, king and judge. I pray

revelation into the hearts and a change in lives. Father, we love You and honour You. We're excited about Jesus. We're excited about His church. We're excited about the gospel. We thank You Lord for Your goodness to us. Everyone said [Amen!] Amen!

Summary Notes

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1. Introduction

- The Bible from Genesis to Revelation reveals who Jesus Christ is.
- Jn.5:39-40 "You search the Scriptures for in them you think you have eternal life, and these are they which testify of Me, but you are not willing to come to me that you may have life".
- Foundational Questions: 1) Who is Jesus? 2) How will I respond to Him?
- Book of Revelation =
1) Passionate Bridegroom 2) Sovereign King 3) Righteous Judge (Rev.9)
- Jn.5:22 "For the Father judges no-one, but has committed all judgement to the Son, that all should honour the Son just as they honour the Father. He who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent Him".
- Understanding the principle of eternal judgements is foundational to maturing. (Heb.6:1-3).

2. God loves Justice and Judgement

- Ps.89:14 "Righteousness and Justice are the foundation of your Throne". NKJV
- "Justice and Judgement are the habitation of thy Throne". KJV
- Justice = OT6664 Tsedeq = right, just = Tsedagah = generosity to the poor.
- Judgement = OT4941 Shaphail = to judge, deliver, rule = a third party who sits over two parties at odds with one another, hears their case, decides what is right and what to do about it. He functions as a judge and jury and ensures the judgement is carried out.
- Jer.9:24 "...I am the Lord exercising loving kindness, judgement and righteousness in the earth for in these things I delight says the Lord".
- Delight = OT2654 = to bend towards, be pleased with, desire, eager and jealous, attentive for.
- Jer.22:16 "He judged the cause of the poor and needy, then was it well with him, was not this to know me? Says the Lord?"
- God is concerned about the issues of injustice, poverty, oppression.
- Jesus' first coming was to deal with the root issue – sin!
- Jesus' second coming will be as a powerful King who loves His people and has come to execute justice and judgement.
- Gen. 18:25 "...shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

3. Jesus Will Return to Judge the Earth (Is.26:9)

- Is.26:9 "When your judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."
- Rev.8: Future, progressive judgements of God in the earth.
- (i) These are parallel to the judgements of God against god's of Egypt (Exod.12:12)
- (ii) These judgements are triggered by intercession of God's people (vs2-5)
- (iii) Trumpets – used to sound war (Num.10:9)
- used to announce enthronement of King (1 Kg.1:34)
- (iv) Judgements are released globally:
Natural 8vs7 Vegetation and food supply
8vs8 Sea Trade and food supply
8vs10 Water Supply
8vs12 Light – cosmic disturbances

Spiritual 9vs1 Demonic spirits unleashed

- 9vs13 Demonic angels released
- 9vs1 Kingdom of God established on the earth!
- When judgements fell on Egypt God's people were present but protected.
- How can we respond?

4. How we respond to Jesus the Righteous

- (i) Receive Christ as Saviour – Surrender to His leadership - Jn. 3:16-
- (ii) Take responsibility for your life – stop blaming, living as a victim - Rom. 14:10-
- (iii) Become Accountable – let people speak into your life - Heb.13:
- (iv) Don't judge by appearances – listen, question – Jn. 5:30; Jn. 7:
- (v) Keep your heart free from injustice, offense and anger – Rom. 12:17-21; Jam. 4:
- (vi) Generosity to the poor, needy and oppressed – Lk. 10:
- (vii) Serve the Lord with Passion and Excellence – He rewards! – Col. 3:23.

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