



Message Transcript

The Beginning of the End

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- Lord Jesus, we give you all the praise and all the glory and all the honor for who you are. And Lord, we believe that as we worship your great name that you alone are worthy and Lord, our prayer today is as we hear from your word that you would do a work in our life. Lord, be helpful to me. Revelation six is a challenging text to teach through. It's a very sobering text to teach through. And Lord, there are as many opinions about it as there are people on the planet. And so Lord, I pray that you would be helpful to us and you would teach us to root our thoughts in your word and Lord that you would have your way with us and Lord that you would teach us today. Most importantly, Lord we wanna be changed and transformed by you. And so now for all of God's people who have gathered who desire to hear what the Lord says, who will believe what he says and by faith we'll put into practice, what he shows you. Would you agree with me this morning by very loudly saying the word amen, amen.

When it comes to the study of the last things or end times or eschatology, one of the questions that we begin to ask is how is it all gonna unfold? What's it gonna look like? What do I need to be prepared for? I listen to this person and they tell me this, I listen to that person, they tell me that. I'm pretty confused about it. What must I know about how God is going to bring all this together? And those are great questions to ask.

The disciples actually asked Jesus some of the exact same questions because they wanted to know what the signs would be that would accompany His coming. They wanted to make sure that they were ready when they saw Him. And as we get into the text today in Revelation six, we're gonna begin to look at how the end times are going

to unfold.

I wanna remind you as we studied this book called the Book of Revelation, this series is all about the Revelation of whom, Jesus Christ is the unveiling of whom, Jesus Christ as we saw in chapter one we got a great picture of the Lord, Jesus Christ and who He is in all of His glory.

In Revelation chapters two and three, we saw how He stands among the churches. He wrote seven specific letters to seven specific churches which also related to all the church for all time. And then in chapter four and five we were invited up to see the throne in heaven and what heavenly worship looks like. It's overwhelming for us to think about that God is inviting us into His throne to be able to worship His great name forever and ever. and where we left off last time in Revelation, chapter five.

You remember from the throne that the one who sat on the throne, the father was holding a scroll. It was a seven sealed scroll. And there was no one that was worthy to take the scroll and on open it except one was found and who was found, the Lord Jesus Christ, the only one worthy and where we left off as He took the scroll into His hand and everyone in heaven begin to worship His great name because He was the only one that was found in heaven or on the earth or under the earth that was worthy to open the scroll. And we talked about this scroll being the title deed, the planet earth, and what is inside of this scroll is how all things are going to unfold in the future.

So I wanna let you know, as we begin this study from Revelation six onward, there are gonna be many opinions as to how all this is going to work out. So I wanted

to make some introductory comments before we get started, because one of the reasons it's very difficult to teach through the book of Revelation is some of you are very new to the faith. You're brand new believers in Christ and we want you to know, we love you and we're glad that you're here. Some of you have just come to church. You don't even know who the Lord is yet. Some of you have been studying the Bible for years and years. Some of you are seasoned veterans in your diet in the wool and have gone to prophecy conferences. And I realized I have all these different people I'm trying to teach. So I'm trying to make this as clear as I can while bringing an application to everyone no matter where you are.

So here's a couple of comments I wanna make before we get into Revelation Chapter six today that I think are super important for our study as a church family. The first is this, and I'll be quick with these three. God has had a plan for this world since the beginning, did you know that? God has had a plan for this world since the beginning. He knew what He was gonna do when He created it and He knew what He was gonna do when He was gonna bring it to an end. In Genesis chapter 1:1, it says in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. That's a mirrorism for the universe. in six literal days, God created everything we see and don't see, that's what the Bible teaches.

If you believe that, there's nothing else about the Bible that's very hard to believe. If God can create everything out of nothing, the things you see and don't see and set it all up, what else is difficult to believe? He can do it all, our strong powerful God Elohim did that.

But when it comes to studying prophecy what we're talking about is this. We're talking about words that God writes for the future which in His mind have already happened. God writes prophecy as history. In other words, when God writes what's going to happen, it's as good as done. From our perspective, we're in the world, we see it, we go one step at a time, but God who stands outside of all time and space sees it all in one big shot. It's not a big deal to Him. God is bigger than we are. God is smarter than we are. God knows things that we don't know.

And here's the reality of prophecy. When prophecy that God designs comes to pass and we're on the other side of that and we look backwards, we think, well, duh, it's right there, it was so easy. How did they miss it? For some of us will say that about Jesus. How can people not see that it's Jesus? There's over 300 prophecies about Jesus alone. So just think about a couple of them.

We'll look them up today but you can write these down. In Psalm chapter 22, a messianic Psalm about Jesus on the cross. "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" Prophetic words that He's gonna utter on the cross one day. Psalm chapter 22 talks about they will divide His garments, that came true when Jesus died, they were down dividing His garments. What about Isaiah chapter seven in verse 14 about 750 years before Christ was born, it was prophesied that behold, a virgin will conceive and bear a son. Guess what we find out in the New Testament, a virgin named Mary conceived and bore a son. In Isaiah 53, we learned that this Messiah is gonna be pierced for our transgressions and wounded for our iniquities. And what do we learn in the New Testament that Jesus was pierced for our transgressions and wounded for

our iniquities? Or if we read Micah 5:2, it prophesies that this Messiah is going to be born in Bethlehem. Where was Jesus Christ born? Bethlehem.

So when we stand on the other side of prophecy and look back, we say, well, that's not a big deal, God knew what He was doing. The challenges when it comes to end times prophecy, we haven't lived through it yet. One day when we're on the other side as believers and we look back because the word of God never fades, it stands forever, we're gonna look back and see all the prophecy and we're gonna be like, well, of course, how did we miss that? That was so clear until that time there are gonna be things that are unclear.

There are some of the prophecies in the book of Revelation, this apocalyptic highly symbolic book that are crystal clear and there are other things that aren't as crystal clear. I'm trying to do my best as I teach through to be as clear on what's clear and to tell you where it's not as clear. My goal in teaching through this book is not that you believe me. My goal in teaching through this book is that you hear the Lord, Jesus Christ and believe Him, amen.

Here's another thing you need to understand it's this, that believers will not endure God's wrath.

Believers will not endure God's wrath. Whatever your position is, whatever you understand about the word of God, as believers we will not endure the wrath of God. We don't endure His wrath. First Thessalonians chapter five and verse nine says it like this, for God has not destined us for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord

Jesus Christ.

Here is why believers will not endure the wrath of God, because we believe that Jesus Christ hung on a cross for six hours and took his wrath and said these words at the end of His life, it is finished and He endured God's wrath on our behalf and that was done once and for all so that when we believe in Jesus, we don't endure His wrath, we're saved from His wrath to come but make no mistake about it.

God is going to pour out His wrath on planet earth and for all who haven't trusted in Him, but that's not for believer, okay? Makes sense.

Third, let me tell you this. Let me tell you this, is super important. Let God's word continue to shape you. Let God's word continue to shape you. I've been a believer now for almost 32 years. I am still letting the word of God shaped me. I'm your pastor, but I'm also a student of the word of God. And if I learned things in the word of God that go against what I once thought I believe, I'm gonna believe the word of God.

You need to believe the word of God too. And especially when it comes to end-time prophetic prophecies, for many of us, we've been taught certain things and so we think because the person that taught us was a godly person, there's no way they could be wrong, I'm gonna tell you right now, God's men and God's people are flawed, God's word is perfect, okay? So believe His word.

I mean, the way I would say it like this is our understanding of God must not define the truth of the Bible, but rather the truth of the Bible must define our understanding of God. Meaning this, as this is being taught to you, my encouragement

would be to say hear it, study it, learn it. Let God speak to you about what He wants to speak to you and come to an informed decision about what you believe based on the word of God. Because today we're gonna begin to journey through how the end is coming to happen. And I wanna make you aware of some terms so you're aware of what's going on because what God teaches is very important that we understand.

Now, I already told you from the outset, I'm a futurist. I believe that what we're reading now are the things that are going to happen in the future. If you're a futurist, you'll believe that when you get to Revelation 20 and it talks about the millennial reign of Christ and six times mentions the word 1000 years, you believe this, like every futurist believes this. There is a period of time that happens and then after that seven year period of time, there is 1000 year reign of Christ on the earth. Every futurist believes that, it's called the pre-millennial position 'cause before the millennium Jesus has to come down so he can rule and reign. If you believe that, many Old Testament scriptures that God made promises to His people about will see fulfilled in the millennial kingdom. That's called pre-millennialism.

Some people read the Bible, some good scholars, some not good scholars and say, now there is no millennium, we're living in the millennium now, that's just metaphoric or highly symbolic language. We are ah, millennial or without a millennium. There is no millennium. Jesus is coming back at some point, He's gonna separate the sheep and the goats, and then heaven begins, that's it. There are millennial, there's no 1000 year reign of Christ on planet earth.

And then some are called post-millennial. They will say this. We believe the

millennium is more metaphoric for the kingdom and things are gonna continue to get better and better. Christians are gonna get in government, Christians are going to the school system. We're gonna Christianize the world and when the bride of Christ is ready, He'll return. Post-millennium, post-millennialism doesn't get much play anymore. Every time post-millennials think it's getting better and better. And I'm an optimist by nature. Things happen, like say World War I, World War II, the way we're living now, everything, right?

So I'm teaching from a futurist perspective. Now by doing that, I'm not saying that people that teach from a different perspective don't love the Lord, Jesus Christ. I'm just laying my cards on the table because I have to teach from a place of conviction.

Now here's the other thing that you need to understand. We're not gonna spend a ton of time on this but you need to know that you came to learn something at church today, right? We're gonna learn something.

How many have heard about the final seven years? Just by show of hands. There's like a seven year final period. Okay, if some of you have some of you haven't. I wanna tell you where people get that because it's in your Bible. If you turn to the book of Daniel, it's in the Old Testament, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel. In Daniel, chapter nine, verses 24, there was a prophecy given to God's people. And it talks about a specific prophecy that needs to take place. And we're not gonna delve into this too far but I want you to know where this comes from, okay? Daniel chapter nine verses 24. This is the angel Gabriel speaking. He says, "70 weeks have been

decreed for your people "in your Holy city to finish the transgression "to make an end of sin, to make an atonement for inequity, "to bring in everlasting righteousness, "to seal up vision and prophecy "and to anoint the most Holy place. "So you're to know and discern that "from the issuing of a decree. "to restore and rebuild Jerusalem "until the Messiah, the Prince. "there will be seven weeks and 62 weeks. "It will be built again with a Plaza and emote "even in times of distress."

So without delving into this, and we could spend weeks on this prophecy, you need to understand that the angel Gabriel gave a prophecy about 70 weeks. He's talking about 70 weeks of years. 70 weeks of years is 490 years. That's 70 times seven. That's how many weeks of years. And he divides it up and he tells him it's gonna take seven sevens or 49 years to get your city rebuilt. What's the city he's talking about. He's talking to Jews and their city is Jerusalem. So God's talking to his covenant. People saying Jerusalem, it'll take 49 years to get rebuilt. And then there's another 62 weeks of years until the Messiah's coming. There's gonna be an atonement for sin and all of that. So if you take the seven weeks and the 62 weeks, you get 69 weeks of years or 483 years.

You just feel like you're at seminary a little bit right now, okay? Without getting into the details, He says from the time, what, from the time that there is a command to go and rebuild the city you will have these 483 years until this takes place. There have been massive books written, tomes written about all this stuff. In 445 BC King Artaxerxes sent Nehemiah back to rebuild the wall in Jerusalem. If you take that and you go through the 483 years that it takes different scholars based upon the amount of

the way they do the calendar and the exact date that they start, somewhere between 27 and 32 and if you wanna get all excited about it, either when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and was cut off, meaning he was saying Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how I weep for you, I yearned to gather you as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you wouldn't have me.

It's either when Jesus rides into Jerusalem or other people place it at the crucifixion and the resurrection when she has made an end to sin and rose from the dead. At that point in time, it took 483 years, depending on whether you think Jesus died in 30 AD, 27 AD, and if you wanna go to coffee about that and give me all your charts and pens and paper, I'm happy to have a discussion with you about it. I'm not all that excited to study. I'm just telling you the word of God is true and that Jesus came at the exact time that He was supposed to come.

But that leaves us one more week. That leaves us one more week, because what happened was at the time Jesus rose from the dead, God gave birth to what is called the church and the Holy Spirit descended, and so in the church, God began to do all sorts of different things. And has set aside on the prophetic calendar one week which is seven years, that's where this comes from.

And you can read if I dropped down to Daniel chapter 9:27 talking about who the antichrist is it says he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering. And on the wing of abomination will come one who makes desolate even until complete destruction. One that is decreed is poured out and who makes desolate.

So what you're gonna see and what believers have said for years as a futurist is there's a final seven-year period where Jesus is gonna bring it all back together and how's it gonna get started? And what is it gonna look like? And where's it gonna go over the coming weeks? We'll spell out what that's gonna look like so that you can take your position and have an understanding.

There are really four main positions. This I'm giving visual aids, just so you can see them. We're not gonna spend much time on this today. We will come back and see it. For many people, they believe that final seven years is the tribulation period. That all seven years are tribulation. If you believe that, then by nature, you're gonna take a pre-tribulational position. So you would be pre-millennial pre-tribulational.

And if you look at the chart that's behind me, you're gonna see that there is a rapture or a snatching away of the saints. You can read about it in first Thessalonians four and in John 14, that there is a time where Jesus is gonna come take all of his saints back up into heaven. Pre-tribulational believers, pre-tribulational preachers would believe that when the antichrist makes this covenant right before he makes that covenant, God's gonna take believers up out of the world, for seven years, we'll be in heaven celebrating with Him, receiving our rewards and then at the very end of that seven years, we will come back.

It is a very wonderful position to hold too because guess what that means. No tribulation, nothing here. I mean, it's just bliss. Just look for Jesus and it's gonna be awesome.

How many have read "The Left Behind" series? "The Left Behind" series is this. This is what you've read, okay? Now let me tell you something. Just because you've read "The Left Behind" series. I met Tim LaHaye when he was still alive. I've met Jerry Jenkins, we did chapel for the Cubs and the Rockies a couple of years ago, both godly men, okay? That's the position they're coming from but I wanna let you know, those guys are fallible, the word of God is not fallible.

Some of you, even at the end of our study, you'll remain pre-trib, you'll say that's the way I see it, that's the way I understand it. Majority of people teach this position. I went to Dallas seminary, this is the position that was taught to me. Many godly teachers, many of the people I've listened to the years, they would take a pre-tribulational position in the rapture.

Now we understand that it's gonna get worse in the mid point. So some people are called mid-tribulation. Let's guess where they placed the rapture. Go ahead. It's a school, it's me, okay, good. You guys are getting this. So they believe before it gets really bad, right? In the midpoint, we're gonna be raptured and then Jesus is gonna bring us down at the end. It's the mid-tribulation position.

Then there's a post-tribulational position. I'm pre-millennial it's before Jesus come but I'm post-tribulational. God will protect us through the entire seven years. So while he's pouring out wrath, God is gonna protect us through the whole thing and then at the very end on the day of Armageddon, we're gonna like rise to heaven and come back down. It's like an elevator the same day, we're gonna go up and go down.

And there are some really good Bible scholars that would teach this position. Guys, you will find godly men and women in every one of these positions. So I'm not putting them down but I am gonna preach from a position of conviction.

And the fourth is this it's called a pre-wrath position. The pre-wrath position would stay at the first three and a half years, or really what the Bible calls the beginning of sorrows or the beginning of birth pains, then comes a great tribulation, unlike the world has ever seen. At some point in time, we do not know the day or the hour but the days will be cut short, where the Lord will come back and bring his church home and His second coming will begin. And His second coming is a series of a complex whole, it's not just a second coming once, much like His first coming was 33 years. His second coming will start at that point, go through the end of the seven years and throughout the millennial reign. That's His second coming, okay? That is a pre-wrath position.

How many of you know that I care more about what the word of God teaches than what these visual aids say? 'Cause I do. And so what I wanna do today is I wanna get to Revelation six.

I don't know what the word of God speak. And I wanna tell you this. As we go through Revelation six, seven, and eight you will see things that are so clear in God's word that will help you make your own informed decision. And I want you to know if a Brave church, there's room for all of us, okay?

This is not a reason to break fellowship. You do not need to agree with me for us

to be great friends. Here's what we need to agree on that Jesus Christ is Lord of all and that He is worthy of being worshiped and that we are ready to meet Him because I'm telling you here's what we're all gonna agree on. Jesus Christ is coming back fully bodily and physically and we wanna meet Him, amen.

So as we're doing this, I'm teaching this 'cause this is what the Bible is teaching and we don't skip over down here at Brave church. We believe every part of the word is inspired. So we're in Revelation chapter six. And as we get into Revelation chapter six today let's just begin to talk about what God wants us to see. And really what we're seeing is the beginning of the end.

We're seeing the beginning of the end. This is a very sobering text. This is a very challenging texts. This is a very difficult text because what you're gonna see as the seven seals get opened on the scroll that Jesus Christ is holding things progressively are going to get worse and worse.

So let's study, Revelation six one. Then I saw when the lamb broke one of the seven seals and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, come, I looked and behold a white horse and he sat on it had a bow and a crown was given to Him and He went out conquering and to conquer, okay?

So this is the first horse. We're gonna see four different horses in the first four seals. Oftentimes these are referred to as the four horsemen of the apocalypse. Remember apocalypse is the unveiling of Jesus. Remember the apocalypse is what we're seeing spelled out over time. And so there's four horses.

Now why horses? I mean, what's the purpose of a horse? I went South Dakota this year, we were horseback riding as a family, right? Usually I look for the big one that can hold my weight and I go, that's probably gonna be mine. Some big nag, that's just gonna go in the back, right? But when people in Bible times, we're talking about a horse, they weren't talking about it just to sit on and go enjoy the scenery, it was part of their war machine. Think about Psalm 20 in verse seven. It says some trust in horses and some in chariots but we trust in the name of the Lord, our God, or how about Proverbs 21 verse 31. We make ready the horse for battle but victory belongs to the Lord.

Horses were important in battle. So there's something that's going to be taking place as the seals are unfolding. And the first horse we see is a white horse.

Now, how does the horse come? The horse comes because one of the four living creatures remember the four living creatures that had all the eyes yelled come, right, come. And all of a sudden this white horse and it had a rider on it and this rider went out to conquer.

Now we can learn a little bit about this rider based upon how he was dressed, notice how he was dressed. He who sat on it had a bow and there was a crown given to him. So he's on a white horse, he's got a crown and he's going out to conquer.

So many people will read this. And that's Jesus, it's white. Jesus is always in white. He's got a crown, Jesus is always wearing a crown. it's gotta be Jesus. It can't be Jesus 'cause in Revelation six one, it says, then I saw when the lamb broke one of

the seven seals, where's the lamb? The lamb is in heaven breaking seals. He's not on the earth doing anything. Jesus is still in heaven right now. He's breaking the seal.

So who would be one who would want to look like, dress like, act like, and talk like Jesus? This would be the antichrist, all right? This would be the one who's wearing a crown. When you read about Jesus in Revelation chapter 19, He's wearing diadems, he's wearing many crowns. There are different kinds of crowns. He's dressed differently. He's coming back differently. This is an imposter.

And we're gonna see when we see the four horsemen of the apocalypse, we're gonna see things go from bad to worse. This is the antichrist. And what you'll see about the antichrist as we continue to traverse the landscape of the book of Revelation is that He wants to imitate. He is a copycut, He is a counterfeit in everything He does.

By the time we get to Revelation 13, and you see Satan and you see the beast, who is the antichrist, you see the false prophet, you see Him try to imitate the Trinity. We have a father, son and Holy spirit, God the father sent his son to be the savior of the world. The Holy spirit was dispensed in the heart of all who believed to manifest and make great, the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

What's the false prophet gonna do? He's gonna play the role of the Holy Spirit trying to make the antichrist look good. What's the antichrist gonna do? He's gonna take over worldwide geopolitical worship so that everybody will worship him. And what Satan gonna do, he's gonna falsely believe that this is gonna last for a long time and it's not.

So what you have here is you have an antichrist figure. They've been in every single generation, but in the final seven years, there will be one that arises that takes over all. There'll be one that arises that does this. And notice this about him. It's pretty interesting because he had a bow, but guess what he doesn't have. He doesn't have an arrow, he just got a bow. It's almost like this geopolitical figure is gonna intimidate people to follow him. He's not even gonna fire a shot.

Like, I don't know. Like, could you imagine government like getting people to do things without even firing a weapon? I mean, can you even imagine what that would look like in a culture, right? Can you even think about that, right? I mean, we're coming up on a year's anniversary of 14 days to slow the spread, just so you know no shots have been fired, right?

This geopolitical leader will begin to set himself up with all sorts of threats, all sorts of different ways to get people to realize that he's in control and that there are things that he can do that are worthy of you worshipping him but he's a counterfeit. He's been given a crown. He's trying to look like a Messiah but he's not the Messiah. And it's gonna get progressively worse. The first seal is the antichrist. There's no doubt about it.

The second seal is this. The second seal is war. It says when he broke the second seal, that's Jesus. I heard the second living creature say, come. Just for a point of reference. For those that think is Jesus is the four living creatures, aren't telling Jesus what to do. Come, and Jesus isn't saying, okay. Jesus is the King of Kings and

the Lord of Lords. This is the four living creatures talking to someone other than Him, right? So guess what happens? So when he broke the second seal, the second living creature said come and another, a red horse, we had a white horse first time, now we got a red horse went out and to him who sat on it it was granted to take peace from the earth and that men would slay one another and a great sword was given to him.

When you have a geopolitical figure that wants all worship to be about him, the second thing you're gonna see is war. What's he gonna take away from human beings are peace. What is Jesus known as, Jesus is the Prince of peace. He's the only one that can bring peace. So this conquering is gonna bring a false peace when the first seal is done where he's going to be a promised peace but it's going to turn into this isn't peace. This isn't what's going on. And there's gonna be a global war unlike we've ever seen before, right?

I mean, we're familiar with reading our history books about World War I and World War II and the number of people that have died but there's never been a time where war has been all over the entire planet all at the same time. There will be during the last seven years, there will be 'cause there'll be war and a great sword was given to him. And this rider that comes out is going to hurt people. This rider's gonna kill people. This rider's gonna take away their peace. When you don't have peace on the inside it causes you to all sorts of crazy things, doesn't it? Peace is gonna be robbed from the earth, right?

I mean, in different pageants and people what are you looking forward to a peace on earth? I want peace on earth. All of us want peace on earth. There's gonna

be a false promise of peace that's gonna be taken away and you're gonna have brother against brother, neighbor against neighbor, family member against family member.

And then there's a third seal which is going to progress from this. It says when he broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying come, I looked and behold a black horse and he who sat on it, had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard something like a voice in the center of the living creature saying a quarter of wheat for a denarius and three quarters of barley for denarius and do not damage the oil and the wine. The third seal is gonna bring famine. Third seal is gonna be in famine.

Now you would say we have famine. There's famine going on around the world. There are agencies, Christian organizations, non-Christian organizations that are trying to take care of the famine problem, the food distribution problem. For most of us, it's not happening here. I mean, as a pastor, if I call you to fast, most people I'm gonna fast from like social media, Facebook, TV, I could probably do that for three hours, right? Food, are you kidding? Like a whole meal. I got to fast for a whole meal. Like which one? Like we're not used to famine. We don't live in that culture.

There will come a day where famine is the result of this. That's the third seal. And if you have somebody that's going out to conquer, a geopolitical leader and promising a false peace that gets taken away and people are dying all over the place. One of the consequences of that is famine, it's food distribution problems. And the voice that he hears, the voice that John hears, one of the four living creatures saying is

a quarter of wheat for denarius and three quarters of barley for denarius.

No, I don't know exactly what that means. Some people have said that wheat is more valuable, so you can get a quarter wheat for denarius and you can get three quarters of barley for the same price. A denarius was a day's wage. Imagine working all days just to get a quarter a week. Imagine working all day just get three quarters of barley. Apparently barley is unable to make as many things. And then all you gluten-free people, I mean, what are you gonna do, right? It's all you got. It would be hard for you. So the bottom line is whatever it is to work a whole day to even be able to barely feed your family is gonna be challenging.

I mean, these things are progressively getting worse. These three are the seals that Jesus would call the beginning of birth pains. The beginning of sorrows. And we see this 'cause we've had the white horse and we've had the red horse. Now we have the black horse and it's something like scales that's measuring this out. And if you go to the produce department, they have scales. Sometimes you can put your fruit in, you can see how much it weighs. These are scales that have a balance on both sides, right? So you put the food on and you put your money on and you see how much it's worth. It means you're gonna get literally nothing for a full day's wage, that's what it means. I mean, these are terrible times, right? This is unprecedented times. These are times our world has never, ever seen times like these.

Now I wanna pause here just for a minute, okay? 'Cause as we're teaching this, especially for some of you that are here saying, why did I come to church today? This is crazy. I mean, why would God put this in his word? Because He wants you to know

what's going to take place.

And the most important thing you need to know if you're listening is that you want to make sure that you know Jesus when this is going on, 'cause we falsely believe sometimes that Jesus is here and I'm there and anytime I wanna trust Him, I can just trust Him.

Here's what you need to know. The more you harden your heart to the Lord, there comes a place where you can't just turn back to Him and you don't want to. That's why, if you hear His voice today, do not harden your heart. God is telling you what's coming because He doesn't want you to experience what's coming at that level. And here's the truth about Christianity. If you really know the Lord, the harder it gets, the longer you're gonna hang on to Jesus. And the truth from the scriptures is if you really know the Lord, he's gonna hang onto you and he's never gonna let you go. That's the good news.

But if you don't know the Lord, it's a time for you to repent and trust Jesus. That's what this text shouldn't be telling you. Like I better get this thing right, I better be ready. I mean, we got a conquering antichrist, we got wars, we got famines, and now guess what? It's gonna progress even more.

Notice verse seven, when the lamb broke the fourth seal I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying come. And I looked and behold and ashen horse, ashen means pale sickly. And he who sat on it, had the name death and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth to kill with a sword and

with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beast of the earth.

So who's riding on that horse? death. and where's Hades, right behind. I don't know if Hades is settled up right behind death or if Hades is running alongside, but here's what you got a picture of. There is they've been given authority to kill over a fourth of the earth and death is happening everywhere and Hades is opening up its mouth and swallowing people like that's what's going on.

Now, keep in mind this, it doesn't say in this text that a fourth of the earth will die. There are some texts where we get to later in the book of Revelation during the trumpet judgments, where we begin to see that a third of the is gonna die and a third of the world's gonna die. Here it says he's been given authority to kill a fourth of the earth. That doesn't mean that he's gonna kill a fourth of the earth. And who are gonna be fourth? I mean, is it geographic?

I can we sit here and be like, hope it's not the United States. You know, I hope it's a fourth of the world somewhere else, is a geographic or is it demographic? Is it Christians? Is it a fourth of the world's population? Is it Christians? Are we gonna be targeted? It doesn't say something just to consider. Whatever's going on, you don't wanna be a part of it.

And think about a fourth of the world. I mean, I was looking up some numbers. You guys are well aware of the coronavirus who's killed over half a million people. Every single one of those people matter to God and it's tragic, right? World War I, World War II, I'm sorry, World War II, 50 to 56 million people have died, just to put it in

perspective, right? I mean, you talk about a quarter of the world's population. We're over 7 billion people. I mean, you're pushing 2 billion people that would die potentially. That's a lot of people. I mean, that's a lot of people, right? So I mean, we're talking about unprecedented. We've never seen anything like this before and it continues to progress.

And if that's really what's going on in the fourth seal, the fifth seal is obvious. The fifth seal is martyrdom. Notice this. When the lamb broke the fifth seal I saw underneath the altar, the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they had maintained.

If you wanna hold on to any two things in this life, hold onto the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ in your life. It means the word of God is completely true, you can bank on it, it will be with you for all eternity, and number two, your testimony for Jesus Christ no matter what comes never, ever let that go. Never waiver on the fact that Jesus Christ is the Lord of your life no matter what, that's why they were murdered. They were murdered for believing the word of God and their testimony that Jesus Christ is Lord.

And notice what we learn about them. And they cried out with a loud voice saying how long, oh Lord, holy and true will you refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell in the earth? It's an interesting question. We've been in church, many of us long enough that we would think that the question is gonna be Jesus, you know, when are you gonna say more? Jesus, when are you gonna love more? Here's what they're asking. The people that have been murdered. How long are you gonna

wait until you avenge our blood 'cause we were killed for you and they're making you look bad. When you're gonna take care of business Jesus? That's what they're asking and notice here is the answer.

There was given to each one of them, a white robe and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer. I mean, you can almost see like Jesus, just relax, calm down a bit, we're gonna get there. Until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also. Here's what Jesus is saying. There's actually more that are gonna be killed. Just hold on. There's more of you coming. That's what He says.

And why did Jesus wait, why doesn't Jesus just act. Why doesn't Jesus bring his judgment now? Here's why, because His desire would be that none would perish, but that all would come to know Him. Why is Jesus waiting with great patients to pour His judgment on the earth? 'Cause He loves the world. Why is He waiting? 'Cause he loves you.

So He tells those who have been murdered. I put on a white robe, just chillax a little bit and sit here, there's more martyrs coming. The day will come when I do this.

Now here's my question. I think it's a question that all of us should be willing to ask and be able to answer. If these martyrs under the throne are praying for vengeance, why are they praying for vengeance and God's wrath has already started? Meaning if God's wrath was already being poured out they wouldn't be asking the question. When are you gonna pour out your wrath? When are you gonna avenge our

blood? When are you gonna bring judgment?

The reason they're not asking it, this is not God's wrath. This is a time of significant tribulation going on. This is not God's wrath. Otherwise they would have said, thank you, Jesus for pouring out your wrath. He's not pouring out His wrath.

Second question I would ask if Jesus says there's more martyrs coming, how can this be as wrath? We've already learned from His word. He's not gonna pour out His wrath on His saints. If this is God's wrath and God takes joy and killing his own people, which we know goes against everything that the Bible teaches. This is not God's wrath friends. This is a time of great tribulation. Unlike the world's ever seen, Jesus talked about it. He said for the sake of the elect those days would be cut short or no one would even make it, right? These guys are crying out like Lord avenge us, Lord bring judgment. He's like, I'm going to but just wait here a little longer. There's more that martyrs are going to be coming into the fold, then I'm gonna pour it out, right?

It's interesting in the fourth. I'm sorry, yeah, in the fourth seal, when we talked about death and we saw how they're gonna be killed with the sword and famine and pestilence and even wild beast of the earth. I mean, who are the wild beasts of the earth? I mean, how's that gonna happen? I don't know. Doesn't sound fun. I mean, people have talked about who it could be. Is it like lions that are roaming around picking up some of the wounded in the dead? Is it, you know, rats that have spread all sorts of diseases like the bubonic plague over time. Some have even said wild beasts.

Every time the word beast is used in the book of Revelation is really talking about the antichrist. Could it be that it's because of him and his allegiance and working that he's doing that, whatever it is we get to seal number five, where we have martyrdom.

Now let me just be really sobering when I say this, right? God doesn't call all of us to martyrdom but God may call some of us. We don't know. For me to stand here as your pastor and tell you, you'll never experience that, I can't tell you what that authoritatively. I do have good news. If you have the spiritual gift of martyrdom, you only have to exercise at once. So that's good, right? But I wanna be sobering here and let you know that you have people who love the Lord, who are coming home to Him because they're going to be murdered because of the word of God and the testimony of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Never let go of them.

And then we get to this place where we're trying to reconcile, how can God do this? Romans chapter 12 and verse 19 does it say that God won't bring vengeance? Here's what he says. Vengeance is mindset the Lord. When you get wrong and you wanna take revenge is a no, no, no, no, you don't do that. You love your neighbor, you pray for those who persecute you. But one day I'll avenge that. I'll avenge everything that was done wrong on this planet. Psalm seven verse 11 says He's angry with the wicked every day. John 3:18 says that nonbelievers remain under the wrath of God.

Here's the truth. That's why we need to flee and get to the cross as quick as we possibly can. Because when we're covered in the blood of Jesus we will not stand under the wrath of God. And I wanna tell you on the authority of God's word you do

not want to do that. You do not wanna do that. You wanna repent and trust Jesus and you wanna repent and trust Jesus today. You wanna know that you know Him, you wanna know that you love Him and you wanna know that He'll never ever let you go, amen. I mean, this is it progresses, continues to get grander and grander. And He tells him to wait a little while so that others who were to be killed even as they had been would be completed also.

And then we get to the sixth seal and this is gonna portend or foreshadow the wrath that is about ready to start coming in the sixth seal. Look at this verse 12, I looked and when he broke the sixth seal and there was a great earthquake and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair and the whole moon became like blood. I've never seen that. You ever seen that? I've never seen. I mean, it's a pretty clear teaching in the word of God of what it's going to be. Sack cloth is like black, deep goats hair, right? And if the sun's not shining the moon's not gonna shine either 'cause the moon is just reflecting the sun.

And verse 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as a fig tree cast its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. Have you ever seen that? I've never seen stars falling from the sky. Never seen it 'cause it's never happened. Verse 14, the sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up and every mountain and every Island were moved out of their places. Everybody ever seen that? Right, we're talking future event, this has never ever happened. This is unprecedented, right?

I mean there's all sorts of evidence that this could be because God literally flooded the entire globe. Back in Genesis that we read about. And there was water

that was under the earth that came out. And that's why all the different plates beneath the earth are moving around and one day they're gonna move around so much that everything's gonna move around. It's gonna be terrifying and notice what the result is. Listen to who's involved.

Then the Kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and strong and very slave and free man, who's that involved? That's everybody, that's everybody. Every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains.

We live in Colorado who here likes to go caving, anybody? We didn't, nobody likes to go caving? My wife apparently likes to go caving. One guy in the back. Good, I'm an avid indoor enthusiast too. So that's cool. But I figured in Colorado, people would like to go caving but I've been down in caves before where it's been dark and you feel pressure on all sides of your body, right? I mean, this is where they're going to hide and why are they hiding? They're hiding from the glory of the Lord that is going and about to be revealed. That the wrath of God is about to be let out on planet earth and these are people that have not trusted Christ and because they haven't trusted Christ, they want nothing to do with Christ. It's not as if they're waiting till the last minute and say, please save me, please save me. No, no, no. They're hiding from his glory and notice what their call is. Notice what they're begging for.

They hid among the rocks of the mountains, verse 16. And they said to the mountains and the rocks and now they're talking to the mountains in the rocks, they're

not talking to Jesus, they're talking to the mountains in the rocks and what are they saying? Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, that's the father and from the wrath of the lamb, that's the son. What are they saying? I mean, as they're getting into these caves away from the glory of God and away from His wrath, that's about ready to come. They're calling out to the rock saying, crush us, hide us. It would be better to be crushed than to have to face the glory of the Lord in an unredeemed state. That's what they're saying. They're not begging for their life, they're saying I'd rather be dead than meet Jesus in all of His glory.

And friends, if you haven't trust Christ in his shed blood, that's exactly how you're gonna feel. If you have, it's gonna be a little different because when you see these things, you're gonna be looking up saying my savior is about ready to come take me home. And it's gonna be awesome 'cause notice what verse 17 says, for the great day of their wrath has come and who is able to stand? The wrath's come and who's gonna stand? Here's the answer.

Everybody who's trusted the Lord, Jesus Christ will be able to stand, amen.

And so as you see all these things unfold for many of us where I go, I don't like that teaching. I'm gonna be pre-trib 'cause then I won't be here. I'll be in heaven looking down saying stinks to be you, right? But I've seen no verse yet in the book of Revelation that says God's taking us home. I haven't seen it yet. I'm gonna point one out to you where you're gonna see it and you're gonna never be able to unsee it again.

But I believe we're here during this time. I believe we're here during this time.

Otherwise, how would Christians be murdered if there were no Christians? We're here. Why would God be killing Christians if that was His wrath, it's not His wrath, He loves Christians, right? This is a time of great tribulation and peril unlike the world has ever seen before or will ever see again.

So the sixth seal is tear. I call cosmic disturbances. It's fear of the wrath to come and it's preferring death to repentance. It's preferring death to repentance.

Now, as we begin to put this stuff together I was just curious you guys can shout out to me who are the best prophecy? Who's the best prophecy teacher you know? I liked the 10:30 service. We had John MacArthur and David Jeremiah. We had a bunch of last service and I love those guys. They're godly men who teach the word in a godly way certainly impacted my life in a positive way.

Jesus is my favorite prophecy teacher, okay? He should be yours too. I guarantee you, He's David, Jeremiah and John MacArthur favorite prophecy teacher as well. He's the best of all. So what I wanted to do is I wanted to show you that Jesus is really the melody for times prophetic events. And John is harmonizing and he seen everything Jesus said was going to happen.

So if you turn your Bible back to Matthew chapter 24 to what's called the Olivette discourse. And the reason it's called the Olivette discourse is because Jesus was on the Mount of Olives when He taught it. So in the Olivette discourse we see His disciples ask in Matthew 24, verse three as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives disciples came to Him privately saying, tell us when will these things happen and what

will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age? And Jesus, doesn't say, oh, that's a dumb question. He spends a lot of time answering. Here's what it's going to be. And you're gonna see amazing similarities here.

So I put together some slides for you so that you can see what Jesus says and how it aligns with what we just read. So in this first slide we see the apostle John's teaching. We saw the first seal that was open with the white horse and the rider the antichrist who attempts to establish his own authority. But notice what we see in Matthew 24 verses four and five.

Jesus answered and said see that no one misleads you for many will come in my name saying I am the Christ and will mislead many. What does he say? There are going to be false Christ. And you will say to me, Jeff there's been false Christ in every single generation. I'm like, yes, there has.

And we're looking and we're looking and we're looking and we're looking but one day and I'll show you how through the book of Revelation the antichrist will reveal himself and you'll know, yeah, no doubt. Global worship of one that's never happened before But it's gonna happen. Jesus said it's gonna happen. They'll always be false Christ. Ultimately there'll be one antichrist.

How about seal number two? The second seal is the red horse and the rider who was given a sword and has power to conquer through war. So it was war. Look what the Lord says in Matthew chapter 24, verses six through the first part of seven, you'll be hearing of what? Wars and rumors of wars, see that you are not frightened for

these things must take place but that is not yet the end for nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. John says, there's gonna be wars. What did Jesus say? There's gonna be wars. Jesus is the melody, John is harmonizing and seeing what Jesus has already told us. You will say to me, Jeff, there's always been wars and rumors of wars. And I would say, totally agree with you but in those final seven years, it's gonna be unprecedented and unlike any other that we've ever seen on a global scale.

How about the third seal? Remember the third seal? The third horse was the black horse and the rider was given the scale to measure the food supply and we'll bring famine in the land where we're begging for a quarter of wheat or three quarters of barley. What does Jesus say in Matthew chapter 24:7 in the middle of seven. And following he says, and in various places there will be what, famines and earthquakes, but all these things are merely the beginning of birth pains. They're just the beginning, okay? So Jesus situating these first three seals says, these are the beginning of birth pains.

When the seven-year start, I believe that these first three seals will take us through the first three and a half years progressively growing more and more. These are the beginning of birth pains. Now I'm not an expert on birth pains but I know some ladies who are, and what I've learned from what I've heard over time is as the birth pains come and they continue to come, they get more severe, they get more intense and they get longer in duration. Am I right? Ladies help me out. And when they happen from every woman that I've ever talked to, there's this inner feeling of get this child out

of me now. Am I right? So the purpose of the birth pains is when they begin to happen, that we as Christians would say, come Lord Jesus, and come quickly. Let's put this thing to rest. We're looking forward to you. We don't want to go through this any longer, okay?

Then there was a fourth seal. Remember the fourth seal, the fourth seal was the ashen or pale horse and rider that represents death. It was given authority to kill over the fourth of the earth. Look at Matthew chapter 24, verses nine and 10. Then they will deliver you to what, tribulation and will kill you and you will be hated by all nations, why? Because of my name. At that time, many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another.

Now why'd I put that in there because you need to understand when the antichrist rises, right? Not only will there be martyrdom but there will be many that quote, leave the faith and the reason they leave and apostate the faith is they were never Christians to begin with.

The reality is the harder things get in your life. If you're a true Christian, the longer, the harder you're gonna hold on to Jesus. And the reality is is if you're a Christian Jesus is gonna hold onto you and He's never ever gonna let you go. But if you're just kind of playing games with Jesus and you really don't know Jesus and things get hard and you start thinking, I might lose my job, I might lose my money, I might lose my wife, I might lose my family. I might lose my life, I'm out. There's gonna be a falling away Like you've never seen is gonna be unprecedented.

There's gonna be a sifting in churches to say we're real believers. Who's really gonna come? Who's really gonna gather, who's really gonna show love to one another when they're being persecuted, that's what's going to happen, right? Jesus taught the exact same thing.

What about that fifth seal? Did we see that anywhere? The fifth seal was the remnant who were murdered because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. What do we see Jesus say in Matthew 24, 21 and 22. And you can use the same verses for the fourth seal as well. For them, there will be a great tribulation such has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved but for the sake of the elect, those days will be cut short. So there's a time of great tribulation that will come after the midpoint that Jesus said are so bad that the days had to be cut short. They had to be amputated or no believer would make it all the way through, right?

That's what Jesus is teaching. He's teaching the exact same trues that John is teaching in the book of Revelation.

And then we get to the sixth seal. Remember the sixth seal of all the cosmic disturbances, where the sun was dark and the moon looked like blood and stars were falling from the sky. What do we read in Matthew 24, verse 29. But immediately what? After the tribulation of those days. Immediately after the tribulation of those days. The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light and the stars will fall from the sky and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Any dispute in God's word. I mean,

it's all the same.

Interesting here, because you can study this and I encourage you to read Matthew 24 this week with Revelation six, with your Bible open and go through Revelation seven and see how many similarities there but notice verse 30 in this text.

And then this is after all these cosmic disturbances and then the sign of the son of man will appear in the sky. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn. And they will see the son of man coming on the clouds of the sky with the power and His great glory. And He will send forth his angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds of the end of the sky to the other. I mean, do you see it? It's right here. John is teaching the exact thing Jesus taught His disciples. He's telling you to look for the exact same things.

So what's the point of all this?

The point of all this is, if what God's teaching is that there is a tribulation time coming that's greater than any other that we'll have to endure, then here's what we, as Christians need to know. Well, we need to be ready. We need to be ready.

You need to know that we're anchored to the Lord no matter what comes our way, we need to be ready because if we're ready, then we can know this, Jesus promised, I will never leave you or forsake you. He says in Deuteronomy, I'm the God who goes before you, I'm the God who goes with you, I will never forsake you, I will never fail you, I will be with you wherever you go.

But are you ready? Because we falsely believe sometimes in North America that

everything's just gonna get better because I'm a Christian, God's gonna prosper me and it's just gonna be awesome and I'm never gonna get sick and I'm never gonna have challenges and my marriage is gonna flourish, all my kids are gonna arise and call me blessed. And it's just awesome to be a Christian.

And the reality is there is a day coming for a generation of the church where they will stand and walk through something that's difficult and unprecedented unlike ever before. It may be us, could very well be us, could be our children or grandchildren.

I just tell you, as I look around in the world and I think that's what the book of Revelation does when we read it no matter what timeframe we're reading it and we think that's happening right now. I mean, it's happening right now, I see all that. And as you start watching what takes place in this book, you're gonna start reading the news differently, you're gonna start seeing, I see that, I see that, I see that, I see that it's all right in front of us.

So what does that mean? It means this one thing, your love for the Lord, Jesus Christ and your excitement for His return is paramount to everything that the church is about.

Do you believe that? If you're here playing games, today's the day you get right because when you see these people at the end of the sixth seal in Revelation, chapter six, they're not looking for Jesus, their heart's been hardened. They want nothing to do with Him. You see Pharaoh's heart hardened over time. He wanted nothing to do with God. God gave him every opportunity to turn to Him. Every time he turned away, his

heart got a little harder. Every time he turned away and some of you are here today your mom's told you about Jesus, your dad's told you about Jesus, your neighbors have told you about Jesus, your friends have told you about Jesus, your coach told you about you Jesus, somebody told you about Jesus and you kind of played games with it and kind of pushed it away, today's the day.

If you hear His voice, do not harden your heart. Today's the day of salvation for you.

And for those of us who know the Lord in this very sobering text, here's what you can go home with, you can know this. He goes with you wherever you go. And He loves you and He'll be with you all the way to the end. That's our great and awesome God, amen.

Amen, would you stand with me as we pray? Lord Jesus, we love you and we bless you and Lord, what a sobering text. Lord is difficult for us to conceive what's going to take place. It's hard for us to fathom any of these truths, but it's in your word and so it's true and Lord for those of us who are studying your word, we wanna show ourselves approved to you. Lord, I know I'm not an authority on your word, you're an authority on your word. Lord help us as a body of people to study your word, to be prepared for what's coming and Lord, to be ready to see your face. Lord, we want you to know we love you, we bless you and we praise you.

And if you're here today and say, hey, I want Jesus. Then how do I do it? Here's how you do this. You admit that you're a sinner right now and you recognize that you're

separated from Christ but you say to Jesus, I believe that you're a God who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead. And you tell Him that right now you wanna turn from your sin and turn to Him. Just say, these words, come into my life Lord, Jesus. Lord we pray you would do an awesome work here today among us, Lord, that you would strengthen us in our resolve to live for you and Lord you prepare us for everything coming because Lord we know that you're sovereign over all of it. You are the King of Kings, you are the Lord of Lords and you're worthy of all our praise and it's in the mighty and matchless name of Jesus that we pray. Amen and amen. Can we give God praise for who He is today?