

Revelation 1:1-22:21

Sunday 10/30/2005

I made up a basic chart that I am going to preach from today. I apologize that it is not neater than it is, but I do not write very well. However, the information is good. You will just have to get past the fact that my artistic abilities are not up to my normal standards.

As you know, we have been coming through every book of the Bible for the last 66 weeks. When we started our church almost two and a half years ago, we focused on learning some of the key foundational things about the Bible. Then I told you that we were going to come through every book of the Bible so I could give you a basic outline of each book. We have done that faithfully. They are all on CD. It is not only a resource that we can use now in our studies, but also in future years as people come in and want to get that. In fact, we have already sent a bunch of them out to people down in Joplin where we had our Bible conference. I get phone calls every week helping people work through those things.

We have now come to the last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation. We have spent, as I said, 66 weeks laying out everything to get where we are right now. Today, we are going to put it all together. Next week, we are going to start what I have told you all through our study: that God has an absolute systematic way of teaching His children the Word of God. We are going to start that systematic study next Sunday. I am going to bring you through and show you how God intended for you to learn the Bible.

I have told you this all the way through: when God wrote a book called the Bible, He wrote a book that is its own commentary, its own dictionary. It contains everything in it for you to learn it without ever stepping outside that one book. Now, I am not against using other material. I read commentaries and study material and helps all the time. But I never, never, never forget the fact that there is only one absolute infallible book on this earth that lays the Bible out the right way, and it is the Bible itself. We have taken that approach all the way through.

I. My Personal Journey in Bible Study

In 1975, I began to set a goal for my life. I was saved when I was probably five or six years old, but I did not really understand all that went on. I got away from the Lord like so many of God's people. In 1972, I came back to the Lord. In 1972, I made a simple deal with God. I told Him that I had wasted the first part of my life. God brought some events into my life that really changed my life back then, with the death of my father. I told the Lord, "I will take this thing seriously."

That was in 1972. I took about two or three years going to church, much like where a lot of you are, just finding myself. By the time 1975 rolled around, I realized that God was going to do something with me. I realized that God had something for me. I also realized at that point that if I was ever going to fulfill that, I was going to have to learn the Bible.

I will never forget, in 1975, I entered into my own personal program where I was going to cross-reference every verse in the Bible. There are 31,171 verses in a King James Bible. I made up my

mind that I was going to cross-reference each one of them and systematically come through the Bible book by book so that, by the time I was done, I would be able to look at the Bible and know what I had.

I was like so many of you, and I hear this all the time: people talk to me about the fact that they try to read the Bible, but they lose interest in the Bible very quickly, or they do not understand what they are reading. That is because you have to know what you are looking for when you read the Bible. God never intended anybody just to pick up a Bible, sit down, and learn it. God never intended it to be learned that way. God intended for the local church and pastors and teachers to take you through and lay out for you the Scripture so you would understand what you are looking for when you begin to read.

I started that systematic going through the Scriptures in 1975. I finished it in 1990, 15 years of my life, at an average of four or five hours a day, sometimes longer than that. When I was done with that, I could look at the Scriptures and I knew what I had. Are there places in the Bible that I still do not know what it is dealing with? Absolutely. But you can find yourself in the Bible about 90% of the time and at least know where you are if you just follow God's systematic pattern.

What I have done for you, and you probably do not realize this, is that in the last 66 weeks, I gave you what it took me 15 years to get. That is the way it is supposed to be. As your pastor, I am supposed to find ways to help you accelerate your spiritual growth. That is what the Bible says. I am to take what God has committed to me and commit that to faithful men. That is what Paul told Timothy. That is my job. My job is to help you learn the Bible so you can help somebody else learn the Bible, and that is the way it has to be done. In doing that, the way I teach you the Bible, I teach you, "When you come to these books of the Bible, this is what you look for." Of course, when we come to the Book of Revelation, that is exactly what we have done.

I did this chart basically on paper. I have given you a similar chart on each book of the Bible when we started it. It is on tape. But I wanted to do this one out so that the Book of Revelation would be clear to you, and we are going to explain it and all the little things on there as we come through it and break it down in just a few moments.

II. The Book of Revelation: Popularity and Simplicity

The Book of Revelation, without a doubt, is the most popular book in all of the Bible. Everybody knows about the Book of Revelation. It is a book on prophecy, so people are drawn to prophecy. Prophecy is future events, so everybody likes this book. If you say to a church, "Congregation, tonight I am going to begin to break down the Book of Revelation and I am going to teach you," you will have a crowd that you cannot believe. If you get up that same Sunday morning and say, "Congregation, tonight I am going to teach you how to live a godly life with Christ and walk in the Spirit, not in the flesh," you will not have anybody there.

The Book of Revelation has always been an attractive book because it has always been viewed as a mystery book. When the great scholars of the world want to magnify that mysticism about the Book of Revelation, they will not even call it the Book of Revelation. They call it the Book of

the Apocalypse. That is a \$50 word, apocalypse. That simply means discovery. It means symbolism or figuratism. When it talks about the Book of the Apocalypse, it is talking about the Revelation, but in a term that would suggest that you really cannot figure out the Book of Revelation, that it is some meaningful fog bank that you enter into, that you are left to yourself to interpret it and come up with your own conclusions. Of course, that is not true.

The Book of Revelation is viewed in a mystic form: horrendous beasts mixed with all kinds of things on the earth, the devil and God. It talks about all the things that are going to take place. There is hardly a movie made today that does not deal with the end of the world where you do not find somebody quoting the Book of Revelation, because the Book of Revelation is the book in the Bible that deals with the end of the world. Between Revelation chapter 1 and Revelation chapter 22, there is revealed the most terrifying subject revealed in all of man's history: the coming man of sin, whom we know as the Antichrist, and he is taking over the world.

The Book of Revelation speaks of the end of Satan. It speaks of the end of the church, the end of man, the end of the nation of Israel, the end of nations in general, the end of the universe, the end of the solar system. It is a book that spells out in its final chapters what the whole concept of God is.

The truth of the matter is, and I hate to blow away the myth of all the mystery around it, but the truth of the matter is the Book of Revelation is probably the easiest book in the Bible to learn. There are a lot harder books in the Bible to learn. I would say probably if somebody would ask me what is the easiest book in the Bible to learn, I would probably say it is the Book of Revelation because there is really no mystery to it. It is very plain, it is very simple, and it is very easy to understand.

There are two reasons for that.

1. First of all, it is because, as we have already learned, by the time you get to the Book of Revelation, if you have been paying attention, you have all the material in the last 65 books of the Bible. The Book of Revelation is not anything new. In fact, the name itself, in the first verse of Revelation 1, says, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." That first verse defines the book. It is the revealing of Jesus Christ. Do you know when Jesus Christ is revealed? He is revealed at the Second Coming of Christ. That is what the book is about. The Book of Revelation is one book that focuses and targets the most influential day, the day that is the day all through the Bible, we are going to look at it in a minute, that deals with the Second Coming of Christ.
2. The second reason it is so simple is because we have told you that John is a type of the church. John, as the apostle, represents what your life and my life should be. He has a closer relationship with God than any of the apostles. He lays his head on the breast of Jesus and literally hears the heartbeat of God, and we talked about how that is a picture of where you and I should be as a Christian. We ought to be in the spot as a child of God that we know where God's heartbeat is. We know what God is doing. We know what God wants. Through that intimate relationship that Jesus had with John, Jesus showed John to reveal all of this material.

Do you know what that tells me? If you and I as a child of God are willing to get into place with God, that we have that intimate relationship with Him, the Holy Spirit of God will show you and I the truth of the Book of Revelation, just like He showed it to John. Using our infallible Bible and God's infallible system of interpretation, which we have already come through and well established now, we will open up this book and you will see it.

Basically, if you just listen to me today, you do not even have to open up your Bible. If you just follow what I say today and listen to me, you will never not understand the Book of Revelation again. I do not have time to go into all the degree detail. We will do that on Thursday night if you so desire. But when I am done today, you are going to understand the Book of Revelation, how it breaks down. We are going to use the chart at some point. If you are into a serious Bible study, I would suggest that you put that chart, if you have a wide margin Bible, in the beginning of the Book of Revelation, just like you ought to be putting all the other charts I gave you.

I am going to break this book down for you. You are going to go out of here with a better understanding so that when somebody is concerned about world events, somebody gets nervous because of all the stuff that is going on in the Middle East, somebody gets upset or worried about the end of the world—and there are about 9,000 different ways that people are worried about the world ending. We are worried about somebody sneaking in a nuclear bomb of terrorism blowing up America. Scientists are worried about an asteroid colliding with the earth and wiping it out, the doomsday asteroid or hitting a comet. There are all kinds of things that the world is concerned about, about ending life on planet earth: global warming, women with your hairspray eating up the ozone layer. All of those things are things that the world is worried about, and they are saying that in time, this world is going to come to an end.

If that was not enough, if you cannot find any fear in that short term, let me give you a long term. Scientists say in about 10 billion years, the sun is going to expel all of its hydrogen gas, it is going to deplete all of the energy that is in it, and when a star does that, a star collapses. They call it a supernova. What happens is the star, before it dies, gets 100,000 times bigger than it is. In other words, right now, the distance from the sun to the earth is 93 million miles. When the sun finally goes into a supernova stage, the surface of the sun is going to go out past Earth's orbit another two or three million miles. It is going to fill up, and we are going to be incinerated. So if you think you have nothing to worry about, 100 million years from now, we are going to be, or 10 million years from now, we are going to be in trouble.

All of that, as far as I am concerned, is for one thing: to get your mind and your attention off what God is really doing. So with that in mind, let us begin to look at the Book of Revelation from God's standpoint.

III. The Book of Revelation: Key to the Old Testament

Let me just say this: the Book of Revelation, first of all, is the key to the Old Testament. If you learn the Book of Revelation, it will open up the Old Testament for you. Why is that? Because the Book of Revelation is about the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which is His Second Coming, and the Second Coming of Christ is the theme of the Old Testament, really the theme of the whole

Bible. Over 800, 900 times in the Old Testament, from Genesis to Malachi, you are going to find references, more than any other reference, to the Second Coming of Christ, the Revelation of Jesus Christ. So the Book of Revelation is the key to the Old Testament. The Old Testament is the key to the New Testament. It follows that kind of pattern. When you understand and you begin to work through the Book of Revelation with that thought in mind, or those thoughts in mind, it begins to help you put it into perspective.

IV. The Key to Revelation: The Three Tenses

The key to the Book of Revelation, and I have given you key verses in all the books that all the books are built around, there are two verses that you have to understand that the Book of Revelation is the key. It is chapter 1, verse 10, and chapter 1, verse 19. When somebody begins to either study or teach or write books on the Book of Revelation, this is where they make their fatal mistake. You miss this key, and the Book of Revelation is meaningless the rest of the way through. You miss this key, and the Book of Revelation becomes unattainable as far as making any sense out of it, because you have to see this concept.

Look at chapter 1, or just listen to me if you want to look at it, fine. This is what he says in verse 10 of chapter 1. John speaking:

Revelation 1:10

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

I have to explain that to you, and on your chart, you will find at the top of that page, you will find those two key verses. Here is what you have: the Bible says that John is a real man. He is on the Isle of Patmos. Patmos is a small Greek island just off the west coast of Turkey. He has been exiled there by the Roman Emperor, Domitian, around 90 AD. John dies on this island; he never gets off. John is the last apostle that we know anything about. He is on the Isle of Patmos in exile by the Roman government. He dies there, but while he is on that island, the Holy Spirit of God comes to him, and here is what He does.

John is on the Isle of Patmos in 90 AD. The Holy Spirit of God lifts him up, and he says, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." The Lord takes him forward in time, 2,000 years, and puts him down at the spot in the Bible, which is called the Second Coming of Christ. At that point, the second verse comes in, verse 19. He is told to write, and here is what he writes. He is told to write in three tenses:

Revelation 1:19

Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

John is told to write in three tenses: past, present, and future. Now, if John was on the Isle of Patmos in 90 AD, and God told him to write what has been, and what is, and what shall be, then it would have been the Old Testament up till then. 90 AD would have been the present, and he would have went into the future. But that is not what God did. God lifted him off the date 90 AD,

and in the Spirit took him to the Lord's day. The Lord's day in the Bible is only one thing. When he says, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day," it is only one day. That day is the Second Coming of Christ. That is what the Revelation is about. The Revelation of Jesus Christ is when Jesus Christ is revealed at the Second Coming.

So John is lifted off that island, literally in 90 AD. He is moved forward in time, and God takes him up to the Second Coming of Christ, and then He says, "John, from your position at the Lord's day, the Second Coming of Christ, you write what has been, you write what is now at the Second Coming, and you write what is going to be in the future."

If you do not get that three-dimensional breakdown, the Book of Revelation gets totally upside down, because you now do not have the proper format from which to study it. By doing this, the Holy Spirit of God has now rightly divided the Book of Revelation into three sections. He has divided it into a section which is the past. He has divided it into a section which is the present, the Second Coming of Christ. And He has now divided it into a third section, which is yet future. John is told to write in those three tenses.

So when you have the Book of Revelation, you have a record of events from the crucifixion of Christ, and that is where your chart starts, all the way over to Revelation chapter 22.

V. Seven Major Events of Revelation

The Book of Revelation records seven major events in your Bible. We study these events individually on Thursday night when we came through the composite study of how to make your own study Bible, you remember that. But the Book of Revelation covers seven major future events.

3. The first event is the period that you and I are in right now, the Church Age. The Church Age, quickly defined, started when Christ died on the cross and will end any second now with the Rapture of the Church. That is the first major event in the Bible.
4. The second major event in the Bible is that Rapture of the Church. God is going to come down any second and take us out.
5. The third major event in the Book of Revelation is the Tribulation Period. The Tribulation Period lasts seven years. It is a time, as we have already talked about, when the Holy Spirit of God has gone off this planet and the devil literally takes over this world as he has so desired to do. He literally runs this world for seven years right before the Lord comes back at the Lord's Day.
6. The next major event found in here is the Marriage of the Lamb, where you and I as the church are in a spiritual sense married to Christ, in the sense that He is the Bridegroom, we are the Bride.
7. The next major event is the key of the Bible. That is the Second Coming of Christ. Everything in your Bible, from the Old Testament to the New Testament, points toward one of two days. There are two days in your Bible that you have to recognize and understand. The first day is the Day of the Lord. That is the Second Coming of Christ. The second day is the Day of Jesus Christ. That is the Rapture. On your chart, they are noted by the two stars there.

You will see the first star right after the three crosses. It says "the Day of Jesus Christ," that is the Rapture. The second star after that is "the Day of the Lord," that is the Second Coming of Christ. The whole Bible is built around those two days.

8. The next event the Book of Revelation covers is the Millennial Reign of Christ. A thousand-year reign when Christ reigns on this earth. We are going to look at all these in detail as we come back through.
9. The seventh event that is recorded in the Book of Revelation is the New Heavens, the New Earth, and the New Jerusalem.

Those are the major events, starting with the time period that we are in right now, and how it brings itself through and shows us how simple this thing really is. So when we study the Book of Revelation, we are going to begin to follow it with our chart, with the past, present, and future, understanding now that John is caught up to the Day of the Lord and he writes what has been—that would be the Church Age, the Rapture, the Tribulation. He is writing from what is—that would be the Marriage of the Lamb and the Second Coming of Christ. And then he writes what yet shall be—that would be the Millennium, the New Heavens and the New Earth, and Eternity.

VI. Breakdown of Revelation Chapters

Here is how it breaks down in your Bible. This is what I have on this chart. You are going to find that Revelation chapters 1, 2, and 3 deal with the Church Age. When you look at chapters 1, 2, and 3 dealing with the Church Age, you are going to find that he has a message to seven churches.

Lo and behold, in Revelation chapter 4, heaven opens up. Heaven opens up two times in the Book of Revelation. It is real simple. It opens up in Revelation chapter 4, somebody goes up. It opens in Revelation chapter 19, somebody comes down. See how easy it is? Let me put it together for you. I am with my eyes closed, with my hands behind my back. Let me show you how easy it is.

Revelation chapters 1, 2, and 3 is the Church Age. Revelation chapter 4, the Bible says, "Heaven opens. I hear a voice like a trumpet saying, 'Come up hither.'" John is immediately taken up in the Spirit. In the first three chapters of the Book of Revelation, you find the church mentioned, I think 17 or 19 times. Revelation chapter 4, when heaven opens and John is taken out, you never find the church again mentioned in the Book of Revelation until the last chapter when he is saying goodbye to everybody. Do you know why? Raptured out.

Do you know what takes place in chapter 5 through chapter 19? The Tribulation Period. Do you know what takes place in chapter 19? Heaven opens again. This time, somebody comes down: Second Coming of Christ. Do you know what happens in Revelation chapter 20? The Millennium. Do you know what happens in Revelation chapter 21? New Heavens and a New World. Do you know what happens in Revelation chapter 22? Eternity. There it is. The whole Book of Revelation laid out systematically by the Bible just dividing itself around two days and two places in the Scriptures where somebody goes up and somebody comes down. The whole Book of Revelation is built on that concept.

All right, with that in mind, now I am going to start coming back and we are going to walk you through. Look at your chart one more time, just so we all grasp it. Your Bible is built around two days: the Day of Jesus Christ and the Day of the Lord. The Day of Jesus Christ is the Rapture, that is your first star. The Day of the Lord is the Second Coming of Christ, that is your second star. The Book of Revelation is broken down around these two days.

You are going to find in Revelation chapters 1, 2, and 3, he writes about what has been: the Church Age. He writes about the Rapture, that is what has been. He writes about the Tribulation Period, that is what has been. In chapter 19, he writes about what is: the Day of the Lord. And then in chapters 20, 21, and 22, he writes what shall be. That will be the Millennium, the New Heavens and the New Earth, and Eternity. Every major prophetic event in your Bible laid out systematically by the way God divided His Bible up, or the Book of Revelation up, in three compartments: past, present, and future. If you miss those little keys in chapter 1, you are out of the picture.

VII. The Seven Church Periods

With that in mind and that infallible breakdown, let us start to look at it even closer, and I am going to give you another, now that we have the pattern, let us walk through the pattern. Chapters 1, 2, and 3. You are going to find in chapters 1, 2, and 3, John addresses seven churches. Each one of these seven churches historically will represent for us the seven periods of church history. When you study the history of the New Testament church, which starts with the church there in Jerusalem, in Acts, and you come through church history right up to the time that we live in 2005, you will find that historically, as you study the church history, God broke down church history into seven periods. He calls every one of these church periods by a different name. Every one of these church names represents something that the church is going through in history.

- The first church is called the Church of Ephesus. This church will be the first church that brings us up probably, and these dates are not absolute. I am not saying that on 180 AD, everybody wrote on their calendar, "Tomorrow starts the next church age period." I am not talking about that; these are approximate times through history. The first church period is the Church at Ephesus. It runs up to about 180, 200 AD. The name of this church means "fully purposed." The Church at Ephesus was a church that had everything it needed to do the job. It was a church that was fully purposed to do what God wanted it to do.
- The next church he talks about is the Church of Smyrna, and that will be around 200 up to about 325. Smyrna means "bitterness and death." Do you know why? Because this is the period in church history where all the early Christians are being tortured by the Roman Empire for their faith. This is where they are being put into the Colosseum with the gladiators, being eaten by lions, being torn apart by wild beasts, where all the Roman Empire would round up all the Christians and they would bring them in. On Saturday afternoon, they did not have Super Bowls or football games. Sunday afternoon, they did not have football games, hockey games, baseball games. They killed Christians. They put them into an arena, and they butchered them. They cheered while the wild animals chased them around and

killed them. They cut them together. They put them in with gladiators, and they had no weapons, and they hacked them to pieces. This is why this period is called Smyrna, which means "bitterness and mirth," a time of severe persecution.

- Then the next period of church history, the next church he writes to, was the Church at Pergamos. That will be about 325 AD and bring us up to about the start of the Dark Ages, about 500 AD. The name Pergamos means "much marriage." This is the time where literally the church becomes married to the world. This is where we find the first downfall and the breakthrough and the breakdown of true Christianity. This is where we begin to see all of the tradition come in. All the things that really have destroyed the church today come in during this period of time. So it is called "much marriage" because the church is not focused on the things of God; they are focused on the things of the world.
- Then we have the next one, which is called Thyatira, which is about 500 AD to 1000 AD. The word Thyatira means "odor of affliction." Again, even though the church went into the worldly system in the last one, there is still a true line of men and women who will never depart from the faith that held true to the Word of God. They are severely persecuted during this time. This is the time when they just go after them and literally try to wipe them out.
- The next church period, which is during the Dark Ages, brings us up to the Reformation, about 1000 AD to 1500. It is called Sardis. Sardis means "red ones." Again, it is a time when the church is literally persecuted, called "red ones," because the church is dipped in the blood of the men and women who pay for what they believe by their own life.
- Then the next one is called the Philadelphia Church Period. It starts about the time of the Reformation with Martin Luther, around 1580, 1600, and really brings us up to about our own modern time, about 1900. Philadelphia means "brotherly love." During this period of church history for about 400 years, it is where the church just blossoms. The Reformation took care of all the persecution that was being done by the church-state setups in Europe. It literally kicked the door open in England, takes the Bible and the Word of God to the ends of the earth.
- Then the seventh church that he writes to is called the Church of Laodicea. That church starts about 1900, and it is in existence today. That is the church period that you and I are a part of. When you understand a little bit about history, you will understand why the church is so confusing today. You will understand why there are so many preachers that are concerned about everything but people in the Bible. You will understand why Christians today are more concerned about their own rights than they are what God wanted them to do. This is a church that has all the modern technology. This is the information age. This is where we can laser print Bibles and gospel messages around the world in an instant. This is where emails and all the fiber optics have made the spreading of the gospel a hundred million times faster, easier, simpler than ever before in history. And yet it is a time when there are less people getting saved than it was back in the Book of Acts. Because this church is dead. This church is filled with Christians that are concerned about their own lifestyles, their own wants, their own desires, and not God's. The name Laodicea means "rights of the people." It is simply a church where everybody talks about their rights, and they forget about God's rights.

That is basically chapters 1, 2, and 3. Historically, it brings us up through the history of the church and shows us the seven periods of church history from the Book of Acts right up to the time that we live.

Then in chapter 4, looking at your chart, your first star, a door opens up in heaven. The Bible says he hears a voice like a trumpet. That will match up with 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and 1 Corinthians 15:52, which deal with the Rapture of the Church.

1 Thessalonians 4:16

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

1 Corinthians 15:52

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

The Bible says in verse 2 of chapter 4, John says, "And immediately, like a twinkling of an eye," 1 Corinthians 15:52, "he is in the spirit and he is standing before God's throne." Do you know what that is a picture of? The Rapture of the Church. That is the Day of Jesus Christ. That is the day that the Church Age ends on earth and you and I are raptured out and we stand before the throne of God and we now give an account of our service down here of what we did for the Lord Jesus Christ. We have talked about that many, many times.

You are going to find in chapter 5 that we have the subject of the Judgment Seat of Christ. John is standing before a throne, and all the material in the New Testament, the Judgment Seat of Christ right after the Rapture of the Church, figures into this time period.

Now, when the Rapture of the Church takes place, things change on this earth, and it also changes in the Book of Revelation. I have to explain something to you here before we move on, and I hope I am doing this in an easy manner for you to follow, just using the chart and showing you how it goes and trying to break it down. I have told you many, many times that the key to the Bible is its consistency. Because God wrote the Bible, He wrote a book that is absolutely consistent. It never breaks its consistency. That is why when you read something back in the Old Testament and it means something there, it will mean the same thing when you read it over in Revelation or 1st, 2nd John, or wherever you go. The Bible has a trail of consistency. This is another place where people mess up the Book of Revelation, and you have to understand this fact.

Once the Rapture takes place, which takes place in Revelation 4, where heaven opens the first time, it is going to take place any second now. Most people do not understand how close that is. Do you realize that the last prophetic event, I have people ask me all the time, "What is the next sign before the coming of the Lord?" They do not understand that the last sign before the Rapture of the Church was given in 1948. The last sign before the Rapture of the Church, detailed out in the Book of Matthew and a thousand other places in the Bible, was the nation of Israel becoming a nation again. For 2,000 years, she was out of the land. For 3,000 years, she could not call her

own homeland. She was scattered everywhere. God promised that He would bring her back. Men laughed at it, theologians scoffed at it. People said it will never happen. All the Arab nations that are against the nation of Israel worked and did everything they could to keep the nation of Israel out of that land. But you know what? To no avail. Because they are God's chosen people, and that is their land.

So in 1948, the nation of Israel, through the events that transpired 30 years, 50 years before that, became a nation back in the homeland, and they are never going to get out. You heard it last week, that guy over there in the Middle East, I did not even know who he was. One of those Allah Arab, hubba bubba guys over there. He called for the wipe out of the nation of Israel. That is what they said. He said, "I am calling about all the Arab nations to wipe out the nation of Israel." Well, let me tell you something. If you are a Bible believer, that carries about as much weight as a note from Santa Claus, from Martin Luther King to Santa Claus in 4004 BC. It just does not mean anything. I am telling you, nobody is going to wipe out the Jew once they got back in the land.

I do not know what it is like in heaven. I have pictured heaven like a big place with a lot of switches. I think that every time a major event happens, God throws a switch, which starts the next event. In 1948, God threw a switch. The only difference between this switch and all the other switches, this is the last switch. When that switch got thrown, everything goes automated from there. Everything went automated. When that nation of Israel, when they put up the Star of David, and they made themselves back in Jerusalem, God walked over and threw the last switch, and the last switch automated every other event that is going to take place.

Somebody said, "Bob, what is the next sign? What is the next sign? What should we be looking for?" Hey, I am not looking for a sign. I am listening for a sound. It is going to be that trumpet. We are out of here, man. If you cannot look at the Middle East and the world around you, if you cannot see that this world is an insane asylum run by the inmates, it is absolutely unbelievable. We cannot get anything done in our government. They are fighting each other on both sides of the aisle. Nothing is going to get accomplished. Everybody, they have lost your, this government was set out to be a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. They lost that concept a long time ago. They have no concern about your needs or my needs. If Jesus does not come, you better enjoy Christmas this year because probably next year, they are going to wipe it off the calendar.

I told you before, when I went to school, right after the Civil War, when I went to school, it was uphill both ways and there was snow every day even in July. But when I went to school at Easter time, they invited a preacher to come in and he told the gospel story about Christ dying on the cross. At Christmas time, we had a manger. We had a baby Jesus in it. We sang Christmas carols. Another preacher came in and he talked about the Savior coming to the world. But you see, it is gone today. You do that today, you will be fired, you will be sued, everything else. Do you know why? We live in a Christless country that does not want any retaining thought or knowledge of God. I am telling you, the switch was thrown in 1948. I am not looking for any signs. I am listening for that old trumpet.

What takes place the moment the Rapture takes place, an automatic event comes into play called the Tribulation Period. The Tribulation Period is seven years. Here is how it breaks down real easy. This is easy. The seven-year period is the time that the devil, who becomes the Antichrist, comes to this earth literally and he takes over the earth. He does it for one main reason: he wants to wipe out the nation of Israel. You are going to see that here in just a little bit. He wants to wipe out and destroy the nation of Israel. God gives him free reign for seven years. It is divided in the middle. The first three and a half years, he shows up as the savior of the world. He comes as an Antichrist, a false Christ. What he does is he brings some kind of world peace for three and a half years. He makes some kind of league with the nation of Israel. He lulls everybody to sleep.

Then the Bible says in the middle of that time period, at the three and a half year mark, he attacks the nation of Israel. He breaks the covenant. He rallies all of the forces that are against Israel, and he tries to wipe them out. During that time when he is trying to wipe them out, God deals with the nation of Israel because the nation of Israel had rejected their Son. Through that trial and tribulation, God reveals Himself, they accept Christ as their Messiah. Then just as the Antichrist gets them down there in the Valley of Armageddon—that is the word today, Armageddon. That is the word. Armageddon means the end of the world. So when you want to make a movie about some comet or some meteor smashing an earth and being a global killer, the movie is called Armageddon. When you want to have some kind of, you saw that movie, you liked it too, did you not? I watched it just the other night. In fact, I watched that before I preached because I want to be full of the right information. I always like to watch people that like the movies I like to watch. Put his name on the list, next movie night at our house, he is coming, okay?

But that is what they do. They want to make it something that goes back to the Bible because Armageddon in the Bible, it is the end. It is the end. What happens is the nation of Israel gets down there and they are trapped in that little valley and the Antichrist has got them ringed and he is about ready to wipe them out. About that time, the Bible says, "Lift up your head, your redemption draws nigh," and they look up, and when they look up, guess who is there? The Lord is coming back. He kicks the snot out of everybody on this planet. He knocks the socks off, man. He comes back and we come back with Him, and He destroys the Antichrist and his army.

VIII. Four Accounts of the Tribulation Period

All of that Tribulation Period, here is what we got. Chapters 1, 2, 3, Church Age. Chapter 4, on your chart, we go up. Now look, between the first star and the second star, you have chapters 5 to 19. You have the Tribulation Period. But you have four accounts of the Tribulation Period. Remember I told you the Bible was consistent? When we came through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in our study of the books of the Bible, I showed you how that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are four accounts of the First Coming of Christ, but every writer tells the story from a different perspective. In Matthew, Christ is portrayed as the King of the Jews. In Mark, He is portrayed as a Servant. In Luke, He is portrayed as the Son of Man. In John, He is portrayed as the Son of God. Each writer takes the First Coming of Christ and puts a different emphasis on a different person of who Christ is. When we read all four accounts, we have a complete understanding of the four aspects of Christ's First Coming.

Well, the Bible is consistent. That is what He does in the Book of Revelation. This is the key. Once we see chapters 1, 2, and 3 of the Church Age, once we see chapter 4 as the Rapture of the Church and out we go, then chapters 5 through 19 give us four accounts of the Second Coming of Christ, just like Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John gave us four accounts of the First Coming of Christ. Each time He puts an emphasis on something different.

- The first time is in chapters 6 and 7. The first time through, He talks about the horses, the riders, and the seals.
- The second time through is chapter 8. I have them all broken down for you on your chart. Chapters 8 through 11, that is the second time through. We are going to look at it in detail here in a moment. This is where He puts it and He talks about the emphasis on the trumpets.
- The third time would be chapters 12 through 14. This third time through, He puts the emphasis on the devil, the Antichrist, and the man of sin. We will look at it here in a minute.
- The last time through the Tribulation Period is chapters 15 through 19. This is the fourth time through. This is where He gives you all the information on Babylon the Great, the mystery, religion, the mother of harlots. It is just as simple as that. It all works that way and it all comes down and breaks down just exactly like that.

All right, now with that outline, I am going to walk you through these four accounts. Here is what we have. We have the crucifixion at the beginning of your chart. Then we have the first three chapters of Revelation. That is the Church Age. That will bring you from the crucifixion, Book of Acts, right up to the end of the Church Age. Chapter 4, Rapture of the Church. Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, four times through the Tribulation Period with the emphasis on the same stuff from four different perspectives. Four different accounts of the Second Coming of Christ.

All right, let us look at it. Let us take it and put it through. Let us go through the first time. This will be chapters 6 and 7. We are going to show you some key areas. The Rapture takes place in chapter 4. We see the Judgment Seat of Christ in chapter 5. We just saw the Church Age in 1, 2, and 3. Now once the Rapture takes place, the events on earth change.

What happens in chapter 6? In comes a white horse rider. This white horse rider will be the Antichrist. This white horse rider shows up, and when he shows up, he comes in as a counterfeit Christ. He comes in as the Antichrist bringing world peace. You will know that when he shows up, he has a bow, but he has no arrows, because he does not come to conquer, he comes to bring peace to the world. As I told you, the first three and a half years in the Tribulation Period, he brings about a false world peace. Then all the other horses come in, the death, all the destruction, all the other things begin to come down and fall down and just begins to, as the seals get open, and the seals are actually like seals on an envelope, and the contents is the wrath of God being poured out on this earth. God's judgment on this earth.

Then you come to chapter 7, and you are going to find that in chapter 7, you have the calling out of what is commonly called the 144,000 witnesses. These are Jews, 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes, who during this Tribulation Period, get the message of God and preach to their own

people that God is coming, the Second Coming is about to happen. Then we find in chapter 7, at the end of chapter 7, we find the Second Coming of Christ laid out for you the first time.

Then we enter into chapters 8, 9, 10, and 11. This will be the second time through the tribulation, but a different emphasis, you see? In chapters 6 and 7, the first time through, he put the emphasis on the seals, and the four riders, and the four horses. The second time through, 8, 9, 10, and 11, he puts the emphasis on the trumpets. These trumpets are the judgments of God again that are being poured out on the earth.

- The first trumpet sounds, Revelation 8:7, hail comes down on earth mingled with fire and blood.
- Revelation 8:8, water gets turned to blood.
- Revelation 8:10-11, water turns bitter.
- Revelation 8:12, darkness covers all of the earth.

All of this is God's judgment being poured out on the devil and the Antichrist and his false kingdom because they are persecuting the nation of Israel. Remember last week when we talked about the Book of Jude and we talked about all the events that are happening in our world today and how people are thinking that that is the judgment of God falling? I told you that that judgment of God is definitely going to fall. Well, here is where it falls. Brother, the Bible says there is no time like this in the history of mankind that God's judgment, when God's judgment is poured out on this earth.

In chapter 9, the Bible talks about the opening of the bottomless pit. Here is where all of the ungodly creatures come out of the bottomless pit. The Bible literally says, and this is where the Book of Revelation, people have a tough time because they just cannot seem to think that that can actually happen. I will tell you why that is, is because preachers quit preaching about hell a long time ago. So we do not think of hell anymore in the terms that the Bible lays it out. We do not think of hell anymore in the terms the way the Bible defines it, but in hell, the Bible says there is some kind of godless deformed, I do not know what you could call them, but they come out and they are described in chapter 9 of the Book of Revelation. They have one desire: they torment men. Men want to die from the torment, they sting them, they are like giant locusts, they sting them. But men want to die, they desire to die because the pain is so great. But the Bible says death flees from them. God does not kill them, He does not let them die. He lets them suffer during that period of time.

I will tell you what, and you can laugh at me all you want. You could call me nuts and crazy, but I am telling you this, I know this about the world and about how people think and about human nature. Let me tell you something. Every horror movie you ever saw, everything you ever, and I know Hollywood puts them out, I know that, but you have to understand that behind the mind of Hollywood sits an unregenerate mind and an unregenerate man that gets its information from the being of darkness, the devil. When these men make up these things, they have one source they have to go by. They do not get it from their own imagination. Let me tell you something, brother, everything you find and everything you see, you can trace back to the Bible because that is the source of truth.

So you have these horror movies, and we all like to watch them, but they all have the same theme. Did you ever notice it? The guy just never dies. Freddy Krueger keeps coming after you. When you think he is dead, he is not dead. Jason, no reference to you Jason, or my other Jason. Well, come to think of it, yeah, you do look like the guy a little bit there. What do they do? How many have they had? Do you know why they have *Terror on Elm Street* one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, and he moves over to Maple Street, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and 10? Because he never dies. They always find some way that he comes back. They cannot kill him. He just keeps coming after you. Did you ever see *Terminator 1-2*? You cannot kill it. It keeps coming back. My goodness, he is coming down there and he is driving. He gets run over by a tractor trailer for gasoline. The plate blows up, but it kills the whole world. You always take a little breather because now they just flipped over there, and they are talking to each other. All of a sudden you hear the music build up. It pans to the thing and out of the fire comes the guy that cannot be killed. That all comes out of the mindset of what it is going to be when God's judgment is poured out on this earth. It is all about that. Only it is 10, a thousand times worse. It is a thousand times more terrifying. We look at that stuff, we see it on TV, and because we know it is just a movie, it desensitizes us. So when you hear me talk about it, you say, "Oh, it is no big deal. I watched *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* last night. Saw 16 kids cut in half with a chainsaw." But I am telling you, it is true. These things come out. They do not die. You cannot kill them. And they torment man.

Then in chapter 10, he talks about the seven thunders, pouring out God's judgment. You will find the seven thunders laid out for you in Psalms 29:1-10.

Then in chapter 11, you find the two witnesses showing up, Moses and Elijah. You will find them in Zechariah 4:11. And then in Revelation 11:15, you have the Second Coming of Christ. That brings you through the second time.

Then you have the third time through. That would be chapters 12 through 14. The third time through, he puts the emphasis on the devil coming down to this earth. Let me just say this to you. Revelation chapter 12 and Revelation chapter 13 are the two greatest chapters in the New Testament that lay out for you the devil: how he operates, how he makes things happen, how he is going to do it, why he is going to do it. They are the two greatest chapters in all of the New Testament on the operation of the workings of the devil. The two greatest chapters in the Old Testament will be Job chapter 40 and Job chapter 41.

Here is what you have. In chapters 12 through 14, you find Satan coming to this earth. Now here is how it works. We have to go back to our little thing now. We saw in chapters 1, 2, and 3, the Church Age. Then we saw the Rapture in chapter 4. Chapter 5 took place, the Judgment Seat of Christ. In chapter 6, we saw the Antichrist coming because the tribulation started. When the Bible says the Antichrist shows up down through here, he comes on a white horse. He is an imitation of Christ. He comes to the world religions and he says, "Okay, I am Christ, you all worship me. Now here I am, we are going to solve all the world's problems." You see, we are all gone. There will not be any more Bob Alexander up here ranting and raving about the Bible. I will be gone. Most of you will be gone. Only people that are left are the people who did not want anything to do with the Bible and God anyhow, so they are left. When he comes down, they are

going to embrace him as the savior of the world. Every major religion in the world is going to say, "He is here, he is here, he is here, he is here." It is all peace on earth, good will toward man. "We brought in the kingdom," and it is all going to be one big happy family for a short time. He is going to come in, he is going to establish it.

Well, in the middle of the Tribulation Period, when he begins to break that covenant, the Bible says that the devil himself, and this is Revelation 12 and 13, comes down and he enters into that Antichrist person. He takes over in that last three and a half years, he bathes this earth in blood. That is why you find in chapters 12 and 14, the third time through, in chapter 12, it lays him out how he comes. He comes to persecute the woman; the woman is Israel. In chapter 13, you find three beasts coming up. Revelation 13:4, 13:11, 13:15, and they are all connected with the Antichrist.

- Revelation 13:4 is the beast.
- Revelation 13:11 is the false prophet.
- Revelation 13:15 is the image of the beast.

I told you, the devil is an imitator of Christ. God has a Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. When the Antichrist shows up, when the white horse rider shows up, and when the Antichrist shows up, he is going to get the world and deceive the world because he has an unholy trinity. Just as God has the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the devil has the beast, the false prophet, and the image of the beast. He counterfeits it with the unholy trinity. Three beasts are three spirits that are going to deceive the world and bring the world to destruction. You find that in every aspect coming through the Bible.

The Bible says Jesus is light, the devil claims to be light. The Bible says that Jesus was God, the devil claims to be God. Jesus is called a prince in Isaiah, the devil is called a prince in John 14. Jesus Christ is called the Anointed, the devil is called the Anointed. Jesus Christ is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Revelation 5, the devil is called a roaring lion seeking who he may devour in 1 Peter. Jesus Christ is called a king, the devil is called a king. Jesus Christ has a church, the devil has a church. Jesus Christ has a city that is His bride, the devil has a city, Revelation 17 and 18. He counterfeits Him every way he can. That is how he deceives the world.

I know what you all think. You all think that the devil walks around carrying a pitchfork with horns and a tail with a red Union suit and looks like some half man, half cow. That is the mindset that we have with the devil. We think the devil has horns, he has a tail, he has a pitchfork, he is red, and he runs all around and you can spot him in a minute because he is the only thing that looks like the devil. That is our concept.

You have the Bible take, and I told you, the Bible is its own book of definitions. The Bible says that he does not appear that way at all. He appears as an angel of light. He counterfeits. His sphere is not the bars, it is not the drug scene, it is not the wildlife scene. His sphere is religion. His sphere, when he showed up and wanted to damn the world in Genesis chapter 3 with Adam and Eve, he did not say, "Hey, let us go out and get stoned." He did not say, "Hey, let us go out and get drunk." Do you know what he said? When he wanted to deceive the world, he said, "Yea,

hath God said?" That is how he did it. He came as a religious constituent. That is how he always does it.

Now when he shows up after the Rapture of the Church, the whole world is going to think Christ is here. It is the wrong Christ. So the third time through, in chapters 12 through 14, you have chapter 12, it lays him out how he comes. Chapter 13 lays out the unholy trinity. Again in chapter 14, you will find the redeeming of the 144,000 like we saw in chapter 7. Then of course it ends at the Second Coming of Christ with a great winepress of the wrath of Almighty God.

Then we start the final time through. Chapters 15 through 19, the fourth and final time. In chapters 15 through 19, we find the seven vials being poured out like test tubes. That is more of God's judgment. We find in here the destruction of Babylon the Great. Chapter 16 deals with the seven vials poured out and the plagues and the torments and the destruction. The water again turning to blood, the grievous sores that come on man's body, the great heat, the darkness that covers the earth, the great hailstones that are eight, nine pounds that come down and just beat people unmercifully. Again, you find a reference in chapter 13 to the three unclean spirits like frogs that we just talked about.

In chapters 17 and 18, you find laid out and explained, pulling all the information together, about a thing called Babylon Mystery, the Great, the Mother of Harlots and the Abominations of the Earth. In this particular portion of the Word of God, you find detailed out for you the great religious system that the Antichrist puts together. You see everything laid out. It pulls all the material together. It runs you through and shows you how down through history the devil has survived through the nations and through the kingdoms and through all the things of this world, how he survived through all the various times in history and he comes out in this time period to take over the world, to wipe out God's chosen people. But he is stopped in Revelation 19:11, by the last and final time of the Second Coming of Christ. The greatest chapter in all the Bible pulls all the information together and it pulls it to the place where it shows Christ coming back. A sharp two-edged sword goes out of His mouth by which He should smite the nations. The Bible says that He is crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords. This is the day, this is your second star. That is how far we have come.

So far in our chart, the Book of Revelation has been laid out in a systematic form. We saw crucifixion and then we saw chapters 1, 2, and 3 bringing us through the Church Age from Christ's death up to the Rapture of the Church. Then in Revelation 4:1, our first star, somebody goes out. From chapter 5 to chapter 19, we now have four accounts of the Second Coming of Christ in the Tribulation Period, each one emphasizing something different, yet they are going together cohesively. Then in chapter 19, where we are at right now, heaven opens again, this time He comes back. That is the Second Coming of Christ.

IX. The Millennial Reign and Eternity

The next chapter is chapter 20. Chapter 20 is the Millennial Reign of Christ. This is where most people have a tough time with the Book of Revelation, because in chapter 20, the end of all government comes. The end of all structure as we know it, all political systems come to an end

here. This is where the Book of Revelation is not only loved by God's people, but it is hated by unsaved people. Because this book spells the end of all governments, all religious systems, because in the first six verses of chapter 20, you can read it and see for yourself, if they mean what they say, there will be no peace on earth, there will be no kingdom come, there will be no rest till Christ comes back and establishes His throne in Jerusalem. You can put bumper stickers, "Peace, peace, peace," all you want. There will be no peace till the Prince of Peace comes back. When He comes back in Revelation 20, the only way He brings peace is He brings a downfall to all the governments. He sets up His righteous government that runs from Jerusalem.

Christ has a Millennial Reign for three reasons. Three reasons, and you need to, they are simple, you need to understand it. Just so you know what is going on here. I have told you many, many times that all of the Bible and all history is built around basically three places in the Bible.

- The first place is the nation of Israel in the Old Testament. The nation of Israel were God's people in the Old Testament, He had a plan for them. He had something that He wanted them to accomplish for Him. We know the story of the nation of Israel.
- The second plan that God has is the church, that is you and me. Just like God had a plan for the nation of Israel, God has a plan for you and for me. Just like the nation of Israel had to choose whether they were going to do that plan or not, you and I, if you are saved, you have to choose whether you are going to do that plan or not. It is as simple as that.

The way that it works is this. In the Millennium, God does three things.

10. He takes the nation of Israel and for a thousand years, while Christ sits on the throne and governs this world, He brings in a society and a government that everybody is trying to do right now. We are trying to bring it in. Aristotle wrote about it, Plato wrote about it, Socrates wrote about it, that guy, Aesop, he was tough to swallow, but he wrote about it. They all wrote about some coming utopia where man was going to live. Ponce de Leon stomped through the swamps of Florida, looking for the fountain of youth, and he said, when a man got it, he could live forever in some kind of peace. None of them found it. Because it will not happen till Christ comes back. When He comes back, He sets up His government in Jerusalem, the whole governments of the world are left in shambles, and God says, "All right, boys, we are going to run it right this time, and we are going to run it by that book." He takes the nation of Israel, and He puts them in the land that was promised to them, the promises of the Canaan's land, the promises of Canaan's rest, the promises of the promised land that they never got. Now they get them.
11. He takes you and I, and for the child of God that has been faithful, for the child of God that figured out what God wanted to do, everything we have been talking about, for the child of God that has been faithful in doing with their life what God wanted to do. God says, "Okay, you are going to reign with me for a thousand years."
12. The third thing that He does, He takes His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and He puts Him on a throne in Jerusalem, a literal visible throne, and He is crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He reigns over the whole world. He is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords for a 1,000 years before eternity starts. God rewards Israel, rewards His faithful Christians, and

has His Son set on the throne as was prophesied in the Old Testament, and He is seated on that throne in Jerusalem and He reigns over God's creation.

Then Revelation 21, New Heavens and a New Earth. Three people groups in your Bible, you will find them detailed out for you, 1 Corinthians 10:32. I have told you, you heard me say it many, many times, the Bible is written to three groups of people. You find three groups of people in the Bible: the Jews, the Gentiles, and the church. They are three different groups. The Bible is addressed to three different groups. The last thing you want to do is get something to the church and put it to the Jews, or get something He wrote to the Jews and put it to the church. But it happens all the time. Rightly dividing your Bible is knowing when your Bible is talking to the Jews, when it is talking to the Gentiles, and when it is talking to the church.

1 Corinthians 10:32

Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

When you get to Revelation 21, when God begins to get His plan going, He has a New Heaven, a New Earth, and a New Jerusalem. New Earth for the Jews, New Heavens for the Gentiles, New Jerusalem for the church. All three people groups.

Now, I am not going to get into the plan of God and eternity this morning. If you want to get into it on Thursday night, I will be glad to. Because one, I am almost done, and I want to wrap this thing up, and it would take me another two hours to do it. But I am telling you this, God has a plan. If you think God just did all that He did, created everything that He created, all the galaxies, the planets, the stars and everything, so we could just look at them, and then when God was all done with it, we are just going to float around in heaven and pluck on a harp with wings. You do not know very much about God. God has something a lot better than that.

Do you know why I serve God, and I do not serve Him the way I should? I do not love Him the way I should. I confess that to you. I fail just like everybody else does. There is nothing perfect about Bob Alexander. But let me tell you what I have figured out. I figured out that there is nothing in this world that is worth what He has got for me over there. Not a thing. There is not a thing down here that shines, glitters, or gleams, or sparkles, or blinks, that is going to even begin to compare one hour over there into eternity with what God's plan is. I do not understand it all. I look at that vast universe out there, and boy, I see that thing, and I see it going on forever and ever and ever and ever, and scientists do not have a clue. They do not figure it out. They walk around and they think, "Well, it all started with a big bang." No, you are wrong, but it is going to end with a big bang. When He comes back, He has got a plan, and He wants you part of that plan.

When Revelation chapter 21 takes place and after the Millennium, God begins to formulate that plan. All of Revelation chapter 21 lays out in details what is for the New Heavens, the New Earth, and the New Jerusalem. What is for the Jews, the Gentiles, and the church?

Then we come to Revelation chapter 22, and with this, we are done. Revelation chapter 22, the great chapter on eternity. The Bible says in Isaiah chapter 9, verses 6 and 7, it says this:

Isaiah 9:6

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

That is Christ. "And the government shall be upon his shoulder," that is the Millennium. "And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," that is eternity.

Isaiah 9:7

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

That Bible says that when it comes into the Millennium, that thing just moves right on out of eternity. It is going to be a wild time.

X. Conclusion: God's Simple Plan

Do you know what God has done? Let me simplify your Bible for you. Now keep in mind, let us get the Book of Revelation straight in our mind. Now you have the whole thing now. You will never have to, when you read the Book of Revelation, you will never have to wonder, "What am I reading in this chapter again?" It should be now concise for you. Maybe you do not have it in total recall, but if you have this, and anybody here today that is a visitor, if you want a copy of the CD today, I will just give you one. That is my gift to you for coming up today and putting up with me. If you want any more, you want to go back and lay that out, you go back there and tell Scott to give you one, no charge. They are \$500 a piece. I know the guy over here that likes the same movies I wanted, he was going to get nine of them. I just saved you \$45 or \$2,500. Anyway, take one. On top of that, if you want to come over to my house sometime and help me lay it down and break it out for you, you come and see me, I will give you my phone number.

My goal is to help you understand the Scripture. My goal is to help you get to the place where you do not get left out of this thing. I am not putting any pressure on you for anything today. I am just telling you, that Bible is true. God has a plan and the boss is pulling out. That is what I am talking about. You have it all now.

You know now that the first three chapters of the Book of Revelation are the Church Age. It brings you up to the Rapture of the Church, any second, Revelation 4:1, out we go, heaven opens. Then chapter 5, Judgment Seat of Christ. Chapters 6 through 19, four accounts of the Second Coming of Christ and the Tribulation, just like four accounts of the First Coming with a different emphasis. Revelation 19:11, heaven opens up, somebody comes down. Second Coming of Christ, right in order. The seven events in the Book of Revelation in total order. Our next chapter, 20, the Millennium. Next chapter, 21, New Heavens and a New, excuse me, New Jerusalem. And then the next one, out into eternity. Everything laid out for you exactly in the order that you need to have.

Do you know why? Let me show you how simple the Bible is. I know you think the Bible is complicated. I know you think it is hard. Do you know what the Bible is simply about? Here is what it is about. This chair right here represents eternity past. This chair right here represents Revelation chapter 22 on. Everything in between here and there is everything in man's history. Do you know what God did? God was over here on this side of eternity a long time ago and He said, "You know what? I have a plan. I am going to make the most perfect environment, the most perfect kingdom. I am going to have this thing set up where it is the most beautiful thing anybody has ever seen in this world. But I do not want to be alone in it. I am going to create man. I am going to create man to fellowship with Me, that on this little timeline called time, we can build a relationship together and he can choose Me. When we hit this point over here and we start from here on out, everybody from here, this is Genesis to Revelation, everybody in here has their chance to choose to be with Me."

Now, do you know what God says? "I cannot make these people love Me. Because if I make them love Me, then that is not real love. Here is what I have to do. I have to create an alternative that they will choose Me because they want to." So do you know what God did? The whole plan, folks, is so simple. God allowed the devil to come into the world to give man a choice. Somebody said, "Well, if God let sin come into the world, then how is God ever going to judge me as an unsaved person because He let it come in?" Not too fast here. The same God that let sin come into the world is the same God that came down Himself and paid the price to take it out. By doing so, He eradicated Himself of any responsibility. Now it is on you and me.

Do you know what God did? God said, "From the time you are born, grow up to the age of accountability. The time I come to the place where I can understand God, the Holy Spirit of God knocks on your door." He says, "Josh, I love you." He says, "Steve, I love you." He says, "Bob, I love you. I want you to come with Me." Do you know what the devil does? He knocks on your other door and says, "Do not go with him, come with me. I have a great deal for you." God says His deal is nowhere like My deal. That whole thing in life is about that, is it not? It is about God knocking on the heart of your door and the devil knocking on the back door saying, "Come with me," and God saying, "Come with Me." You see, you have a choice. That is all the Bible is. In its most simplest form, that is all the Bible is. Oh, it is about the flood, it is about Adam and Eve, it is about Sodom and the war, a lot of events. But in its basic form, it is about God had a plan that started here and it is going to end here. In the course of that plan, He knocks on your door every day of your life until the time you die and He says, "Come with Me." He says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." He says, "I love you." He said, "I died," and then He came down and He made it. In the Old Testament, He got a nation to go tell the world that God was real. But in the New Testament, God came down Himself and took on the body of man and died on the cross and then called everybody that was His children to go tell the world. Why? Because He wants you to go with Him. You see, that is the choice. That is the choice.

The Bible is not hard, it is not complicated. It is simply about God has a plan. The Book of Revelation is the consummation of that plan. The Book of Revelation is the capstone of the Bible. It looks back, John is called to the Second Coming and he is told to write what has been,

what is, and what shall be. Within that scope, God lays out the finalization of His plan. When you get to Revelation 22, He says, "Come on, let us go." Time on earth is done. No more pain, no more suffering, no more tears, no more graveyards, no more little cancer wards with kids in them, no more little burn wards, no more birth defects, no more sin. We are going to a place that every day of your life is going to be the happiest, the greatest, the joyous day because you are going to be in fellowship in perfect harmony with the God of this universe that loved you and me enough to do all of that and then to stand at the door of your heart every day of your life and say, "Hey, come with me, come with me."

Every head bowed and every eye closed. That is it, folks. It is as simple as that. That is the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. I am telling you, that is the way it plays itself out. It is not hard.