

Measure Up - Revelation 11:1-12

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Preacher: Pastor Jared Bromka

[0 : 00] Okay, you can open your Bibles to Revelation chapter 11.! How exciting! We have been on quite a journey through the book of Revelation, God's revelation, the revelation of Jesus to man.

The desire of the Lord not to conceal, but to reveal, even though it may seem like He does a lot more concealing than revealing.

Many times in our life, it seems like when we want answers, God withholds them. But He's not withholding them. It's all part of His plan and all part of His perfect timing, just as we've seen as we've gone through Revelation.

He has the exact moment and timing in history, the future history that we've yet to experience. We won't. We won't be here. But the future history that's being laid out in Revelation, very specifically, times and seasons and angels and people coming on the scene right when God wants them to. So we are in Revelation 11, which is, we've just, we've finished up the sixth trumpet. We are kind of in an interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpet.

[1 : 06] I think tonight the seventh trumpet sounds, yes. Assuming we get that far. And chapters 11 through 15 are somewhat of an amplification of events.

It's almost like the Lord takes His magnifying glass and gives to John this, like, zoomed-in look of everything that's kind of, we've been walking through and happening in the book of Revelation. We're getting to the midpoint, if you see on the top there, the tribulation.

So we've had three and a half years where Israel has kind of been under the protection of the Antichrist, the false peace. And there's a temple, we're going to look at that tonight, that's been built. And they are worshiping and they think that life is good. Good times are here again. God is blessing this nation. And then in the middle of that, those three and a half years, is when kind of the Antichrist slash Satan will pull the rug out from under them.

And it will turn into three and a half years of persecution. We're right about there. We're right about at that midway point. And chapters 11 through 15 are really going to amplify what's happening at that time.

[2 : 11] So, tonight, we're going to look at what it is to measure up. God's going to pull out his measuring tape and he's going to start measuring some things. And we're going to see what it is to measure up.

I don't like measuring. My job is measuring a lot of it. I work for a civil engineer and I don't like having to like do things to that little line. I like, I don't mind if it's between the three and the four inch, but why do we have to have all those little lines in there?

Close enough is good enough. So I don't like home projects. I mean, it looks good. And then you go to fit it together and it's like, oh, Henry and I built a tree house and it's almost level and it's almost square, but it's safe.

It's just not, I'm more, you know, make it look nice and call it good. So if you remember last time, Revelation chapter 10, we saw that God's word was given to John.

It was this little book, the little book, the revelation of God, the scroll, and it was sweet and bitter. It was bittersweet. God's word presents many bittersweet truths.

[3 : 19] You know, many times when we first approach God's word or hear its truth and it resonates with us. We're like, yes, wow. And then we grow and we walk with the Lord. And those truths that are still so very sweet, they can sometimes take a bitter aspect, not because God is bitter or his word's bitter, but I recognize that because of my sinful condition, I bring this almost this bitterness to it.

That the fact that I have to allow God's word to do a work in my life, there's a moment there where it's not pleasant. It's not always fun. I think of the scripture that says that despise not the chasing of

the Lord for whom he loves, he chastens, but no chastening for the present seems joyful. But afterward, it works a peaceful fruit of righteousness. God's word is not just sweet words of mercy. It's also hard words of truth and judgment, of accountability, of faithfulness. It reflects upon my life. I was thinking as we were singing that other song that, you know, he will never fail. You will never fail. I'm thinking, Lord, I fail all the time. I fail all the time. I fail so often in my own heart and mind and just in my own lack of consistency and faithfulness that it's like, I can't go and study your word and go teach, Lord.

I'm a failure. And the Lord's like, yeah, I know, but I'm not. So let's go. It's like, okay. And here we go again. And that's kind of that bittersweet reality of the existence we have in Christ.

[4 : 48] It's beautiful. It's wonderful. But sometimes it's just, it's downright heavy. This cross we bear sometimes. And I'm not saying the burden of the Lord, the burden of the Lord.

I'm saying the reality is we don't always, you know, skip through the daisies. Sometimes it's the valley of the shadow of death. And it's God's truth that's led us there. God created us for truth. Truth is sweet and refreshing. But there's also the reality of what that costs us and what the truth requires of me. It requires something that is going to cost my very life.

As Jesus said, he who would not take up his cross daily and follow me cannot be my disciple. So John experiences this, this bittersweet truth. And he was exiled for that truth. That was a part of the bitter part for John.

He was exiled for the truth and the testimony of Jesus Christ. But as we saw at the end there, in verse 11, the angel said to him, you must prophesy again before many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.

[5 : 47] Before also means of. He shall testify before them. Yes, John is going to leave Patmos and he's going to go and he's going to testify before many other people. But it's also, it's talking here that there's still more to say, John.

There's still more to say regarding prophecies and people and nations and tongues and kings. We're not done yet. But John was still to proclaim this truth. And so we get into chapter 11, which again, like I said, is almost like an amplification.

If you are kind of going along and reading in a fiction book or whatever, this would be like where there's the parentheses and it kind of drills in and gives some other depth to the story before you kind of continue with the narrative.

So verse 1, John says, There was given me a reed like unto a rod. So he's just been given the little book, the scroll. He eats it. He's got a little bit of a tummy ache. And then there was given to him now this reed like unto a rod.

It's a measuring stick. And the angel stood saying, Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and them that worship therein.

[6 : 52] So John seems like must have been sitting down. Maybe he wasn't feeling too good after eating that. Maybe he just needed to process. Rise and the Lord says, hey, well, the angel says on behalf of the Lord, Rise and measure the temple of God.

There's a work to do. Rise. I think many times God's word knocks us back. It puts us in our place. Sometimes it's just speaking that bitter truth to my heart that says that was a failure right there. Oh, Lord, sorry.

You shouldn't have responded with that thought, that attitude, that word, that action. You should have. Lord, I'm sorry. And it takes a minute. We process sometimes and we're thinking, but the Lord always says, all right, let's get up.

The righteous man falls seven times and gets back up again. And so God measures. God measures. There's multiple times in scripture where God specifically gives one of his servants something to measure. Three of those times being one in Ezekiel, the millennium, the millennium, millennium, millennial, millennium, the temple of a thousand years during the millennium or the millennial.

I'm not sure which that should have been. But anyway, in Ezekiel 40, Ezekiel's given the measurements and dimensions for the temple at that time.

[8 : 02] Well, is that the temple we're going to look at tonight? No, it's not. That's a temple that God is going to establish in the thousand year reign. And Zechariah 2, Zechariah is given to measure Jerusalem, to go about Jerusalem and to measure it.

And this is for the sake of judgment, to measure off those will be judged. And then Revelation 21, the dimensions of the new Jerusalem that God measures. Remarkably here in verse 1, John is to measure the temple of God.

Did God build this temple? No, not the temple in the seven-year tribulation. Did God instruct his people to build this temple? No, he did not. They built it in unbelief.

They built it looking for a Messiah who'd already come because they've rejected Jesus. And yet remarkably, God claims ownership of a temple built by man and for man.

And yet God says, this is mine. The temple of God is known by God, measured by God, and claimed by God. He takes ownership of it.

[9 : 05] Why? Because those are his people. That's his land. And that's still his temple, even in unbelief. Even when they have rejected their Messiah.

He does not reject them. This temple that we're going to read about right, that we're reading about right now in the tribulation, in the seven years of Jacob's trouble, is spoken about in multiple places in Scripture.

Daniel chapter 9 speaks about it. Matthew 24, Jesus speaks of the abomination of desolation that will be set up. That's in that temple. There has to be a temple for that to happen. And then 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, we'll read that one, beginning in verse 3.

It says, let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come. What day? The day of the Lord. What we're reading about. He's saying to the church, it's not going to come except there first come a falling away, or in the original wording, a departing.

The first has to come a departing. Those that are going to depart must depart. And that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, the Antichrist, he's already been revealed. He's one of the characters that we're going to look at as we amplify, eventually, moving forward in Revelation, amplify this section.

[10 : 14] Remarkably here, even Paul says this, the temple of God.

God's people built it in God's land, and they built it in unbelief, but God says, that is mine. This is my temple. Those are my people, and that's my land. He who touches Israel touches what?

The apple of God's eye. So that he, as God, sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. So there has to be a temple built. And we're not going to go into it.

You can research it on your own. It's the Temple Institute, where they are ready to build the temple. You know, I work in construction, around construction. We do a lot of different projects. My projects usually last 18 to 24 months to build a fully functioning, state-of-the-art pump station, right?

They're not massive, but, and that's with one general contractor and a handful of subcontractors. Maybe you got 8 to 15 people on site at a time doing work.

[11 : 24] Well, multiply that by 100. Get like, you know, man, throw a lot of money at that. Get as many people as you then. You can build stuff pretty fast. So it's not outside the realm of possibility that when they say, let's build that temple, boom, they are ready to go.

I mean, if David can prefabricate the temple for Solomon, then don't you think that today they're going to be ready and they can build it pretty quick? It's not going to take them seven years when it comes time to build this thing. Jesus says in John chapter 5, I am come in my Father's name, and you receive me not.

To this Jews, he's saying this. If another shall come in his own name, him you will receive. And that's the one who's going to come into this temple in his own name. But here it says that the Lord measures some things.

One of the things he measures, says he measured, said to John, measure the temple, the altar, the place of worship, and who? And them that worship. Man is measured by his worship.

We are measured before God by what it is we worship. Jesus says again in John chapter 4, The hour comes and now is when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

[12 : 35] For the Father seeks such, or you could almost say, the Father is measuring out such, to worship him. We must worship him in spirit and truth, managed and measured by his worship.

Those who do not worship the Father in spirit and in truth do not measure up, in a sense. Verse 2, But the court, which is without the temple, leave out.

Don't measure that, John. When you take this reed and you go and measure, Leave out the court, the outer court. Measure it not, for it's given to the Gentiles. And the holy city, Jerusalem, shall they, the Gentiles, tread underfoot forty and two months.

Forty and two months is three and a half years. One of the things we notice in verse 2 here is there's a shift. We are very heavily now into Old Testament language. We are reinstating this Old Testament language regarding the way we speak of Jews and Gentiles in relation to God and his temple.

But the court, which is without the temple, leave out and measure it not. It's given to the Gentiles. Where's the church? It's Jew, Gentile. There's a church. There's that who is the believer, that which is the church, and that which is not.

[13:41] Well, the church isn't there. The church is in heaven. So now we're dealing again with this language of that which regards Israel. And we have here Jew and Gentile and the relationship to God in the temple.

The outer court is not taken by the people of this world. You think of the Temple Mount and the Alaska Mosque and, you know, it's taken by man.

It's not. It's given. God says here, it is given for the Gentiles. For a specific time and season that has been ordained by God. So where's the temple going to go?

We know that there's going to be a part, a court, kind of left out. Well, maybe it's because that in the middle there you see the Alaska Mosque. Maybe that's going to stay there. And for a long time the thought was, well, that's where the temple has to sit right there.

Well, there's plenty of research now showing based on some of the gates and also some of the structures like the archaeology that's found that it could have been north or south of that. And it fits.

[14:40] It fits. You can fit it there north or south just fine. And then you can leave a court for the Gentiles.

And they shall tread it underfoot three and a half years. The last half of the tribulation, once the Antichrist ceases the sacrifice and sets up the abomination of the desolation, that's what it's talking about being tread underfoot.

Because he will come in and he will say, this is what we're going to do now. And he will trample them under feet. He will cease. As Daniel says, the oblation shall cease, the sacrifice shall cease. And then he will waltz in and say, and guess what, folks? I'm God. And Israel at that time, their eyes will be opened. I think we're going to see in this chapter, their eyes begin to be opened here. And I will give power, verse three, at this time. So at the three and a half year mark, it's being trampled underfoot three and a half years. So we've got the Antichrist coming in with the abomination of desolation. And then something happens remarkably.

[15:40] God says, I'm going to give power. I'm going to give authority. I'm going to give ability unto my two witnesses. And they shall prophesy 1,203 score days, three and a half years.

Clothed in sackcloth. So 1,260 divided by 360, because Israel's calendar is not 365. It's 360 days in a year. Comes out to three and a half, three and a half years.

Deuteronomy 17, 6 says, At the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death. But at the mouth of one witness, he shall not be put to death.

So you have these two witnesses, and we're going to see one of their main roles is to deal out death. But they're in sackcloth, interestingly. The scripture points that out. For three and a half years in sackcloth, and sackcloth represents mourning.

I think it's just, excuse me, God's heart over his people and God's heart over the condition of the world at this time. So we saw three things that God takes ownership of here in the beginning of this chapter.

[16:41] God takes ownership of his temple, his worshipers, and his witnesses. God says, those are mine. Those are mine. That gives me great hope. It's like I said, we're the temple of the living God.

We are worshipers and worship him in spirit and truth. We are the lights of the world. And yet I fail. God says, that's okay. I will take ownership. Just as he takes ownership of this temple right now. These are the two olive trees in verse four. And the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. Turn to Zechariah chapter four, if you would, with me. These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

We talked before about when the Bible definitively interprets itself, we don't get the option to go, well, like the parable of the sower. You know, I think I want the seed that fell among the thorns to be somebody who's highly emotional and their emotions just run away with them.

We can't do that because the scripture tells us what it is. It's those who are taken with the cares and riches of this world. So if Revelation chapter 11 verse four says these are the two olive trees and two candlesticks, then that's who they are.

[17 : 48] What's that referring to? Well, that's back in Zechariah chapter four. We'll read a few verses, the first three verses, and we're going to jump down to verse 12. Zechariah four verse one says, And the angel that talked with me came again and waked me as a man that has waked out of his sleep.

And he said unto me, What do you see? What seest thou? And I said, I have looked. And behold, a candlestick, all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it.

And his seven lamps thereon. Essentially, a menorah. Seven lamps, seven bowls filled with oil. So, lit. And seven lamps thereon.

And then seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof. And so this has a continual source, is the idea. There's a continual source coming in to this lamp. And two olive trees by it.

One upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. So you have two olive trees giving a continual source to these lamps. Jump down to verse 12. And I answered again and said unto him, What be these two olive branches, which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?

[19 : 00] It's going into the lamp. And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? I said, No, my Lord. He said to me, These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

And that's who these men are. They have a continual source from God, and they are to be a light and a witness. And that source is not going to dry up. They stand before God, and they are supplied by God.

And if any man will hurt them, in verse 5, fire proceeds out of their mouth. The idea is, if any will seek their hurt. Not like if anyone physically does hurt them, but if anyone desires to seek their hurt, somehow they're going to know it, and they're going to, you know, just burp them out of existence. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies. And if any man desires to seek their hurt, will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

Deuteronomy 17, 6, At the mouth of two or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death. The fire of God represents authority and validity.

[20 : 05] You know, you think of Elijah. We're going to look at Elijah a little bit here. When he's on top of Mount Carmel, and he said, Oh Lord, you know, show that you are God, and God sent fire from heaven. Solomon, when he dedicated the temple, the first temple, fire came down and burnt up the sacrifices.

2 Kings chapter 1, Elijah's sitting on top of a hill, and Ahab's looking for him because there's a drought for three and a half years.

And he sends these men to find him, and Elijah answers and says to the captain of the 50, because this captain comes with his 50 men and says, You shall come with me, I am captain. And he says, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your 50.

Poof! And there came down fire from heaven and consumed him and his 50. As God validated his man and showed that he had authority. Here in Revelation, God is forewarning.

He's forewarning who would ever read this ahead of time. Say, Hey, don't mess with these guys. But he still holds them accountable. Those that would seek to take away what he has given, these are the two that he has given.

[21 : 11] He is supplying them. Whoever would come and seek to take away from that, they are accountable. But mercifully, God is forewarning any who would read this and care to believe it. Is this the church?

Maybe it's the church, right? Maybe the church is going to go through the tribulation and they've got power to smoke people. That's how we're going to make it through the tribulation. We're just going to breathe fire and burn people up.

What does that make you think of? Jesus is passing through in his ministry. And one of the towns, I think it's one of the Samaritan towns, they won't receive him. And James and John, they come on and they say, Lord, we got a new ministry we want to start.

You know, either turn or burn. And we want, they didn't turn, we want to burn. What do you think? Well, Paul writes in Philippians 2.15, he says that we may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.

We are to be blameless and harmless. That's what we're to be. We're to be sons of God. We're to be without rebuke. Among whom you shine as lights in the world.

[22 : 22] And it's not burning balls of fire to light people on fire. We shine as lights to attract people. They may be harmless. You know, Ephesians gives us our marching orders.

It gives us the armor that we put on. And the only offensive weapons we have is the word of God. And you say, well, in prayer. Well, not really. See, the word of God is all I have to essentially attack. Right?

You say, well, the Bible says, and I can speak that to someone. We don't actually pray to the person. Well, I have prayer. Oh, Lord, save this person. Right? We're praying to the Lord. But the only interactive weapon we have is God's word.

When Jesus is about to be betrayed, he before had said to the disciples when he sent them out, he said, hey, don't take an extra coat.

Don't take money. Don't take a sword. Don't take your backpack. Just go. Don't take a sword. And now, at the end of his ministry, as he's going to be leaving them, he said, hey, before I've told you to take nothing, now I'm telling you guys you need some, you know, be prepared.

[23 : 24] And he says, do any of you have a sword? Peter goes, I got one. He goes, that's enough. One's good. What does Peter do with that? Peter pulls it out. And he cuts off the dude's ear. And Jesus says, and put up your sword.

You know, you don't see the church wield a sword again, except the sword of the word. You never see the church pull out a sword again. All through Acts of the New Testament. When's the next time we see a sword? In the hand of the church.

It's when Jesus comes back. And he says, and out of his mouth goes that sharp two-edged sword. It's not our place to wield a sword, except this sword. Except this sword. And that is harmless, blameless.

So this is not the church for many reasons, right? We already know we've been raptured. But if someone says, well, we think this is the church. You know, these two witnesses. And it's not. Because they're killing people.

And that's not the church's place. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy. And they have power over waters to turn them to blood. And to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will.

[24 : 22] They have power. They have ability. They have authority. There are many modern day prophets that claim authority. But they have no ability. These guys don't just have the authority.

They don't just have the power. They don't just claim that. They have the ability to go with it. Who are these men? I don't know. The Bible doesn't tell us who they are.

Right? It could be Moses and Elijah. Elijah was taken to heaven. Moses, we know. That Satan desired to have his body. He argues with Michael, the archangel. And he doesn't get it.

So maybe God has reserved it for here. Or maybe this is a man like John the Baptist. That he came in the spirit and power of Elijah. I don't know. It's none of us. Hate to break it to you.

We won't be here. It's not the church. We know that James chapter 5 tells us that Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are. And he prayed earnestly that it might not rain.

[25 : 20] And it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. Three and a half years without rain. These men will stop the rain. The ministry will be three and a half years.

We've just come through Exodus with Moses. Exodus 7, 17. Thus saith the Lord, in this thou shalt know that I am the Lord. Behold, I will smite with the rod that is in my hand upon the waters which are in the river.

And they shall be turned to blood. Is it Moses and Elijah? I don't know. It's very Moses and Elijah-esque. Very much so. Whoever it is, it will be pointing to the ministry of Moses and Elijah. will declare the same authority and power that they had. And they shall smite the earth with all plagues so often as they will. That is intent.

As often as they intend to. God's intent, however, is never destruction but repentance. However, God will use destruction if it's the only means left to move someone to repentance.

[26 : 26] The goodness of God leads a man to repentance. But if the only option left is destruction, then God will use that. But his intent is never to destroy for the sake of destruction. So these two men, very interesting, they will frustrate the men of the earth by displaying control over that which man has long desired to control.

Man desperately today wants to control the elements. They want to control death and life. They want to control the weather and they want to control nature.

And these two men, Satan's entire elaborate system that he's put in place, run by AI, I don't know, whatever it is, it's probably going to be DI, demonic intelligence at that time.

Whatever it's run by, Satan's whole system is going to be thwarted by two men in sackcloth. These two guys that just sit there proclaiming God's truth and everybody he sends against them, they just burn them up.

Verse 7, And when they shall have finished their testimonies, we just covered a lot of time, right? Three and a half years is their ministry. They'll finish their testimony just as Moses and Elijah finished their testimony before Jesus arrived on the scene, didn't they?

[27 : 46] Well, they will finish their testimony three and a half years, and at that point then, Jesus will arrive on the scene. But when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them and kill them.

When they finish their testimony, that word finished is fully executed. It's the exact same word in the Greek that Jesus uses when he says, it is finished.

And he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. Fully executed, nothing left to accomplish. Who is this beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit?

Well, we've already seen a bottomless pit in Revelation 9-11. And as we said, I can't imagine Satan allowing anybody else to be king except him.

And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon or destroyer, but in the Greek tongue, his name is Apollyon. So the destroyer, his name is destroyer, and he's the king over the bottomless pit.

[28 : 46] And here we see in verse 7, that the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. At the greatest time of Satan's control over the earth and its system, he will still not be able to prevent the will of God being accomplished in the life of these men.

This is his greatest moment. This is the most control he's ever had in the system of man. And he still cannot prevent God's will from being accomplished in the life.

Isaiah 54, 17, No weapon that's formed against you shall prosper. Every tongue that shall rise against you in judgment, you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

That's independent of us. We enter into that. That's not because of us. We get to be part of God's heritage and his righteousness. The ministry, purpose, and testimony of these men, it was not cut short.

It was not ended too soon. But it was accomplished. It was finished. We have the same promise. We can be confident of this very thing that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it, will accomplish it, will bring it to be fully executed until the day of Jesus Christ.

[30 : 06] Death was not the end of their testimony, but it was an integral part of it. And it's the same with ours. Death is an integral part of our testimony. Back to Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians chapter 4. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with them, those who've died. Death is a huge part of our testimony.

That Jesus died and rose, and then it gives hope to the dead who've died in Christ. That's a huge testimony that people who have died, that are not here anymore, who are separated from us, whose bodies have rotted in the grave, what a testimony that they will come back to life.

Paul talks extensively about the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15. He says, It's just nonsense. Because if there's no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen? And if Christ be not risen, then what's the point of what are we preaching? Our preaching is vain, it's empty, it's pointless, and your faith is as well.

[31 : 15] Why? Because it's not about this world. It's not about this life. Our faith, Paul is saying, must extend past this life where it's pointless.

Then they also, which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished. Part of our testimony is that we will never die that we go to be with the Lord.

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. And we will come back to that idea of being too focused on this world. But if all we have is this life, hope in Christ, we're most miserable.

Our hope is the fact that no matter what we suffer in this life, we have a much better one to go to. The enemy, however, he always thinks that death is victory. He always thinks that.

He's so stupid. He thinks, if I can just kill it, if I can kill Jesus, if I can kill, it is victory, it's just not victory for him. Oh death, where is your sting? Oh grave, where is your victory? But thanks be to God which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[32 : 17] It is victory, but just not for him. And so they will kill them. Satan will think, ha ha ha, I did it. It took three and a half years, but I did it. Now they're dead. Well, it's just their testimony was completed, but death is part of their testimony as we're going to see.

And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom in Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. In Jerusalem. God sees past the religious veneer to the spiritual rot that's underneath.

And yet remarkably, God is still willing to own the spiritually wicked city, people, and temple. This is my city. This is my people. This is my temple. And just as he has done with our hearts, he owns my spiritually wicked heart.

He says, yeah, that's mine. That's mine. Because for you and I, he sees past our flesh, our failures, and he sees to what's really in there, which is the life that he's placed in there.

And they have the people and kindreds and tongues and nations. They shall see their dead bodies three days and a half and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in the graves. And just let them sit there and rot. What the enemy seeks to use to discredit God is just a setup for God to display his glory.

[33 : 34] To leave them unburied is to dishonor them. It's to discredit God to say, ha, we beat them. Look at that. Look, you see these guys? It's day two. All right? It's day two.

You pull up your two witnesses app and you can see, ha, ha, ha, they're still there dead. Two days in, rotting. You follow me.

You take the mark and we'll defeat God just like we did his two witnesses. The beast will be saying, thinks we've done it. Ha, ha, ha.

Jesus is in the grave. It's over. Ha, ha, ha. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them and make merry and send gifts one to another.

It's a holiday. You get off work because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. Tormented them? Was that God's heart? Not at all. The torment was that they opposed the system that man had put in place.

[34 : 32] The torment was that they stood there as a reality that man was accountable to God. That bittersweet truth. Earth dwellers are earth focused.

They shall send gifts because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth and they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them. Earth dwellers are very earth focused.

First John says, love not the world. Neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Why? Because this world passes away and the desires thereof but he that does the will of God abides forever.

Little children, it is the last time. And as you have heard the antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists whereby we know it's the last time.

Many have gone out that stand opposed. Earth dwellers are earth focused. I want to read you something.

[35 : 37] Unfortunately, I don't think it's going to fit on my screen. We'll see if it fits up here. I'm going to have to read it like that. There we go. This is an article. I'm not going to say who it's by. Why the rapture isn't biblical and why it matters.

Somebody wrote. True. The Bible teaches that when Christ comes back, it will be good news. The hope is that those in Christ will be raised to eternal life.

True. And everything that is wrong with this world will be made right. This world renewed is going to be our home for eternity.

Really? I don't remember reading that. I remember reading that the heavens and earth will pass away. I don't remember reading this world will be our home for eternity.

But that's the idea this guy's putting forward here. And we have the opportunity to reflect that future in our present. Rapture invites us to escape this world and the last thing that Jesus would have ever taught or this is the last thing that Jesus would ever have taught.

[36 : 41] Our world's future is hopeful. Let's tell that story and not the escapist narratives that many of us grew up with. The future's hopeful. We can make this world a better place.

Jesus would have never said he wanted us to escape. Oh, if only we read our Bibles. Oh, you err for you know not the scriptures. Luke 21, 36 Jesus said, watch you therefore pray always that you may be counted worthy to make the world a better place.

You may be counted worthy to escape. Escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man. I'm not going to stand before the Antichrist. I'm going to stand before Jesus and Lord willing I'm going to hear him say, well done good and faithful servant enter into the joy of the Lord.

And at the end of this seven years when he wraps it all up I'm going to come back with him and yes there's going to be a thousand years on this earth where he will rule and reign in righteousness but sin will not yet have been dealt with because at the end of that Satan will be loosed and he'll go and gather all the nations from the four corners of the earth and they will come up against Jerusalem and guess what comes out of heaven and burns him up fire and then the Lord just wraps the whole thing up and says I'm going to make a new heaven and a new earth.

It's our blessed hope. Dave Hunt was one of my heroes in the faith. I miss him greatly. Yeah I know it's like a whole book I just put up there but he wrote a book called The Seduction of Christianity and he's gone home to be with the Lord.

[38 : 10] Speaking to this idea this dominion theology idea this idea that we're going to take over the world there are many factors that make up the growing apostasy and seduction of the church. One of the most alarming least understood and fastest spreading errors is the teaching that this present earth instead of heaven is the ultimate home for the church.

Accordingly her goal is to take over the world and establish the kingdom of God only then it is said can Christ return. Not however to take us to his father's house as he promised in John 14 but to reign over the kingdom that we've established for him.

However if the real Jesus Christ is going to catch his bride up from the earth to meet him in the air as it tells us in 1 Thessalonians 4 17 then those who are working to build a kingdom for a Christ whom they will meet with their feet firmly planted on the earth have been under heavy delusion indeed and in fact they've been working for the instead of Christ the other Christ the antichrist it's not just another viewpoint it's not just oh well it's not that big a deal let's not divide over that now we're supposed to be gentle we're supposed to be harmless right we're supposed to be lights in this world no we're not going to go out and beat people down over what they believe within the church even but it's very very important to realize the hope that we have our testimony encompasses death death to ourselves death in this life death to this world because we have a hope in another life and when we become earth focused we end up becoming earth dwellers our life is all about here and I don't think we're going to get to the end of this chapter tonight what verse are we on 10 10 11 okay cool so

Satan always seeks to take the truth and twist it into a very palatable counterfeit none of his counterfeits are like they're very palatable they make a lot of sense they feel good they're logical yeah yeah I've worked hard for the things I have in this world makes sense God wants to bless me and then we see these earth dwellers do three things rejoice they make merry and send gifts and even that is a counterfeit rejoice rejoice over our conquest of the earth well Jesus says rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven for so persecuted they the prophets which are before you so persecuted they these two men what are we to rejoice over the things on earth no the things in heaven make merry the story of the prodigal son the two sons the father makes merry because of all the stuff and how well that son handled himself now he made merry because this my son who is dead is alive again was lost as is found and they are to send gifts

God gives us good gifts but the greatest gift he gives is our salvation for by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourself it's a gift of God that gift is not salvation in this world salvation out of this world because everything that's in this world passes away and after three and a half days three days and a half three days and then resurrection they're having a holiday they're giving gifts

they're Venmoing each other and like oh my word I'm so happy and the spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet and great fear fell upon them which saw them question is what did they look like just as the spirit of God entered in them they stood on their feet did they look dead were they completely just hey like nothing had happened I don't know but all the power of the enemy it could not keep these men from the life of the spirit and all the power of the enemy cannot keep us from the life of the spirit either the spirit of God entered into them because that was God's will

[42 : 30] Romans 8 2 says the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death no power of the enemy can keep that law from operating in our lives once the spirit of life has entered into us how sad that the faith that these faithful spirit filled men standing up for God would bring fear upon the world how sad a world that's being tormented with the demonic horde as we've been seeing and they're all wiggled out over this then said in Matthew 28 10 then said Jesus unto them when he appears before them in the upper room to the disciples or I'm sorry this is to the women after the at the tomb be not afraid go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee and there they shall see me how sad that such a wonderful event should cause fear there are people who think of the son of God returning and it creates fear there's part of the church that thinks that way because they're not ready they're earth dwellers they're not looking for their blessed hope

I think we will end looks like we'll end in verse 12 and they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them come up hither and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud and their enemies beheld them their enemies heard a voice call from heaven telling these men to go to heaven who were then witnessed ascending to heaven they heard them they saw them we know we will go to heaven because of a voice 1 Thessalonians 4 16 and 17 the Lord himself should descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel angel with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord the Lord himself will call from heaven telling us to go to heaven will it be witnessed

I don't know I don't know we know that when Jesus went to heaven when he ascended in Acts chapter 1 verse 9 when he spoke in these things while they beheld he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight they saw him go up 1 Corinthians 15 tells us 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 what we shall be changed in a moment we'll be changed and we'll be snatched away from this earth I like to imagine and I could be completely wrong I picture us like here and then you hear that and boom in that moment we're all changed can you go to be with Jesus right now can you you can't but if you could would you if you knew if you heard the trumpet and in a moment we're changed and he's in the clouds calling to us you know I can go to him and we all go I don't know maybe the world will see us you know you grow up I grew up in the church and it's always like the thought of like oh it's just gonna be like people's pacemakers fillings and clothes will be left behind but it says in a moment we'll be changed we shall be raised incorruptible death is part of our it's part of our testimony but it's not the end of that testimony this world will pass away but we're not gonna we're just gonna pass from it in a moment as we end tonight with these two witnesses faithful men they were worthy because they just did what God called them to do I think sometimes we think man if I can't breathe fire what's God got for me you are so counted so worthy that in a moment God is gonna metamorphosize you in the most glorious thing all of this will pass away and we will go to be with the

Lord not because we are worthy we are to give thanks unto the Father which has made us worthy to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light who has delivered us from the power of darkness yes I'm gonna escape because I've already escaped and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear son in a moment in a twinkling of an eye whether we all change in a moment and fly up together or whether we hear the trumpet and next thing we know we're there with him I'm looking forward to the kingdom of his dear son Lord thank you so much for just this beautiful section of scripture tonight Lord thank you for oh Lord the promises of God that are yes and amen in Christ Jesus thank you for our blessed hope Lord if we just read your word I just can't imagine you know someone writing well Jesus would never tell us that he wants us to escape and then we read and Jesus said I pray that you can escape I've not appointed you unto wrath to receive salvation

[47 : 46] Lord our hope is resurrection as Paul so eloquently says in 1 Corinthians 15 resurrection is our hope and resurrection for the church happens when you call to us say come up here and just

like those two witnesses Whatever condition and whatever state we're in Lord we're going to stand up and we're going to go up until then Lord be strong in us Lord be strong on our behalf Lord so that we can stand up for the truth Lord harmless gentle as lights in this world we love you so much bless our fellowship now in Jesus name Amen