

# The World's Woe - Revelation 18:1-24

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[ 0 : 00 ] Turn to Revelation 18. And so will I. You know, I was thinking of what we were talking about Sunday, how Jesus is our risen Lord.

! Jesus is our risen Lord. Yes, we remember the cross. And yes, it's His blood. It's His sacrifice. But His sacrifice was accepted because of the resurrection. Well, He was resurrected because the sacrifice was accepted.

The proof that the sacrifice was accepted was the resurrection. And because of that, we have a living hope. All right, Revelation 18. Exciting stuff.

We'll finish the judgments. Well, most of them. I mean, the Antichrist and the false prophet. They're going to get thrown into the lake of fire. But 19 is like, man, it gets into some of the good stuff.

[ 0 : 55 ] It's like, here we go. The Lord is not slack concerning His promises, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering towards us, not willing that any should perish.

And even as He wraps up the ages of the world, this whole experiment of creation and salvation and all of this, as He wraps it all up, there is an end.

He's not slack. He's not dragging His feet. And as we go through Revelation, we see that it is all planned out. It is all in His hands and in His will and in His mind.

Different slide of the same type of timeline, but just giving a little bigger picture of all of this. So we are at just about at the end of our three and a half years of the 70th week of Daniel, as prophesied in Daniel 9.

You have the 70 weeks of Daniel. 69 were fulfilled. We are in that space in between. So it says there in Daniel that those weeks, the 70 weeks are for Israel.

[ 2 : 01 ] The first 69 were about Israel. The church was not there. And in the 70th week, the church is not there either because it has to do with Israel. And so we are approaching the end of that period as we are seeing a zoomed in picture of the last of the bowl judgments, which is the fall of Babylon.

It is the fall of the system that started in the garden with the lie and then was taken up by Nimrod, the Tower of Babel. And from there has been the system of the world.

And last week we looked at Babylon, the religious epicenter of the fallen world. And today or tonight we will look at Babylon as the political, governmental and societal, sociological epicenter or system of the world.

But last time we saw that Babylon was beautiful, but filthy and defiling. It was very beautiful, but it was very defiling. It was very filthy.

Babylon is the source of every belief system that validates sin. Every belief system out there that validates sin is rooted in what we would term or the Bible would term the Babylon, Babylon system.

[ 3 : 20 ] Nahum 3 verses 1 and 4 said, Woe to the bloody city because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favored harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts that sells nations through her whoredoms and families through her witchcrafts.

Woe to the bloody city. And we saw that witchcraft essentially sorcery, necromancy, whatever you want to call it. It's an attempt to access the divine by some other means than God.

It's circumventing God. It's some way that I'm going to access the power, the abilities of the divine by getting around God. But where it says, woe to the bloody city, well, what we're going to look at tonight is we're going to look at the world's woes.

As there were three woes, if you remember, that the angels pronounced, woe, woe, woe, as we got to the end of those bold judgments. Well, today we're going to see the six woes of man, or tonight we're going to see that as we see the world's woes, as they cry woe in Revelation 18 here over the loss of this system.

So when you're the six woes of man, it appears three different verses where there's a set of two woes. So you have Revelation 18 10 where man says, woe, woe, and then verse 16 and verse 19. [ 4 : 33 ] And so it's the six woes. And number six is the number of man. It's the number of man. And here you see these men of the earth crying this out six times. These six woes, they're all based around temporal and material loss.

Their despair is over the loss of the things that are temporal and material. And they cry out, woe, that God would judge their system. They are in despair over this and at a loss.

So let's jump into verse one of Revelation 18 and see what the spirit has to say to the church tonight. And so John says, after these things, after seeing the woman who rode the beast, after seeing how the kings of the earth, they stripped her naked.

They took her, her, um, they took her, her, her riches, and then they ate her flesh and burned her with fire. They consumed her. They turned on her and they were using her simply to promote their system.

And now John says, after these things, I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power. And the earth was lightened with his glory. So the earth is like lit up with the glory of this, this angel.

[ 5 : 45 ] And so here we're going to look at Babylon as a sociological, political, and governmental system. Uh, it's the society of the world. It's the politics of the world. It's this governmental system and everything that that involves, everything contained in there.

But here this angel comes down and it lights up the earth was the glory of just an angel. Habakkuk 2.14 says, For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. The knowledge of God's glory. And where's God's glory displayed? It was at the cross, right? The knowledge of his glory shall fill the earth.

Second Corinthians four verses three and four. Paul says, But if our gospel be hid, it's hid to them that are lost. In whom the God of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not. Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. The glory of God's grace in this world.

[ 6 : 47 ] The glory of his grace is currently shining through his people of grace. The way in which he's displaying that glory. He's not, it's not an angel right now. It's not angels that are coming down from heaven and displaying that glory.

Right now he's telling us to let our light so shine before men. That they may see our good works. And glorify your father which is in heaven. It would be easier if it said, Let your light so shine before men that they may see his good works.

And glorify your father which is in heaven. But he says, No, no. Let your light so shine that they see your good works. They see the good work God is doing in and through us. And they will glorify our father in heaven.

And this angel then cries in verse 2. With a mightily, he cried mightily with a strong voice. Saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen.

And the word fallen just means to descend. It is brought low. And it has become the habitation. The habitation here of devils. And the hold of every foul spirit.

[ 7 : 48 ] And a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Habitation and cage are the same word. They mean a dwelling place. Or more aptly, a prison. It has become the dwelling place.

And the prison. And the hold of every devil. And foul spirit. And cage. And the cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Why birds? The Bible is just down on birds.

I mean, they were created on day 3. Boy, it's been a while since we did Genesis. They were created when he created the fish. Because the water is teemed and the air is teemed.

But birds represent evil throughout scripture in many ways. We think of the parable of the sower. Right? And the seed that's on the path. What comes and takes it away? Birds.

And then Jesus says, the birds are the devil. Who come and take it away. So every unclean and hateful bird. And I think the idea with birds is that they roost. And they fly around, move around, and they come to roost.

[ 8 : 48 ] And so I think it's that idea that almost like those winds of doctrines or those evil things that just alight somewhere and take up residence. And every unclean and hateful bird.

Hateful is just detestable. So the fall of this world system, it will not come because of a lack of involvement when God judges this system.

He says Babylon has fallen. It's not because a lack of involvement. If only more people would get involved in this world system. It's not by accident. But it is by decree. God says this world system is to descend.

It has fallen. It is over. The hope of this world is not in making its government better. But in making it new. It's not about coming. Let's work with what we got here.

It's no. This is going to be set aside for something brand new. And apt scripture for the time of year. Isaiah 9, 6-7. For unto us a child is born.

[ 9 : 45 ] Unto us a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder. And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor. Mighty God. The Everlasting Father.

The Prince of Peace. And if you ever run into Jehovah's Witnesses, take them to Isaiah 9, verse 6. Because they don't think that Jesus is God. You read this to them and you say, but it says he is the Everlasting Father.

He is the Mighty God. Who is this talking about? Unto us a child is born. They'll say Jesus. You say, but it says he is this. And they'll say, no. It means he's like it. They'll put that word like in there.

But it doesn't say that. And of the increase of his government in 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 forever.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. See, this world system and its government will have an end by decree. Because God's going to replace it with something new and something better.

[ 10 : 45 ] And the zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this, not our activism. But here you see, when you reject God, as the system of Babylon has, you open yourself up to everything and anything else.

I mean, look at the things that are here. It's the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and detestable bird. When you reject God, you open yourself up to any and everything else.

And everything and anything else that has rejected God is going to be like those things we just read. There's nothing good about it. So Babylon, it's a place where detestable devils dwell and are detained.

This is the system that is falling. This place where the things that are detestable, the things that are devilish, where they dwell and they're detained. There is no part or place of humanity that the devil loves.

There's no part of this creation that the devil's like, yeah, but these are my guys. Oh, yeah. No, he uses people. He hates them.

[ 11 : 53 ] He's a liar. The thief comes not but to kill, steal, and destroy. And he was a murderer from the beginning. There is no part or place of humanity that the devil loves. None at all.

Not even in this system, which is his system, essentially, of Babylon. There's no part of it he loves. It is just to destroy. And those who think they're going to get into the world's system and be part of its system will find that they're part of something that hates them, especially those that are part of the body.

We looked at this on Sunday in Luke chapter 10, when the 70 return from preaching and they're all excited. And Jesus said to them, hey, don't rejoice that the spirits are subject unto you.

Luke 10, verse 20. But rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. He's pretty much saying our hope is not the defeat of devils. Don't rejoice because those spirits are subject unto you. Our hope is the defeat of death. It's not we're going to clean this up and we're going to make things better. It's that no, it's that death has been overcome. And so a world that's filled with death, headed towards death, men rejoice because our names have overcome that are written in a place that that is overcome.

[ 13 : 09 ] For all nations, verse three, they have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. The world's entire social, governmental, and economical system is too drunk on power to see it's headed to wrath.

All the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. What are they drunk on? It's power. She gives them power. And the kings of the earth, the rulers of the earth, have committed fornication with her.

The kings of the earth are in an unholy, unclean, and unlawful union with Babylon. And the merchants of the earth, they are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. Delicacies in the Greek means luxury or eager desire. They have these, they're eager desires. Every desire has been fulfilled with Babylon. Babylon, the merchants of the earth, they've become rich through fulfilling people's eager desires.

Because the flesh sells. The flesh sells. Holiness doesn't sell. You know, there's no clothing line out there that's like, do you want to look modest?

[ 14 : 24 ] Do you want to be, you know? It's just not. There's no product out there that says, hey, be content with who you are. Don't worry about trying to make yourself look like this picture.

Just be content. It doesn't sell. What sells? The flesh sells. My eager desires. But for the church, that shouldn't be.

For the nations of the earth, they through power promote their system. And the kings of the earth, for us, it should not be. The power will never advance the purpose of the church. It won't. We will not advance the church through power. Jesus said as much in Matthew 20 when he said to his disciples, he said, you know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them.

And they that are great exercise authority upon them. And the disciples are thinking, yeah, which one of us is greatest in the kingdom? Which one of us gets to tell the rest of them what to do? But it shall not be so among you.

[ 15 : 28 ] But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister. Or literally, let him be the servant of a king. Minister, let him serve. Let him serve the king. Instead of being the king, serve the king.

Power never advances the purpose of the church. It's not how we move this forward. And I heard another voice, verse 4, from heaven saying, Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.

There's a few words here that we can kind of look at some of their meanings. Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers. To be a partaker is to have community or to be a co-participant. Come out of her, my people. Do not have community with her. Do not be co-participants with her. And that you receive none of her plagues.

Receive is to take hold. Do not take hold on her plagues, her death strokes. Come out of her. Do not have community. Do not co-participate. Do not take hold of that which is the stroke of death.

[ 16 : 30 ] 2 Corinthians 6, 14 and 17. Be you not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness?

What communion has light with darkness? Have you ever seen an area where light and darkness hang out together? It doesn't work. You want to come over to my house? Man, every time I get there, darkness is gone. Wherefore, come out from among them and be you separate, saith the Lord.

Touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you. Because God wants to keep us from the party? No, because he doesn't want us taking hold of things that are death strokes to us.

Do not be yoked. Do not be yoked. Do not be in the same, pulling in the same direction as the world's social, governmental, and economical system that is power drunk.

Just drunk on power. As we get to the end of this, we're going to see that we are to be in the world, but not of it. We're not to flee from the world, but we're not to be yoked with them.

[ 17 : 34 ] We're not to take hold of this world. Isaiah 48, 20 says, Go, you forth of Babylon. Flee you from the Chaldeans.

With a voice of singing, declare you, tell this. Utter it even to the end of the earth. Say you, the Lord has redeemed his servant Jacob. Meaning, why are you still in Babylon?

You are redeemed. That is not a place for the redeemed. Come on out from there. You see, when we heed heavenly voices, it's very blessed.

And it blesses our experience on this earth. But it can be very lonely. It can be very lonely. To go out from a place where everybody is. To be that person that is wandering about, as it says in Hebrews 11, 37.

That by faith they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins. That doesn't sell either. Being destitute, afflicted, tormented. Of whom the world was not worthy.

[ 18 : 38 ] They wandered in deserts and in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. Why? Because God wanted to give them a hard time? No, because this world said, you're just, you don't fit here.

And I said, you're right. I don't. But it's okay. Because so much better to wander about sheepskins and goatskins with the one who's also been rejected. And to be part of this system. Jump back a few verses in Hebrews. It says, and truly, if they had been mindful of that country from once they came out. That means mindful meaning not like, well, they knew what it was. They remembered it. But if they had their, if their desire and affections were there, if that's where their mind was, if they were choosing to be mindful of that country, they might have had opportunity to return.

But now they desire a better country. That is a heavenly. Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God. For he's prepared for them a city. He's not ashamed.

[ 19 : 37 ] He's not going. This is kind of embarrassing. I've prepared this amazing place. And I've brought them out of this place of death by redemption. And they don't want to come. He's not ashamed to be called their God.

So this city. That is fallen is fallen. And the angel says, come out of her or another voice from heaven. Not that angel says, come out of her. Verse five.

Why for her sins have reached unto heaven and God has remembered her iniquities. Do you know our sins have reached to heaven as well? Our sins have reached all the way to heaven and all the way into heaven.

Our sins reached to heaven. So God reached to earth to rescue us from our sin. But in Christ, our sins reached to heaven and entered into heaven. In a sense.

Hebrews 9.24. I think we looked at this one Sunday. For Christ has not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself. Now to appear in the presence of God for us.

[ 20 : 39 ] So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. So in a sense, our sins have reached to heaven.

The fact that my sin needed to be dealt with. And Jesus stands there now bearing my sin. So that I can stand there. But heaven is the supreme court for sin.

Where it says it's reached to heaven here for these men, for these earth dwellers, for these people, inhabitants of the earth. It is not because they've accepted grace. They chose the cup of iniquity instead of the cup of grace.

But it's saying that there's nothing higher. Their sin has reached to heaven that like there's no other place it can go. There's no other court it's going to go to. Sin has reached the height of where it's going to go.

You can appeal to nobody higher. This is the end for sin. It's reached to heaven and it will be dealt with. Reward her even as she rewarded you. And double unto her double according to her works.

[ 21 : 42 ] And the cup which she has filled, fill to her double. We talked a little about that Sunday. Talking about the priest that those who serve in the work of God, that they have a double blessing.

Well, this is not a double blessing. This goes back to Exodus 22 and Moses is on the mountain and God is giving him further instruction in how to operate under the law. He says, if the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be an ox or a donkey or a sheep, he shall restore double.

That's what he's saying here. Hey, that double shall be restored. Because of her works that she has done. Galatians 6, 7, be not deceived. God is not mocked.

For whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. Reaping is always according to sowing. Always. It's always according to sowing.

And reaping always comes after sowing. And you always reap more than you've sown. Doesn't work backwards. God is not mocked. It's not, well, I've sown this, but I'm sure I'll reap something different.

[ 22 : 49 ] That would be to mock God or to put it in a different order and say, well, I want to sow before I reap. That's what we do when we want to sow. We want to reap the blessing, but we don't want to sow the heart.

We don't want to sow the work. We don't want to sow the dedication. But here, this woman Babylon, she's filled with the reaping of her works.

Oh, how much she has glorified herself and lived deliciously. So much torment and sorrow give her. Is God just down on a good time?

No, it's because her glorification of herself and her living deliciously has come at a cost. It's come at a cost of suffering of others.

Deliciously means luxury. It means sport. It means wandering morally. I thought that was interesting. It had the idea of sporting or sport within it. Now, she has lived for luxury, wandering morally, and sport.

[ 23 : 54 ] Sounds a lot like our culture. Delicious living has led to torment and sorrow. I mean, I can't enjoy luxuries.

I can't enjoy sports. And no, I should not wander morally. No, but if that's what you make your priority, if you live for those things, boy, it's going to lead to torment and sorrow. And isn't that true? How many like billionaires and movie stars and sports stars are like really well-grounded, stable individuals? There is some.

There's some. But delicious living, living for luxury, living for immorality, it leads to torment and sorrow. So Babylon's delusion here. She's glorified herself.

She's lived deliciously, but she's under a delusion. Her delusion is that she shall have an unending reign. I sit a queen. I am no widow.

[ 24 : 52 ] And she'll see no sorrow. Her delusion is she has an unending reign. She's full and fruitful and she is untouchable. It's all a delusion. Therefore, her plagues come in one day, death and mourning and famine.

And she shall be utterly burned with fire. For strong is the Lord, the Lord God who judges her. That's her delusion. But what's her reality? Babylon's reality is that it's temporal.

She's dead. She's empty. That is the reality. First Corinthians chapter three. Paul is talking about how no foundation can any man lay other than Christ.

In verse 11. He says, Now, if any man build upon this foundation, you can only lay the foundation of Christ. And then what are you going to build upon it? Gold, silver, precious stones or wood, hay or stubble.

That's your options. And every man's work shall be made manifest for the day shall declare it because it shall be revealed by fire. To see and to try what sort of work every man's work is.

[ 25 : 58 ] And so the fire here, she's burned with fire. The fire will prove that Babylon had nothing redeemable, nothing lasting and nothing of value.

He sift through those ashes of Babylon. There's no gold. There's no silver. There's no precious stone. There's not even one little thing that you can find. For strong is the Lord God who judges her. And the kings of the earth who have committed fornication and live deliciously with her, who have lived in luxury and sport and wandering morally, who have committed fornication and live deliciously with her, they shall bewail her and lament for her when they shall see the smoke of her burning. Their reaction to her burning, it's unfortunately just a foretaste of what awaits these kings. They shall lament and wail when they see the fire of her burning. Matthew 13 says that when the sun sends forth his angels and shall gather out of his kingdom, all that offend and all that do iniquity, they shall be cast into the furnace of fire.

And there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. That they will then bewail their burning and their torment. The kings of the earth who have committed fornication and live deliciously will bewail her.

[ 27 : 17 ] They shall lament her. Because man's system cannot stand alongside God's system. Because man's system is opposed to God. We can't cohabit together. Man's system is opposed to God.

We are not part of man's system. We're in the world, but we're not of it. God will set up a system that we will be of. But man's system is opposed to God. Jesus said, hey, if they hated me, they're going to hate you.

Expect it. Be ready for it. So man's system, it must make way for something greater. Praise God. Standing afar off, verse 10, these kings of the earth, they will stand afar off for fear of her torment. Saying, here's the word. And King James, it's alas. I don't know what is in your version, but it's woe. It's the same word for woe. Standing afar off, saying, woe, woe, that great city Babylon, that mighty city.

For in one hour is thy judgment come. These six woes of man, they're all based around temporal and material loss. All of their sorrow is because of what they have lost here.

[ 28 : 22 ] Nothing to do with their souls. Nothing to do with eternity. Man is crying, woe, that God would judge his system. And they pull away.

They cannot believe it. And they pull away from her and they see this judgment. And they stand afar off for fear of her torment. Romans 5, 6 says, For when we were yet without strength, God pulled away.

Whoa, man, look at that torment and judgment and fire that's coming. No. In due time, Christ died for the ungodly. The world's response to judgment is to pull away. God's response is to draw near. When he saw that we were already under condemnation, for God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He that believes is not condemned, but he that believes not is condemned already.

But God's response is to draw near. For when we were yet without strength, when we were those that were headed for a burning, Christ died for us.

[ 29 : 27 ] But here, the kings of the earth, they say that she was a great and mighty city. And she was. She was great in immorality and she was mighty in oppression. Proverbs 22, 16 says, He that oppresses the poor to increase his riches and he that gives to the rich shall surely come to want.

He that oppresses the poor to increase his riches. You know, the kings of the earth get rich today. They don't oppress one another. They oppress the poor. He that gives to the rich shall surely come to want.

Well, I don't see him coming to want. Yes, they will. Standing afar off and saying, woe, woe for the great city, the Babylon, in one hour is your judgment come.

There is an hour of judgment coming. God will right all wrongs. The world system, unfortunately, it uses its strength for oppression. God's kingdom uses its strength to relieve the oppressed and give hope to the poor.

Where the world system, it uses oppression to gain power and strength and wealth. God's kingdom, it uses its strength to relieve the oppressed.

[ 30 : 38 ] Isaiah 61, 1, The spirit of the Lord God is upon me. Because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

God's kingdom uses its strength for deliverance, to relieve the oppressed, not to put a heavier yoke on them. And the merchants of the earth, they shall weep and they shall mourn over her.

So we have the kings of the earth, the rulers, now we have the merchants of the earth. They shall weep and mourn over her, for no man buys their merchandise anymore. Merchandise just means freight.

So the markets collapsed, the transportation systems at a standstill, and value can no longer be measured. All of these things at once had great value.

The merchants of the earth, they weep and mourn because no man buys their stuff anymore. No man buys their merchandise anymore. There's no longer a market to do that. Their freight is at a standstill and nobody values what they at one time valued greatly.

[ 31 : 47 ] Paul would write to Timothy in 1 Timothy 6, 6 to 9. And you know, it's because Timothy was like, you know, he's in the ministry and he's like, man, maybe if I could eat a little more money.

He said, Timothy, godliness with contentment is great gain. I have found that to be true in my life. Godliness with contentment. What does it do?

It allows me to value things. It allows me to look at something and be content and with godliness go, this is gain. Praise God. Over the simplest things. Whether it's like, you know, Sue comes home and says, I got a great deal on the groceries.

Oh, that's great gain. You know, the simple things. Why? Because there's contentment. When you're not content, you don't even notice those things. You're always grasping for something you don't have.

For we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be there with content. Contentment, not grasping for more.

[ 32 : 46 ] But they that will be rich, not are, but will be, those who desire it to grasp for more, those who will be rich, will they fall into temptation and a snare, into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

That describes what we're reading about. That describes Babylon, this system full of people that will be rich at all costs. And the merchants of the earth shall mourn and weep over her, for no man buys their merchandise anymore.

The merchandise of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet and all thine wood or sweet wood, whatever that means, and all manner vessels of ivory and all manner vessels of most precious wood and a brass and iron and marble and cinnamon and odors and ointments and frankincense and wine and oil and fine flour and wheat and beasts and sheep and horses, chariots and slaves and souls or bodies of men.

Notice how this list contains very little bit that is a necessity. They won't buy this anymore. Very little bit on here is necessity. It has oil and wine and fine flour and wheat and beasts and sheep and most of this is not necessities.

And then at the very end, oh, they would no longer buy their merchandise. They would not buy slaves and souls or literally the bodies of men because this world's value is derived from oppression and from the forceful using up of lives.

[ 34 : 28 ] That's what a slave is. Forcefully using up someone else's life. That's what this world system does. Where does it not do that? Take a moment and think.

Look around. Where does this world system not use people, even in the best of intentions, to further its cause? Uses people. The church shouldn't be that way, guys.

We shouldn't just be looking for bodies. Like, well, you know what? We didn't put these seats in here for nothing. Let's fill them. Or we got some ministry to do. We got some cleaning, you know. We've joked in the past that, you know, when God puts a call on your life, you're like, oh, I want to serve the Lord.

You kind of go out and you just kind of find someone and say, hey, come here. I need to do ministry on you so I can feel fulfilled. Sometimes we can have that mindset. Like, oh, God wants to use me. I just need to find someone I can do ministry upon.

But that shouldn't be. We should not be those who use up lives. We should be those who give our lives. We should be those who willingly give life for the sake of others. Verse 14, Eternity would not be long enough to fulfill our flesh.

[ 35 : 48 ] We could live for eternity and our flesh would not be fulfilled. Listen, before the flood, they lived 900 years and their flesh wasn't fulfilled. Got to the point where God says, man, every thought intended their heart is wicked all the time.

The flesh isn't like it lives in exponential life. It continues to exponentially increase in its wickedness and desire. Eternity would not be long enough to fulfill the flesh.

But those who choose a life that rejects the spirit and lives after the flesh, well, they will live in eternity of unfulfilled desire. And the fruits that your soul lusted after are departed from you and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from you and you shall find them no more at all. An eternity of unfulfilled desires. And the merchants of these things which were made rich by her, verse 15, they shall stand afar off for fear of her torment and they shall be weeping and wailing. Those who value gain above all else, they will not seek to endanger themselves for the sake of another. They will stand off and say, well, there it goes and there'll be wail and mourn, but they're not going to step in to try and help.

[ 36 : 57 ] And they shall say in verse 16, our next set of woes, woe, woe, that great city that was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls.

What does that sound like? What have we just been reading about on Sunday? Purple and scarlet and fine linen and decked with gold and precious stones. The city and its system, it mocks God, it deceives man and it pretends to holiness, but it's not.

It's just a mockery. And here man cries, woe, why? Their riches have come to nothing. Woe, for all our precious stones and all of these things, they've come to nothing.

For in one hour, verse 17, so great riches has come to nothing. And every ship master and all the company and ships and sailors and as many as trade by sea, they stood afar off and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, what city is like unto this great city?

They stood afar off and they cried for their sorrow over the loss of things that had value or what they thought had value.

[ 38 : 11 ] But it was not true value. The true value is found only in the value that God gives to things. No matter how our material wealth is enjoyed by us, no matter how much we can richly enjoy it, it is God who gives us the things that he desires us to enjoy.

1 Timothy 6, 17, charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded nor trusted in certain riches, but, contrary, trust in God, trust in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

It doesn't say all things are to be richly enjoyed. It's the things that God gives. Who gives us richly all things to enjoy? All the things that are to be enjoyed, God gives them to us richly.

Everything that God wants us to enjoy in life is not just like, well, let's see how you do with that. He gives us all things richly that he wants us to enjoy. No matter our material wealth, we can richly enjoy all that God has given us.

Whether it's much or little, what has God given us? And he's given it to us to do what? To enjoy. God's abundance and his true value is found in joy.

[ 39 : 27 ] And they cried when they saw the smoke for burning, saying, what city is like unto this great city? You know, we've seen this phrase a bunch, her burning, her burning. They stand afar off, her burning.

You know, and this is one of those areas you could speculate and say, is this nuclear? We know that it says that the kings of the earth, that they burn her at the end of Revelation 17, that they will make her desolate and naked and eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

And so here they stand off. They won't draw near and they stand off because they're afraid of her torment. They're afraid of her burning. Is this a nuclear thing? And then they cast dust on their heads and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, whoa, whoa, that great city wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness.

For in one hour is she made desolate the last two woes of man, the six woes of man. Man here cries, whoa, that their riches have turned to rags.

They've become ruins. No longer are their riches anything but rags now. Desolate means to be despoiled or stripped.

[ 40 : 44 ] That great city wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness. For in one hour she is stripped, despoiled. And man cries, whoa, because their riches have been turned to rags.

Revelation 17, 16 said, and the ten horns which you saw upon the beast, these shall hate the whore and shall make her desolate and naked and eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

So these men, these kings that were kings over industry and merchandise, they are mourning for the loss of their riches and yet they care nothing for the loss of souls.

They have been selling men and slaves and souls, trafficking in human souls. They don't care anything about that. They're mourning for their loss of material riches but they don't care anything for the souls that they've lost.

They don't even care about their own soul that they've lost. In verse 20, this voice says, rejoice over her thou heaven and you holy apostles and prophets for God has avenged you on her.

[ 41 : 52 ] You see, Babylon is no friend of heaven or of its people. Never has been and it never will be. Psalm 89 14 14 says, justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne.

The one who sits on the throne, justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. Mercy and truth shall go before your face. Romans 12 19, dearly beloved, avenge not yourself but rather give place to wrath for it's written vengeance is mine.

I will repay sayeth the Lord. Rejoice over her you heaven. Why? Why rejoice? We just read that his mercy and truth go before his face. Yes it did.

But he's also a God of justice and judgment. Rejoice because a just God is maintaining his justice. If God did not maintain his justice, we have no assurance of our standing in Christ.

We stand justified in Christ because God maintains his justice. Because justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. The same justice and judgment that says I see you righteous because you stand in Christ is the same justice and judgment that will say I see you condemned because you stand outside of Christ.

[ 43 : 09 ] And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and he cast it into the sea saying thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down and shall be found no more at all.

This is an interesting verse. It's like it's just for show. He's like splash just in case you don't quite understand what's going to happen here. This is what it's like. Well what's that make you think of?

Well Matthew 18. But who so shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck that he were drowned in the depth of the sea woe unto the world because of offenses for it must needs be that offenses come woe to that man by whom the offense comes.

The world system will not be remade. It will be removed. It will be removed dramatically. Just as a millstone is thrown into the sea the end will be swift dramatic irreversible and it's going to make a big splash when God brings down this system.

It's going to be swift dramatic irreversible. You throw the millstone into the sea and it goes into the depths of the sea you're not going to say you know what I wish I didn't do that let's undo that and it's going to make a big splash.

[ 44 : 27 ] Verse 22 a couple of verses left and the voice of the harpers and the musicians and pipers and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all no more entertainment the entertainment industry will be brought down and no craftsman of whatsoever craft he be shall be found any more in thee no more merchandise no more retail the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee no more commodities the end of the world system the world's entertainment system its merchandise and its commodities will be brought down and the light of a candle shall no more at all in thee and the voice of the bridegroom and the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee be no longer inhabitable no longer a candle there it'll no longer be a source of delight a bride and a bridegroom for the merchants for thy merchants were the great men of the earth these men were the great men of the earth and they were deceived into believing they could attain in this world and from this world what could only be attained from God great men of the earth but nobody's in heaven they don't get names just these great men of the earth great men on earth but nobody's in heaven but your name and my name is written in heaven for thy merchants were the great men of the earth and for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived sorceries that's that word in the Greek pharmakia we get pharmacy by thy sorceries were all nations deceived they believed that there was some way that they could access something by a means in this world to attain something outside of this world somehow we can do this whether through our sorceries through our incantations through our drugs through our whatever our meditation somehow

I'm going to access something I'm going to access something by means in this world I'm going to access something outside of this world we can't do that guys we have no capacity to do that God had to take something from outside this world and put it in this world for us to access anything outside this world he put his word in this world he sent his spirit into this world and we can now access things from outside time and space we can access things from eternity the very heart and nature of God, but you're not going to find any other way to do it.

And these great men who are nobody's in heaven are saying, whoa, whoa, whoa. And verse 24, and in her was found, like, as you clear those ashes away, right? What do you see? It looks so beautiful. It looks so prosperous. It looks so good. Like we could work with this system.

And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all that were slain upon the earth. It's like the greatest conspiracy theory, but it's not a conspiracy because it's true. It's not a theory. It's true conspiracy, which is multiple people getting together to plot evil. The world system is simply a disguise for death. That's all it is. When you remove it all, all the superstructure away and all the ash and all it's left is death. Jeremiah 51 49 says, as Babylon has caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth. You see, we are not of the earth, nor will we be slain with those of the earth. We won't. We may be slain by those of the earth, but we will not be slain with those of the earth because we're not of this earth.

In John 17, Jesus prays for his disciples, his high priestly prayer in John 17 verses 13 through 17.

[ 48 : 20 ] And he says, and father, now I come to you and these things I speak in the world that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves, true value found in God's joy. And I have given them thy word and the world has hated them. It's very hard to make it in the world's system when we are those who have God's word, right? It's kind of why, um, you know, you're only going to go so far as a Christian musician because you're only going to appeal, appeal to the people. If you're, if you're, if your words are, um, honoring to God and in line with doctrine and truth, and according to spirit and truth, you're only going to just go so far because you're only going to appear to those, appeal to those people who have the truth. The world's going to hate that. One of the reasons that the world's always seeking to water down, water down God's word, water down the message, because then we can appeal to more people.

I've given them your word and the world has hated them because they're not of the world. Even as I am not of the world, I pray not that you should take them out of the world. Well, it seems like that would logically be his next prayer. Take them out of the world, Lord.

They're not of the world. So take them out. He said, no, no, don't take them out, but that you should keep them from the evil. They are not of the world. Even as I am not of the world, sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. We are in, not of. We are not standing aloof, but we are standing strong. Keep them. You know, that's a blanket statement. You know what a blanket statement is? It's like saying, you know what you need to do? You need to seek the Lord.

That's a blanket statement. Great. Any particulars? That's a blanket statement. We're in the world, but not of it. How do we in particular apply that blanket statement? What does that look like? What does it mean? You know, the world system, it's governmental system. How do we be in it, but not of it?

It's entertainment system. How do we be in it, but not of it? It's many industries. And how are we in them, but not of them? How? How do you know? How do you apply that particularly to your life?

[ 50 : 41 ] Well, it's a word called discernment. Discernment comes by the word and by the spirit. Hebrews 5.14 says, by strong meat belongs to them that are a full age.

Maturity. Even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Right? You give your little kid a little cheerio thing that like melts in its mouth.

You don't be like, you know what? I see a tooth. Here's a chunk of steak. Chew well. No, and you work up to it as maturity happens. And by reason of use and learning how to use those muscles and chew and all that. They're exercised to discern both good and evil.

Galatians 5.25. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit. So discernment comes through use by reason of use of God's word and by the spirit.

You see, our particulars will always, always, never without fail, always be according to God's truth, God's spirit, and God's righteousness. Our particulars will always be according to God's truth, spirit, and righteousness.

[ 51 : 51 ] But my particulars may not always look particularly like your particulars. Right? My particulars, which will be according to God's truth, God's spirit, and God's righteousness, may not always look particularly like your particulars.

But whatever your particulars are, they're going to be according to God's truth, God's righteousness, and God's spirit. How do you know? Well, you have to know your Bible. And you have to know the leading of the spirit.

You see, you can't just take the word and use it, you know, without the spirit. Because where Paul says that we do not preach according to the letter, for the letter kills with the spirit, the spirit gives life.

You have to have the two together. My favorite example of that is those two proverbs. First, answer a man, answer a fool, answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like unto him. Don't answer a fool according to his folly.

You're just going to end up being like unto him. Don't do that. But there's another proverb that says, answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit. Well, you better say something, or he's going to think that, oh yeah, you didn't say anything, so I'm definitely right.

[ 52 : 52 ] He's going to be, how do you know which one? How do you know when you answer a fool and when you don't? You got to have the Holy Spirit direct you. You have to be directed by the spirit. And the spirit's going to use the word of God. But if you don't have the word of God in there, the spirit can't use the word of God.

And if you're not giving him opportunity to walk in the spirit, then how are you going to know what it is to have the spirit direct you? Do you know what it is when the Holy Spirit's directing your life? Do you know how to discern that? To discern your particulars.

In Luke chapter 5, Jesus goes with Levi or Matthew back to his house to have a wedding, to have a feast, a wedding feast. And there's a great company of publicans and others there.

So there's a lot of officials, governmental officials and IRS people, the tax collectors. And the scribes and the Pharisees were like, they said to the disciples, why do you eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

Why do you do this? Like, that's wrong. That's bad. You must be in sin. And Jesus answered them and said, they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

[ 53 : 58 ] I'm not come to call the righteous, the sinners to repentance. They said, Jesus, you're of them. Jesus says, I'm not of them, but I'm in them. I'm among them. We do need to be careful.

We live in a world that is trying to water down God's word. We live in a world that is taking God's word and using it as a source of entertainment and merchandise. They're adding and taking away from God's word. How do you know if it's someone who's seeking to be in that space for the sake of the gospel?

Or how do you know if it's someone who's just of the world using the gospel and using God's word to try and make merchandise and use it for entertainment and whatever?

Man, you got to have discernment. You got to have discernment. And that will be your particular, your particular and my particulars. But what will they always do? They will always be according to God's truth, his spirit and his righteousness.

Jesus was able to be in, but not of. He did not stand aloof, but he did stand strong. And he was there to call the sinners. We are in, but not of, the world's social, governmental, economical, and entertainment system.

[ 55 : 08 ] We are part of this whole thing. We are in it, but we're not of it. Don't let the world determine your particular value system. Don't let it. Have your own particular value system based upon God's word, his righteousness, his spirit, his truth.

Don't let the world determine it. Don't let the world say, this is okay. Well, no, it's not, it's not lining up with God's word. I kind of got to go with God's word. First Corinthians 12, 27.

Now you are the body of Christ and members in particular, individually. We're each particular.

Father, we each have an opportunity to be in this world and not of it.

And we can say no to the world's woe. Father, thank you so much. Thank you that, Lord, you have given us what a beautiful example, Jesus, of being in the world, but not of it.

Of being according to God's word, God's righteousness, and God's spirit, according to the truth.

And yet, Lord, the Pharisees would look and they would say, the particular thing Jesus is doing is not right.

[ 56 : 15 ] Well, if they're walking in the spirit, if they're walking in truth, they would see that your heart was to be in that place for the sake of the lost, for the sake of souls.

And Lord, as we saw tonight, the world system doesn't care about that stuff. They don't care about souls. They don't care about the lives of men and women and boys and girls.

And so, Lord, that's a good start for discernment. That's a good place to start. Is this thing that I am in, that I'm being asked to take part of, is it something that cares for the souls and lives of people? Is it something that I can be in for the sake of rescuing people out of this world system? Thank you for the particulars.

Thank you, Lord, that I have my particulars. And I'm not going to put them on anyone else because I don't need to. Because we have the covering, the blanket statement. We have been covered by the blood and we have been given the word and we have the Holy Spirit.

[ 57 : 21 ] God, give us boldness. Help us not to fear, to walk forward in the particular ways that you are calling us to go and be part of something that maybe another brother or sister would look at and go, I can't believe you're in that.

But we know we're there because there are lost who are there. There are people in the government and entertainment. There are people in the community that are lost. And we're not going to be of that.

But God, we need to be in it. Show us how to be in it. And use us to be lights in this world, to point people to true value that's found in you. Thank you that you are not going to remake this world system.

You're going to replace it with something so wonderful. And thank you that we already get to experience what it is to be part of that kingdom. And in Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

God bless you guys. Amen.