

At Home in Who You Are

Revelation 15 and 16

#30 in our series “The Gospel According to Jesus: The Revelation”

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Prayer

Lord God, we praise you...may we see you. Preaching about you is a little terrifying for me because I always feel such a temptation and desire that comes from this world to turn you into a little platitude that we could take and apply to our life so we can feel better about ourselves. But you are so much more! You are everything. You are so simple and yet we've made this world so complex, and this world is complex. So, Lord, I ask that you would help us to see you. I know that you are one, but we are many; we are divided even within ourselves. Lord God, help us to see you, and help us to be one as you are One. In Jesus' name help us to preach. Thank you Lord God, for what you showed us last week. That the blood of the Lamb is in those cups of wrath in Revelation 15. I pray that you would show us more now, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Message

One morning about twenty years ago, my wife Susan woke me up early and said, “Peter, I just had a vision!” (It was a new thing for her, at that time. I've never had one, but I've learned to trust my wife and what God shows her.)

She said:

When I woke, I looked in the corner of the room, and I saw dark clouds. Then, they parted and the sun came out... in our room.

But just before I woke, I had a dream, an incredibly clear dream—it was so real (maybe it was more real than this world)! I saw thousands of people descending down a spiral staircase in a line. The people were like zombies... the walking dead. All along this descending line of the walking dead, there were demons that were harassing them, poking them, and trying to hurt them.

And yet, these people didn't even move—they hardly even flinched—because they were used to it. It was normal for them. Then all at once, I saw this woman and her eyes weren't cloudy like everyone else's; they were wide open and she was awake. She was alive! She kept protesting, “Something's wrong here. I'm not supposed to be here. I'm not meant for here. Something's not right.”

The demons kept harassing her, trying to horrify her and mock her, but she kept protesting. And the line kept moving. At the bottom of the staircase there was one huge demon, a beast with eight arms. It would take these zombies and throw them in the Lake of Fire, and they'd be consumed.

Then the beast threw that woman in the Lake of Fire. But she wasn't consumed! In fact, she kept protesting, "Something's not right, I'm not supposed to be here."

It absolutely infuriated the beast! He went into a rage and was trying to push her into the fire, but each time she would just float back up protesting. He kept pushing her down and she kept rising up, and as I watched this, she gradually began to float out of the reach of the arms of this beast.

Then she said, "It was like the whole lake shifted and she floated into this area of cool, clear water (the water was at peace... like glass)."

She continued:

On the shores I began to see vegetation lush with life. Then I saw Him. I saw Jesus. He reached in and pulled the woman out of the water and stood her right next to Him. And she was gorgeous! She was like made of gold, refined by the fire—spun gold—I don't even know what spun gold is, but that's what she was! She was radiant.

Then, Jesus looked at her and said, "Sweetheart, you were meant for here."

Then Susan said, "Peter, what was that? I said, "Have you ever read Revelation 15?" And she said something like, "You know me... What's Revelation 15? ...and Peter, who was that woman? ...and who were all those zombies?"

Well this is Revelation 15; we began preaching on it last week. In Revelation 14, we saw the winepress of fury of the wrath of God and from it, a river—a river that filled the land to the depths of a horse's bridle—a river that filled the land, forming a sea—a sea of blood that's wine and wine that's blood, a sea of the "knowledge of the glory of the Lord" that covered the whole land(Hab. 2:14).

Revelation 15:1-16:1

Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues [pleges: wounds, stripes], which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished [teleo]. And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps [kithara: where we get our word "guitar." They were seven stringed instruments with a sounding box; that's a guitar!] of God in their hands. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

*Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations!
Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come and worship you,
for your righteous acts [judgments] have been revealed.*

After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, and out of the sanctuary came the seven angels with the seven plagues [wounds], clothed in pure, bright linen, with golden sashes around their chests. And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath [thumos: passion, anger] of God who lives forever and ever, and the sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues [wounds] of the seven angels were finished [teleo].

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath [passion] of God."

In verse 8 John wrote, "No one could enter the Sanctuary until the seven wounds of the seven messengers (that look like Jesus) were finished." And yet, as we'll see in the next chapter, when the seven wounds are finished, it would appear that everyone is dead.

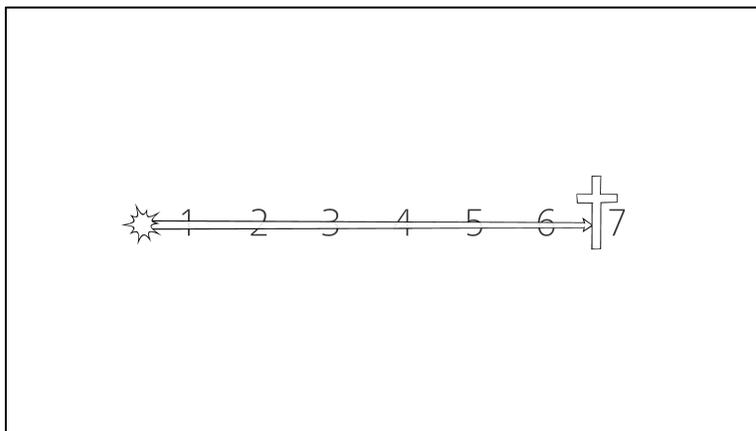
In 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, Paul writes something really weird:

For the love of Christ compels us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

"One has died for all, therefore all have died..." (That would make everyone a zombie, and yet we'd think it's normal.) But what if death died? Perhaps the death of death is eternal life?

Verse 8: "None could enter the Sanctuary until the seven wounds were finished (teleo)."

On a tree in the Garden on Mt. Calvary, at the end of the sixth day of the week, on the sixth day of creation at the sixth hour of the day Jesus is crucified.



- The sky grows black, the earth shakes, he lifts his head and cries, “*It is finished*” (same word, *teleo*.)”
- The curtain in the temple separating the people from the abode of God rips from the top to the bottom...

Verse 8: “*None could enter the sanctuary until the seven wounds were finished.*”

What is the Sanctuary, and what would it mean to enter?

- *Naous*, the Greek word translated “sanctuary,” and sometimes “temple,” comes from a verb that means to dwell; it was where the presence of God would dwell.
- As we’ve seen it would literally rest on top of the Mercy Seat covering the Ark containing the law, behind the curtain.

According to Jewish tradition, the sanctuary was built on the very spot that God breathed His breath into dust making the human soul, in the Garden of Eden. As you know humanity was exiled from that garden when we took the knowledge of the Good from the tree in the middle of that garden.

God placed two cherubim to guard the entrance. In the Sanctuary on top of the Ark, Moses was instructed to place two golden cherubim as if guarding the way to the presence of God in His Garden.

In the Gospel of John Jesus says, “Destroy this temple [*naous*] and I will raise it in three days,” and John tells us that Jesus was speaking of His Body. In John 15 Jesus says, “*Abide in me and I in you.*” You abide in an abode. He is your sanctuary and you are His.

In a few chapters we’ll witness the New Jerusalem descending on Mt. Zion.

It comes down on the spot where God made Adam (that is, humanity).

It looks like Eden and contains the Tree of Life.

It’s shaped like the stone Sanctuary only massively bigger and alive.

God dwells there with His people, of which it is constructed.

We read that there is no Sanctuary in the City, for God Almighty and the Lamb are the City’s Sanctuary . . . And the City is God’s Sanctuary. We are the heavenly Sanctuary—God’s Temple, Body, and Bride. We are the Sanctuary.

Verse.8 “*No one could enter the Sanctuary until the seven wounds were finished.*”

And check this out, the Sanctuary, that inner room in which God dwells...

It’s not of this age—this *aion*, in Greek.

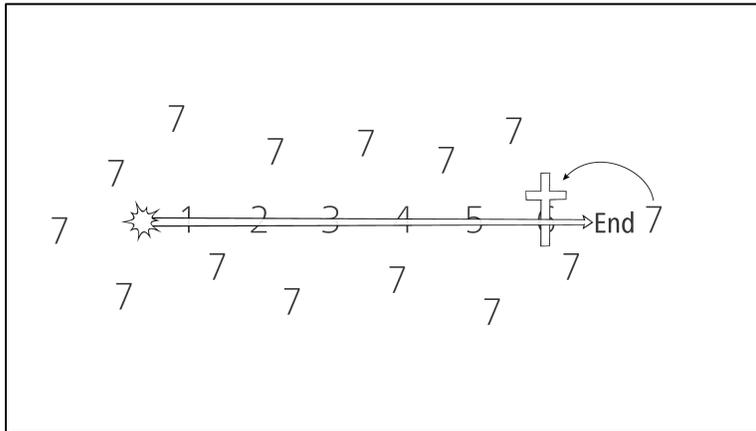
It’s *aionios*—meaning “of God’s Age,” and God created the ages.

In Hebrew 9 we learn that the outer room in front of the inner sanctuary is symbolic of the present *aion* (age) (9:9). But that Jesus goes behind the curtain obtaining an *aionios*

redemption (9:12). For *“He has appeared once for all at the end of the aeons to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself”* (9:26).

What I’m trying to say is that the Sanctuary was not only a special place, it was a special time—or the absence of time, or maybe the presence of all time, it was a chunk of eternity in our space and time.

In Hebrews 4 we read that to believe is to enter that rest, God’s rest. And then, that rest is described as the Seventh Day, when God rested from all His labor, for everything is finished, for everything is good.



SO... what would it be like to abide in the Sanctuary?
Well... You *are* the Sanctuary... Do you feel at home in yourself?

Verse 8 *“No one could enter the Sanctuary until the seven wounds were finished.”*
“No one!”

And yet, in verse 2 we read about some folks that seem to be in the Sanctuary, now. They’re singing and playing the *kithara*, the guitars of God, and singing the song of the Lamb.

They look just like the 144,000 (that we saw in the last chapter) with the name of the Father and Lamb written on their heads, that we saw in the last chapter...

- The 144,000 that play guitars and sing the new song
- The 144,000 that are the Israel of God, the Church

And these 144,000 stand before the throne (Rev. 4:5)—the throne that is in the Sanctuary on the other side of “the sea of glass,” and before which are seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth (seven *angelos*, messengers)

They sing the song of eternity that we encountered in Revelation 5 when John hears “every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea and all that is within them” praising The Father and the Lamb.

They sing that eternal song but now they sing it in time, and so it is always new where eternity touches time. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes, as members of one Body—one dancing Body. We noted that all the members of a dancing body are perfectly ordered and yet entirely free... for every member freely submits to the rhythm of the Song.

In chapter eleven, the seventh trumpet was blown and the Ark was seen within the temple. The Ark is a representation of the free will of God and the temple is us. We noted that if we had free will . . .

- We would be entirely unrestrained by any law exterior to ourselves; we wouldn’t “should” on ourselves.
- We’d never deliberate between choices—“should I step here or step there.”
- We’d constantly do what we want and want what we do.
- We would be the Uncaused Cause; we would be God . . . or we would be like the Body of God, the dancing Body of God.

If we think we are God and so take the Life that is God... everything dies. (Zombies everywhere) But if we surrender to God and receive the Life that *is* God... we all start dancing. Jesus is the Free Will of God and *we* are His Body...

A dance is perfect order and perfect freedom. It is also an incredible amount of work, and yet we experience it as rest and so we call it “play.”

Have you noticed that we never say, “Can you *work* the guitar?” Instead we ask, “Do you *play* the guitar?”

When my children were little, they spent most of their time playing in the yard. One day it hit me: All their play was what I called “work...” I mean they freely did what I forced myself to do, but they didn’t call it work; they called it play.

They played house. They even played church. In the sandbox they made roads, and houses, and cities. They had a play lawnmower and a play vacuum. But they didn’t just mow and vacuum they dance-mowed and dance-vacuumed. They seemed to constantly sing, and dance and they expended a lot of energy . . . Technically, that’s work . . . but we called it “play.” They did everything we did, but they had fun.

They didn’t work to live; they lived, and so, they worked; they played. And...they seemed to be very at home in themselves.

You know when God put Adam and Eve in the Garden, they didn’t do *nothing*:

They were to *“be fruitful and multiply”* and they were to *“till the ground and keep it.”*

- And it was paradise. It was fun.
- They were like little children at play in their Father’s Garden.
- Jesus said that we must become like little children to enter our Father’s Kingdom.

It was paradise until Adam and Eve believed a lie. You know children of a loving father really have it so good, but they don’t *know* that they have it so good. The problem is that, at a certain point, they begin to want to grow up.

It was the father of lies in the body of a snake that said,

“Hey Eve, wouldn’t you like to be like God?”

“Take from the tree of the knowledge of Good and evil and you can make yourself in the image of God.”

Now God had already said that He would make Man (male and female) in His own image. But Eve, and that first Adam, didn’t know that the Word of God is Good.

Well, at one point, my kids were children at play in their father’s garden.

At times we’d have to hire a babysitter for a day or a weekend.

Imagine if the babysitter said something like this to my kids:

“Hey Jon, nice road you made there in the sand...”

But Elizabeth’s is better... Actually hers is good, yours is bad.”

“I have knowledge of good and bad roads. So, from now on I’m going to judge your roads, and houses, and your dance-mowing, and dance-vacuuming...and give you a grade. When your parents come home they’ll reward the one that gets the best grade and punish the one that gets the worst grade. Actually the one with the best grade will live, and the other will die and endless death.”

What would happen?

Well, if my children believed the lie, my children might make roads and mow the lawn, but they would become beasts . . .

- They would begin to bite and devour one another.
- They would compete with each other.
- They wouldn’t love me; they would despise me and they would begin to hate each other.
- They would believe that Life is the survival of the fittest.
- They wouldn’t be made in the image of a loving father, but the image of a beast.
- They would die... the light would go out of their eyes; the dance would go out of their step and they would become the walking dead.

You may say, *“That would never happen!”* But don’t you see: It has happened and it’s happening all the time. This entire world is like a river of lies that is all one lie:

“You are your own creator, savior, and redeemer so you must take knowledge and make yourself in the image of God. And God grades on a curve. Some of His kids will pass the test and some will fail.”

You know? Sometimes we even say, “Life is the survival of the fittest. Life is competition.”

And yet any honest biologist will tell you that life is not competition; life is cooperation. Life is not the survival of the fittest; life is the mutual sacrifice of the fittest. Competition explains the limits of life—why one life will bite and devour another life, but it can’t explain life itself: one molecule cooperating with another molecule, one cell sacrificing for another cell, one body part freely bleeding into another body part in one happy dancing body.

1Corinthians 12:13 says, “...*In one Spirit, your were baptized into one body.*” Well, competition explains beasts—why one life will consume another life. But competition can’t explain Jesus, who is the Man in the image of God.

I see no theological, philosophical or biblical problem with the idea that my body evolved from the beasts over millions of years as we measure time.

It’s not a body of flesh that makes me a man.

It’s the Spirit of God breathed into my flesh, and in which I’m baptized at the end of the sixth day, that makes me into the image of God.

Satan doesn’t want me to be a man made in the image of God. At the end of chapter 12, we saw him go to war with the little brothers and sisters of Jesus; He battles with a river of lies. And then you may remember when that didn’t go totally well, he called up the beast to help him lie. He wants to shape you in his own image; he wants to name you; he wants to write his number on your head “666,” the number of the beast... the number of humanity on the sixth day, not yet finished in the image of God.

Well imagine if the babysitter said, “ John and Elizabeth, you will receive a grade on all your play. Some of you will pass and some will fail. Some will earn their life and some will not.” I think it would turn my kids into little beasts . . . restless beasts, for the moment you take life, the life dies and then you desperately try to take more life. You take life and everything dies including you—restless zombie beasts.

And imagine if the babysitter continued, saying something like this: “And if you pass the test, your father will love you.” That would turn my children into little harlots—that’s *porne* in Greek.

- They would compete for my love. They would try to buy my love with deeds
- They would try to earn my love, and so be unable to receive my love and love in return.

The lie would turn my kids into restless little harlots . . . For if you must pay for love, love is no longer free, and so, no longer love; you crucify Love and Love is Life...

Sometimes I think men are particularly tempted to be beasts . . . and women are particularly tempted to be whores . . . but we're all tempted to each. And it appears that we can become what we think we are . . . at least for a time. And yet, we'll be endlessly restless, 'cause that's not who we truly are in eternity.

I don't know about you, but sometimes I just don't feel at home in "me"... I can't stand "me"! Sometimes especially around two or three in the morning, I'll wake up and I just can't seem to endure my own skin.

I'll think I don't know how to make life work: I don't know how to make the sermon work, and church work, and that's how I make my life... I work for Life. And I'll think I don't know how to get this person to love that person and it looks like they both will end up hating me... I don't know how to earn Love.

See maybe I'm believing a lie at that moment: that I have to *take life* and *earn love*.
God is Love and Jesus is the Life.

Maybe I can't stand me, 'cause that's not the real me.
If I can't stand "me," that probably indicates that "me" is not who I am.
Maybe I can't stand the beast that I'm trying to be.

Listen to what we read in the last chapter:

"...the smoke of their torment goes up for (ages) and (ages), and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."

Maybe I can't rest 'cause I've let the beast name me and so make me in its image.
Maybe I trust, "*Me is salvation*" rather than "*God is Salvation*"—*yehoshuah*.
Maybe I think I'm my own creator, savior, and redeemer . . . the antichrist, that means, imitation Christ.
Maybe it's the Mercy of God, which is the Wrath of God, that won't let me rest in my own wicked illusions . . . that won't let me remain as I think I am: a beast on the sixth day of creation—not the Man on the Seventh Day.

Well, the folks standing beside the sea, playing guitars, dancing, and singing are no longer living in the sixth day of creation. They've entered the Sanctuary and all their work is rest and all their obedience is free.

They're not beasts; they're men.
They're not harlots; they're the Bride.
They're not the walking dead; they have eternal life.
They've conquered the number of the beast's name and have God's name: I AM.
They sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.
The song is entirely about God and not at all about them.

It's like they've forgotten themselves . . . and so found themselves singing . . . and outrageously happy . . . They are entirely compelled by Love.

At staff this week, my friend Mark said, "I can't figure out if I'm one of the people standing on the side of the sea or one of the walking dead marked with the number of the beast." Me too.

In chapter 13:7-8 we read:

And authority was given [to the beast] over every tribe and people and language and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it...

Well, who doesn't dwell on earth? Can you abide somewhere else?

and all who dwell on earth will worship it, ["everyone" is supplied by the translator] whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

Does that mean that all who dwell on earth will worship it, *except* those that have their name written in the Lamb's book of life? It doesn't say "except."

Or does it mean all who abide on earth worship the beast and do not have their name written in the Lamb's book of life?

I wonder if part of you could abide on earth... like dust.
And part of you could abide in heaven... like spirit?

In 13:16 we read: "...it [the beast from the land] *causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead...*[all, no exceptions are mentioned] v. 16 ...*it is the number of [a] man* [In the Greek it's not a man, but man], *and [man's] his number is 666.*"

It would be so cool if that was just a funky tattoo offered by some Romanian dictator in 2027... you could just say, "No." But what if the mark is the fact that you've simply let things like governments, religions, and the institutions of this world name you?

...That you've let them convince you, that you must take life or earn love?
...That you've let them convince you, that you are a self-made man, so you put your trust in "me-sus" instead of Jesus.

That's called sin and the soul that sins will surely die [literally: "*Dying you will die*"]. And God said, "The day you eat it you will die . . . That day is the sixth day.

In chapter 19, The Living Word will cut "the flesh" from all men, not some, "all."

I literally make my flesh by consuming life, like a beast. My body eats life and excretes death, that's how it grows; that's how it exalts itself.

Solomon wrote that God is testing us that we might see that we are but beasts. If I'm honest, I seem fairly beastly and whorish . . . fairly restless and wanton.

But now listen to the singers on the side of the sea:

"Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty!

Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations!

[We just read that the beast was given authority over the nations.]

Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name?

For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you,

[All nations were under the authority of the beast and marked by the beast.]

All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts [judgments] have been revealed."

We already heard every creature, from everywhere, and everywhen worshipping the Father and the Lamb in Revelation 5. We'll soon hear the voice from the throne say *"Look I make all things new"*(21:5). And we'll read that *"the nations"* will walk in the light of the Lord (21:24). And *"the kings of the earth"* (who had been horns on the beast) will bring *"their glory"* into the Sanctuary...; it's utterly shocking.

And so,

It seems that I'm a beast *and* I'm the very body of the Man, Jesus.

It seems that I'm something of a harlot, and I'm the spotless Bride.

It seems that I'm both . . .

Or at least I was a beast, and I am becoming a man, in the image of God.

Or I was a harlot that discovers she's really the Bride.

Maybe I was a false man and I'm becoming real.

Maybe I am a sinner, but gettin' filled with Grace.

Maybe I'm the woman in Susan's vision... The Church.

Verse 8: *"No one could enter the Sanctuary until the seven [wounds] of the seven angels [that look just like Jesus] were finished (teleo).*

No one could enter the Sanctuary, *but* the dancing singing guitar players are in the Sanctuary, or *are* the Sanctuary—*How did they get there?*

Well they must've passed through that sea of glass and fire like that restless woman in Susan's vision, who finally stood beside Him as spun gold. Scripture says that our faith is tested as gold is tested and refined... by fire. So, who we are must somehow be like this fabric of spun gold our of the warp and woof of this world that turns in to the new self . . . or something . . .

So what is this sea of glass mingled with fire?

In chapter 4 we saw a sea of glass around the throne of God & the seven torches of fire... **-It must refer to that.**

Once, God judged the earth with a flood of fire, and Scripture claims that there will also be a flood of fire...**-It must refer to that.**

Israel passed through the Red Sea following a pillar of fire. In this way, God's judgment saved Israel from the Egyptians and they stood on the side of the sea and sang the song of Moses... **- It must refer to that.**

In the temple there was a molten sea, which was a huge metal basin placed between the Sanctuary and the fiery altar. The priests would wash themselves before approaching the Sanctuary lest they die. (It must've contained water and blood that burns like fire.) In the temple God's judgment showed Israel that He not only saved them from Egyptians but saved them from their sin... **- It must refer to that.**

In baptism, God reveals that He not only saves us from Egyptians and He not only saves us from sin, He saves us from ourselves...the "me" that I have made. **- It must definitely refer to that.**

In all four Gospels, we find that Jesus came to baptize, but not just with water, fire.

-Baptism symbolizes dying with Christ and rising with Christ.

-It symbolizes the fact that your sins are washed away and you invite the fire to fill the Sanctuary that is your soul.

-It is a public statement that you agree with *The Judgment of God*.

The Judgment of God is Jesus, and His name—*yeshua* means "God is Salvation"

- God's Judgment is a knife that cuts to division of soul and spirit.
- It cuts to the division of the beast you have made yourself to be and the child of God that you truly are.
- It cuts to the division of the beast and the man, and the harlot and the bride.
- It cuts to the division of "me-sus," and Jesus.

If you believe "God is salvation" you can no longer believe that *you* are salvation...

That's a clean cut. At one moment and one time you cannot believe both.

- It cuts to the division of the old man and the New Man.
- It cleanses you of the old self and purifies the New.

Last Sunday at communion downtown, I said, "The Judgment of God will burn you right down to a child at play in your Father's Garden."

The Judgment of God is absolute Mercy that burns our sin like fire... until we believe God's Judgment: "You *have been* forgiven," and then, that burning blood tastes like the sweetest of all wine.

Last week, I told you how in a moment, one day in Canada, God revealed to me that I'd gone into the ministry because I hated the Church... I wanted vengeance, I wanted blood for blood, I wanted to take life to make my life; I was a beast and deeply restless.

And yet, God's Wrath was absolute Mercy; He didn't condemn me; He wept for me, through me, in me; He literally liberated me from myself. He literally pinned me to the floor. Then, later that evening, He showed me that He was everywhere and everywhen loving me—***I think He baptized me in Holy Fire.***

I thought I was going to die, and I was truly thrilled it might happen.

I literally could not stop worshipping.

I no longer asked, "What's wrong with me?"

And I could only think of "what's right with Him"...

And you know what's so right with Him? ...The way that He always loves me!

One day you will not be able to stop singing about the way He always love you.

And all of our songs will come together and we will join the eternal symphony of praise that is the eternal Song that sounds around all creation, and undergirds it, and makes all things new.

It was the most amazing experience of my life.

And here's the most amazing part of all:

When it was over—I was totally at home in me.

- I was not sick of me. I thoroughly loved me. I even had compassion on me.
- I was absolutely unable to worry about me or anyone else.
- And every night as soon as my head hit the pillow, I fell sound asleep.
- I had entered His rest... and yet that didn't mean that I would do nothing. Actually, I did everything—everything I did before: mow the lawn, work in the garden, write sermons, and go to meetings, but now it was like dancing.
- I was a child at play in my Father's Garden.
- I knew I couldn't *make* myself good; I could only *be* Good.
- I knew I couldn't *make* myself in the image of God; I could only *be* the image of God.
- I knew that I had nothing to defend, and everything for which to be grateful.
- I knew the Good: it was my Father's absolutely sovereign and merciful Judgment and it was at home in the sanctuary of my soul.

That experience lasted about three or four weeks and then it wore off. I knew it in my head, but not in all of my being.

You know the Israelites sang the song of Moses after they were baptized in the Red Sea... But then in a few weeks, they stopped singing and dancing.

- They believed God is Salvation, but they also didn't believe God is Salvation.

- They trusted their Heavenly Father and His Word, and yet, they didn't.

When my kids would have a hard time trusting me, nothing seemed to help quite as much as taking them on a journey... even better, an adventure... even better, we'd go camping. In the wilderness they'd stop trusting them selves and their knowledge and once again they'd start to trust me... they'd snuggle up next to me in the tent and remember that I loved them.

After Israel passed through the Red Sea, God took them camping in the wilderness, in tents. He travelled with them in a tent, called a tabernacle that became the temple. God's wrath is against anything that would separate you from Him. And His sanctuary is a tent in which you snuggle up next to each other. You rest in Him and He rests in you.

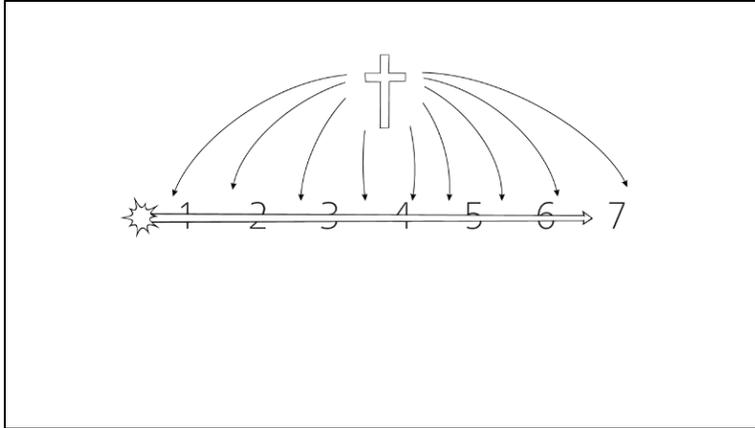
The book of Hebrews says, "*Strive to enter His rest.*" And then it says that Israel was unable to enter that rest because of unbelief, and so they died in the wilderness and did not enter the Promised Land.

I've wondered if they were like all those zombies in Susan's dream. Those Israelites didn't enter, and yet, they hadn't yet seen the seventh bowl of wrath. They didn't enter, and yet, they do enter in the end. Through Ezekiel God says that he will raise all Israel from their graves and bring them into the land... God does remarkable things with dust and ashes!

Moses was one of those that died in the wilderness because of unbelief, and yet He shows up brand new on the mount of transfiguration in the heart of the Promised Land with Jesus. (Dust and ashes is not the end; Jesus is the End.)

Well, my point is that you can enter His rest now.
And you can live from His rest every day.

I'm really bummed that we don't have time to read this, but the next thing that happens is that the seven angels with the seven wounds pour the seven bowls of the passion of God upon the earth.



Remember seven is the number of the days of time, and it's the number of your days on your journey through time.

You see, God is taking you camping in tents: tabernacles of flesh (2 Cor. 5:1-4). Hopefully, you were baptized and if not, you can get baptized. You were baptized, and now, you're on a journey, but every seventh day you come here and drink from a bowl of wine that's blood, and blood that's wine; it's also the Judgment of God.

Well, in chapter 16, the angels pour out the bowls of blood that's wine and wine that's blood on the days of time:

At the 1st bowl everyone gets sores—have you ever had a sore? They wound your flesh and they wound Christ's flesh. Your wounds match His wounds and reveal Mercy.

At the 2nd bowl, every soul dies in the sea. But if you're a believer, you already died in the sea at baptism.ⁱⁱ

At the 3rd bowl the river and springs become blood. An angel cries, *"You have given them blood to drink. It's what they deserve."* Every time you come to this table God gives you blood to drink. I guess it's what you deserve: You took His blood and He gives His blood. It burns the beast and sets you free.

At the 4th bowl people are judged by the Light.

At the 5th bowl people weep and gnash their teeth in darkness.

At the 6th bowl all the kings in all the earth gather their armies at a place called "Armageddon"...but the word means something like "mountain of the crowd or assembly." I think that place is Jerusalem where we all go to war with the Lamb, where

the beast and the harlot—together—nail Him to a tree in a garden on a mountain. John always pictures Jesus as enthroned upon the cross.

At the 7th bowl a voice cries from the throne, *“It is done.”*
It is finished in eternity, and it is done, it is accomplished in time.

It is the Judgment of God that burns you right down to a child at play in your Father’s Garden, and yet you know something you didn’t know before. You know the Good: God is Good and His Word is Life given to you. You can enter His rest and live from His rest right now. It’s Eternal Life now.

People always say, “But Pastor what do I do now? What are you telling me to do.”
I don’t know if this is a great answer but it’s the best I got right now.

- ✓ If you want to be Good, try to be Good, try to act Good.
- ✓ Then, every seventh day come to the Sanctuary and sit before the Judgment of God.
- ✓ Drink the cup and it will expose, and burn, the beast... just let him burn.
- ✓ It will destroy the beast and reveal a man or woman of solid gold.
- ✓ You’ll know it’s gold for when you see it you will only be grateful.
- ✓ So grateful, you’ll loose yourself, and find yourself singing *The Song of the Lamb*.
- ✓ Actually you never have to stop singing that song; you can live your whole life as a dance danced to the rhythm of the song.

What do I do?

1. Be baptized in the sea of glass and fire.
2. Live a life of communion with God (“go camping”) until you are at home in who you are—the temple, with Him. He’s already in your tent.

It reminds me of how my son learned to play guitar. One Christmas, he got an electric guitar and he tried and tried to play. It’s hard telling your left hand to form chords on the neck of the guitar, while telling your right hand to strum in rhythm, as you sing. It doesn’t do any good to yell, *“Try harder; work harder; what’s wrong with you?”* That only makes a person more self-conscious.

Well, I got the chords for an old Elvis Presley song. I showed Coleman where to put his fingers, and I described the strum. But it all sounded really bad . . . until Coleman discovered a secret. He said, “Dad, you sing, and I’ll play along.”

You know they’re constantly singing in Heaven.
They’re singing about the glory of the Judgment of God.
They’re singing and we can play along.

I don’t sing well, but when I sang, Coleman’s fingers began to dance: His right hand would strum in rhythm; his left hand would changes chords at *just* the right time . . .

All because he gladly surrendered to the word of his father as I sang,
Your kisses lift me higher, like the sweet song of a choir.
You light my morning sky with burning love...
I'm just a hunk, a hunk of burning love. I'm just a hunk, a hunk of burning love."
That is the Word of the Father...

Communion

On the night He was betrayed, He took bread and broke it saying,
"This is my body given to you. Do this in remembrance of me."
And in the same way He took the cup saying,
"This is the covenant in my blood. Drink of it all of you."

[Pointing to the communion table]

This is Burning Love.

This is The Judgment of God.

This is the Rhythm of the Song that creates all things, including you.

This is the constant reminder of your baptism:

You are in this world, but not of this world.

You are not meant for here.

You are being *made* here, for a place on the other side of the sea.

You are *not* a beast, and you are *not* a whore; you *are* a child of the Living God.

Believe the Gospel and play along.

Come to the table. The bread and wine are like a little hunk of burnin' Love.

[Several worship songs are sung including "Hunk of Burnin' Love".]

It's coming closer

The flames are reaching my body

Please won't you help me

I feel like I'm slipping away

It's hard to breath

And my chest is heaving

Lord Almighty,

I'm burning a hole where I lay

Cause your kisses lift me higher

Like the sweet song of a choir

You light my morning sky

With burning love

With burning love

Ah, ah, burning love

I'm just a hunk, a hunk of burning love

So, do you want to be baptized? In all four of the gospels Jesus said, "I came not only to baptize with water but fire. And that water represents washing away your sin. And then, on Pentacost the Church is gathered, all sorts of people gathered from all different places and the Spirit descends like fire. The people are baptized with fire and they begin speaking in a common language; they begin worshipping in all these different language and they are baptized into one Body.

Paul said, "There's one Lord, one faith, one baptism." So, we baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So, if you've been baptized, you're baptized. And in all your life you're remembering your baptism, and at times the Holy Spirit might show up and just knock your socks off; you don't know. But being baptized means you agree with the Judgment of God. You don't *determine* the Judgment of God, you *agree* with the Judgment of God. And that means, for the rest of your life you know that your Father is taking you camping. Who knows what might happen on this adventure? But one day, if your tent is destroyed, which it will be . . . one day, you don't need to fear because you'll be home on the other side of the sea. And right now, guess who's in your tent with you? The Fire. Zachariah said, on that day, they'll be no wall around the city, but I will be a wall of fire around her and the glory in her midst.

You see? *You* are a hunk a burnin' love. God sings it to you, and that's what He's making you, in His image. Believe the gospel and play along! In Jesus' name, Amen.

Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio or video version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.

ⁱ If you read the Revelation quickly, assuming that you already know what it means, you'll think it's saying, "Get your crap together or else." But if you read the Revelation seriously, assuming that it might actually be the truth, and you have something to learn, it will make you ask some very interesting questions... and might even provide a spectacular answer.

ⁱⁱ In Greek, it doesn't read, "Every living soul in the sea died," but "every living soul died in the sea."