

# Jesus Comes to Grant Our Desires

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Preacher: Elliott Lytle

[ 0 : 0 0 ] All right, well, good morning, everybody. Always a joy to be back with you. My name is Elliot. I'm one of the pastors here. So exciting to be here. Again, if this is your first time, it's so great to have you here with us.

And for those listening online, I hope this also finds you good and will be a blessing to you. So what we've been doing the past couple of weeks is going through a series during the season of Advent. And Advent is just a word that means the coming. So we're celebrating and preparing for the coming of Christ. And we've been doing that in a little bit of a unique way. We've been trying to look at it through the lens of some common Christmas hymns, some of our most cherished hymns, not just because they're fun to sing, but because they're actually loaded with spiritual truth.

They're loaded with things that point us to Christ. And so we're going to continue that today in this series. And we're going to start by looking at a passage from the book of Haggai.

So maybe a little backdrop here. So Haggai is part of the Old Testament. And it's in a section that we typically call the Minor Prophets. And really this entire section deals with a period in Israel's history where they've been carried off into captivity.

[ 1 : 1 1 ] They've been conquered multiple times. They've been scattered to the wind. And now they're starting to come back to their land, right? Like in pieces they're starting to come back. And so the book of Haggai has a lot of the themes you'll see in that section of books.

Things like God calling people to repentance for the things that led them into captivity. A call to come back to the land of Israel and rebuild.

And most notably, over and over, God gives them encouragement and promises that of a future restoration. That he's not done yet.

That the story isn't finished. And what he's doing is going to be more than they could have imagined. So that's kind of the backdrop when we pick up this in Haggai chapter 2, verses 3 through 7.

It says this. Who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Does it not seem like nothing?

[ 2 : 1 1 ] But be strong, Zerubbabel declares the Lord. Be strong, Joshua, son of Josedach, the high priest. Be strong, all of you people of the land and work.

For I am with you, declares the Lord Almighty. This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit remains among you. Do not fear. This is what the Lord Almighty says.

In a little while, once more, I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I will shake all the nations. And what is desired by all nations will come.

And I will fill this house with glory. So here's kind of the backdrop, right? So some people have come back and they've started rebuilding the temple of God.

And they're getting close to finishing that project. And they're looking at this rebuilt temple where they can worship. But the problem is there's still kind of a collective cultural memory of what the previous temple was, right?

[ 3 : 0 8 ] The one that Solomon built when Israel was kind of at its height. And so they're looking at it. And those who remember what that old temple was, it kind of seems pathetic to them, right? Like they're a little disheartened because they remember what they used to have, what they had lost.

And they're looking at it. And God, as he often does, speaks right into that tension. He says, hey, those of you that you remember the old temple and now this one doesn't look like anything to you, right? And he says, but look, what I'm doing, I'm going to make you a promise.

Not only am I going to restore this temple and not only is it going to be of greater glory than anything you've seen, it's going to be the very desire of nations.

Now, before we go any further, we probably need to take a quick side road and talk about desire. I don't think the rest of the sermon will make a lot of sense. So desire is this incredibly interesting facet of the human experience, right?

Like on the one hand, it colors, it brings passion to what you're doing, right? Like to have desires and to pursue them and to see them fulfilled is one of the things that makes life worth living.

[ 4 : 21 ] But on the flip side of that, it's also one of the most painful things, right? To desire things and they not come true, right? To that some of the deepest wounds come from things that you have desired that didn't turn out like you wanted to.

And so there's kind of a complexity to that. And then there's a place where, you know, you can't really get rid of desire either, right? Like if you just try to go full Vulcan and like live your life, no desire, drive out all emotion, you know, that sort of thing.

When people are like, you know, if I have no expectations, then I'll never be disappointed, right? Yeah, and you'll also have a miserable life, right? You can't just take desire out of your heart and be like, everything's okay because it's not.

And so there's some complexity to that. And then some people kind of frame it in, okay, so what you desire, it's really just all physical, right? It's like complex chemical equations, evolutionary processes playing themselves out.

And so you just kind of desire what you're made to desire. But that doesn't really seem to touch, there's certainly things physically that we need, but that doesn't touch all of human desires either, right?

[ 5 : 31 ] Like it's cliché because it's so common. Like how many times have you seen a story of somebody pursues and desires something? They're chasing a dream. And like celebrities, powerful people, like you get there, right?

You become the great man. You become the great woman. You get the fame. You get the girl. You get the guy. You get what you are pursuing and you're still empty.

Like how many times have you, that story is cliché because it happens over and over. Hey, I got famous. Everybody in the world knows my name. Everybody recognizes my craft. And it doesn't fill me.

And that reality isn't confined to the halls of the church. Across the ages, you can see thinkers and searchers kind of bumping into this kind of confounding thing that like no matter how much I try to pour into my desire, nothing ever seems to satisfy.

And that seems to be like drawing me to something transcendent, right? Here's a few quotes from a couple of them. So this is from Augustine of Hippo, which was a leader in an earlier period in the church.

[ 6 : 38 ] And he said this, a famous quote, You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in you. It's kind of testifying to the fact of it just seems like I'm just going through life chasing everything.

And none of it seems to satisfy. You flash forward a couple of centuries, you run into Blaise Pascal, a mathematician, searcher of his time.

He said, again, another famous quote, There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every person. And Pascal is a mathematician, right? So you might have heard that as whole. He actually said vacuum, and he's trying to communicate something very specific there about the fact that it can't stay empty, right?

And not only can it stay empty, it seems like it's kind of shaped like God in the sense of nothing else seems to quite fit. And also, it seems like it's infinite. Like you just dump stuff into it, and no matter how much you dump into it, only something infinite could fill it up.

But flash forward a couple more centuries. This quote, it's actually often misattributed to G.K. Chesterton, but it was really in a work by a guy named Bruce Marshall.

[ 7 : 48 ] It says, the young man who rings the bell at a brothel is unconsciously looking for God. So kind of the idea that whatever desire base or otherwise that you're pursuing, you're really looking for something else.

And maybe you think, no, I mean, when I'm searching for something like that, that's what I'm searching for. But again, I would put back to you, if that's the case, when you get it, are you full? Or are you still empty?

And then one more really famous one from C.S. Lewis, again, trying to bring some logic from his own experience to this, just kind of comes to this conclusion. If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for a different world.

And so now, if we flash back against all of that complexity of human desire and what it is and how we can't fill it, you look at this verse from the book of Haggai in a bit different way, because God says, I'm going to satisfy all the desires of the nations.

And that's a much bigger thing than it looks like in one line. And as you go throughout Scripture, you realize what God is doing is not just a building. Like, what he's bringing is a new kingdom through his son, Jesus.

[ 9 : 13 ] Which really leads us to the main idea of this entire sermon, which is simply this. Jesus is the desire of everyone, everywhere.

So you could think a couple things when I say that. I could understand if you look and say, all right, look, you're a churchy guy, right? Like, you like Jesus, you get excited about this. So maybe that's just me being exaggeratory, right?

Like, I'm into Jesus, so I'm trying to explain to you how much it is to me, so I'm kind of using overbroad language, right? Or maybe you're sitting here and that hits you and it actually hits you in a bad way, because to you, you just think that is an incredibly arrogant statement, right?

Like, how could I possibly know all the depth of all the life experiences of all the desire in this room? And oh, by the way, there's an entire world of people that care nothing for Christ or Christianity that still have lives and desires, and you're going to stand in the middle of that and say Jesus is the desire of everybody, everywhere.

I get that, too. Or maybe just cynically, again, when I say something like that, it just feels like a sales pitch, right? Like, this is a church, so Jesus is the product, and so I've got to say, you know, Jesus is the product you need, right?

[ 10 : 33 ] So really what we're going to do today is just look at, are any of those true? Like, are those, is that really what that statement is, just an exaggeration or an arrogance?

Or is it actually possible that those searchers and thinkers, that things that were said through the prophet Haggai and through Augustine and Pascal and C.S. Lewis and a host of other people both inside and outside the streams of the church, is Jesus what we're actually searching for?

And so for the rest of the morning, let's look at this, and we're going to do it as we have been through the lines of a Christmas carol, a Christmas hymn, if you would. And I am not going to sing this, so like, sorry.

We are going to sing it later, so like if this is your jam, and you just want to lean into your calling, when that moment comes, then lean into it, but I'm going to read it, because I think that will be more beneficial for us. So this is from O Holy Night, a very well-known thing.

It says this, O Holy Night, the stars are brightly shining. It is the night of our dear Savior's birth. Long lay the world in sin and error pining, till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.

[ 11 : 48 ] A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn. So right there in the verses, this hymn, if you want to peel the onion a little bit, you see some of the desires that are common to all of us.

And the first one that I see in here is this, the nations long for truth. So in some way, on some level, that search for truth seems to be particularly pressing in our time, right?

But a lot of times in modern life, that comes in the form of thinking about kind of the search for unvarnished facts, right? Like where do I go to get an unbiased spin?

Like what sources do I trust? How do I know that this piece of information is correct and this one is false? How do I screen out? How do I get past people trying to manipulate me and get to an actual piece of truth?

So there's that level. And then there's kind of the ages-old philosophic level of kind of thinking about it like, is truth even a thing, right? Like truth is a philosophic concept.

[ 12 : 59 ] Is there any real truth? Is it all just kind of subjective to your experience? And those are important conversations, I guess. But, well, they are. But the truth of those is, as far as desire is concerned, I would posit to you that even if you get those, truth received as a fact or as a philosophic discussion really can be in your most important moments kind of cold comfort.

Or even worse, it can be used as a weapon to harm you, right? Like somebody who knows something true about you and says it but not in love. Like they're wielding it as a weapon to kind of

hurt you, right?

Like that's truth but wielded in a way that is intended to damage you. I would venture to say some of you in the room have experienced, have come to expect when somebody says something like, well, I just tell the truth.

What they mean is, I just like being mean. Like I just like to use candor as an excuse to say something mean. And it's obvious enough that you having more factual knowledge doesn't make you a better person.

As a matter of fact, sometimes when you store up knowledge without adding love to it, it makes you worse. And so we have this mixed relationship with truth, right? Like we don't want lies, but the truth really doesn't bring us joy either.

[ 14 : 28 ] And particularly if you've experienced truth as kind of a weapon against you, then you might be thinking anytime somebody starts talking about truth, I really don't even want a part of that because I just, I don't find any embrace in that.

So I would invite you to see a different picture in Scripture. So when you go to Scripture, the first thing you notice, just kind of unvarnished, is that there is a truth and it can be known.

And it's evidenced primarily by the fact that you can operate outside of it. So if you think of those lines, sin and error pining. Sin and error are really kind of synonymous in the sense of sin is just a word that means to miss the mark, which sounds a little benign when you think about it just by saying miss the mark.

But sin is so egregious because it presumes that there is something that's holy. It's because there is something that is representative of what truth and goodness and rightness and righteousness is. And you can operate outside of that. And when you do, it brings pain and suffering and desolation. And so that's a really important truth right off the bat that there is a truth.

[ 15 : 43 ] Like good and bad aren't just sort of arbitrarily decided what's going to be good, what's going to be bad. Like they're based on something real. They're not just a societal construction, a construction of the church.

They reflect a reality. But it goes even a little deeper in terms of how the people in Scripture look at truth. And you could go to a lot of places. One of the best I know is Psalms 119.

That entire psalm is chocked full of these ideas. I'll just give you one. The psalmist in 119.103 says this, So you think about what that person is saying.

The truth you give me, God, is sweeter than the sweetest thing I'm currently aware of. Honey is like the sweetest thing. There's no high fructose corn syrup. So like honey is like the sweetest thing this person's got access to.

Later in that psalm, he says it's more valuable than gold. It's the same idea. The most valuable thing I know. It's more valuable to me than that. And if you just think about like the fact that the author is literally writing a poem or a song.

[ 16 : 56 ] That kind of truth is not a hey I learned in school 2 plus 2 equals 4 kind of truth. Like those words are dripping with desire. Like he's looking at truth as something that is bombed to his soul.

So how is that possible? Like how could somebody feel that desirous and passionate about a concept? And the answer is simply this that we see in scripture.

Because truth isn't what you think it is. It's not a cold concept and it's not a philosophical exercise. Truth is a person. A couple verses from the Bible to substantiate this.

Jesse started off with one. In Isaiah chapter 9 it says this. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness a light has shone on them. So truth is coming to their life to illuminate it.

And what is that truth? For unto us a child is born. A son is given. And the government shall be on his shoulders. And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor. Mighty God.

[ 17 : 59 ] Everlasting Father. Prince of Peace. If that seems a bit of a reach for you. Jesus kind of takes away all doubt in John chapter 14 verse 6. You've probably heard this one before.

For Jesus said, I am the way and the truth and the life. And then in John 1 14 it says this. And the word became flesh.

So the word, like the living logos, like the embodiment of all the truth of God. What did it do? It became flesh.

And it dwelt among us. And we have seen his glory. The glory as the only son of the father full of grace and truth. Now that truth, that truth is a person is really deep.

And goes much further than any one sermon could encompass. But here's what that really means on a practical level. It means truth is relational. It means truth is meant to be experienced in the context of that love relationship.

[ 19 : 02 ] With the person who is the physical embodiment of it. And so like if that's what truth is. It should be welcome to our hearts, right? Because it's greater than our feelings.

It's not based on what we feel. It's not based on what we think. It's not based on. It's based on the one who loves us. Which means it's never a weapon. It's never a power play.

It's never a way to make you feel inferior. It is a grace extended from the heart of the one who loves you. That is the kind of desire. That's the kind of truth that the nations long for.

The second thing I see is this. Kind of peeling again the onion a little bit on this song. The nations long to be known and delighted in. So a lot could be said about that desire as well.

And it's again not confined to the church. To be known and seen and valued is a universal human desire. And all of us I think are aware of how we try to feel that in so many ways that leave you disillusioned and disappointed.

[ 20 : 10 ] Particularly if you're kind of pursuing the approval of others. And either it's given in an unhealthy way or it's not given at all. It's denied. We want to be known and loved.

But it goes beyond just we want somebody to know the truth of us. What we really want is to be delighted in. Right? Like the best friendships are the ones where somebody knows you.

And not just knows that you're bad and kind of tolerates it. But like sees the whole of you and is excited that you're there. And God does that.

The God we see in scripture does that all throughout scripture. Right? Like there is certainly a level where God operates in pity. Right? Like where he sees the affairs of the people of the earth.

And he is drawn in compassion towards them. But his love when he interacts with you isn't restricted to just kind of a well. Yeah I see everything and you are.

[ 21 : 07 ] And yeah you're really pathetic. And there's really nothing to desire about you at all. But I'm just going to love you anyway. So you should be happy with that. Man God goes right to the very core.

And again no sermon could encapsulate how God does that. So it's really hard to think about. Particularly that line in the hymn is one whether you know it or not that has just been mulled over for a long time.

He appears and the soul felt his worth. Like what does that even mean? What does that look like? One of the ways that. I'm just going to give you one from scripture that will maybe whet your appetite to see some others.

But here's one that God kind of pulled out to me when I was studying for this. That I think gets at least around the fringes. Is this right? Like how does God love us in a way that we are known and delighted in?

And so one of the things you'll see throughout scripture is God has this interesting habit of giving people new names. Right? Like he encounters them and they have some kind of name that defines them.

[ 22 : 14 ] And he says no that's not your name anymore. You're going to have a different name. A couple of examples maybe bring this out. One of the ones that always jumps to me is one of my favorite characters.

One of the favorite stories in the Bible. So Jacob is a son who is a couple generations removed from Abraham. And he's born a twin.

So he's born. Him and his brother Esau are born. And as they're coming out Jacob is literally like the baby is just literally holding on to his brother's heel. Right? And so whoever's born first is the first born.

And in that culture there's a lot of blessing kind of accrued to that. So they see this coming out and they give him the name Jacob which literally means he grasped at the heel. But it actually has more of a connotation of surplanter or even deceiver.

Right? Like the idea is your identity is you are always grasping and struggling and trying to get the thing that's not yours. Right? And if you look throughout Jacob's life.

[ 23 : 16 ] And I mean there's so much to that. Right? So like part of that like Jacob's family doesn't get out of sin here. Right? Because like they're bestowing that name on him and living out of it. So that does damage to him.

And what Jacob decides if you look at his life is he decides he's going to live out of that. So like Jacob throughout his life is kind of a scoundrel. He uses deceit and guile and craftiness to get to where he wants to get.

Because he sees he's good at it. Like that's what comes to define him. Right? And so he concocts this whole plan to steal his brother's blessing from his father. There's another moment where he takes advantage of a weak moment of his brother to steal his birthright as well.

And he's just living that. That's his identity. I'm a deceiver. I'm a stealer. I struggle with people to get what I want. And then near the end of his later in his life there's this really mysterious passage where he's been struggling with people.

And then out of nowhere he runs into God. And he wrestles with him. And again it's hard to even understand exactly what's going on there. But he's wrestling with God. And when he gets to the end of that he can't like he's using all that he's ever known.

[ 24 : 32 ] And he can't get blessing that way. And so he asks for it. And God strikes him in his strength and takes it away. And it's interesting God gives him a new name.

And he says your name is now Israel. Which means he struggles with God. And that's actually the name that that entire nation will take its identity from. And again that might not strike you right off the bat.

But essentially what God is saying is this. Your whole identity has been struggling with the world. But really you don't know who you are. Like now you struggle with me.

That's who you really are. Your identity is in me. Maybe one that's a little more familiar. So flash forward to the gospels.

Jesus picks as one of his disciples. A man named Simon. Son of Jonah. And he's also known as Peter. You probably know him as Peter.

[ 25 : 28 ] And that's because while they're together there's a moment where Jesus is teaching and asking questions. And Peter says something that Jesus clearly sees as the father working in him.

And he recognizes that. And right on the spot he gives him a new name. He says you're going to be Peter. Which is kind of synonymous with the word rock. And that's interesting because when Jesus does that there is nothing about Peter that is a rock.

Like if you look at Peter. Even at that moment. Not like right like he was. Like even from that moment on. He's kind of flaky. He's kind of impetuous.

He's kind of presumptive. But Jesus gives him the name right there. He says that is what defines you. Right. He does that to whole people groups.

Like in Isaiah 62. He talks to a people that have kind of adopted. Our name is desolate and deserted. And he says no your name is going to be Hepzibah. Which means you're delighted in.

[ 26 : 29 ] In Isaiah 56. He talks to a group of like the group of eunuchs. Right. So like people who in that society. Like if you couldn't father. You couldn't mother sons and daughters.

You had no name. You had no future. You had no hope. Because you were physically unable to father. To have a name. And God says that is not like.

I am going to give you a name that is better. Than any sons or daughters that you could have.

Right. Like that is the measure of how God works with us. And so it really it really comes down to this.

Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth. Like you really can't know yourself. That's part of what this desire is about. You really can't know yourself. Until you've encountered God.

You can't know yourself truly. And so I'll just pause right there. Maybe that's for somebody today. When I was putting this together again.

[ 27 : 28 ] It's like that can be a little side exercise in your life. Like if there. You feel like. You're operating out of a curse. That somebody's put on you. Like a name that doesn't fit.

You can ask God. For a new name. You can do that in community. Like that's a great thing. To like get around people who love God. And ask them. Like sometimes how we feel about ourselves. Looks totally different. Than the people around us see. Right. And if you really want to be bold. Like this is part of how the body ministers to each other. Like maybe. When you pray for somebody. Or you think about them. There's. God keeps putting something in your mind. Right. Like there's something he says about that person. Or what they mean to you. Or how they bless you. Maybe go tell that person that.

I mean worst case. You go and tell somebody something nice. And they're like okay. You know. But you know. You're just spreading happiness. But. Sometimes that's the kind of thing that God does. Through each other. To change the direction of someone's life.

[ 28 : 28 ] Jesus delights in you. As the father delights in you. And that's the kind of desire that the nations long for. And then lastly.

The nations long. For a better future. So. Growing up in the church. There's all kinds of. Streams you could have been in. And I think. The idea of our destiny. Or the idea of heaven. Or the idea of what God's doing. There's a lot of ways you can absorb that.

That's unhelpful. Right. So there is sort of a picture. Of heaven. That's just like. That's where I'm going. And everything. Until then. Is going to be terrible. And I just. Like I'm holding on. Desperately holding on. Until one day. God will make everything better. In the sweet by and by. And that's true. Like he will. Like that.

[ 29 : 24 ] That vision of heaven. That God is going to heal. Is correct. Correct. But it shouldn't inspire you. To be passive. On the other hand. We sometimes over correct.

And I think this is. Probably what happens a little more. In our modern day. Where. We've just got this very. Tepid version. Of what heaven is. Right. Like when you think of heaven. I would venture to say.

A lot of the times. The idea that comes to your head. Is boring. Or maybe even. Something you wouldn't look forward to. Right. Like it's just kind of an endless church service.

And you're like. Man I like church. But I don't know about that. Like is there. Is there any adventure. Is there any. Learning. Is there. You know. Is there any. And so.

I think one of the things. To kind of understand. The future. That Jesus is. Putting us into. What God is doing. Like. Like the hope.

[ 30 : 21 ] That is dawning. Is not meant to be something. That makes us passive. But it's also not to be something. Meant to be something. That we never think about. It is. Rocket fuel. For how you serve the Lord.

It is. Something that you are supposed to. Treasure in your soul. That helps you move forward. So let's. Let's try to tease out. What that would look like. Okay. So. Let's start with.

Kind of our ultimate destiny. Right. So like. Heaven. The consummation. Of all things. The full coming. Of God's kingdom. What is he doing there. Right. It's really hard.

To get at this. I will use. A kind of example. From my own life. So. I was. Single. Into my late 30's. So if you are hanging out. In New Bern. It's a rough place.

I feel you. Like. It can be hard. Right. And that was not the life story. I intended. Right. Like most people. I assumed. I would meet somebody. Earlier in life. We would get married. We would have children.

[ 31 : 17 ] That was kind of. What the narrative. Would look like. And that's not. How it worked out. In my life. But like most things. That have some pain. With it. There's certainly lessons. If you're.

Have some wisdom. About it. That you can take. From that. And it's certainly. Just being single. Longer than you expected. It's not the only forum. You could learn this in. But one of the things. I learned about that. Was.

As you start to. Get later. Into a desire. Not being fulfilled. Right. You start to run into people. And you start to understand. A little more.

Of the depth. Of what woundedness. Looks like. Right. So for instance. You know. When you're. 22 or 23. And. You're lonely. And you want to be with somebody.

Or. The person. That you're with. That you thought. Was going to be the one. It doesn't work out. And it falls apart. Like that can. That's heartbreaking. And it's sad. And you have to walk through it.

[ 32 : 13 ] But when somebody says to you. Something like. You know. Your day is coming. There's a certain part of you. That kind of reaches that. And says. Yeah. Like God is. God is going to do something. Like there's still time here.

Right. What you find out. When you work with singles. Is that hits a little different. When you're 44. And you're still single. And not because God.

Can't have a great future. For you. Right. But because there's things. To be mourned. Right. Like if your desire. Was to be married. During kind of that. Flower of your youth. You realize.

That no matter what happens. That can't happen now. Right. Or maybe. You wanted to have your own children. And now you've. Just crossed the age. Where. That's not going to happen.

And again. That doesn't. Doesn't take away. The hope of what God could do. It doesn't take away. Possibilities. Of. Of children. That he could bring into your family. But it's something you have to mourn.

[ 33 : 09 ] And it's something that you realize. That no matter what comes. Here on. There's. There's no amount of time. That's going to heal it. It's just something you have to mourn. And again.

That's. That's kind of a. Simple example. From. A trail of singleness. But. The truth is. Nobody ever plans. For. The thing you've chased.

To not happen. Right. Like. Your whole life. Has been. About an athletic pursuit. And then you injure yourself. In a way that. You'll never be an athlete again. Nobody ever plans.

To lose a spouse. Nobody ever plans. To lose a child. But it happens. And when something like that happens. A simple. Like. Happy vision.

Of what's going to come next. Isn't enough. Like that's. One day. There'll be joy again. But you're still. Like. The weight of that scar. Doesn't go away.

[ 34 : 04 ] So when I think of heaven. This is the verse. That always comes to my mind. This is Revelation. Chapter 21. Verse 4. And it's interesting that.

When. When. The spirit is revealing. That's. What the book's name is. Revelation. Right. Like a. A little bit of a picture. Of what God is going to do. The image he gives.

Is not. Like. A description of. Well. He does in some other places. But like. Overarching. We don't get like. In detail. Every detail. Of what it's going to look like. And what you're going to do. And. But this is what he does say.

About what God's going to do. He will wipe away. Every tear. From their eyes. And death shall be no more. And neither shall there be mourning.

Nor crying. Nor pain. For the former things have passed away. When you say wipe away every tear. Like that's not God saying like. Okay. Buck up.

[ 34 : 59 ] Like the hard times are over. That. That literally means. Wholeness. Wholeness. Wholeness. Like the thing that you think. Cannot be healed. Can be healed.

That means there. If there's no more mourning. That means there's nothing left to mourn. And again. That's a really hard idea. To get at. To grasp.

Again. C.S. Lewis takes a stab at it. In the great divorce. He says this. You cannot. In your present state. Understand eternity. And that is what mortals misunderstand.

You say of some temporal suffering. No future bliss. Could ever make up for this. Not knowing that heaven. Once you attain it. Can work backwards.

And turn even that agony. Into glory. I mean we literally sing a hymn. In this church. That says. Earth has no sorrow.

[ 35 : 53 ] That heaven. Can't. Heal. And it's only against that kind of backdrop. That you can really start to appreciate. A verse like Romans 8.28. Where he says.

All things work together for your good. Or. How. A man who's a prisoner. And tortured for the gospel. Can say. In 2nd Corinthians.

These are light. And momentary troubles. And they're as of nothing. Compared to the weight of glory. Of what God's doing. Jesus. Is the promise.

Of that better future. And maybe one thing further to say. So you might say. That is encouraging. But. Heaven's a long way off.

Like heaven's not going to show up at work. On Monday morning. Part of what we celebrate in Advent. Is that when Jesus comes.

[ 36 : 52 ] Something new starts. Like that reality. That we're charging to. So just as. Through Adam. Sin and death. Comes in the world.

Through Jesus. Righteousness. And wholeness. Starts to break in. Starts to invade. And so you may still look around.

And go like. Well man. The world still looks pretty bad. Why is it so bad? If Jesus coming. Did something. And again. I don't have an answer. For every. Every sorrow. And everything.

That God has chosen to do. Or not do to this point. But I can tell you this. Wherever God's kingdom is. Like wherever his will has come. His will is being done. Things are right. Like there.

There is healing. And there is wholeness. There is fixing. Whether that's something. Common or supernatural. That is an expression. Of the healing. Of his kingdom.

[ 37 : 47 ] Coming in. When we say. Every week. We're going to go out. And push back darkness. That's what it means. It means we get to join. Jesus. In the mission. Of pushing back darkness.

With his kingdom. Like of bringing. Heaven. To people. Right now. In. In small. And big ways. Through kindness. And love.

And prayer. And not only all of that. As we kind of advance. We know that we don't. Do that in vain. Right? Like we're just making little gains.

But man. At any time. Something in the world. Can come along. And sweep all that away. Because Jesus. Doesn't just leave us. With that mission. He leaves us. With a promise.

In Acts chapter 10. And it says. And while they were gazing. Into heaven. Two men stood by them. In white robes. And said. Men of Galilee. Why do you stand. Looking into heaven. Because Jesus. Who was taken up from you.

[ 38 : 44 ] Will come again. In the same way. He left. And throughout church history. When you look at the church. Celebrating Advent. They have always recognized this. You're not just celebrating.

We're celebrating. The baby who came. But there's a bigger thing here. Which is. They could see from that. Because Jesus came once. We can be certain.

He will come again. And so. Whether it's that. Future. When God will remake the world. Or the hope of God's kingdom.

Entering your life right now. Jesus is that hope of a better future. And that's why we celebrate. So as we.

As we close. I don't know. What of those desires. Might resonate in your heart. But I can testify to you. From a life of following the Savior.

[ 39 : 42 ] Jesus is the only thing I've ever found. That can get in that deep place. That can start to touch the edges of that place. That doesn't feel like it can be touched. And so I'd invite you to consider him today.

Because he is the hope of nations. Jesus is the truth we see. Jesus is the delighted embrace we crave. And Jesus is the promise of a better future.

Jesus is the hope of everyone. Everywhere. The band comes up. If you're not a follower of Jesus. Maybe one of these is resonated with you. I'd really invite you to step into that. Jesus is not this aloof person.

Like he's never going to meet you. In a place of condemnation. Like the scripture describes it as him standing at a door. Like your door. The door of your life and knocking.

[ 40 : 40 ] And he says if anyone. Anyone. No matter who you are. What you've done. Where you're at. If anyone. Opens that door.

I'm going to come in with you. And I'm going to fellowship with you. Like if you. Sense. Through some desire. That that's what he's doing. You've just got to say.

Jesus come in. If you want to. There'll be some people to the side of the stage. They'd love to pray with you about that. But if any of those desires. If you feel like you're just chasing your tail in life.

I'd invite you to give Jesus. A second look. If you are a follower of Jesus. What place in your heart. Might you need that to flow into.

Is it a new name? Is it hope for tomorrow? Like what do you need from him? Like your relationship with him doesn't start. Stop when you invite him in. Like he's. He's as close as flesh.

[ 41 : 36 ] That like. You can ask him for that. You can say. God. This thing. Feels like it. Will never get better. This thing. Feels like it is broke. And it can never be made.

Whole. You're in fellowship. With the one who can make it whole. Both now. And in an ultimate sense. Why don't you bring that to him today?

We're going to take communion together. If you'll go ahead and stand. One of the beautiful things about.

The communion cup. Is it is a. Consistent reminder to us. That we have fellowship with the one. Who is our desire. That we can have access to that.

Because of what he did. What he was willing to pay. And I was. As I was thinking about this week. If you think about. When Jesus. Takes the cup.

[ 42 : 42 ] Again. Just to that promise. Of what he's doing. He says to his disciples. I'm not going to take this again with you. Until the unbreaking of all things.

He's like. The next time we do this together. Until I come. You do this to remember. But one day. Everything will be whole. And we'll take it together again.

If you're a follower of Jesus. Let's take this bread. And this drink. In remembrance. That he came. In anticipation.  
That he's coming again. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.