

# The Guaranteed Harvest

by Paul Washer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God's sovereignty in human history and its significance in the context of missions and the Great Commission.*

**Duration:** 1:17:26

**Scripture:** Psalm 2:6-8, Matthew 6:33, John 6:37, Acts 1:8, Ephesians 1:4, Revelation 5:1, Revelation 7:9

**Topics:** "Evangelism"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of not wasting one's life and giving more to the cause of Christ. He urges the audience to prioritize the Great Commission and the gospel over worldly pursuits. The preacher warns the young people in the congregation that they will be held accountable for their privilege of hearing the Bible taught. He also highlights the need for believers to have a deep knowledge of God and a vision of Christ. The sermon concludes with the introduction of a strong angel proclaiming a message that is meant for the entire universe.

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## Transcript

It's a great privilege for me to be here with you this evening. We are here to speak about missions, yet at the same time, there are so many here this evening that your heart is dull because you've never known Him. Maybe you're a young person and you were brought here this evening.

Your parents. You look down, you move your feet, you write with a pencil, you distract yourself. No matter how humble we are as preachers and how hard it is to hear us, know this young person, that just the fact that you're in a church where the Bible is taught and a man is attempting to speak from the open Bible, you are greatly privileged.

Greatly privileged. And you will be held accountable on that day. I fear for some of the young people who are here tonight.

Listen, there is absolutely nothing more important than Jesus Christ. If you sense boredom, fight against that boredom and pay attention. Because your life depends on everything you hear when a Bible is open.

Seek with all your heart to know Him. Hate the fact that you don't care to know Him. Do whatever is within your means to seek Him and to hear His Word.

If you're a Christian here tonight, we're talking about missions. We're not talking about something that can be added to or taken from the Christian life. We're talking about missions.

That there are countless billions of people who have not heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. And if we're in this generation, we are responsible to make that gospel known. I always say this, missions, there's only two ministries in missions.

You either go down in the well or you hold the rope for those who are going down. Either way, there will be scars on your hands. Stand up, show me your scars.

What has it cost you to be a Christian? What has it cost you to follow Him? What has it cost you to take the gospel to the nations? What have you given up? You look for meaning here and there, running to and fro. I'll tell you what meaning is and where it is found. It is found in doing the will of God.

I have food to eat that you know not of. My food is to do the will of Him who sent me. The reason why Americans are so full and yet so empty.

The reason why our Christian bookstores, 50% of the books in there, are written to figure out why we have no purpose. Why we feel so hollow. It is because we have left the first things.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. With all your mind and with all your strength. And love your neighbor as yourself.

And your neighbor is the one closest to you and the one most far away. The one who has the gospel and must be encouraged. And the one who does not have the gospel and at this moment stands very little chance of ever hearing the gospel.

Unless something changes. Let's open up our Bibles to the book of Revelation chapter 5. Revelation chapter 5 and verse 1. I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back. Sealed up with seven seals.

And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals. And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it.

And one of the elders said to me, stop weeping. Behold, the lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals. And I saw between the throne with the four living creatures and the elders, a lamb standing as if slain.

Having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him who sat on the throne. When he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the 24 elders fell down before the lamb.

Each one had each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song saying, worthy are you to take the book and to break its seals. For you were slain and purchased for God with your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

You have made them to be a kingdom and priests who are God and they will reign upon the earth. Let's pray. Father, father, we so much need the Holy Spirit.

God, multiplying words upon words. Take, Lord, this word. The Holy Spirit.

And make it alive. A living reality in the hearts. Of all of us, Lord, that we might see the victory and the glory that the lamb has won.

That we might see his absolute sovereignty and his power, how he has triumphed over all things and purchased for himself a people that that would motivate us to worship him, to serve him and to go out, father, to every tribe and every tongue and every people and every nation. With the glorious gospel of our blessed God, father, help me, Lord, who is worthy to even touch. The dust of this book and yet, Lord, to speak about this text at this time, father, please help us in Jesus name.

Amen. The general theme of this book is the victory of the lamb. And the victory of the lamb's gospel.

We live in a day where Christianity is considered a small thing. But it is not a small thing because of the one who has accomplished the greatest work in the name of God, and that is his Messiah, his Christ. This chapter that's before us, it is about the victory of the lamb and all that he has accomplished through the cross.

And I want us to look at this verse by verse to see that the work of missions does not hang upon the power of a man, the intellect of the greatest mind or the eloquence of the greatest preacher. The gospel hangs upon the power of Christ. The lamb of God, the son of God and the savior of the world.

Before I get started again, I just look out here and I see so many lives and I want to tell you, don't waste your life. I am 48 years old and I have regrets. The only regrets that I have is that I have not given more to the cause of Christ, that I've kept so much back for myself.

And I look at you and you love your children and you love your wife and you want good things for them and you want your children to learn all sorts of things and to prosper and have good jobs and play basketball and football and have friends. But don't you see that that's compared to Christ and the great commission is nothing. Sir, are you leading your children to see that all the universe pales in comparison to the one we're going to see here tonight? And every task, every work, every deed that is known to man is nothing compared to taking this gospel to the world.

Don't waste your life. Look at this Christ tonight. Fall in love with him.

Be absolutely amazed at his power. Follow him. Follow him.

And we look at our text, verse one, he says, I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne, a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals. John says, first of all, I saw. That's why John is called the seer.

He saw the things that God revealed to him, that Jesus Christ himself revealed to him. And he wrote it down in this book. Now, the fact that John saw the future is a very important thing.

It tells us something very important about God. Really, we can interpret this only one of two ways. If God saw the future, if John saw the future, it's because God revealed the future to him.

If God revealed the future to him, God knows the future. But here's the question. How does God know the future? It is very popular in the evangelical world today to say that God knows the future because he looked down through the corridors of time.

And he saw what was going to happen or that his wisdom is so great, he is able to discern all the factors creating the future and then come to a logical and perfect conclusion about the future. He knows the future because he saw it. But that's not what Scripture teaches.

John knew the future because God revealed the future to him and God revealed the future to him because God knows the future and God knows the future because he is the author. And the sovereign Lord of the future, he has determined, designated, predestined, designed, whatever you want to call it, absolutely everything so that it will come to pass according to how he desires. And yet, without removing the responsibility of moral creatures.

Now, he says here he saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne, a book. Now, this book consisted of papyrus or parchment glued together and rolled up on a spindle books, as we know them today, didn't come into play until about the second or third century. Now, we have to ask ourselves, and this is very important to understand our text.

What does the book represent? Well, I want to read to you from Ladd. He says this. It is God's redemptive plan for the final scene of human history, the overthrow of evil and the gathering of a redeemed people to enjoy the blessings of God's rule.

Bill writes, the book is best understood as containing God's plan of judgment and redemption, which has been set in motion by Christ's death and resurrection, but has yet to be completed. I believe this book deals in a general way with the revelation of the final consummation of God's plan in human history, the gathering forth of a people, the judgment upon the wicked, the redemption of the church and the restoration of all of creation. Now, he says here, I saw in the right hand of him.

So the the book was held in the right hand of God, literally in the Greek, it says that the book was on the right hand of God. Now, from our studies in biblical literature, we understand that the right hand was a place of favor, attention and a place of power. Thus, the Christ is seated at the right hand of the father, the seat of favor, the seat of power, the seat of authority.

Now, what does that mean about this book? It means this. That God's redemptive plan for the church, his work of gathering a people for himself, it receives his full attention and is the center point or focus of all his power. And you see what that's actually saying.

You see a missionary beating on a drum, talking about a people that he loves. You don't see that because he is involved in the Great Commission, that he receives the full attention of God. That he is the focal point of the power of God.

It's quite an amazing thing. Let's go on. Now, I want you to look.

It says I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne, a book written inside and on the back. The thoroughness of this book, I want you to understand something with regards to the salvation of the church, the gathering forth of a people for Christ, the Great Commission. Not one detail is missing.

Not one thing is left to chance. He is sovereign over all things to the greatest events, to the most minute. He's Lord over it all.

I want to read something to you that I wrote to put in my notes. Whether it is one family saved from a deluge in a makeshift boat, granting a baby to an old man and his barren wife, sending a favored son to

prison in Egypt, placing a baby in a basket of reeds and setting him afloat on the Nile, dividing a sea, diverting the spear of a wicked king thrown at a young psalmist who would replace him. Preserving the Messiah's line from an evil queen when only one male descendant remained on earth, watching over an exiled people and bringing them home again, moving an entire empire to hold a census in order to bring one unknown carpenter to his hometown in Bethlehem.

Whether it involves sending his son and having him offered up on the cross by the hands of the wicked men, whether it involves resurrecting him from the dead and gathering a people to be his bride, every detail is worked out and not one thing is left to chance. A missionary life is not one of great apparent success. True missionaries struggle a great deal.

They can spend their entire life and not see many conversions in certain lands. This is the stuff of strength. Not what they necessarily see with their own eyes, not with the reports that they can send home about all that God is doing.

No, their strength comes from this, that the one who is Lord over history is Lord over the Great Commission and everything he has ordained will come to pass. Psalms 33, 11, the counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of his heart from generation to generation. Isaiah 46, 9. Listen to this.

Remember the former things long past, for I am God and there is no other. I am God and there is no one like me declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times, things which have not been done, saying my purpose will be established and I will accomplish all my good pleasure. Ephesians 1, 11, who works all things after the counsel of his will.

Now, if we look in verse one again, it's a book written inside and on the back and it's sealed up with seven seals. Now, in ancient times, in Roman times, the seal was used to show three things or to do three things to show ownership, to protect a document from being changed or altered in any way. And to keep its contents secret.

Now, how does this apply to our text before us tonight? Well, first of all. That seal implies God's ownership again, that God is the owner of human history. He's the sovereign Lord and author of human history.

You need to understand something. Everything that has ever been done has been done for him. Everything that he is doing is ultimately for his glory and the display thereof.

Now, because you're from a humanistic culture, you say, how could God do all these things for himself? Because he happens to be God by virtue of that title. It is his right to do all for his own glory. Any rational creature must have an end or a purpose for what they're doing.

And if they are a rational creature, they will have the highest end or highest purpose for what they're doing. So if God is going to do something, there must be a reason for it. And the highest reason in the universe is God himself.

He does it for him. You say, what about me? Well, the kindest thing that God could ever do for you. Is to give you the greatest gift he could ever give you.

And that is for him to make the world a stage and to walk out in the center of that stage and to reveal his glory so that you might see it. Some of you who think Christianity is so dull, it is either you have been taught wrongly or you still remain unconverted. Because when you understand that it is about the glory of

God and the manifestation of such beauty that you must be strengthened in your inner man on the day you stand before the Christ.

Because if you are not strengthened in some supernatural fashion, his mere beauty will drive you mad. Christianity is about that glory. Now also, the decrees are fixed.

That seal represents that what God has decreed to do, it cannot be changed. By anything in heaven, earth or hell. The most well-meaning angel cannot bring a change to a jot or tittle.

The greatest demon in hell cannot affect what is written on that scroll. Listen to what he says in Ecclesiastes 7.13. Consider the work of God, for who is able to straighten what he has bent? No one. Oh, he is not this little God sitting there on some tin throne with a paper mache crown on his head, wringing his hands, wondering what's going to become of his plan.

He knows what's going to become of his plan. There will be victory because it hangs upon one who is worthy, and that is the Christ. Now also, God's decrees are hidden from men unless he chooses to reveal them.

It says in Deuteronomy 29.29. The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever. Do you realize something? Listen to me. Those who don't think much of scripture reading or preaching.

Do you realize that men and women far more noble than you would have given their lives to hear the things you are hearing and to see the things you are seeing? Oh, if God would just take away our ignorance, if he would take away this dullness of mind that causes us to chase after things that do not matter. If we would only in our hearts return to those things that are truly precious in the sight of God. Ramsey writes this in God's government.

Nothing is left to chance to him. Nothing is uncertain. No unforeseen contingency can arise and there is no crisis unprovided for.

It's amazing. It's amazing. Now, in verse two, it says, and I saw a strong angel proclaiming in a loud voice.

Now, we all know that angels are quite strong. At least that's what it seems in the scriptures. So if it was just an angel or maybe even a small angel, we would be amazed.

But it says clearly that here is an unusually strong angel proclaiming in an unusually loud voice. Now, what is he trying to show us? He's saying that the message, the declaration that this angel is about to make is not confined to a certain region in the world or a certain region in the cosmos. But his voice travels throughout the entirety of the universe.

And what does he ask? Read on, he says, who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals? The word worthy comes from the Greek word axios. It's an adjective meaning literally weighty, having weight or having worth. When you're in an argument with someone and you trump their contradiction, they say, well, that's a weighty argument.

That's a worthy argument. It has worth. It has value.

And the question being asked here is who has the weight, the worth, the virtue, the merit, the strength corresponding to the greatness of the task. Now, who is able to reveal, but not just reveal, also enact or

bring to completion the decrees of God leading up to the final redemption of the church and the final restoration of creation? Verse three, and no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. First of all, we understand that a search has been made throughout the entirety of the universe.

Secondly, we find out that not even the greatest of angels are able to answer the call. We have no mention here of Gabriel coming forth or of Michael standing up and saying, I am the one when we look among the greatest of men. We could go to Noah, but he's absent.

Abraham. Moses. He's silent.

Surely, Isaiah, Jeremiah, one of the prophets of old, no, they sit in their seat, they do not move. They know they are not able to answer the call. As a matter of fact, if all the most precious creatures in heaven were to join forces of strength, of intellect, of purity, of spirituality, none of them.

As a collective unit would be able to rise up and say, we shall do the task. No one Ramsey's writes, Ramsey writes in vain is this call made. The whole universe is silent.

It seems to stand appalled at the very idea of such a work being committed to creature hands. Cease writes, Angel shrunk back from it is beyond their qualifications. Heavenly principalities and powers stood mute and downcast as they surveyed the requirements of the work.

Do you know one of the great evidences of true conversion? Is that if someone comes to you and even hints. That your virtue or merit had something to do with your right standing before God, you become so nauseous as to vomit. You turn from them and say, oh, way, oh, way.

Here, this great call is made and all of creation hangs its head. Almost sick and even the possible suggestion that one of them or all of them together might be worthy. Now we read in verse four, then I begin to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it.

Literally, John began a great weeping or a wailing. There is no one able. No one to open up the seals, reveal the plan of God, but most importantly, there is no one able to take that book out of his hands and enact the decrees and bring the work of God's salvation to its final completion.

Seuss writes, John knew this is so amazing. John knew by that spirit in which he was, what that sealed book meant. He knew that if no one was found worthy and able to take it from the hand of God and to break its seals, that all the promises of the prophets and all the hopes of the saints and all the things associated with the redeemed world must fail.

He understood that if there was a failure at this point, the redemption of the purchase possession must fail. Could it be possible that this should be? Had he all this while been hoping and preaching and prophesying what should, after all, not be accomplished? Was the promise inheritance now at the ripened moment for its recovery to go by default into eternal alienation? How could he bear the thought? Yes. Yet such were some of the suggestions of this interval of blankness and awful pause.

We are so dull. About the things of God. That someone would suggest that something might not happen, that he decreed, and we are so dull in our understanding that we do not think it's a big deal.

John came undone. He knew if only one aspect of God's plan fails or cannot be enacted, then the whole thing is gone. There is no hope at all.

You know, there's a saying out there that men are so spiritually minded, they're no earthly good. I say men are so earthly minded, they're no good in heaven or earth. Do you see what's going on here? We care more about our balancing of our checkbooks, about whether or not we have the right home or the right car or the right clothing or this and that.

We fret about so many things. But John was a seer. He could see that all the earthly things do not matter.

The decrees of heaven being carried out on the earth is the only thing that matters. Oh, give me 25 men who realize that the only thing that matters on this planet is the carrying out of the decrees of God and they will march like an army this world has never seen. This silence in heaven was a dramatic interlude.

It was a dramatic interlude calculated to impress upon John and to impress upon us the singular dignity of the one that's about to be presented. I love that all hope is gone. There's nothing left, not even the greatest angels in heaven or the holiest of men.

Their jaws drop, their arms hang to their side. There's no force left in them. Even the seer wails and cannot be comforted.

And then you hear the Lamb. That name. I know a dear brother.

And if you walk up to him, he's an old man, and you say, Brother, tell me something about Jesus. He will turn around with his face glowing and tears just flowing down his face. Let me tell you, I wish we would see him.

Is that precious? I don't need to psych you up for missions. I don't need to get you like some football player riled up to go do some good deed. What we need is a vision of Christ.

And that will compel you. Paul, yes, he was a prisoner for Christ Jesus because he wore chains, but it was much bigger than that. He was indicating something else.

He was a prisoner of the love of Christ. He was a prisoner of the splendid beauty of Christ. He saw Christ in such a way that Christ became of infinite worth to him.

And it drove him. Some would say drove him almost mad, but drove him nonetheless. That's what we need.

That's what we need in evangelicalism. That's what we need in reform movements and sovereign grace movements and every other kind of movement. We need an exalted vision of the beauty and power and the unique dignity of the person of Jesus Christ.

That will build a fire in a man that won't go out for a thousand lifetimes. In verse 5, one of the elders said to me, stop weeping. Now, this elder is possibly part of a group of 24 that are possibly the most splendid, the most exalted rank of angelic creatures.

It could be possible. We don't know that they are the greatest, the highest order of creature. But notice when he directs John, he does not direct John to himself.

He points away from himself and he directs John to the person of Jesus Christ. That is such a good word for those of us who are preachers. There are no great men of God.

Never have been, never will be. I've known some of them and they're not great at all. There are no great men of God.

Just tiny, faithless, unbelieving. Sinful, minuscule, pathetic little men of a great and mighty God. He says to John, stop weeping or stop wailing.

This is not merely a consolation. He's not merely telling John, John, I'm consoling you. I feel for you, John.

Now, this is a command. John, stop. Stop.

What's the difference between John and this elder? How is it that the elder can stand there in silence and be so bold? And yet John hears the silence. No one answers the call and he's broken into a million pieces. He's disintegrated.

What's the difference? I'll tell you what the difference is. It's not the nature. Of that angelic creature as being superior over that of John's.

But it's that that angelic creature possessed a greater, sure knowledge and a deeper vision of the power of God. He knew God. I am amazed today.

I go up to students and I say graduated from this and that seminary or Bible college. And I say in your four years of training, how many of those years did you spend studying the attributes of God? Well, we dealt with that half a semester. There's a problem.

There are two things in which men must be trained. One is to know their God. And the other is to understand the gospel.

How to spend four years on both. We need a vision of Christ. Now, I'm going to stop here for a moment.

I could tell you that you need to love God more. And you would say, of course, I do. The question is, how do you love God more? Do you pull yourself up by your proverbial bootstraps? What do you do to make yourself love God more? Well, I love my wife now much more than I did when we were first married.

She is an imperfect person. But over the 16 years that we have been married, I know more now of her virtue and her merit, her nature. The things and the ways in which God has changed her.

And that virtue in her draws out my affections. So the more I see of her virtue, the more my affections are drawn out toward her, the more I love her. It's the same way.

The more you know of God's virtue and merit and worth. If you are a true believer, the more your affections will be drawn out of you and control you. But if you're an unconverted churchman, the more you know of God, the more you will hate him.

Because your heart must be changed before such virtue could ever draw forth such affection. Now, let's go on. He says, John, stop weeping.

Behold, the lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the root of David. Behold, Edu. Look, be careful.

Pay attention to this. At this moment, at this moment, everything draws back and everything vanishes from John's sight. And there stands the Christ.

The angel says he is the lion of the tribe of Judah. Now, this is a messianic title taken from Genesis chapter forty nine. Just let me read it to you.

Judah, your brother shall praise you. Your hands shall be on the neck of your enemies. Your father's son shall bow down to you.

Judah is a lion's wealth from the prey. My son, you have gone up. He couches.

He lies down as a lion and as a lion. Who dares rouse him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler staff from between his feet until Shiloh comes. And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

Now, why is he called the lion of the tribe of Judah? He is presented here. Jesus Christ is presented as the great, the magnificent, the fierce warrior king. Yes.

Now, I want you to hold on to that. He is presented as God's great champion and the champion of God's people. Now, he's also called the root of David.

This also is a messianic title. Let me read it to you from Isaiah 11. Then a shoot will spring forth from the stem of Jesse and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.

The spirit of the Lord will rest on him. The spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And he will delight in the fear of the Lord.

And he will not judge by what his eyes see, nor make a decision by what his ears hear. But with righteousness, he will judge the poor and decide with fairness all the afflicted for the afflicted of the earth. And he will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth.

And with the breath of his lips, he will slay the wicked. Also, righteousness will be the belt about his loins and faithfulness, the belt around his waist. Now, by calling him the root of David, the stem of Jesse, this is what's going on.

First of all, the Messiah came forth from the line of David when David's line was almost nothing more than a wilted root, a dried, parched branch in the desert. And what does that tell us? Even when the greatest promises of God seem to be coming as close as possible to their ultimate failure, they blossom forth in fulfillment and prove the faithfulness of God. That is God's dealings with his people.

That it seems like before every great victory, we get closer and closer and closer and closer to failure so that every human strength is exhausted. All endeavors of mankind are dried up. There is no hope.

And then he comes bursting forth. Is that not the way God moves in history? Secondly, though he is the son of God, he is the son of man. He is of David's line.

I think this is so amazing, folks. I could stop right here and for the next three hours we could just go on this. And what's so important here? Just listen to me.

This one who is going to walk up to God and take the book out of his hands and is going to enact the decrees of God and direct all of human history to its final goal, making every even the smallest detail obedient to him. He's a man who is not ashamed to call us brothers. This is amazing.

He is God, yes, but so often in our defense of Christ's deity, we forget his humanity. And that is a tragedy. Now, number three, though David was the anointed of God.

This is God's anointed and he is given the spirit without measure. Now, let's just go back for a moment. I want you to think about something.

David. King David. There was so much about him that was admirable.

There were so many great works that he accomplished. He fought the battles of the Lord and for the Lord's people. He did great things.

He brought liberation. But he is a worm and less than a worm compared to the one who comes after him, the one who is greater than David. Sometimes I hear pastors will compare themselves to Moses and they'll say, you know, as as Moses needed a man to stand on this side and that side to hold up his arms so that the people of God would prevail.

So the pastor needs someone on their left and their right holding up their arms so that the people will prevail. Now you're missing the point. The point is we now have one who is greater than Moses.

He doesn't need to sit on a rock and no one needs to hold up his hands. You are not the fulfillment of Moses. Jesus Christ is.

You are not the fulfillment of Joshua. Jesus is anything that's ever had to have a fulfillment. He's it.

And I like it that way. I like it that way. Also.

Having died in weakness. This one from David's loins. He was raised.

We see this working constantly in this magnificent person of Christ. He came in weakness as a lamb and was crucified. He was raised.

He sits at the right hand of God. There is a sense, my dear friend, and we're going to possibly get to this tomorrow in which there no longer are any real governments or real kings. There is only one in God's economy.

And those who would pretend themselves to be an authority, they ought to kiss the sun and make amends with him before he becomes angry. And his anger can flare up in a moment. That's the Christ you never hear about.

But it's the one of Scripture. Goes on. He has overcome.

We read so as to open the book and its seven seals. Christ has overcome. But in what way has he overcome? Well, there's a whole lot I have here, but I'm going to have to jump through a lot of it.

He has overcome all the obstacles that have stood in the way of God's redemptive plan for his people and the restoration of creation. And in actuality, my dear friend, that can all be boiled down to one thing. Sin.

Sin. When God created man, he gave him dominion over the earth. When man sinned against God, he lost that dominion and it was usurped by the evil one.

And the world itself was thrown into chaos and placed under condemnation and bondage to sin and death. But the Son of God became a man. The world was given to men.

The world was lost by a man. The world had to be regained by a man. He overcame sin.

Hebrews 9:26. For now, once at the consummation of the ages, he has been manifest of put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He overcame Satan.

He defeated him. He plundered him. He made a public spectacle of him.

He overcame death. Hebrews 12, 14 and 15. Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise also partook of the same that through death he might render powerless him who had the power of death.

That is the devil and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. He has overcome. And how did he overcome? He overcame.

Through the cross. Now, let's go into verse six. He says, and I saw between the throne with the four living creatures and the elders, a lamb literally.

And I saw in the middle of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the middle of the elders. The simple meaning here is this, that Christ takes center stage in the universe. In heaven.

And on Earth. Does that make you afraid? It should. Is he center in your life? Is he the priority? Does everything else pale in comparison to him? If you say no, then I can tell you, you are thinking like one who is insane.

You are thinking like one who does not have his reason. The greatest, most splendid creatures in all of heaven acknowledge him to be front and center in all things. And yet you and I are so quick to forget him and to neglect him.

What foolish creatures we are. It is for this reason God has given us the word of God to renew our minds. It is for this reason God has given us a church that we might sharpen one another constantly, constantly prod one another, constantly be moving, motivating, stimulating one another to forget of these vain distractions, this vanity fair called our world and to focus on everything that is the focus of heaven.

And that is Jesus Christ. He is not. Some little accessory to your already wonderful life.

He is everything. Or is nothing. Christ takes center stage.

I wrote here. This is not a momentary phenomenon, but an infinitely extended and established state. The way things will always be.

Christ will always be at the center. Of everything, of everything. We go on.

I saw between the throne with the four living creatures and the elders, a lamb, a lamb. John looks up and sees a lamb. I can assure you that this was not what he was expecting.

The fierce warrior king, the champion of God, the champion of God's people. Is a lamb. Cease rights.

He is here described not by the ordinary word used to signify lamb. I'm not. But another army on more intensely significant of gentleness and domesticity, A pet lamb, the gentlest and most inoffensive of beings.

Morris writes. This is so good. Russia elevates the bear.

Britain, the lion, France, the tiger, the United States, the spread eagle, all of them ravenous. It is only the kingdom of heaven that would dare to use as its symbol of might. Not the lion for which John was looking, but a helpless lamb.

And at that, a slain one. Now, also, I want you to realize this. For those of you who care not much.

For Christ. For the nations and for the great kings that lift up their noses at him and rule without his authority. I believe that this word is being used here to show not just the lamb, but the gentlest of creatures.

He's doing it to give consolation to God's people, but he's doing it also to heap judgment upon his enemies. That this one who rules has never been. He's never been an unloving tyrant.

He's never been a wicked beast. He's never gobbled up nations or trampled them down with iron shoes. No one on judgment day will ever be able to stand there and excuse themselves for not surrendering to him because they found something wrong with Christ.

He has been kind. He has been gentle. He has been loving.

He has waited for you and waited for you and waited for you. He has called out to you. He has given you rain.

He has given you sunshine. He has put the clothes on your back and the breath in your mouth and the beats of your heart all come from him. And on the day of judgment, all of creation will stand against you and they will applaud when the verdict is read with regard to your condemnation because you rejected someone so good.

Goes on. It says the lamb standing as if slain, the word there is Slazo, meaning to slay, slaughter, butcher a lamb bearing the marks of slaughter. Lad writes, the lamb had the appearance of having been slain, that is, with its throat cut as though it had been slaughtered.

Now, we must always remember this and never forget that everything the lion of the tribe of Judah has done and everything he will accomplish, this great and mighty lion has accomplished it by dying as a lamb. The land that was slain, it says he is now standing as the New Testament church always cried out. He has risen indeed.

John is now just seeing with his own eyes what Christ himself declared to him at the beginning of this book when he said, I am the first and the last, the living one. And I was dead. And behold, I am alive, not periodically.

Not at just this moment, but I am alive forevermore and I have the keys of death and of hell. The lamb is risen, but I want you to realize something, though he is risen, though he is all powerful, the marks remain.

The cross was not a necessary evil to be forgotten.

It was the greatest revelation of God to be remembered forever. It was not a momentary evil to be forgotten. Goes on, he says, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the world.

The horn in ancient Jewish literature referred to power. We can see that in Deuteronomy 33, 17, as the first born of his ox. Majesty is his and his horns are the horns of the wild ox.

With them, he will push the peoples all at once to the ends of the earth. Now, the fact that the Christ not only has a horn, but has seven horns represents his absolute and perfect power. Some scholars suggest, especially from this passage in Deuteronomy, that it refers to not only perfect power, but aggressive.

I want to read something. Just listen for a moment. From Isaiah 59, and he saw that there was no man and was astonished that there was no one to intercede, then his own arm brought salvation to him and his righteousness upheld him.

He put on righteousness like a breastplate and a helmet of salvation on his head. And he put on garments of vengeance for clothing and listen, wrapped himself with zeal as a mantle. This Christ.

My goodness, listen to me, lift up your head, get it out of a book, think about this. Christ is doing mighty things in the land. I could I could right now just stop preaching.

This brother could come forward. We could tell you report after report after report. Some of them so magnificent, you would not believe them about what this Christ is doing.

He has wrapped himself in zeal and he is carrying out a great work for the last two thousand years. He has been doing it and he will continue it until the day he returns. And you need to understand something.

Christianity is not some little thing, some sectarian thing done in South Mississippi. You take everything Christ has done and is doing in Christianity is, has been and always will be the biggest thing going in the universe. And you get to be a part of it.

And don't you realize we are living in the greatest time to be a Christian? Here are these people moping about us living in a post-Christian America that gives us an opportunity to live like first century Christians. We may even get to suffer for him before we get out of here. Privilege, privilege goes on.

Christ is not. Nonchalant. In his endeavors, it says he has seven eyes.

These represent his omniscience. Nothing is beyond his government and nothing is beyond his gaze. Nothing is going to appear suddenly over the hill and thwart his plans.

He knows everything. Absolutely everything. So he is all powerful.

He is all knowing and he is worthy size. These writes the following three grand qualities of the Christ are thus brought to view. First, his sacrificial virtue to take away sin.

Second, his aggressive strength to conquer and to overcome all foes. And third, perfect and universal intelligence direct from the indwelling spirit of God in all his fullness. Therefore, this lamb really is worthy.

He really is verse seven, and he came and took the book out of the right hand who sat on the throne. Do you know anything about God? Don't you realize you can't do this? You can't do this. This is amazing.

These rights, this is the sublimest individual act recorded in the apocalypse. Ramsey writes, it is the investiture of the slain lamb with universal dominion. Isaiah, you know, in the year of the king, as I died, I saw also the Lord high and lifted up in his train, filled the temple above him.

He stood the seraph, each one having six wings with two. They covered their face with two that covered their feet with two. They did fly and one cried unto the other.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. He goes on and goes on. And then he says, woe is me, for I am undone.

He caught a fraction of a glimpse of God and it disintegrated him. The lamb, the son of David, greater than David, walks right up to God. And don't forget, this is our brother.

This is the one who did not take upon himself the nature of an angel, the nature of a man. Here we find a direct correlation, I believe, with the son of man in Daniel. It says in Daniel seven, I kept looking in night visions and behold, with the clouds of heaven, one like a son of man was coming and he came up to the ancient of days and was presented before him.

And to him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom that all the people's nations and men of every language might serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away. And his kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.

This is what Jesus meant when he said, all authority has been given unto me in heaven and on earth. What did you think that meant? A simple statement, all authority has been given unto me in heaven on earth. That could be some theologians believe the most radical statement Jesus Christ ever made.

All authority has been given unto him in heaven on earth. Ephesians one twenty and twenty one. He raised him from the dead and seated him at the right hand in heavenly places at his right hand in the heavenly places far above all rule and authority and power and dominion in every name that is named not only in this age, but also in the one to come.

Verse eight, when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty four elders fell down before the lamb, each one holding a harp. Here we see the most exalted creatures in the universe falling on their face before Christ. If this is not a proof of deity, what could be? And know this.

Learn from them, if you're going to take anything home to meditate on tonight, meditate on their action, the most exalted creatures. I'm sure if one of them came down to this planet, the world could not contain them. Their beauty would devastate us.

Our minds would not be able to comprehend a fraction of their glory. Such fear was set upon us that we would all die in an instant. And they throw themselves down before Jesus of Nazareth.

Will they not condemn us on the day of judgment for our lack of worship? The Puritans were right when they called sin, neglect of God, insanity. But the most reasonable creatures throw themselves down and we have no time for such things. Are you sure you know Christ? Are you sure? Goes on.

Golden bowls and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. I simply want to say this skimming over it. In ancient Jewish literature, again, angels were often appearing, presenting the prayers of God's people to God.

But here's something that's quite amazing. They do this in the presence of the lamb. He is our mediator.

There is one God. Only one and one mediator between God and man, the man, Christ Jesus. Goes on, verse nine.

And they sing a new song saying, worthy are you to take the book and to break its seals? All of heaven now confesses with its mouth what it's been proclaiming with its posture. They've thrown themselves down before Christ and they're crying out, you are worthy. They sing a new song.

Now, in the scriptures, a new song is usually coined after some new act of deliverance. This is the last new song to ever be sung. That Christ is worthy because he was slain is the great anthem of heaven.

I would pray that you would catch a glimpse of the cross. That it would become your anthem. My favorite preacher ever.

No question about it is Charles Spurgeon. But to be honest with you, and I know he's going to get very angry with me when I talk to him one day. But the guy only preached one message.

I have read so many sermons of so many sermons from Charles Spurgeon. And every one of them, it doesn't matter where you take him, what text, he is going to make a beeline for Jesus Christ on the cross. He will find a way.

I wonder why he was the most used and maybe the most powerful preacher that ever walked this planet apart from Christ and his apostles. Could it be because he was so enamored, that great mind of his and that great heart of his, with one thing, the crucified Christ. Oh, that we would be that way.

Goes on and he says. For you were slain. It is worthy are you to take the books, to break it seals for you were slain.

Now, finally, we are told with words clearly that we cannot misunderstand. He is worthy to be worshiped by all of creation, the greatest and the smallest. And why is that? Because he was slain.

Slain, he was a lamb led to the slaughter. There is no Christianity without a lamb and there is no lamb in Christianity except the one that has been slaughtered. And if you're going to preach Christ, you are going to preach Christ slaughtered, crucified for the sins of his people and raised again on the third day.

Let me read some things to you. This cross is the anthem of heaven. And it should be the thing that draws you to loyalty, but for the world, they hate it.

My dear friend, sometimes I'll come home from preaching. And I'll tell my wife. These men got very, very angry at me, these men threatened me or these men wrote this on the Internet.

And my wife will always say, what are you? That's what they're supposed to do because men hate the cross. They're supposed to do it. Now, get back out there again and preach.

Men hate the cross. And if they don't hate you, you're not preaching the cross. Now, sometimes I have preached the cross of Jesus Christ and I have done it with the wrong spirit.

I have failed in so many ways. A man asked me recently in a radio interview, he says, a lot of people say a lot of bad things about you. And I said, yes, because what do you feel about that? And I said, well, when people said horrible things about Christ, they were always wrong.

But when people say things about me, they're not always wrong. And we need to learn from them. But notice men hate.

Listen to this. This isn't a dialogue from Octavius. In this, Felix derides the Christians, saying their ceremony center on a man put to death for his crime and on the fatal wood of the cross.

He goes on to say that Christians put forth sick delusions, a senseless and crazy superstition which leads to the destruction of all true religion. That is true. Lucian, the Voltaire of Antiquity, mocks Christians in his *De Morte Peregrini* as poor devils who deny Greek gods and instead honor that crucified sophist and live according to his laws.

Origins works contra Celsus in it. Celsus declares the following. What drunken old woman telling stories to lull a small child to sleep would not be ashamed of muttering such preposterous things.

And plenty of the younger rights after examining two Christian slave girls under torture, I discovered nothing but a perverse and extravagant superstition. But I'll tell you this. To honor his son.

If you go out into that world that hates your gospel and you preach it long enough and faithfully enough, God will call forth people. Why finish up here? He says, because the son of God purchased them for God with his blood. Now, it says he purchased them men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

I do not believe that we ought to sit down and just try to figure out exact and perfect definitions as though some some code is found within these words. I think what he is telling John is that he is going to gather a people for himself, not from just one singular ethnic group or even a few, but from every ethnic. I'll tell you this.

The extravagant theologies that come out of America with regard to eschatology have done more damage to winning Muslims to Christ than anything I could possibly ever think of. I honestly think that if they were to be nuked tomorrow, a lot of Christians would rejoice saying it's the will of God rather than souls have perished. Christ died for a people from all peoples and we carry the gospel to all peoples and we love all people and we die for all peoples.

The gospel might be preached to every creature. Now, here's where we're going to end. And this is where the sovereignty comes in.

Listen very carefully. Because really, this is important. I'm going to read some things to you.

God reveals to John that he is going to call forth the people that has been purchased, has been purchased. It's going to call forth the people from every tribe, every tongue, every people and every nation. Now, when we hear that, we've only got a few options theologically and I'm going to give them to you.

One. Here's the question. Is this prophecy based on God's foreknowledge of how people would respond to the gospel or is it based on his sovereign decree? Two.

Did Christ pay a price only in hope that he might gain an uncertain number of people who might choose him? Or did he pay a price for a certain number of people that God had chosen before the foundation of the world? Three. And this is the kicker. Now, listen, I want you to think about this.

Was Jesus able to reveal to John that men from every tribe, tongue, people and nation would be redeemed simply because he was able to look forward in time and see that fortunately, that is the way things turned out? Or was it because God had ordained it from before the foundation of the world? I'll give you the answer. Psalms two, six and eight, chapter two, verse six and eight. But as for me, I've installed my king upon Zion, my holy mountain.

I will surely tell of the decrees of the Lord. He said to me, you are my son. Today I have begotten begotten you.

Ask of me and I will surely give you the nations as your inheritance and the very ends of the earth as your possession. I will give them to you, son. And then in John six thirty seven, all that the father gives me will come to me and the one who comes to me, I most certainly will not cast out.

Now, I want to conclude with just saying this. The infinite value of the death of Christ secures for us the right to offer the gospel to every creature on this planet and to do so passionately. That is why one of the first administrative acts of Christ, when he had all authority and all power, was to send forth his men to preach to every creature on the face of the earth.

But at the same time, the death of Christ not only made possible a universal offer of the gospel, but it actually secured a specific people. I'm going to read from Ramsey from the Geneva commentary, and this is we'll just conclude with his words. The price has been paid.

The prisoners, therefore, must be released and given over to him. The curse cannot hold them, for he has already borne it. The law cannot hold him, for he has already satisfied it.

Death and hell cannot hold them, for these derive their claim from the violated law and that claim is forever canceled. Having paid the price of their redemption in his own life's blood, they are his property. And since he cannot be deprived of his blood-bought right, sin that by nature reigns in them must be dethroned and destroyed and the world that holds them captive conquered.

Thus, I love this part, thus he sends forth the Holy Spirit to subdue their hearts to himself. He regenerates their hearts and makes them able to respond to the gospel of their salvation. Thus, by repentance and faith, they take actual and complete possession of that spiritual and eternal life purchased for them.

That same death secured the right for Christ. Now, listen to this. Oh, I love this.

That same death secured for Christ the right to direct all acts of providence of every kind and decree and degree from the fall of a sparrow to that of an empire so that they work together, all of them for the good or salvation of his people. Nothing in earth or hell can deprive him, the Christ, in the minutest degree of what he has bought with his blood, the complete salvation of every one of his people whom the father has given him. All things, therefore, are committed to his hand and to be used by him for this great end.

Do you see the power? We can go anywhere. Anyone tries to stop us. The daughter of Zion wags their head at them and we can go knowing that if we stay, if we preach, if we're faithful to the gospel, if we cut ourselves off from all of these church growth helps in these supports of the flesh.

If we go out there with nothing more than the gospel of Christ, sacrificial love, intercessory prayer, we will bring in the sheaves with joy because he's ordained. Thank you, Paul. The stand and be dismissed.

We have a full day tomorrow. It's been a great evening to kick off this conference. So I'll ask God to be with us now.

Lord, we thank you for this powerful reminder tonight. The harvest is guaranteed. You've purchased past tense, your people out of every kindred tribe, people and nation.

Now they await to hear the gospel. Help us, Lord, to go forth in every aspect of our lives, neighborhoods, family, even to the uttermost parts of the earth. Help us to open our mouths and speak about Jesus Christ.

The good news that sinners can be saved, receive your righteousness, O Lord, and then await the glory of heaven while we serve you faithfully. Lord, just continue to meet us this weekend. Bless us with a full day tomorrow.

Fill our cups to overflowing. Thank you for giving us such powerful thoughts tonight from your word from both Ken and Paul. Help us to go away now meditating and thinking and discussing and then closing our eyes with these great thoughts for your glory alone.

In your name we pray. Amen.

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