

Revelation 20-05-07a

Good evening, welcome to the Sunday plus four, which would be Thursday night Bible class at Grace and Truth. We continue our study in the book of Revelation tonight, and we're going to be picking up our study of the seals, trumpets, and bowls. In advance of that, we're going to be looking at a few things related to where we are relative to scripture's guidance about the end of this age.

And so we'll take a moment to ask God's blessing on our fellowship and on our study on this seventh day of May, 2020, and then we'll begin. Father, we do thank you for this opportunity to spend time together in fellowship and the study of your word. We pray that it will be fruitful and profitable for each one, and that as we reflect on these truths, we will be better equipped to produce the fruit of righteousness by faith and be prepared to fulfill every good work, both now and in future opportunities for service.

We pray these things in Jesus' name, amen. If you remember, we looked at both 1 Timothy chapter 4 and 2 Timothy chapter 5 to find out where we are relative to the next phase of God's plan and purpose, because the signs given by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24 are earthly signs. Earthquakes, famines, pestilences, wars, and rumors of war, and so on, these are signs to Israel.

All of the signs to Israel are physical. The signs and miracles that God worked to deliver them from Egypt were physical. The pillar of fire and pillar of cloud was on the earth.

The miracles that the Lord Jesus did to verify his credentials and announce the coming of the kingdom were visible and earthly and manifest. We are a spiritual people. We do not observe rituals, because those are physical signs.

Our observances are in the spiritual realm. We weren't even given any concrete guidance on how to organize a church. You cannot find in scripture whether a church gathering ought to be ruled by elders or by a single pastor or by several elders who are pastors.

We are told the functions that should take place. There should be consideration. It should be decently and in good order.

There should be teaching of the word of God as a primary undertaking, and those who do so, who function in leadership in the church, should be qualified and examples themselves. That's about it. Everything you see in all the rest of church hierarchy, structure, constitution, and all that is just made-up stuff and to each his own, much as we do with the rest of our lives.

We all make decisions about what we prioritize, what we do and don't do. Paul said some observe days, others observe every day alike. Some people refrain from foods, others don't.

Some observe the feast, some don't. Let each one be fully convinced in his own mind. That's the

way this age works.

Well, the signs of the end of this age likewise are spiritual. So we've been focusing on it here these last few weeks. We looked last time at 1 Timothy chapter 4. The Spirit expressly says that in latter times, some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.

This is what is taking place all around us today. There has been a hard core of doctrinal truth and solid biblical belief. It started out in the Catholic church and when the Catholic church got too wild and woolly, it came outside the church and it existed underground for several centuries and finally came to the surface with the Reformation.

And since that time, Protestant churches recognize that all of this excessive folly roll and accretion is much like what happened in Judaism versus genuine law keeping. The Lord Jesus said, you can sum up the law and the prophets in two quick things. Love the Lord, love your neighbor.

And all the law and prophets basically emphasize those truths. Well, in the same way, Bible believing Christians laying hold of righteousness by faith have existed in the church since Pentecost 2000 years ago. So giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.

This is really a recent thing in what you would call the mainstream church. Now people could say, well, but look at Catholicism. Well, what you want to look at is the Heartwood of Christianity.

And after the first few centuries, the Heartwood wasn't in the Catholic church. The Heartwood was elsewhere. And there have always been a remnant according to the election of grace, if you will, that God has worked to preserve the scriptures, to preserve scriptural doctrine and apostolic truths, and the genuine opportunities for believers to learn and grow and be fruitful in this life all the way up until lately.

Now it is almost impossible to find that Heartwood. Doctrine of demons, seducing spirits are everywhere. And they have infiltrated and overtaken vast swaths of the church.

And they completely dominate media. They dominate social media. They dominate book media.

They dominate television. They dominate every avenue of communication. Even if you want to go to the internet and say, there's somebody out there somewhere that will just give me the simple truth of the word of God, you have to wade through so much detritus that unless God, the Holy Spirit supernaturally guides you, it's virtually impossible to find legitimate Bible truth.

There are a few places, and I'm not talking about us necessarily there. You can go to bible.org and there's some wonderful central truths. You can find legacy websites that preserve some teaching from earlier days, but you've really got to look and you have to know what you're looking for.

And you have to be able to weed out. Sometimes it sounds good, the first few sermons or lessons that you hear. And then you find out that the guys from the church of tomorrow, and he's a Herbert W. Armstrong guy, or he's a Mormon or something else.

You just, it's very difficult to find undiluted, uncorrupted scriptural truth. These days have come upon us. Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron and the scandalous behavior in the leadership of denominations of denominational churches and even other prominent ministries.

The rise of parachurch ministries in the last century and a half is unparalleled in history. Churches supported missionaries, churches trained pastors. And then you had kind of the seminary movement.

And seminaries are not under churches. Therefore they're not under the only structure that the new Testament gives for church age believers to function under. Well, they're parachurch.

And all of these other organizations that focus on evangelism or on, you name it, charity work or whatever. If they're not under the umbrella of a church, if they're not subject to oversight from elders, they are unbiblical. You can say, but look at all the good that they do.

And people get saved and people get helped and be that as it may show me in the word of God, the charter for any organization other than a local church under the oversight, administration and responsibility before the Lord of elders. There is no authority for anything but small local churches in the word of God, none whatsoever. And the fact that we're used to it and we're inured to it.

And we look around and say, oh, but they've done so much good. That's fine. But I would not want to stand on the painted yellow footprints in front of God's desk and explain when I know the word of God, why I do something that isn't in the word of God.

It's all the same as being a Catholic priest and he's, you know, father Pedro. And when he gets up there, did you not read where Jesus said to his own disciples, let no man call you father. You've been called father ever since you took your ordination as a priest.

The word of God says, let no one call you father. I don't let anybody put reverend in front of my name. I think that's just silly.

I'm not any more revered or reverend or, you know, why don't I just say the super righteous Sam or the, the wonderfully talented hall or it's, it's just why the Lord Jesus said, don't let anybody tack something onto your name. You're a servant. You're all you're doing is, is slinging the hash on the mess decks so that people can get their necessary nourishment and do what they do before the Lord.

Every one of us is a believer priest. Every one of us is directly connected to God, the father

through the Lord Jesus Christ and no other intermediaries. God, the Holy spirit makes and sustains that connection.

But the only connection that we have is to the father through the son, by means of the spirit, there are no humans in there anywhere. Not me, not the person that led you to the Lord, not a mentor, not a, not an exemplar, not an elder, nobody. So this has gone by the wayside.

Now there's this, it's almost as bad as Catholicism in Protestant denominations and Protestant churches. So this is what has happened. Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron.

Do you not read the word of God? What does it say? If you don't look at the word and say, I need to be doing what the word says, what happened to your conscience? Well, it's been worn over. There's scar tissue. There's, there's insensate separation where we're no longer sensible and can't be led by the Holy spirit.

The Holy spirit speaks with the word of God. If we're not looking at the word of God and doing what it says, we're in the weeds and many are going to come to the Lord in that day and say, in your name, did we not do all these wonderful works? And what's he going to say? Oh, well, if you did wonderful works, let me, let me just open these double doors and invite y'all all in. Not what he's going to say.

We know this. Then we talked last time about verse three, forbidding to Mary. It's not forbidding.

It is discouraging. It is opposing. I want to read you something on this.

This is a word I'll have to spell for you. The first part of it is poly, P-O-L-Y, like polyunsaturated. And the last part of it is amory, A-M-O-R, like Spanish amore.

So poly amore, and then put a Y on the end, poly amory. So when you put those pieces together, what do you get? Multiple love something, right? Polyamory. This is, and you can look up your own, there's any number of articles on this.

This is one from menshealth.com. I found it by looking for it. I don't read menshealth.com, but here it is. And so this article is from late last year.

Let's break down the basics. Polyamory, poly fidelity, open relationships, and relationship anarchy. By the way, from the standpoint of these people, relationship anarchy is a good thing.

This is a self-identification. In 2019, the internet will have you believe that everyone is polyamorous. Articles are published daily about couples who have sexual and romantic relationships with more than one person at a time.

For Valentine's Day this year, NPR had a segment titled, The New Sexual Revolution, Polyamory

on the Rise. Just last week, this is August of 2019, the New York Times published, Polyamory Works for Them. How many people actually are polyamorous? It's tough to gauge the numbers, but it's currently estimated that four to 5% of people living in the United States are polyamorous.

Remember when they used to estimate that four to 5% of people were homosexual? And now that's gone through the roof and off the charts. And 20% of people have at least attempted some kind of open relationship at some point in their lives. These numbers are likely to increase as a 2016 YouGov study found only half of millennials, defined as somebody under 30 years old, want a completely monogamous relationship.

Half of the generation that is taking over, only half of them are considering a monogamous relationship. One out of two. So what exactly is polyamory? How does it differ from open relationships and so on? Polyamory simply means you're open to the idea of both loving and having a serious romantic relationship with more than one person at a time.

Poly comes from the Greek word meaning many, amory from the Latin for love. So it's a bad way to make a word because you don't want to mix Greek and Latin, but they did anyway. It's like there's a dog food brand that does the same thing and it just drives me up the wall.

I can't even walk down that aisle. Anyway, ethical non-monogamy is the umbrella term for all relationship styles that aren't strictly monogamous, including polyamory, open relationships, and all the terms to follow. There are other terms.

Monogamish describes relationships that are for the most part monogamous, but allow for little acts of sexual indiscretion with the partner's knowledge. These acts of indiscretion don't happen regularly. They typically take place when one person is out of town for work.

These flings are meaningless, and in my own personal experience, talking to couples in monogamish relationships, they usually have a don't ask, don't tell policy, meaning they don't want to hear about whatever their partner did while out of town. This differs from most open relationships where couples tend to share their sexual experiences to their partners within reason. So that's monogamish.

There is polyfidelity. In polyfidelitous relationships, all members are considered equal partners, agree to limit their sexual and romantic activities to only those in the group. This is also called a closed triad or a closed quad, depending on if there are three or four people in it.

It's like monogamy, only with extra people. Relationship anarchy, often abbreviated as RA, which to me is the same as rheumatoid arthritis, or the what, Royal Auxiliary, or RA's, when that girl's in the, yeah, anyway, means you can do whatever you want in your relationship and it's nobody else's business. You and your partner make up your own rules without care for what is traditionally considered right or wrong.

Again, this is relationship anarchy. Relationship anarchists are the, we don't do labels of the relationship community. Yet, ironically, they need a label to make this distinction.

They actively issue any social norms when it comes to relationships and don't want to categorize their relationship as being open, monogamish, or anything else, even if it technically fits one of those categories. Why are we seeing a rise in interest and practice of ethical non-monogamous relationships? Notice they call it ethical because we've now made up our own ethic that isn't Christian, isn't biblical, so it's ethics according to me, what I think is ethical. But listen to this now, because attacking marriage, setting aside marriage, opposing marriage, it's not forbidding, not wagging your fingers saying you can't get married.

This is dissolving the concept of marriage. This is the institution itself being shoved out of the way. Why are we seeing a rise in interest? And it's in the millennials.

This is why half of them are open to these ideas. Many millennials grew up in broken homes or with parents in a loveless marriage. How did that happen? Well, it's the evaporation of Christian values and the moral courage to stick with something till death do us part, right? Former examples of love from our childhood have had an impact.

We realize the mistakes our parents made and strive not to repeat them. We don't want to get divorced because we still have scars from our past. Since monogamy didn't work for many members of the previous generation, millennials are searching for other types of relationship formats.

We have a better idea. This, by the way, is also why they're staying away from church in droves even before distancing. This is why there's such an overt lack of interest in their parents' moral code, system of ethics, sense of values, what a person ought to do, be good for their word, owe no man anything, work hard, make your own way.

This has gone by the wayside and the sense of entitlement that has been hammered into people's heads for the last several decades has now come to the front. Secondly, millennials are leaving organized religion. In line with is the idea of sanctity or something that should be holy in our eyes.

Well, I guess I am unconsciously absorbed this. I didn't remember seeing it before. Millennials are leaving the church in droves.

This guy says, we're seeing the hypocrisy of religious leaders. Many are rebelling against the principles we've been raised to believe were important to reach salvation. Since the current generation recognizes how often traditional marriages fail and don't trust the church's concept of marriage, we formed our own thinking on what love, commitment, and sex means to us, which opens the door for loving more than one person.

Doctrine of demons, deceiving spirits. You go to 2 Timothy chapter five, I'm sorry, chapter three, Perilous Times. Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, lovers of pleasure, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, and not just disobedient to parents, but setting aside the example, the authority, the heritage from parents.

It's not just not doing what they say. It is dismissing and discounting anything related to parents. Unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers.

You look at the piling on that can happen in social media, the self-righteous purging out of things by mob action. Somebody says the wrong thing, something gets miscast or misquoted. Well, you can be obliterated overnight.

Traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. So we formed our own thinking on what love, commitment, and sex means. And that opens the door to whatever we want to do.

Thirdly, there's an increased use of dating apps. Hookup, listen to this now, hookup culture is the norm. And people now feel they have options when a relationship doesn't work out.

Now this of course, by forcing everybody out into college and the marketplace of peers all running high on hormones and with no oversight outside of the classroom, very little in the classroom, hookup culture is the norm. And of course your millennials grew to maturity in this environment, people that are under 30 or 35, that's all they've seen is celebrities and their favorite singers and so on in serial relationships without benefit of marriage. So too has the pool of potential partners increased.

Both men and women are starting to wake up to the idea that having a single partner for life might not be as interesting as finding many people to play with. This doesn't mean we don't want commitment. There's plenty of commitment in polyamorous relationships.

We just don't believe that one person should be responsible for all of our emotional and sexual pleasures. Fourthly, there has been an increase in polyamorous representation in the media. Over the past 20 years, we've seen an increase in stories about polyamorous people, both real and fictional.

And here's a list of things that have been on cable stations, stations, polyamory, Big Love, Unicorn Land, Me, You, Her, Professor Marston and the Wonder Woman, Wonder Women, Monogamish have all been programs. And my understanding is that there's a show, Modern Family, I think. I think initially it might've been called The New Normal, but people hated that.

So they changed it to The Modern Family. And it has featured for several years an openly gay couple of men as one of the main sets of characters. I've channeled past it and seen just enough to know that.

But evidently in that program now, there is a polyamorous group being featured positively. And in the same way that clear back in the seventies, the BBC sort of took the edge off of opposition to homosexuality through, are you being served? And there was an openly gay, but if he's funny, well, he's okay. As long as somebody is funny or can sing, what they do doesn't matter.

And you look at all of these talent show contests now where people don't earn their way to being a popular singer. You know, they don't serve their time. They go on TV and have a contest and a sing off.

And now you're Kelly Clarkson and you sell records and have your own TV show. And you didn't do any of that. And it's just a complete new paradigm.

And for these folks, our new paradigm is a better way. And, you know, it's, it's arguable. I'm not saying you can't win a contest and be a singer, but these are the factors that are the hockey stick graph of spiritual malaise and actual illness in the church at large.

It is harder and harder and harder for genuinely motivated believers to find a large enough group to assemble with in their location. Look around you. A lot of us are scattered all over the country and we've tried, we've looked around, we've gone to church after church visiting and, and, and talking to people.

And well, what goes on at your church? And do you know, do you all really have a sense of momentum and learning the word of God and, and setting aside a lot of the, the folly roll, or is it program driven and babysit my kids driven and, and I'll plink money in and somebody else can, you know, do the righteousness by faith thing. Uh, we, it, it's unprecedented what we're seeing around us today. Now, some of the other signs, uh, we've often talked about the, you know, what would the mark of the beast look like to not buy and sell? And, uh, for a long time we thought, well, it's going to be microchips.

Um, and I don't have time to cover it tonight. So let me just direct your attention to a quick summary of this. It's as good as any go to Wikipedia and go to the article called microchip implant, parentheses, human microchip implant, parentheses, human.

There's another one microchip implant, parentheses, animal. That's, that's your dog getting chipped. And when he gets lost, they can wave a wand on him and call you up and say, Hey, we found your dog in Kansas.

But, uh, this is microchip implant plant human. And you can get, uh, there's a big art article section on medical records and how there's a unique code in the chip. And that ties back to the database.

You know, that we've talked in, in our, uh, end time study about the huge database that Google and others maintain. Well, with this code on you, they can scan that and link you to everything in

the database, your entire history. But I want to read you something more interesting, uh, than that.

We thought it was going to be chips for a long time, but, uh, let me read you something. I got onto this because with the virus, uh, fluffery that's going on right now, and I don't mean to belittle it. I'm just saying there's, you can't get press coverage of hardly anything because that just dominates the news.

And it's really hard to find other things. Part of that news was we think the Chinese have underreported their deaths because in the last couple of months, 21 million cell phone accounts have been turned off. Well, then you go to the Snopes and the debunkers and they say, oh, that doesn't mean that there are 21 million people that died, uh, in China that, that haven't been reported.

Uh, it's, it's migrant workers who had a second phone and decided not to turn it on because they're not going to be doing their migrant work. And, uh, that, that's what it is. This is word for word from China.

That's China's explanation for why. So whatever you want to believe about that, I was just curious and I ran across something completely, completely, uh, unrelated to explaining the 21 million mysteriously missing accounts. Here's somebody was just saying, well, let's, let's add some details because there's not enough to say about the 21 million missing accounts.

Let's talk about cell phones in China. This is what's interesting. Listen to this.

I'm going to, I'm going to read you this and we're going to go to the break and then we're going to get into the Bible. So I apologize. There hadn't been any Bible, but it's, it's, I'm just showing you how closely what Paul wrote to Timothy, who was a pastor is to our present day.

Cell phones are an indispensable part of life in China. The digitization level is very high in China. People cannot survive without a cell phone.

Tang Jingwan, a US based China affairs commentator told this particular outlet on March 21st, dealing with the government for pensions and social security, buying train tickets, shopping, no matter what people want to do, they are required to use their cell phones. Let me read that again. Government pensions, social security, train tickets, shopping, no matter what people want to do, they are required by the Chinese government to use their cell phones.

The Chinese regime requires all Chinese use their cell phones to generate a health code. That's H-E-A-L-T-H, a health code. Only with a green health code are Chinese allowed to move in China.

Now, Tang said, it is impossible for a person to cancel his cell phone. China introduced mandatory facial scans on December 1, 2019, to confirm the identity of the person who registered

the phone. To register a phone, to use a phone, you have to have a face scan associated with your ID.

As early as September 1 of 2010, China required all cell phone users to register the phone with their real identification. You know, here in Oklahoma and Texas and other states, they've implemented the Real ID program, and you've got to get a special driver's license that links back to the database. You can't just have the card in your wallet, and you can't just go renew your driver's license.

You've got to go give your genuine bona fides to get your new driver's license this year, and you will not be able to board an aircraft. This was before the current restrictions. After the early to mid-summer this year, you will not, I think it's August, you will not be able to board an aircraft on your driver's license alone.

It has to be a Real ID driver's license or some other facsimile of Real ID. Well, China did this 10 years ago. All cell phone users register the phone with their real identification by which the state can control people's speech via its large-scale monitoring system.

Furthermore, Chinese people have to bundle their bank accounts and social security account with their cell phone because all these services apps can detect the phone's SIM card and then check with the state's database to make sure the number belongs to the person. Beijing first launched cell phone-based health codes March 10th of this year. All people in China have to install a cell phone app and register their personal health information.

Then the app generates a QR code. You've seen those. It looks like a little checkerboard with some of the blanks filled in.

QR code. It's on products at the store and such. All people in China use this app, which generates a QR code, which will then display in three colors to classify people's health level.

Red means the person has an infectious disease. Yellow means the person might have an infectious disease. Green means the person does not have an infectious disease.

Beijing claims the health code is to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. China allows each adult to apply for at most five cell phone numbers, and usually they apply for those and then give them to their kids. Kids can't register one, so the adults register their own and for their kids.

Since February the 10th, the majority of Chinese students have taken online classes with a cell phone number due to their schools being ordered closed. The student accounts are under their parents' names, which means some patients needed to open a new cell phone account in February, etc. But don't think that the time of state control based on a given necessity, in this case the health crisis, won't lead to this kind of thing everywhere.

Have you heard of contact tracing? Google. If you have the Google map app on your phone, and nearly everybody does, and in order for it to work you have to turn on location tracking, well then you can go and see everywhere you've been. I can see everywhere I have been since 2010.

There's a map and it shows me going down to Texas and up to Oklahoma, all of my piano customers, my trips to Lowe's or wherever. Every single place I've gone for the last 10 years is stored in the Googleplex database. Once I am tied permanently to my cell phone and my unique cell phone ID, everything about me is known.

There's a little store in Claremore that sells reloading supplies and ammunition. They'll know I've been there. Well you were in Pete's, so you're a gun owner.

Well, but I got rid of my guns. Well, we're going to have to check because we've got tracking data that says you were in a store that sells ammunition as recently as X. So I am just here to tell you that it's not waiting to see how soon it's going to happen. It has happened.

We're going to pause here and take our break. When we come back, there's more to come. In particular, we're going to be looking, if you don't already have it, during the break, be sure you get the Seals Trumpets and Bowls chart.

It will greatly assist you in understanding what we cover in the second session. There's a link in the GTBC discussion board. There's a link on, if you go to the audio archives, go to Revelation 4 through 22.

And at the top of the listing of all of those lessons from 2005, there are three links. One of them is the Seals Trumpets and Bowls. You need it.

At least pull it up on a screen or something. It'll really keep you from getting lost. It's like a map, like the old style map.

So we'll be back for special music in the second session in about 10 minutes.