

Rev 26-07-05a

Good morning, welcome to the Sunday morning service here at Grace & Truth Bible Church. This is the 5th of July, 2026. We continue our, as one of my seminary professors liked to say, excavation of revelation, exposition, more properly.

Let's ask God's blessing on our time of fellowship and study will begin. Father, how grateful we are for this nation in which we live, the freedom that we enjoy, the prosperity and the largesse and the security that we can so easily take for granted. We pray that as we reflect on your word this morning and seek a better understanding of it, that your Holy Spirit will help us to understand it and to see its pertinence and application in our lives.

We ask it in Jesus' name, amen. Looking at our passage, we're in Revelation chapter 20 and we are at the threshold of the great white throne judgment. We have spent some time in recent weeks looking at the nature of the resurrection.

Everybody is resurrected at one time or another, in one way or another, prior to the great white throne judgment. We have endeavored to understand these and in so doing, looking at 1 Corinthians chapter 15, we have observed a principle that is really important to remember in the interpretation of all scripture, nowhere more importantly than Revelation itself. Turn with me back before we read this passage, back to 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

This is the death where is your sting passage. You can begin in verse 50. Fascinating chapter all the way through.

I would love to read the whole thing, but moving on. "This I say, brethren,' Paul says," 1 Corinthians 15, verse 50. "Now this I say, brethren, "that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Think about this for a moment.

What did we just say about the resurrection of Old Testament saints? "I will pour out my spirit on all flesh.' "Priests will sweat. "Children will be born. "Occasionally people will die.

"There will be capital punishment,' and so on." So if flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, what does that tell you about the millennial kingdom with respect to that phrase? The millennial kingdom is not the kingdom of God, God the Father. The millennial kingdom is the kingdom of the Son. Matthew chapter 25.

Read again at your leisure, "The Sheep and Goats' Judgment." The Lord Jesus is going to sit on the glorious throne of His kingdom. "He will rule for a thousand years,' but notice the compression. He says He will sit on His throne.

"Then He will gather the nations before Him "and judge them.' They will be judged on how they acted corporately and by extension individually during His time as king." He can't exactly judge

them when He just got there and they haven't done anything. So almost all Bible interpreters that you check believe that the Sheep and Goats Judgment is at the beginning of the kingdom. There are several things that tell us it's not by way of review.

One is the destination of the goats because at the judgment, they are consigned to the lake of fire. That is our passage, Revelation chapter 20. So the Sheep and Goats Judgment is a reference to the great white throne because the penalty is not cut into and apportioned your lot with the hypocrites, darkness which is outside, looking at the faint glow of Jerusalem from over the horizon.

This is joining Satan and His angels in the lake of fire. Sheep and Goats Judgment of Matthew 25 is the great white throne in my opinion. So flesh and blood, Paul says here in 1 Corinthians 15:50, "Cannot inherit the kingdom of God nor does corruption inherit incorruption." There is still corruption in the millennial kingdom.

There is the need for sanctification, for purification. There can be defilement that needs to be addressed. And there are instructions in Ezekiel for how the priests at the millennial temple are to deal with this.

So what Paul is talking about here is the kingdom of the father, which we will soon see. "Corruption does not inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery, one of many that we studied recently in our Timothy study.

We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." Sleep here is put for physical death. Most of us will sleep, but not all of us. But whether we are alive or dead, whether we are asleep or awake, we will be transformed, Paul says.

We shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet. When you say the last trumpet, is this the last trumpet judgment of revelation? Is this the trumpet that sounds at the rapture? It is the latter. But if it's the last trumpet, what preceded it? What was the first trumpet? Were there some number of intermediate trumpets? Why does it say last? Last is one of those words that derives its meaning and its import from context.

We hear many trumpets for many different purposes as a call to action, as a reminder, as an instruction when verbal instructions can't be heard. This is how it's been used for many centuries in the military. It's the bugle call, the trumpet call.

In Israel, it was the shofar. And if you've ever heard someone who knows how to blow one of those, I go to Pentecostal churches and tune pianos, and sometimes they'll have a shofar. A couple of months ago, I was in one and they had this great long shofar.

And the guy that knew how to play it was there. We were in a relatively small, what they would call sanctuary. I don't think it's any more sanctified than any other room, but the church house

with the pews and the pulpit.

And so he picked that thing up and blew it. And I thought it was gonna knock the windows out. That thing carries.

It is a beautiful tone, resonant. You can call to the ages. If you watched the suggested movie last week, A Great Awakening, and you saw Ben Franklin trying to figure out how many people George Whitefield could speak to at once.

And it came to 36,000 and change, I think, based on that he was busy calculating and so on. He was gifted by God with this beautiful, sonorous, resonant voice that carried without amplification to the back reaches of the crowd. That is what a trumpet does.

God calls us. We are referred to as the called. Remember Romans 8, 28 through 30? All things work together for good to those who love God, who are the called.

People always think, well, this is an effectual calling to salvation if they are reformed or Calvinist. We are called to many things. We are called to duty.

Whether it is military, civic, family duty, is one of the highest priorities. We are to look out for one another. The Lord Jesus on the cross gave an example of carrying out family duty.

He was the oldest son and he ensured that in his absence, his mother would be cared for by the apostle John, whose words we are reading. Duty, it is a call. It is a clear call.

Sometimes when we're surrounded with circumstances trying to figure out, well, what do I do next? I've got this long task list. I've got a mountain of needs. Where is the call? What comes first? What is most important? And I think as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, as a representative, a member of his body, bearing witness, performing the functions that the Lord Jesus performed when he was here.

And he paid attention to his mother and his brothers. He conversed with them. He met with them at the wedding feast of Cana.

He listened to them when he was traveling to feasts in Jerusalem. And he took care of his mother from the cross. It is a calling.

That's what a trumpet does. The last calling that you and I will have as a punctuation mark at the end of our earthly life, living or asleep, we will hear this last trumpet, the last call from the Lord Jesus to do what all of our callings should do, which is to be drawn to him, to be ready to serve him, to walk with him in white, to sit with him on his throne, to partake of the hidden manna that he will provide. This is the last, not in the sense of, it must be a post-tribulational rapture because this is at the seventh trumpet that John talks about.

Nobody had heard of the trumpets when Paul wrote these words that he got from the Lord himself. We shall all be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, the last call on our lives. It is a whole new ball game once we join the Lord and are ever with him.

The trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. Notice again, a distinction of our resurrection, the church resurrection is we are raised incorruptible. In no passage related to the Old Testament saints coming back does it say they are raised incorruptible because they are corruptible.

They are much as the earliest generations of humanity, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, their wives, their children, the antediluvian civilization, meaning before the flood. So we are raised incorruptible from the corruption of the grave to the incorruption of a body like that of the Lord Jesus. The dead will be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.

Second time he has said we will be changed. Don't you look forward to this. A body so transformed that the shortcomings, the fatigues, the inadequacies, the defilements and corruptions that pertain to this three score in 10 and by reason of strength, a little more, gone.

Raised incorruptible, we shall be changed. You can reflect on that and spend your next 15 minutes thanking God for all of the things that we are delivered from as we join our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the air. What a blessing, what a hope.

Beside that, the cares and affairs of this life really get put into perspective, don't they? We shall be changed, raised incorruptible, never to die. If we pay attention over us, the second death will have no power. Can really dwell on that for a few minutes.

Why 53 of 1 Corinthians 15, this corruptible must put on incorruption to dwell with God in the heavenly realms, not in his throne room, but in the place that the Lord Jesus has gone to prepare. John 14, two and three. You can't dwell there in this kind of body.

Can't subsist, can't survive. Think of all the depictions of outer space and how unsuited this fleshly body is for an environment other than that that has been created for us on the surface of this planet. We have to be changed.

We must put on incorruption to be in God's realm. This mortal must put on immortality. This is the rapture.

Israel is not raised incorruptible. Israel does not put on immortality at the beginning of the millennial kingdom. That will be later.

So when this corruptible has put on incorruption and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written. And this is Isaiah 25, verse eight. Death is swallowed up in victory.

It doesn't say it's swallowed up in life, does it? Life has just overwhelmed death. In this earth and in this environment, it's the other way around. Death eventually catches up and overcomes life.

None of us live forever. But death is not swallowed up by life. Death is swallowed up by victory.

What victory? The Lord Jesus Christ has conquered sin and its inevitable outcome, end, and penalty, which is death. The Lord Jesus Christ on the cross made this immortality and this incorruptibility real. And he was the first human being to be granted it, to experience it, to become immortal and incorruptible as a human being.

Lots you can say about the hypostatic union, which is seminary way of saying he is both God and man. He has always been God, eternally past, eternally future. But in a point of time, in God's plan, he became human, and he will everlastingly be human, and immortally and incorruptibly so.

We will join him in that so that we can see the fulfillment, death, where is your sting? Hades, where is your victory? Hosea 13, verse 14. Notice 56, the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Those things that we share in him, Ephesians chapter one, one of them is victory. We should not be depressed. I have been recently on a kick.

My family may be tired of hearing it repeated, but the many possible futures contain a lot of stress, a lot of worry, a lot of angst. What if this happens? What if this doesn't come through? What if this eventuality happens? And in a present moment where we are safe, secure, provided for, healthy, reasonably well off in every way, we spoil the day, we fumble away a perfectly good hour, a perfectly good day, a perfectly good night's sleep, because the worries of one possible future come and corrupt it and defile it and cloud it. They distract us.

The opposite should be true. There is not one of many possible futures. There is a certain future for you and for me.

And that is this mortal putting on immortality, this corruption putting on incorruption. It is a certain future event. It is going to happen.

Ready or not, the Lord Jesus says, here I come. We want to be ready. So we practice the kind of thinking that one should do when he is immortal and incorruptible.

Dedication to the plans and purposes of God, viewing things as best we can from his perspective. This is why Jesus said, take no thought for what you will eat, what you will drink, or what you will wear, things that are put for any worry in the material realm. Your heavenly father knows what you need, even before you ask him.

He doesn't say don't ask because he already knows, but have the assurance that when you ask, you're not talking to somebody that's getting surprised. He knows what you need before you ask.

him. So cast all your cares on him.

He is eternal and he cares for us. He loves us. Whatever the difficulty, don't borrow from the future.

Jesus also said, sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Concentrate on making the most of this day. Redeem the time today.

Look at opportunities. Get the effects of canceled sin out of our lives. Take it to the Lord, be cleansed, be purified, clear the decks so that the Holy Spirit can lead us and guide us in the light today.

Tomorrow will take care of itself. Jesus said, when you pray, ask for this day's daily bread. Let me concentrate on today.

I can't guarantee tomorrow. God already knows about tomorrow and he's already made provision. We can't see around corners.

God exists around the corners. Stop worrying. Stop moving into the future and flailing.

What can I do today? How would God have me use my time, my efforts, my gift, my ability to communicate in relationships? What is my responsibility today? I don't wanna go dig up old bones from the past and I don't wanna try to worry about potential bones in the future. Nothing wrong with planning ahead, having a contingency. You learn this in the artillery as I'm sure many other places, but you have a primary firing position.

But I, as a lieutenant and a platoon commander in a battery, if you have the guns platoon, you go and recon where you are going to go. And you say, all right, look, we can get here out of sight behind this rise. And here's a good place where we can position the guns.

But what if we start taking fire? What if the mortars find us? I need an alternate position. And so you recon the alternate position. You say, well, if we have to leave the primary, here's a quick path we can easily pack up, move, and in place here.

And we've got a fresh lease on life to continue our mission. And what if the alternate position gets found out or attacked? Well, then I've got a supplementary. I have a plan B and a plan C in the artillery in place.

I don't know what they do now, but in the good old days when you had wooden men and iron guns, this is how we did it. Primary, alternate, and supplementary. So yes, have a plan.

Think about the future. All right, if this happens, this is my contingency. But make the plan and set the plan aside.

Don't worry about it. Don't stew about it. Don't spoil today and be distracted from today and fail to

do what God, our heavenly father, wants us to do today because we've got our head in some potential space in the future.

This is what trumpet calls are all about. Do you want to get distracted when you hear the shout, the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God? And, oh, but wait a minute, I haven't finished watering my flowers. Who will be here to watch? What about my dog? Seriously, priorities, pay attention.

Your heavenly father knows what you need. God loves the animals. He'll take care of them.

They die when they need to die. They're born when they need to be born. It's a stewardship.

If you've got them in your periphery as pets or as companions or as a business, you're raising cattle for beef or sheep for wool or whatever, it's a responsibility. We would do it the way David took care of his flocks, but don't get so invested that we don't hear the call and respond. We have many trumpets.

We are going to be raised to be incorruptible. We have to start thinking like people who know what to do with an incorruptible, immortal existence. If you have always driven an old car and you suddenly get a new one and it doesn't have a shifter lever on the steering column and it doesn't have a stick shift on the console, you get in there and sit down, everything is strange.

There's no key and no ignition switch to put a key into. There's no shifter. How do I drive this car? Oh, well, this is one of those where you just carry the fob and it's got a push button and it doesn't have a shifter.

It's got a little knob you turn for your transmission selection. Do you want to be given this brand new car and you sit down in it and it smells so nice and looks so good and you can't go anywhere because you are bleeding ignorant of how that car works. We are here to learn to think in immortal terms, in heavenly terms, in God the Father plan and purpose terms.

We learn it now. Wouldn't you like to get a tutorial video off of GodTube that shows you how to drive a car that uses a fob and has a wave your foot under the back bumper and the hatch opens up compartment access. I can learn without even having the car.

How many times now do we all have to do a thing and we say, I bet somebody's made a YouTube video on how to fix this or how to use this or how to program this or how to get my carpet crawling rug bot to make a map and go where it's supposed to go. You go watch a video and you learn, then you go and do. We are here to learn so that when the last thing Trump sounds, it is not enough to say, oh joy, won't it be great.

Meet the Lord in the air, see our departed loved ones. That's a momentary experience. Now you've got to live.

It goes beyond the rapture moment. We are entering into a heavenly existence. Are you ready? You can celebrate getting hired for a job, put out resumes, do interviews, post yourself on all of the online sources, Headhunters have your name.

Somebody hires me. How bad a day will it be if you show up and hurray, celebrate, I've got a job and you get there and you don't know how to do it. You are a giant disappointment.

You looked for the day, you worked for the day, you celebrated the day, you come there on Monday morning and you are totally ignorant and useless and hopeless. That should not be our rapture. We know better.

That's why we're in Bible class. That's why we're doing what we're doing. Be ready for the trumpet call.

Love to look forward to it, greatly anticipate seeing the Lord Jesus Christ, first and foremost, beyond all, to see Him, to be qualified, to stay in His presence and not be living in the distant suburbs, as it were, of the place that He has prepared. I wanna be close. I wanna be able to walk to Bible class in the heavenly realms.

Get ready, be ready. This is what Paul is describing, what we have to look forward to. When this verse 54 of 1 Corinthians 15, when this corruptible has put on incorruption, this mortal has put on immortality.

Notice the when, when this has happened. The seeing is fulfilled. Death is swallowed up in victory.

But we don't just continue an endless celebration of victory, do we? Once we're victorious in any endeavor, now there is an afterglow, there is a new situation that that victory has secured. And we've got to be ready for it. We need to have provisions.

We need to have a plan. We need to have skills. We need to know our place.

So don't get so focused on the victory that you forget about Tuesday, the day after. Verse 57, thanks to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. I like to cross out that little italic B because it isn't there.

Thanks to God. He gives us as a gift victory in our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, what is the application of this? What is the application? Read that verse 58.

Therefore, Paul says, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord here and now. Can we look at ourselves and say, you know what? I am rock steady. I am immovable.

I am unshakable. Whatever gets thrown at me, I get a nasty surprise. I wake up in the middle of

the night.

I hear gurgling noises and my living room is a lake. The bottom fell out of the hot water tank. My upstairs air conditioner got the drain plugged.

My ceiling has fallen in. A tree fell on my car or my truck. Bad things have happened.

I've gotten news over the phone. There's been a departure to the next life in my family. Bad news from the doctor's investigations.

Am I steadfast? Am I immovable? Am I living in a house that has been built on the rock? Bring whatever storms you want. That house stands because it was built well, built according to the instructions, and it has a foundation on the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Knowing that your labor is not with no point.

The work we do now, the suffering that we endure, the difficulties that we navigate, the prayers that we pray, the empathy in bearing one another's burdens, and the sometimes exhausting task of bearing our own burdens. You can be exhausted and not be depressed. You can be bent, but not broken.

God does not overload us. We can always bear what he gives us, and if we feel like we can't, we're not looking in the right place for strength. Cursed is the man who puts his trust in man and makes flesh his arm, his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord.

You remember what he's going to be like? A shrub in the desert. Is a shrub in the desert alive or dead? It's either dead or nearly so. And the sad thing is, you'll be like a shrub in the desert and not see good when it comes.

You get so wrapped up that when good does come, you can't see it, appreciate it, experience it, be built up and edified by it, be prepared for the eternal future through it. This is our calling. The trump that is sounding right now is the one we need to listen to.

I look forward to the last trump, but I've got trumps going off every day. We need to rise to these occasions just as we will rise in that last great trumpet sound. So this is the resurrection, each in his own order, Christ the first fruits, then those who are Christ's at his coming.

That's us. But notice the compression. Then comes the end.

You can look back at this. The resurrection is evocative of the spiritual life that we gain at the point of our salvation. And in some cases, we're sort of a baby that isn't aware.

And we come to knowledge at a certain point and we suddenly are self-aware. We can see things around us. We can empathize.

We can begin to live in the world as it is. We start forming memories that last and experiences

that guide us. But there is a great compression here because the purpose is not to give a detailed chronology.

And that's what we're gonna see when we come back from the break, that there is compression in many of these. Ancient Near Eastern thought and God's thought on which it is based is not scientific Western. I need a clear episode by episode map.

It brings out the salient points. Look at the creation in Genesis chapter one that mentions the Lord Jesus nowhere. And yet John tells us that without him, nothing was made that was made.

Well, where is that detail in Genesis? You don't need that detail in Genesis, but it's there and it's true. So we have to be careful about drawing inordinate conclusions when we are looking at a clearly compressed account. Let's pause here and take a break.

When we come back, we are going to move forward with this as background, these resurrections and the timing, who is where, who gets raised when, who is judged when, what is the outcome of that judgment? What is on the line as we move forward in Revelation chapter 20.