

Jesus, the Bible and You in 7 Steps - The Return

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Date: 22 February 2026

Preacher: Johan DeJong

[0 : 00] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Just to say that we haven't actually started yet.

Because if I was a teacher, I'd be like, it's your time you're wasting, not mine. But to help us kind of lead gracefully into the start of the service, we're introducing a countdown video.

[3 : 38] No, not that countdown, big hair, Europe. Just to help, sorry for the disappointment. But yeah, so just to help us kind of get into a bit of a mindset and preferably into the start of the service.

So normally we'll not introduce it, but as this is the first week, just in case you wonder what's going on, this is it. No, it's not.

Go back. Cool. It'd be boring if it was easy.

That's my fault, sorry. Right. Cool. Let's go. Let's go.

Thank you.

[5 : 22] Thank you.

You're all very welcome. Our prayer this morning is that each of us will feel God's presence and his blessing as we worship him together.

I'm Dave McKnight. I'll be leading us through the first part of the service. And in John 14, Jesus says to his disciples, Do not let your hearts be troubled.

You believe in God. Believe also in me. My father's house has many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I'm going there to prepare a place for you?

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and I will take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

[6 : 42] And this morning is the last of the Jesus, the Bible and you in seven steps series where Johan will help us think about Jesus' return and us being with him in heaven.

It's good to see the building full week on week as we go. We're continuing to use the overflow. And so the Northwest Calm Group are in the overflow this morning.

Let's pray and ask for God's blessing. Merciful Heavenly Father, as we settle ourselves seeking to be blessed by your spirit this morning, Lord, we acknowledge that you, O Lord, are all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving, everlasting, always the same.

Lord, for us who know you as our saviour, we look forward to Jesus' return. We thank you that you show us the way, that all we need to know is in you, is in your word, and that Jesus, your living word, is our way to eternal life with you.

We know you tell us in Thessalonians that you will return and descend from heaven with a shout, the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God.

[8 : 17] And then we will always be with you in heaven. But Lord, whilst we're here on earth, you call us to worship, to do life, and to encourage each other as we seek to do your will in this fallen world.

So we humbly ask, Lord, that this morning you would fill our heads and our hearts with your spirit. We acknowledge your presence with us now in this place.

And as we begin our time of worship, Lord, help us to release our cares and anything else that would hinder us from experiencing more of you in this service this morning. Help us to focus our hearts and minds on you.

For Lord, you are worthy of our praise. For all glory belongs to you. In Jesus' precious and powerful name we pray. Amen.

Amen. So, help us focus on God. We're going to sing a couple of songs.

[9 : 23] If you're able to stand for all of that, that's grand. If you need to sit down, then feel free to sit and sing. Thank you. To God.

To God. He has died To sin of any of the world And gave us his soul To sin of any sin And sin of sin And sin of sin And sin of sin And sin of sin And sin of sin Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, that we love, hear His voice.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, that the people rejoice. Come to the Father, Jesus the Son.

Give Him the glory, great things He has done. Oh yeah.

Oh yeah.

[11 : 29] Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the man hear His voice. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice.

Come to the Father, the people rejoice. Come to the Father, the people rejoice. Come to the Father, the people rejoice.

Come to the Father, the people rejoice. Give Him the glory, great things He has done. Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

Great things he has taught us, great things he has done, and great are rejoicing through Jesus the Son.

[12 : 50] And the other and higher, and great how will be, the wonder of the strength that Jesus recedes.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, that he has his voice. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, that the people rejoice.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, that the people rejoice. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, that the people rejoice.

Come to the Father, Jesus the Son. Come to the Father, Jesus the Son.

Come to the Father, Jesus the Son. Come to the Father, Jesus the Son.

[14 : 12] Come to the Father, Jesus the Son.

Lord, we praise you. Lord, we long for the whole earth to hear your voice, that the earth may praise you, that the people around us and our nation and this world may rejoice because we trust in you. Lord, that we as a globe of people may give you the glory because of Christ who is our hope in life and death.

Lord, we know that this is not a naive prayer because you are the God of this earth, of this universe, and you made and you love every single people, every person on this globe.

Help us, Lord, to know how big you are and how loving you are. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[15 : 34] The heart of His command And what will be pushed to the end The love of Christ is finished with God I will sing hallelujah Our thanks great eternal I will sing hallelujah Now and after we commence

Why is the hope that I forget? Watching Thine come The trouble of soul For His good God is good There is His grace And goodness love In our faith We need the God Who knows the faith With hands of hearts What stands upon And so will shine To sense the grace That ring of sight Up to the shore The dark and light I will sing hallelujah I will sing hallelujah

How long spring's eternal I will sing hallelujah How long spring's eternal To the grace Christ the hope and life again But to the grave what shall we say Christ he lives, Christ he lives And what reward will never bring Everlasting life again And we will rise to the Lord Where sin and death will be destroyed And he will each will end destroyed

When Christ he lives forevermore Oh, sing hallelujah Oh, sing hallelujah Oh, sing hallelujah Now and then we commence Christ the hope and life again Oh, sing hallelujah Oh, sing hallelujah In the trouble of shame Hallelujah Now and then we commence Christ the hope and life again Now and then we commence Christ the hope and life again

Christ the hope and life again Thank you Yeah, please be seated So as always, God is busy, God is at work The things that he's doing here at Bethel You'll have that in your news and prayer bulletin If you don't get that at the moment Please speak to Paula, our administrator So you can get that regularly Just want to highlight a couple of things So this Saturday coming We've got men's breakfast Please do invite friends And let John Ross know that you're coming So we're not fighting over the last bit of bacon Thanks And also, oh, sorry The Craft Noon Tea Is on Sunday the 8th of March 3.30

[20 : 43] Details of how to book Are in the church bulletin Thank you So we're already one-seventh of the way through 2026 And we've already probably had I feel like we've had six-sevenths of the rain But to cheer you up a bit Here's Johan to share a little On what we're going to focus on this year Thank you Morning, folks Yeah, thank you We'll get to birthdays in a minute But before we get there Let's think just a little bit about this Don't read that for a second Just focus on me We want to be a church, don't we That knows each other Knows each other well enough To know when someone needs help Knows each other well enough To celebrate When something's gone well When someone's done something amazing We want to be that kind of church, don't we We want to be the kind of church That knows what we're like What are we good at?

What do we maybe not have so much skill in? We want to be a church that knows What folks out there are like Right? Farnham isn't the same as everywhere else Aldershot's not the same as everywhere else What's it like?

We want to be wise about those things, don't we? And we want to be a church that shares the good news of Jesus with other people So really our objectives in 2026 are to do that As a leadership team every year We want to listen And then we want to plan Acknowledging that God may have other plans So we did that this year too As a leadership team back in January And here's what we would love to focus on as a church Together in 2026 So reflect To gain a better understanding of us And our area If we end up doing a bunch of things That none of us are very good at None of us feels we have a gift at Then there's not going to be a lot of joy in that And probably There's not going to be a lot of Results from that either So spend time thinking together What am I like?

What is my gifting? What are we like as a church? What are we good at? Where are the needs in our area? Where are the opportunities? As we do that We get a sense of what we're like And where we need to be We want to make room Life is busy, isn't it?

We don't want to be busy with things That aren't the best things So we want to make room In order to deepen our relationships With each other What I said about Knowing each other well enough To help and to celebrate And make room To sharpen our outreach So that we've got space and time To do the things that we know Will help people around us And we did a look back to 2025 Where we listened hard About what Sunday mornings were like And we pooled all our ideas We came up with some things That we wanted to do Slightly differently To feel slightly different So the third of our objectives For 2026 Is to put those things Into practice And develop our Sunday worship And welcome And those things we've done Because we recognise That the Lord is growing us Slowly but surely We're really thankful for that And because we want to keep growing Don't we want to keep growing As individuals Knowing ourselves Serving in the right way Finding joy in Jesus And we want to keep growing As a church as well So we just wanted to share

[24 : 04] Those things with you If you want a copy of that slide Come and ask me afterwards We'll happily share it with you And the members will already have it If you've got questions Grab me Grab one of the other elders We'll be happy to talk about it Great Okay Some of you are probably wondering Why I'm wearing a huge badge Wait a minute Wait a minute Wait a minute I've got other things In my bag Here's my hat Do you like my hat?

In case you hadn't guessed It's kind of aimed at the kids So If you feel like you'd like to be a kid Come and sit at the front Do that If you don't that's fine So Who had Can anybody guess?

Who had a birthday this week? I can't ask you Yes Me Yeah I had a birthday But come on Some other people had birthdays this week as well Yes Corey?

James James who? James Did you have a birthday this week? Wow What day was your birthday? It was on the 20th February No That's when my birthday was Amazing Same birthday Right Who else had a birthday?

I know there's at least two other people Who have celebrated birthdays this week Come on you guys Who else? Who else? Wendy's got a hand up I did You did? Wendy was it your birthday as well?

[25 : 31] Yeah A week on Monday A week on Monday Wonderful Well done Anybody else? Birthdays? Yeah Emma? Yesterday Wow Happy birthday PS today Fantastic Wait a minute Two more people I know there's two more people Who celebrated birthdays this week It's definitely a half term birthday week Isn't it?

Come on Some of you were at her party yesterday You really should remember Betsy It's Belle Belle Yep Belle celebrated her birthday too And I think James Errett celebrated his birthday this week That's a whole lot of birthdays isn't it?

Right Enough of the birthday stuff I'm just going to show you a picture of my birthday cake Are you ready for this? Stop That is 25 Wait Why are you all laughing?
Why are you 25? Why? 25 Okay Right They're like 50 All kinds of rudeness going on Can't possibly repeat it Today guys We are thinking about birthdays But We're thinking about Jesus coming back We know Jesus had a birthday on earth Didn't he?
He was born here We celebrate that at Christmas Don't we? But we're thinking about Jesus coming back How do we know that will happen? And what will it be like? Well It's a little bit like A party for your birthday Right?

[26 : 56] You know your birthday's coming You know what date it is And your parents tell you There will be a party There will be a party It's all planned Because you can trust your parents Can't you?

They say you're going to do a birthday party They'll do a birthday party for you And you know that it will probably be Someday Around the date of your birthday It might not be on your birthday Because that might not work But that's when the party's going to be Isn't it?
And when it comes That birthday party date It will be great Won't it? It's going to be fun And Jesus' return is a bit like that We know there's a party planned We know there's a party going to happen We know kind of roughly around when it will be But not exactly And we know it's going to be great So the thing we need to do If we're thinking about Jesus coming back Is remembering That's going to be a time to celebrate And putting our trust in him now Accepting his invitation to his birthday party So that we're there when the time comes Can you remember that for me?

Great Don't remember the silly hat Don't need to worry about that Just remember Jesus is coming back And when he comes back It will be like a great birthday celebration Wonderful Thank you for listening Thanks Johan We'll remember the hat So Today the grid is on And you're doing your final session In your series on the biblical view Of identity and sexuality So Anyone else in school years 10 to 13 Are also invited to join And you've been meeting around the corner At James Dancer's house Scramblers Pathfinders Explorers Are all on today Apparently You're all chilling Which is nice Right but before we go So try and avoid a kind of Farnham-esque traffic mayhem And help the people from the overflow Come back in So if you're leaving at this point If you can go out through that door We'll pretend it's not raining

You can go across the car park And either go into the middle hall At the far glass door Or across to the old chapel That would be great Let's pray for you Before you go Dear Lord God We do thank you For our kids And our young people That we have here at Bethel Help us as a church To show them your love And we thank you For those now Who are going to Teach them your truth Bless them Lord Save them May they become your children Through saving faith We ask us in Jesus name Amen Amen Okay catch off you go Enjoy Thank you Thank you If you haven't got a Bible to hand

[30 : 07] And you like one Now's a good time to grab one From the thing Actually I'm going to grab one Okay! so Amanda and John Closier are now going to come and lead us in prayer thank you father we thank you that we can meet together this morning and we pray however we come this morning whether that is with hearts full of joy or sorrow pain or worry we just pray that you can meet all of those those needs and those emotions and that we can know that you are with us and whatever we're going through and that you will hold on to us and through those times and help us hold on to that promise as your hand was saying that you know one day there will be that greatest party ever and we know it's coming and we can hold on to that hope so no matter what what we're going through at the moment we can always we can hold on to that and that can carry us through all those ups and downs of life and we pray that as a church that we can come alongside one another in those times however we are this morning perhaps we need someone just to come and give us a hug someone to give us a smile someone just come say hello we just thank you that we are a welcoming church we are a church of love and we just pray that that be part of our time today and and throughout the year and we just just thank you that we as you have loved us we can love each other and and we can be a family a friend to one another and because that is what church is and we just thank you so much thank you so much that we have our church family and we pray sort of go that we can show those things outwards to our local community we have so many one of things coming up to share that love with with others who perhaps don't know you yet we particularly think of the men's breakfast coming up next week and uh and for john ross speaking pray you be with everybody that goes it'll be a great great time but it'll be a real opportunity as well to witness and to

And that's sad. And do you remember that moment at the edge of the ship when she's really old? She's got the necklace. We know what the necklace means, don't we? It symbolizes the love between them.

[47 : 04] And she throws it into the sea. And so love dies. As well. Great. Why is it the worst movie ever?

Because there's no resolution. It describes a world in which we don't reach safe harbour. Love does not find its fulfilment. The hero dies.

And disaster and distress and danger are not removed. That's why it's the worst film ever. And we know on some level that that's a terrible story, don't we?

Because we kind of live in the tension of being on the good ship humanity ourselves. And we want it to be okay. Even though we ignored the designer's instructions about sailing into iceberg-laden waters.

Even though we didn't listen when he told us how to sail through life safely. We want it to be okay.

[48 : 06] And we need those irresponsible people who were steering the ship. And the selfish people who took other people's places on the lifeboats. We need them held to account, don't we? And that doesn't happen if the whole ship just goes down and everybody dies.

The Bible tells a better story. And that story has a better ending. And it ends as it began with Jesus. Now there's lots we can say about this, isn't there? Lots we can say about when Jesus will come back. We don't know. Short answer. And what's the thousand years about? And do pets go to heaven?

And is hell actually a lake of fire? It's all very interesting, isn't it? And at some point it's very worthwhile too. But we could discuss all of that without actually knowing Jesus any better or living any differently.

Couldn't we? Alistair Begg, who's one of my favorite pastor theologians, says, The plain things are the main things. And the main things are the plain things. It's a good way to navigate your way around the Bible, isn't it?

[49 : 12] Hebrews 1 verse 2 says, In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways.

But in these last days, note when Paul is writing, he has spoken to us by his Son. If we stick to the words of Jesus, we'll be best off, won't we?

And the Bible recording Jesus' words is clear. When Jesus returns, three main things, plain things, will happen in short order. Jesus will raise the dead. Jesus will judge all.

And Jesus will remake all things. In other words, there will be a resurrection, there will be a reckoning, and then there will be renewal and rejoicing. And that is how we're going to think about this last of our series of seven talks about Jesus, the Bible, and us.

Come with me back to that passage that Louise read for us. Revelation chapter 20, verse 11. Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. That's Jesus.

[50 : 24] The earth and the heavens fled from his presence. There was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. And the first thing you notice about those standing around the great white throne of judgment before Jesus is that they're all alive.

Jesus will raise them, the Bible tells us. John chapter 5, verse 28. Jesus speaking, do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out.

Those who have done what is good will rise to live and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned. Jesus speaking. Or if you would like it plainer, Jesus says somewhere else, John chapter 11, I am the resurrection and the life.

And so when Jesus comes, we will be raised. Have you ever been to London? Seen St. Paul's? St. Paul's Cathedral? Where St. Paul's stands now, there used to stand an old church.

And it was burned down in the Great Fire of London in 1666. Do you know who designed the current St. Paul's? Christopher Wren. Christopher Wren designed it.

[51 : 38] And Christopher Wren was walking through the wreckage of the old church, thinking about the new. The first stone he picked up had this written on it. Resurgam.

And it means, I will rise. That is what God is going to do in us. From the rubble of the old, he will raise a new and greater temple, body, in which he will dwell, in which we will worship, always.

New bodies, which don't stumble, which don't crumble away. Death defeated. The consequences of sin undone. Reunited in Jesus with those who have died in Jesus.

That's what he's about. You might be thinking, hang on, I thought we had new life already. I thought Jesus taught that the kingdom of God had come when the king had come, i.e. when he came at Christmas time.

I thought this was already happening. Well, we do have new life. When we put our faith in Jesus, we have new spiritual life.

[52 : 54] We are spiritually alive. And our spirits will never die again. But our bodies will die. Won't they? And so even though Jesus' resurrection work has begun, it is not yet finished.

Jesus' kingdom and his restoration are all ready and not yet. and you can trace that all the way through the New Testament. It is, to use some long words, inaugurated but not consummated. The first step of consummation is resurrection. resurrection. In other words, to go back to the Titanic picture, we're still on the good ship, humanity.

It hasn't come into dock yet. It's kind of like the difference between dawn and noon. Dawn is broken with the first resurrection, that of Jesus.

And so there's light. There's beginnings of light. But even though there is some light, the cold of the morning, the fingers of darkness of night, still linger over the world, don't they?

[54 : 09] But soon it will be high noon. And high noon is when judgment comes to town. Isn't it? And that's where we live.

We live between dawn and noon. the reckoning.

One reason that we can't just leave Jesus as a nice guy who said some good stuff when he was here is because he's not done with the world. He's coming back.

We'll see him. And then Jesus will be the judge of each of us. Back to our passage. The books were opened. The dead were judged, verse 12, according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

The sea gave up the dead that were in it and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, resurrection. And each person was judged according to what they had done and then death and Hades were thrown in the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

[55 : 14] Anyone whose name was not found in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire. See, the purpose of God's judgment is not to know our hearts because God knows our hearts already, doesn't he?

He doesn't need to open the books to read the story of our lives because he knows it. The purpose of God's judgment is to demonstrate his glory to everybody by showing them both his justice and his mercy.

And that means for us that wrongs will be righted and will be seen to be righted. All those injustices done against us. all the injustices done against those we love, all of the atrocities committed in this world, all the bad motives behind the good deeds, including the ones that people get away with, will be dealt with by a holy and all-powerful God.

And we need that. We need to know that. We need to know there's justice in this world. That justice will be done in the end. But of course for Christians that also means no grudges, no getting your own back, no giving as good as we get.

That's God's business because God is the judge and he is also the party sinned against the most. At the same time it's a double-edged sword, isn't it?

[56 : 39] Because it means all the wrongs and the bad motives and the injustices that I have that I have been involved in that are on me will also be revealed at that time.

And then the question for each of us is to whom will you go? It also means rewards received. If you're a believer in the Lord Jesus our works will be weighed but more important than that is what we spoke about last time when we were thinking about Jesus.

Romans 8, chapter 1 there is now no condemnation for you who are in Christ Jesus. Jesus' judgment for those of us who love and trust him will just mean receiving the inheritance and the reward that he has kept for us all of this time.

For us who trust in him Jesus' judgment will mean that we are vindicated. It will be seen and shown that we were right to trust in him all along.

It will all be worthwhile. That's what Jesus' judgment means for us. But it also means unmistakably from that passage rebels punished doesn't it?

[57 : 58] If you don't believe then how does the prospect of standing before a God that you have rejected to account for your life strike you?

Jesus' standard remember is that anybody who hates his brother is a murderer and anybody who looks at another person lustfully is an adulterer.

Which of us is innocent then? How do you stand with Jesus? That's the key question because for those not in Christ there is no eternity in the presence of God who is the source of all goodness and all love and joy.

There is only eternal separation from him in a place that has therefore no joy or goodness in it. And where the consequences of sin have not been reversed and so they go on forever Jesus speaks of that place more than almost anybody else and he calls it hell.

I just want to read you a story took place quite a long time ago in another country see if I can find it here we are happened in a church a young minister of the gospel was confronted as the congregation expected after the service by an able young skeptic who is called Bert Olney and at the close of the service Olney goes up to the pastor and he says you did well but you know I don't believe in the infallibility of the Bible it is appointed to men once to die but after that to face judgment was the young minister's calm assertion I can prove to you there is no such thing as a judgment after death declared the skeptic but men do die the young preacher declared for it is appointed unto men once to die and then to face judgment well that's no argument the skeptic protested let's get down to business and discuss this matter properly with rational arguments and the minister shook his head

[60 : 33] I'm here to preach the word of God and not argue over it Bert Olney is very annoyed and he turns away with the remark well I don't believe you know the Bible well enough to argue about it perhaps you're right came the calm response but please remember this it is appointed to men once to die and after that to face the judgment and Olney goes home and every sound on his way home sings the word judgment to him the brook he crossed the leaves on the trees say judgment and the next morning he knocks on the pastor's door and he says I've come to see you about that verse of scripture you gave me last night he said I spent a terrible night with those words burning their way into me I can't get rid of them tell me what I must do to be saved it is appointed for man to die once and then to face judgment and after that let's look at chapter 21 in our reading then I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and there was no longer any sea and I saw the holy city the new

Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying look God's dwelling place is now among the people and he will dwell with them they will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God he will wipe every tear from their eyes there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain for the old order of things has passed away after that friends there will be renewal and rejoicing heaven and earth will be remade but without the chaos that the sea represents Jesus will finish the work of redeeming and restoring which he has already begun the promises that he stamped and sealed at the cross will be hand delivered then and there will be a feast a feast to celebrate that nothing now hinders the happiness of God and his people together

Israel knew this God's people knew this from before this is how David is able to sing in Psalm 16 you make known to me the path of life you will fill me with joy in your presence with eternal pleasures at your right hand that's what the future holds for God's people there will be the immediate presence of God with us all that's the essence of heaven isn't it because in his presence is fullness of joy Westminster Catechism first question is what is man's chief end in other words what's the point of us man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever and that is possible and wonderful here isn't it but it is inevitable and unlimited there that's the future for us don't know if you like your theology you probably guessed I do the reformers had three purposes for Sundays for Sabbath days rest recreation or recreation if you like and rejoicing heaven is all of that all the time isn't that amazing all that is good here will be better there no more death no mourning no crying no pain and the tender hand of our father god will brush away all the dirt and knit up all the wounds and if you're in christ here today then you're already a citizen of that kingdom you belong there that's your inheritance isn't that amazing there's another story those of you who get the bulletin will know that we sometimes in advance let folks know what we're going to be thinking about some time ago a minister called

Charles E. Fuller announced that he would be speaking the following Sunday on heaven and during that week a letter was received from an old man who was very ill and here's an extract from it are you ready next Sunday you are to talk about heaven I am interested in that land because I have held a clear title to a bit of property there for over 55 years I did not buy it it was given to me without money and without price but the donor purchased it for me at tremendous sacrifice I'm not holding it as an investment since the title is not transferable it is not an empty plot for more than half a century I have been sending materials out of which the greatest architect and builder of the universe has been building a home for me which will never need to be renovated or repaired because it will suit me perfectly individually and it will never grow old termites can never undermine its foundations for they rest on the rock of ages fire cannot destroy it floods cannot wash it away no locks or bolts will ever be placed on its doors for no vicious person can ever enter that land where my dwelling stands now almost completed and almost ready for me to enter in and abide in peace eternally without fear of being invicted there is a valley of deep shadow between the place where I live and that to which I shall journey in a very short time

I cannot reach my home in that city of gold without passing through this dark valley of shadows but I am not afraid because the best friend I ever had went through the same valley long long ago and drove away all its gloom he has stuck by me through thick and thin since we first became acquainted 55 years ago and I hold his promise in printed form never to forsake me or leave me alone he will be with me as I walk through the valley of shadows and I shall not lose my way when he is with me I hope to hear your sermon on heaven next Sunday from my home but I have no assurance that I shall be able to do so my ticket to heaven has no date marked for the journey no return coupon no permit for luggage yes I am all ready to go and I may not be here while you are talking next Sunday evening but I shall meet you there someday wish I could write letters like that but that friends is why Jesus says the words that

[68 : 31] Dave read out at the beginning do not let your hearts be troubled you believe in God believe also in me my father's house has many rooms if that were not so would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come back and take you to be with me so that you also may be where I am renewal and rejoicing is what we have to look forward to Jesus encourages us as his followers to think about three main things in view of his return and the first is to hold on I've got a mug don't know where it came from I like it so much in fact that I bought a second one in case the first one breaks a bit weird it's on the level of the man who buys like 20 pairs of the same trousers and keeps them in his wardrobe anyway here's the mug on it in case you can't see it says everything will be okay in the end and if it's not okay it's not the end and that is the message of Jesus to us as we wait for his return hold on which of course in the bible also means continue to be held secondly be ready if you read the words of Jesus in the gospels this is the main thing that he says to his followers be ready long for his coming with all of your heart live watchfully and expectantly don't drift off to sleep in the same field that everybody else is camping in be ready it's a bit like putting on your seatbelt we don't put on a seatbelt because we see the accident coming do we we put on the seatbelt!

because the accident can happen anytime be ready and thirdly invest there treasures in heaven those are Jesus words aren't they send the building materials that way to use the letter give yourself give your resources to things that will last build a lifestyle of worship because that's what we'll be doing there witness to those around us because that's why we're still here going through all this because we want people to be with us there don't we for those of you who don't yet follow Jesus who have not committed themselves to following Jesus that means changing direction it means turning around and following him repent to use the Bible word ask the judge for mercy before it's too late make sure your name is in the book of life just want to give you a moment to reflect using the three questions there just take a minute to yourself think and then pray and then we'll close off those those those

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Come to fruition. But you know the end of the age that Jesus speaks of is not the end. It's not even the beginning of the end.

[73 : 01] It's rather the end of the beginning. Here's how C.S. Lewis puts it in the Chronicles of Narnia at the end of the stories.

The things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them. And for us this is the end of all the stories.

And we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after. But for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world, all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page.

And now at last they were beginning chapter one of the great story which no one on earth has read. Which goes on forever. In which every chapter is better than the one before.

So come Lord Jesus is what we say. Isn't it? Come Lord Jesus. Amen.

[74 : 02] Amen. Thanks Johan.

Let's respond to that by singing a couple of songs. As we think about a higher throne on that day when we will be there.

There is your heart of love And all this world has owned Where faithful ones from every time Will one day come Before the storm will stand To the land To the land The healing heart My promise Salvation God In heaven's voices sing Let's understand the days To ending the night Forevermore And there we'll find a home A life for the throne An honour in perfect storm

Where we belong The Irish shits may die At first upon the night The land becomes our shepherd's feet We'll reign within Heaven's oyster stream Heaven will stand the way To end our course and jam our stars The pain is wide For glory is the power

[77 : 57] Strength like Son of love You've gone a King In the names of mine Forevermore There is a day All creation's waiting for Day of freedom

Liberation for the earth And on that day The Lord will come to meet his heart When we see him In an instant we will be changed The trumpet sound And the death will then be raised By his power Never to perish again Once we fled

Outgrown with immortality When we see him Swallowed up in the grave We will meet him In the air And then we will be like him For we must see him I've seen him Oh yeah Oh yeah And all that time We will see him And we'll be with him Forever

And with his glory We will live Oh yeah Oh yeah Oh yeah Oh yeah So lift your eyes To the things that yet unseen That will remain For all eternity That will remain now For all eternity Though troubles are For his turning And it's achieving Our future glory

And we will be with him And we will meet him In the air And then we will be like him And we will see him In the air And then we will be like him And we will be like him And we will see him And we will see him As he is Oh yeah Oh yeah Oh yeah Oh yeah Oh yeah Oh yeah Oh yeah That's great Lord

[83 : 19] Thank you for Giving us a way through Jesus That we Can be with you forever And in your glory We will live Help us Lord to live Now with eager anticipation For the day when you return Help us to make sure That we are yours Now And if we're not That you would make that clear to us And that we would be yours That you would save us through Jesus Amen Thanks for being with us this morning Do take a seat Do hang around For a coffee

And a chat Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you