

A Picture of Our Returning King

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[0 : 00] Maybe you've come this morning to this building and you are overwhelmed by your circumstances. You are so overwhelmed you can't get past today.

You think that chaos reigns. I mean, that's where you are. That's where you're living at. You need something to bank on. Or maybe you've come here this morning and this might not be easy to hear, but let's just be honest with each other.

You're bored. Christianity is boring. Jesus is boring.

You need some fresh wow. You need to be awed by the Savior. Or maybe you've come and you've just been preoccupied with things.

Busy, busy, busy. Good things, but preoccupied with them. So much so that you've lost sight of what Jesus has called His disciples to be about.

[1 : 15] Making disciples of the nations. And so this morning you need a bit of a sober encouragement. A sober wake up call.

Or maybe you've come this morning and you've just been adrift. Your devotion to Jesus is just kind of distracted.

And what you need is another kind of wake up call. A call to a full and exclusive devotion to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

You know what you need this morning, brothers and sisters? If you fall into any of those categories. And I fall into each one sometime during every day.

Alright? If you need some... If you see in that, what you need is a renewed vision of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[2 : 22] And in the book of Revelation, chapter 19, verses 11 through 16, God delivers. He delivers. He gives you a vision of the coming Christ.

Your Christ. Your Savior. That is to compel you. That is to strengthen you. That is to have the effect of producing in you a perseverance to follow Jesus no matter what comes.

Revelation 19, verses 11 through 16 gives us a view of our glorious, risen, returning King.

Speaking of views, do you know what a view master is? One of those little red things. It's got the black kind of click thing on the side. And what you do is you have these white discs with pictures in it.

And you drop it in. And you click it. And you're like, oh, that's awesome. Clickety-click, click, click, click. And you just kind of scroll through a bunch of things on a variety of different subjects. Well, your Bible is like God's view master.

[3 : 34] And there are a variety of discs that he has in the Bible for you to be compelled by. To be taught by. To be spurred on by.

And so imagine this book. All right, all right, all right. Everybody, get your Bible out. All right. There's some in the pews. Here's what I want you to do. I want you to put the spine of your Bible up to your eyes like a view master.

I just personally want to see it from up front here. And so this book is God's view master for you to see things as they really are.

And so in this book, let's say we put in the film of Christ's birth, click. There's an angel speaking to Joseph, click. Angel speaking to Mary, click.

They're on their way to Bethlehem, click. Oh, there's Jesus in the manger, click. Click. Oh, angels, myriads singing praises to God in the darkness around Bethlehem to shepherds.

[4 : 35] Click, click, click, click, click. Wise men bowing before him. Oh, click, click, click, click. Awesome, awesome. Let's put another disc in. The life of Jesus. Life in ministry.

Oh, he's tempted in the wilderness, but not sinning once. Click. Oh, there he is again. Preaching, teaching with authority like nobody else.
Click. Click. Oh, with just words, raising people from the dead. Click, click, click, click, click. He's awesome, isn't he? Let's put another one in. The crucifixion of Jesus. Now, this is a disc that should get a lot of use for you.
Jesus. He's betrayed with a kiss. Click. He's given over to the Sanhedrin. Trial one. Click. Before Pilate.
Before Herod. Click, click, click. Look. Soldiers beating him. Soldiers mocking him. Soldiers putting a crown of thorns on his head. Click, click, click.
[5 : 31] Scourged. Click. Cross on his back. Carry to Golgotha. Click, click, click. Click. Nails in his wrists and in his feet.
Put up on the cross. Darkness covers the land. Click, click, click. Now we put the sound in. Eloi, Eloi. Lama Sebehtani. My God, my God. Why have you forsaken me?
The curtain is torn from top to bottom. Click, click, click, click, click. Your salvation is accomplished. Let's put another one in. The resurrection. Click. Empty tomb.
Jesus rode to Emmaus. Jesus eating fish with his buddies up in the upper room. Click, click, click, click, click. Jesus, Mount of Olives.
He commissions his disciples to go make disciples of the nation. Jesus ascends. This book gives you a view of your Savior. It's God's kindness to you.
[6 : 29] Click, click, click, click, click. All of our clicking so far has been on what Christ has done. And so this morning what I want to do is put in a disc into your viewfinder called The Return of Jesus Christ.

I want you to get a good look. And it has an intended effect. God has Revelation 19, 11 through 16 in your Bible for a reason.
It's to encourage you. To strengthen you. Now, I don't know what goes through your mind when you hear the book of Revelation.
Ooh. But when God had John write these things down, and when they arrived, when this letter arrived to its original audience in the first century, it was arrived to a group of Christians who were being persecuted for their faith.
They were being challenged. They were being challenged. They needed to be strengthened. They needed to be encouraged to press on in faithfulness to Jesus. And so this book of Revelation, which we're going to just crack open today, this whole book, not only was it intended for the encouragement of the first century Christians, it's intended for the encouragement of 21st century Christians for this church this morning, for us living in Kenosha in 2016.
[8 : 04] Do you need encouragement? God's going to deliver it. Revelation 19, 11 through 16 is a glorious picture of our returning king.

And just to be forewarned, when he comes back, we're going to see a picture here of him coming back as a warrior. Triumphant conqueror.
Coming back to wage war. To carry out justice. Peace. And so, as we're about to look at this passage and read it, hey gang, you know, chaos isn't in control.
Evil doesn't have the final say. God's in control. And Jesus is sitting on G, waiting for O to come back and make all things right. So, would you open up your Bibles, if you haven't already, to Revelation 19, verse 11.
And now, children, if I can have your attention, this is the time where I want for you to draw a picture for me, and I would love to see it after the service. I'm going to read this passage, and there's going to be some images that go into your head.
[9 : 28] Try to draw a picture of that. I would love to see that afterwards. Revelation 19, 11-16. May God bless the reading of His Word. Then I saw heaven open, and behold, a white horse.

The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True. And in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems.
And he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood. And the name by which he is called is the Word of God.
And the armies of heaven arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations.

And he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

[10:34] On his robe and on his thigh, he has a name written. King of kings and Lord of lords.

Amen. This passage is a glorious picture of our returning king.

And there's a whole lot of descriptions of our returning king in this, but what I want you to see this morning are the four titles given to Jesus. There are four of them.

And they're all given for your encouragement to press on. Let me show you the... I'll just name them and then we'll come back to them. The first one is in verse 11. It's the trustworthy title. Faithful and True.

The second title is found in verse 12. It's the mysterious title. A name written that no one knows but himself. Verse 13 is the sobering title.

[11:38] The Word of God. You may say, well, how is that sobering? Wait till you see the context. And the last title, verse 16, is the supreme title.

The glorious title. The King of kings and the Lord of lords. Each title in its own right is an encouragement. When you take them all together, your encouragement should bloom into worship. So let's jump right in. The trustworthy title found in verse 11. Faithful and True. John writes, Then I saw heaven open, and behold, a white horse.

The one sitting on it, it's called Faithful and True. And in righteousness, he judges and makes war. Well, verse 11 opens with the opening of heaven.

A revelation. And God gives John this vision of the returning Christ. And what does he see? He sees Jesus mounted on a white horse. And what you need to know is that at that time, a white horse represented conquest.

[12:48] Victory, triumph over one's enemies. Caesar's would ride into Rome on a white horse, or following white horses. Victorious.

Victory won. And so John starts this description saying, Done! Victory won! Victory won! But John doesn't stay focused on that white horse.

He actually focuses the rider, on the rider of the white horse. The one who accomplishes the victory. And John calls our attention to that first title, Faithful and True.

But can we just ask a question? Of all the titles, why does he start with Faithful and True? Why that title?

And here's a second question. Faithful and True to what? Let's answer those starting with a second. Faithful and True to what?

[13:47] Here's a clue. If you turn back into Revelation chapter 3, if you turn back to Revelation chapter 3, and you look at verse 14, and if you remember, at the beginning of the book of Revelation, the risen Christ talks to John and says, Hey, send out seven letters to seven churches, and here is the last letter to the church of Laodicea, and this is how it begins.

And to the angel of the church in Laodicea, write the words of the Amen. The faithful and true witness. It's a clue. What do witnesses do?

They bear testimony. They bear testimony to the truth. They're faithful to their word. And so, what is Jesus faithful and true to?

He is faithful and true to His word. So why does John the Revelator begin with this title?

Because Jesus has already said that He's coming. He's being faithful and true to what He's already said.

[15:02] That He's going to return and come back and judge the world, wiping out His enemies and vindicating His saints. In Matthew 24 and 25, Jesus spends a long discourse in talking about the end times and of His return.

There's overlap with what we're talking about this morning in Revelation 19. And what we learn from Matthew 24 and 25 is that no one knows the day or the hour of Jesus' return.

No one does. Well, one person does. One person has it on his calendar with permanent marker and that's God the Father. The day's set. But nobody else knows.

And so He will come back suddenly. And when He comes back, He will hold all His own accountable. That's the point of the parable of the ten virgins.

The parable of the talents. Be faithful while He's gone because He's going to come back and hold us to account. But not just that. When He comes back, He will judge all the nations.

[16:10] Separating the sheep from the goats. That's what He said in Matthew 24 and 25. So why does John start with faithful and true? Here is the first title. Because Jesus is being faithful to what He said.

He's come back to do what He said He would do. He's told us, I'm going to return. I'm going to bring with me fullness of justice to all.

So, let's say that you're in need of encouragement this morning. You're overwhelmed by your circumstances. You feel like chaos reigns. Well, what this title, faithful and true, should do is say no. Chaos doesn't reign. Evil doesn't have the final word. Jesus has spoken. He's coming back. And here we have a picture of His return. It's going to happen.

You can bank on it. There's something else you need to know. This title, faithful and true, presumes something else.

[17:20] It presumes God is in control of all things. That God is working all things out according to His good purpose. He's reigning over all.

Orchestrating all things. Even hard things. He's orchestrating it all for His good and gracious purpose. So, if you're discouraged today, you know what you do?

You focus your heart on that day. That day when Jesus comes back. That day when He comes back to make all wrongs right.

Faithful and true is a trustworthy title that should encourage your discouraged heart. Our God is in control.

He's coming back. And He knows you. Let's look at the mysterious title. Verse 12. A name written that no one knows but Himself.

[18:22] Look at verse 12. His eyes are like a flame of fire and on His head are many diadems, many crowns.

And He has a name written that no one knows but Himself. So, if I'm understanding this right, John is saying, He's got flames of fire, many crowns, and by the way, He's got a name that He knows that you, reader, do not know.

How does that make you feel? Make you feel out of the loop a little bit? Make you feel like you don't fully know this one?

That there's mystery to Him still? Another way to talk about it is He knows everything about us. We don't know everything about Him. At the beginning of verse 12, He says, His eyes are like a flame of fire. What does fire do?

[19:41] Well, it warms you and we're plenty warm right now, aren't we? It also gives light. The eyes of Jesus are flames of fire of an intense omniscience that knows everything.

He sees everything in you. He sees everything in everyone in every place at every time. He knows everything about us, but we don't know everything about Him.

You know what this makes Him? This makes Him the most interesting man in the world. My son and I were recently driving together and we heard a Dos Equis commercial about the most interesting man in the world.

You know, that guy that says, stay thirsty, my friends. I tried my accent with Mary Nichols today or this week and she goes, that sounds French, not Spanish.

Well, so I thought, okay, let's see if there's any quotes on the internet from the most interesting man in the world. And of course, I found the top 100 quotes of the most interesting man in the world.

[20:59] Here are some of the ones I found most interesting. And I was laughing in my office out loud. This week. This first one is very compelling.

When he drives a car off the lot, its price increases in value. The most interesting man in the world. Once a rattlesnake bit him, after five days of excruciating pain, the snake finally died.

If he were to punch you in the face, you would have to fight off a strong urge to thank him.

Superman has pajamas with his logo.

Sharks have a week dedicated to him. He once made a weeping willow laugh. Roses stop to smell him. Bigfoot tries to get pictures of him. He never wears a watch because time is always on his side. He has won the Lifetime Achievement Award twice. If opportunity knocks and he's not at home, opportunity waits. This guy's amazing.

[22:10] His blood smells like cologne. On every continent in the world, there's a sandwich named after him. International respect.

Panhandlers give him money. His pillow is cool on both sides. He taught Chuck Norris martial arts. Once he ran a marathon because it was quote unquote on the way.

The police often question him just because they find him interesting. If he was to pat you on the back, you would list it on your resume. He's considered a national treasure in countries he's never visited.

The most interesting man in the world. And he happens to drink Dos Equis beer. Stay thirsty, my friends.

When you read a bunch of quotes like that, it doesn't take much to realize that human beings, we want to be in awe of someone.

[23 : 28] It's deeply ingrained in each of us. It's built in. This is just a creative funny way to express it. And we all know that the Dos Equis beer commercial guy is just an actor.

He's really not the most interesting man in the world. In other words, if this guy who's the most interesting man in the world, the best thing that he can say is stay thirsty, my friends.

come on. Come on. Forget about it. How about this? The real most interesting man in the world said in John 4 to the Samaritan woman, this water that I give you to drink, drink it and you will never be thirsty again.

The most interesting man in the world is not the beer guy. It's the rider on the white horse.

He has a name that only he knows. With just words, he spoke into our planet, the universe.

[24 : 45] With just words, he rose people from the dead. With just words, we'll just see in a moment, with a word, he strikes down the nations. patience. He's the most interesting man in the world.

We don't know everything about him, but what we do and even what we don't adds to his mystique. And the result is awe.

Have you lost some of the wow factor over Jesus? Are you bored with Jesus? That speaks more of you than of Jesus because he's not boring and he knows it.

Be encouraged. Be awed by Jesus. Savor the Savior. You cannot fully comprehend him.

Now, if you're sitting here and you're like, man, I'm a little bored. I need a little what do I do? Can you just hang out in Revelation 9, 11 through 16 all week?

[25 : 51] Seriously. Just read it every day. Say, God, would you awe me with Jesus? And then read it. See what happens. Or you can read John 1 or you can read Hebrews 1 or you can read Colossians 1.

A lot of the ones. John, Hebrews, Colossians. There's a lot of big Jesus action in your Bible. He's a mysterious guy.

The most interesting man in the world. And he's riding this white horse. Let's look at this sobering title in verse 13.

He's clothed in a robe dipped in blood. Makes you wonder whose blood it is, doesn't it? He's clothed in a robe dipped in blood. And the name by which he is called is the Word of God.

Now, the same guy who wrote the book of Revelation, he wrote the Gospel of John 2. The Apostle John.

[27 : 00] And in the Gospel of John, chapter 1, the Apostle John describes Jesus as the Word of God. The same kind of language he's using here in Revelation 19.

And what that is getting at is this. Jesus is the ultimate divine self-expression of God. He explains them.

Jesus, the incarnate Word, the Word in the flesh, is the greatest self-revelation of God. John 1.18.

And so, with that in mind, we come back to Revelation 19.13 to this title, The Word of God. And it's carrying the same kind of meaning. Revelation.

Revelation. The writer on the white horse is revealing something about God. God's active self-disclosure in the person of Jesus.

[27 : 59] But what you need to understand is in this passage, there is a real sobering nuance. We see that in verses 14 and 15.

The incarnate Word of God leads out in the army of heaven. And they're clothed in fine linen, white and pure, riding white horses.

That's you and me. I don't care if I've got a big horse or a little horse. I'm just going to be on a horse following Jesus. That's awesome. We're with Him.

Protected by Him. But what I want you to see is in verses 14 and 15, there are three acts of judgment by the Word of God.

You ready? Look at verse 14. And the armies of heaven are raided and fine linen, white and pure. Excuse me. 15. From His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations.

[29 : 07] Jesus comes back. He's the Word of God. God's self-expression. Active self-expression. And we read here that He strikes down the nations.

All who oppose Him. All who oppose Him. He strikes down the nations with this broad sword that is coming out of His mouth.

It's a word of judgment. In verse 21, John comes back to it. It says, the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of Him who was sitting on the horse.

Jesus wins the victory not with weapons, but with a word spoken. What you understand here, it's violent.

It's judgment. The incarnate Word here is a word of God's judgment on the enemies of God. Let's look at that second picture.

[30 : 08] The Word of God rules with a rod of iron. And He will rule them with a rod of iron. It's actually speaking of an iron shepherd's club.

And John is drawing off of a prophecy of the Messiah in Psalm 2, verses 8 and 9. If you want to flip back there to Psalm 2, it would be good for you to see.

To see that this is in your Bible. I'm not making this up. This is that great psalm about the coming Messiah. And His reign over the nations.

Verse 8, Ask of Me and I'll make the nations your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession. Verse 9, You shall break them, the nations who oppose Him, You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

The image John is painting here is not of a Messiah who comes back and keeps the nations in lines with an iron scepter, but the returning Messiah who is dashing to pieces all who oppose Him with an iron shepherd's club.

[31 : 27] Psalm 2. That's what's happening here. Our warrior king has returned. It's violent and it's judgment. Let's look at this third picture.

It's very sobering. And He, the Word of God, will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

I doubt that you have a winepress in your house. Maybe you do. But back in the day, a winepress was a big vat and after a grape harvest, they dropped the grapes in it and through a couple different means, they would apply pressure down upon the grapes.

And they would squash the grapes, causing the grape juice to squeeze out. And there would be this little hole in the bottom of the vat and the grape juice would flow out and from that you could make some wine.

This isn't in here to give you instructions of how to make wine. This is in here to help you understand what Jesus is going to do when He comes back.

[32 : 49] He is going to be the force applied to the winepress of destruction, of judgment on all who oppose God and His purposes.

Jesus, the incarnate Word of God, is the executor of God's judgment on the nations who will not bow their knee to King Jesus.

You can't miss that Jesus is treading the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

Why is God so angry? He hates sin. Always has. Always will. Whether it's the Old Testament or the New, God is opposed to it.

He's holy. And He will carry out judgment on it. All three of these. All three. Whether it's the sword, whether it's the shepherd's club, whether it's the winepress, all of these are images of Jesus, the incarnate Word of God as the executor of God's judgment on the rebel nations.

[34 : 09] He returns violently against all who oppose Him. It's a sober word, isn't it? But blessed and safe are those who have already bowed the knee.

We're riding behind them on white stallions. But for those who haven't repented, haven't bowed the knee to Jesus, Jesus comes back to shed blood.

That's the blood on His robe. It's the blood of the nations. His robe is dipped in blood. This is terribly sobering, isn't it?

I don't tell this to you joyfully, but soberly. How can this be encouraging? Two ways.

The first is this. This is a sober encouragement to you to take stock of your life. To take sin seriously.

[35 : 17] To not minimize it. God does not minimize sin. He gave His Son for sin or He's going to come back and judge it violently.

So the question I have for you this morning is have you been washed clean by the blood of Jesus? Can you say yes? The second way this is a sober encouragement is more bigger picture for us as a church.

When Jesus comes back, He's going to execute judgment, right? He's going to execute judgment on sinners who haven't yet bowed the knee. And for those of us who have, by God's grace, bowed our knee, we're surrounded by people that if Jesus were to come back, they're under His sword. They're under His club. They're in the wine press. Do you see where this is going? It should have a sobering effect on us.

Now we can get preoccupied with things in our own lives. Good things. And we can get busy doing things that are things we need to do. But they can become first things when they're not.

[36 : 35] What this sober vision of the Word of God does is compel us to be about His mission. To make disciples of the nations.

We've been entrusted with the message of reconciliation. We have the message of peace. We can help people not fear the wrath of God to come by telling them about what the King's already done for them.

The title, Word of God, given the context, is that Jesus is God's decisive word of judgment. And it should be sobering to us.

The last title is this. It's the supreme title and we see it in verse 16. On His robe and on His thigh He has a name written King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

This title is the climax of all the titles. And it seems like when you read the description that it's written twice. But the reality is this.

[37 : 44] Jesus is on His war horse. His robe would have been draped over His thigh. And so, it's King of Kings, Lord of Lords. But what I want to draw your attention to is where it's at.

The perspective John has given. Your eye level with King Jesus' thigh. Reading King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Do you know what that means?

You're looking up to Him. He's high and lifted up. Supreme over all. Supreme over you. He's exalted over all.

On His head are many diadems, verse 12. Many crowns. He reigns over all. He alone has the rightful claim to rule all the people and places on the earth.

Psalms 2.8 The nations are His heritage. The ends of the earth are His possession. Revelation 19 He comes back to claim them as His own.

[38 : 52] If you were to read on for the rest of the book of Revelation from here, you would see the King of Kings and Lord of Lords doing some amazing things. The King of Kings and Lord of Lords completely wipes out all of His enemies.

Including the beast. Including the false prophet. Including Satan himself. Even death and Hades He throws into the lake of fire. King of Kings.

Lord of Lords. Jesus. The King of Kings and Lord of Lords takes up His place on the great white throne of judgment and He judges all the dead.

He separates them out like sheep and goats. And those who are not written in the Lamb's book of life He casts into the lake of fire. But for all who are written in the Lamb's book of life, all who have bowed the knee to Jesus by grace have seen Him for who He is, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords comes back with the new heavens and the new earth.

He wipes away our tears. He dwells with us. He's with us for eternity. I want to clarify just one thing.

[40 : 05] When Jesus comes back, He doesn't become the King of Kings and Lord of Lords at that point. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords right now.

He's reigning now. And He is poised to come back at an unknown hour. So this title, King of Kings and Lord of Lords should compel you to devote yourself fully and exclusively to Him.

To worship Him. To live for Him. So let me just wrap it up by saying this. Be encouraged by Revelation 19, 11 through 16.

Be encouraged. If you're overwhelmed, you can bank on Jesus Christ coming back. If you're bored, be awed at this Savior who defies your comprehension.

If you're preoccupied, be sobered up with His mission. And if you've been adrift, in your devotion, He is your King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

[41 : 29] Don't give up. Let me pray. God in Heaven, we do thank You so much for Revelation 19, 11 through 16. God, we pray that You would use this now and throughout the week to stir us to be faithful.

To press on. Lord Jesus, we don't want to live for anybody but You. we praise You and trust our lives to You. In Your name we pray.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.