

# Sunday August 21, 2022

## Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

### Welcome & Prayer

*"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. <sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? <sup>3</sup> My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" <sup>4</sup> These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng. <sup>5</sup> Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God." (Psalm 42:1-5, NIV)*

Let us pray.... Dear Lord, our soul pants for you this morning. We long to be in your presence. We long to worship you with others in person but today we can't, despite all our good intentions and so we come to you by ourselves this morning or with our family around us. We need you. We need you like we need our food and drink. We need your presence, your forgiveness, your love, your grace, your help and power. So give us more of you today. Let us see more of your glory as we sing our songs. Let us hear more your character as we listen to your word. Let us experience more of your goodness as we pray. And draw us closer to your people as we sing the same song, pray the same prayers, listen to the same sermon, even if we are in different locations today. Help us this day to truly worship you in spirit and in truth. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

### Song – Praise 96 [Psalm 96 Praise - YouTube](#)

- 1. Sing unto the Lord a new song  
Sing unto the Lord all the earth  
Sing to the Lord, bless his name  
Tell of his salvation day by day.
- 3. Let all the creation be glad  
The earth and the sea sing for joy  
Before the Lord, the judge of the earth  
Who judges us in righteousness and truth.
- 2. Majesty and honour are his  
Strength and beauty, glory and righteousness  
Great is the Lord, and deserving of praise  
He is to be feared above all gods.

**Chorus**      Worship the Lord in holy array  
                 Tremble before him all the earth  
                 Our God reigns.

### Bible Reading – Revelation 13:1-18 (NIV)

*The dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns, and on each head a blasphemous name <sup>2</sup> The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne & great authority. <sup>3</sup> One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. <sup>4</sup> People worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can wage war against it?" <sup>5</sup> The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise its authority for forty-two months. <sup>6</sup> It opened its mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. <sup>7</sup> It was given power to wage war against God's holy people and to conquer them. And it was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. <sup>8</sup> All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the*

*creation of the world. <sup>9</sup> Whoever has ears, let them hear. <sup>10</sup> "If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity they will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword they will be killed." This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of God's people. <sup>11</sup> Then I saw a second beast, coming out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon. <sup>12</sup> It exercised all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and made the earth & its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. <sup>13</sup> And it performed great signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to the earth in full view of the people. <sup>14</sup> Because of the signs it was given power to perform on behalf of the first beast, it deceived the inhabitants of the earth. It ordered them to set up an image in honour of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. <sup>15</sup> The second beast was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that the image could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. <sup>16</sup> It also forced all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, <sup>17</sup> so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name. <sup>18</sup> This calls for wisdom. Let the person who has insight calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. That number is 666.*

## Announcements

**Focus for August – Commitment.** Our first commitment is to Christ. We then need to committed to Christ church and out of that will come a commitment to Christ's mission. To grow His kingdom. To preach the gospel. To love the lost. How are you going with that? Are you finding time during your average day/week/month to do that? And how would an increased commitment to Christ and his Church enable you to grow in your commitment to his cause?

**COVID.** As the risk of spreading covid reduces in our community so we can ease back on some of our restrictions. So from this weekend we will again have morning tea & supper. Small groups and Church wide meetings will (if they can) meet again in person. But we will continue to open windows and doors to keep a good airflow and will provide masks if people feel more comfortable wearing them inside.

**Church Redevelopment.** The Building Working Group wants to keep you informed of where they are up to with the possible church redevelopment. At present the architects are trying to develop a more modest proposal that is in line with our budget. In the next week or so that will go to the building Working Group for consideration/commit and revision. If/when we are happy with the plans, we will take it to COM and Session for their input. After that there will be a recommendation made to the congregation to either proceed with the proposed redevelopment or to scrap the whole idea completely. Rest assured everyone will be able to have their say when a recommendation is made to the congregation.

**Recharge conference,** A conference for men in the Hunter Valley. Saturday, 10th Sept, 2022. 8:30 am to 3:00 pm. Location: Grace Evangelical Church, 344- 348 Lake Rd., Glendale. Speaker, Simon Manchester, John 14, 15 &16, for "on ocean of encouragement". Link for more details and to register: <https://www.hgm.org.au/recharge>. Any enquiries, Martin, 0421749751.

**The Christian Health Professionals Network** would like to invite all healthcare workers and support staff (admin/ pastors) to their annual prayer brunch at Macquarie Life Church at 127 Macquarie Rd, Macquarie Hills on Saturday 3 September, 8-10am followed by morning tea. Contact Liz Trethewey on 0402 123 839 for details or register at [www.chpn.com.au](http://www.chpn.com.au).

### For your diary

- Working Bee – Charlestown Church – Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 8-12 noon.
- Mission Team Zoom Meeting – Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> August @ 4-4:45pm  
<https://uonewcastle.zoom.us/j/88079180899>
- Small Group Leaders meeting – Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> August 11:30-12:30pm in Cottage
- Lords Supper Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September
- Church camp. Fri 3 – Sun 5 March 2023

**Kids Church:** This is our last week in the series of lessons from Luke 1-5 where we will be learning that Jesus amazed Simon and Andrew by the huge load of fish they pulled onto their boat the 2<sup>nd</sup> time round

(Luke 5:1-11). Simon tried to push Jesus away, but instead Jesus asked him and his friends to become fishers of men. Question of the week: How can we be fishers of men this week at home or at school?

**Rhema (if room!)** Do you realise that our Church runs a radio programme on Rhema every Sunday morning from 7:30am? It costs us approximate \$60 a week to put the programme on Rhema and if you would like to financially support it please mark your offering Rhema.

**Women's High Tea** Date: Saturday 17 Sept 2-4pm. Cafe 360 - 360 Pacific Highway, Belmont North. (Salvation Army church facility) Cost: \$30- high tea ( no dietary variations though Gluten free available ).RSVP and fully paid by 11 Sept ( this is the definite cut-off date) capped at 100 places. Speaker Sylvia Sui. Info: Linda Small 0422014250 or lindajs@gmail.com

## Prayer Points for 21<sup>st</sup> August 2022

**Psalm 27:1** “The Lord is my light and my salvation - whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life — whom shall I dread?”

**Pray for Taiwan:** Pray for many more missionaries to share the Good News of Jesus in this politically open land. Pray for the chains of idol worship, superstition, and false religion to be broken by the power of Jesus. Pray for the Gospel to infiltrate and transform the working class that is less than .5% Christian.

**Pray for our government:** Pray they will avoid foolish controversies, strife, and disputes. Pray they will respect what is good, sensible, and just.

**Pray for our church:** Pray for unity, wisdom, and clarity in the spiritual battle to herald the good news to our world.

**Compassion:** Education and poverty are linked. Distance to school, lack of infrastructure, financial costs, child marriage, child labour and more can all keep children living in poverty from school. Without education, a child is less likely to be able to support themselves in the future and so the cycle of poverty continues. The Compassion Child Sponsorship Program cares for children holistically, including supporting their education. School closures in developing countries were 3 times longer in 2020 due to COVID 19. Please pray for the children and families trapped in poverty, that God would provide educators and schools. Pray that Christian people in wealthy countries will be moved to reach out to poor children to assist in their education and spiritual growth through supporting organisations such as Compassion.

## Bible Reading – Revelation 14:1-20

*Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. <sup>2</sup> And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters & like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. <sup>3</sup> And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. <sup>4</sup> These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they remained virgins. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among mankind and offered as first fruits to God and the Lamb. <sup>5</sup> No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless. <sup>6</sup> Then I saw another angel flying in mid-air, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people. <sup>7</sup> He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.” <sup>8</sup> A second angel followed and said, “‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great,’ which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries.” <sup>9</sup> A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and its image & receives its mark on their forehead or on their hand, <sup>10</sup> they, too, will drink the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulphur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. <sup>11</sup> And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.” <sup>12</sup> This calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God who keep his commands and remain faithful to Jesus. <sup>13</sup> Then I heard a voice from heaven say, “Write*

this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labour, for their deeds will follow them.” <sup>14</sup> I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like a son of man with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. <sup>15</sup> Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” <sup>16</sup> So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. <sup>17</sup> Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. <sup>18</sup> Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, “Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth’s vine, because its grapes are ripe.” <sup>19</sup> The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God’s wrath. <sup>20</sup> They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses’ bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia.

## Song – Mine eyes have seen the glory [Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory \(Battle Hymn of the Republic - 4vv\) \[with lyrics for congregations\] - YouTube](#)

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|--|---|
| <p>1. Mine eyes have seen the glory<br/>of the coming of the Lord;<br/>he is trampling out the vintage<br/>where the grapes of wrath are stored;<br/>he hath loosed the fateful lightning<br/>of his terrible swift sword;<br/>his truth is marching on.</p> | <p>3. In the beauty of the lilies<br/>Christ was born across the sea,<br/>with a glory in his bosom<br/>that transfigures you and me;<br/>as he died to make men holy,<br/>let us die to make men free,<br/>while God is marching on.</p> |
|--|---|

Refrain: Glory, glory, hallelujah!  
Glory, glory, hallelujah!  
Glory, glory, hallelujah!  
His truth is marching on.

2. He has sounded forth the trumpet  
that shall never call retreat;  
he is sifting out the hearts of men  
before his judgment seat;  
O be swift, my soul, to answer him;  
be jubilant, my feet!  
Our God is marching on.  
(Refrain)

4. He is coming like the glory  
of the morning on the wave,  
he is wisdom to the mighty,  
he is honour to the brave;  
so the world shall be his footstool,  
and the soul of wrong his slave.  
Our God is marching on.  
(Refrain)

## Sermon – Deceived! (Stephen T)

When Antonio James was growing up in New Orleans, he and his mates would often rob tourists in the French Quarter at gunpoint. Most of them just handed over their valuables but one guy lashed out and Antonio shot him and he died. His fellow gang members ran and later dobbed him in which meant Antonio was sentence to death for his crimes. He stayed on death row for 14 years. During this time, he became a Christian. He began to read the Bible & teach it to others. He cared about his fellow inmates especially those on death row.

Just before Antonio received the death penalty, he asked forgiveness from his victim’s family and told them he was very sorry for what he had done. The warden of the prison, Burl Cain, a fellow believer, took Antonio’s hand and said “Antonio, the chariot is here, get ready for the ride. Here we go; you are about to see Jesus.”

Now when I first read that story is moved me to tears. What a powerful gospel we have. In the midst of death, in the midst of prison, in the midst of sin and isolation the gospel of the Lord Jesus gives us hope. Gives us life. Gives us a future. But ponder this with me. The average person seeing Antonio die would only see justice being done. Would see a life being ended? And think what a waste of Antonio's potential! But the Christian looking from the vantage point of heaven sees something completely different. They see God's chariot parked outside ready to take this man into the eternal joys of heaven & they would rejoice!

For the lens that you look at life through will change what you ultimately see. And so in Revelation 13 & 14 we see firstly evil running rampant as the unholy trinity of the Dragon, the Beast of the Sea and the Beast of the land take centre stage. But if you look at what is going on with a wide-angle lens you also see that God is in control and his people are praising him for all that he has done & is doing. So your perspective will change everything!

Slide 2

So chapter 13 paints for us this frightening picture of the devil doing his work through his two henchmen, the Beast from the sea and the beast from the land. Now over the last few weeks, the book of Revelation has shown us that the devil loves to hurt, kill and persecute the people of this world, especially the Christians. But he is not a one trick pony for in Rev 13 we see he also loves to deceive. And he does that by producing a counterfeit Christ.

Slide 3

### **1. The Counterfeit (chapter 13)**

*"The dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. It had ten horns & seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns & on each head a blasphemous name"*

Slide 4

This beast from the sea has a love of power, hence the horns and the heads and the crowns. And it loves to oppose God, hence the blasphemies that come from it. And if you know your Old Testament you will see there is a real connection between the way that this beast is described & the four beasts of Daniel chapter 7. So, let's continue, <sup>2</sup> *"The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne & great authority."*

In Daniel's vision the four beasts representing four successive world-empires. The first beast was like a lion and represented the Babylonian empire, the second was like a bear and acted like the Persians. The third like a leopard covered the ground so quickly it was like Alexander the Great's Greek conquest. And the last was the most frightening & it was linked to the Roman empire, the very government that was persecuting the Church in John's time.

Slide 5

So, this beast from the sea is given the dragon, or the Devil's power and authority, to rule. Satan you see has set up a counterfeit leader for this world. He doesn't want God to rule, he wants to rule in God's place. And so, he takes God's playbook and copies it. <sup>3</sup> *"One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed."* You see just like Jesus received a fatal wound and came back from the dead so this beast looks like he is indestructible, that not even death could hold him down either.

Which means the beast demands worship! *"The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. <sup>4</sup> People worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can wage war against it?"* And the answer seems to be? No one can.

Slide 6

<sup>5</sup> *"The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise its authority for forty-two months. <sup>6</sup> It opened its mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place*

*and those who live in heaven. <sup>7</sup> It was given power to wage war against God's holy people and to conquer them. And it was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation."*

Friends this beast is a God like figure, strong and mighty, having authority over the people of every nation, tribe and language. All except the true worshippers of God, who in comparison will seem like a weak and powerless minority. This is bad, but it is about to get much worse.

Slide 7

For this deadly duo is about to become an unholy trinity. <sup>11</sup> "Then I saw a second beast, coming out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon." Horns like a lamb, that is that meant to remind you of the lamb of God, Jesus. For lambs are not up there with bears, or lions or eagles but the lamb is the way that God represented his son Jesus.

<sup>12</sup> "It exercised all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and made the earth & its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed.      Slide 8      <sup>13</sup> And it performed great signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to the earth in full view of the people. <sup>14</sup> Because of the signs it was given power to perform on behalf of the first beast, it deceived the inhabitants of the earth. It ordered them to set up an image in honour of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived.

Slide 9

This beast could do miraculous signs, like Jesus did miraculous signs. It can order fire from heaven just like Elijah did in the OT and the two witnesses are said to do in Revelation 11. And it pointed people to another to worship, just like the Holy Spirit points to Jesus as the object of our worship. For what the Dragon, the Beast from the Sea and the Beast from the Earth are trying to do is mimic the Father, the Son & the Holy Spirit in order to deceive.

Slide 10

And they are successful in their deception. People from all over the earth fall for the counterfeit, the copy, not the real thing. It's sort of like going over to Bangkok to do some Duty-Free Shopping. You walk up to a store and you want to buy a product with a name brand, an Apple phone for example, a Rolex watch, an Armani Suit. But you don't get the real thing, instead you get a sweat shop imitation. Something that looked real on the outside which over time will be shown as a fake.

And in our passage these unsuspecting humans are hoodwinked into worshipping Satan not God. And once they do that, they received the mark of the beast. In the same way that Christians receive the seal of the Holy Spirit so the worshippers of the beast have the name of Satan attached to them. And without that mark they can't buy or sell so it really is a matter of life and death whether you have this mark or not.

Slide 11

All right so who are these beasts? As you can guess there is no shortage of options people have given – Emperor Nero, Hitler, Stalin, the Pope, Martin Luther, the European Economic Community, the United Nations. Needless to say people of any age can see elements of these two beasts in the people and governments of their day. Which I think gives us an important clue. In one way or another, the Beast is always with us.

Now that doesn't mean that right at the end of the world there won't be the beast that all these others beasts were pointing toward but what it does mean is that, before Jesus comes again, we will see beast like creatures appearing in this world seeking to draw people away from God and instead directing their worship towards the devil. But if I was to take an educated guess, I would say the first beast is seen most clearly when governments seek power for themselves. And the second beast is when religion works hand in glove with the government and provides the moral and spiritual authority for the government to reign.

So when the Communist Government is able to rule like a totalitarian government and is backed by the Catholic Patriotic church. Or when Russian Orthodox Church backs Putin no matter what he does. Or when

the Church of England backs the English crown and throws someone like John Bunyan the writer of Pilgrims Progress in jail for doing nothing else but preaching the gospel, then religion and government are working together to give power to the Devil, in the same way that the Beasts from the Sea & the Land work tougher in Rev 13.

Slide 12

Which brings us to the last verse, the mark of the beast 666. It is the number of the beast, but the Bible also says it is man's number, as against God's number. So, what is God's number? We have already seen that the number 7 has been repeatedly used in the book of Revelation as the complete number, God's number. So, 6 is a falling just short of that number. 6 is almost there but not quite. Man was created on the 6<sup>th</sup> day out of 7. So if God might be represented by the number 7 and the trinity 777, then 666 represents the unholy trinity of the devil and the beasts of the sea and land. They try to be like God but fall short.

Which means those who follow the devil will probably not have a 666 emblazoned on their foreheads or have a credit card or a mobile phone that includes those numbers in it. But they will be slaves to human thought. They will want to live as other men and women do. They will give their allegiance to this world and the false God's of this world. They will follow man's religion. In short, they will not be godly but humanists.

Which means that we need to be wise. The world will attempt to deceive. Religion at times will put forward a counterfeit Christianity. And many will be fooled. There are many bestselling Christian books that are not really Christian. Plenty of big Churches, and famous preachers who will lead us astray and away from Jesus. If we let them deceive us.

Slide 13

<sup>9</sup> "Whoever has ears, let them hear. <sup>10</sup> "If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity they will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword they will be killed." This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of God's people." Christians might have to endure hardships, many will end up martyrs, more in the last 100 years than the previous 1900 years put together. But we are called to endure, no matter what. Be patient even if the world seems to be going crazy; and be faithful, resisting the devil and his evil schemes.

Slide 14

And John helps us in another way. For alongside the fake, he also paints for us in Revelation 14, a picture of the real thing. Do you know that when the Australian government wants to train people to find counterfeit notes it doesn't just show them examples of fake currency? It instead gives these investigators access to real money. So, they can look at it, feel it, touch it, examine it. You see when you know the real thing really well you can recognise the fake when it comes along. So our best defences against falling for the counterfeit in the future is to be totally immersed in the real thing in the present. That's where we head next,

Slide 15

## 2. The real thing (14:1-5)

"Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. <sup>2</sup> And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters & like a loud peal of thunder. <sup>3</sup> And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth."

What does John see but true worship? Those who have been saved singing a new song to God. And that song is about being redeemed, being bought back from God. And the price paid to buy them back was the precious blood of Jesus. Their worship is not about their feelings or their needs or their themselves but it was about God's glory, God's name being praised. God Himself. The devil may have fake worship but God still has the real thing.

<sup>4</sup>“These are those who did not defile themselves with women for they remained virgins. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among mankind and offered as first fruits to God and the Lamb. <sup>5</sup>No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless.” Here are the true believers. Redeemed by God and cleansed by God. So they are pure, completely pure, and haven’t given themselves over to spiritual adultery. They are spotless, sanctified, blameless because they have followed the lamb wherever they went.

Slide 18

True believers, truly changed by God, giving God true worship. True praise. True honour. These Christians are not humanists but godly. They were so filled with God, so consumed by God, so enthralled by God that their focus is always on God. Now that’s the real thing. So is that what your family is producing? Is that what our Church is producing? Is that what our nation is producing? If you answer yes then being around those people will help you identify the fakes. But if you say no, you are in danger of being caught up in the devil’s deception.

So the contrast is right there before us. The lamb or the dragon. Sealed with his name or marked by the beast. Following the lamb or worshipping the beast. Worshipping an idol or singing with gusto to God, the power to buy and sell of being purchased by the Saviour.

Slide 19

### 3. The counterfeit, the real thing and thirdly **the eternal gospel (14:6-20)**

For there is one thing that should change everything. There is a perspective that makes all the difference. There is a wide angled lens that will help you to see past what is going on in our world, to see what is currently going on in heaven and will enable you to be on the right side. And that is the eternal gospel.

<sup>6</sup>“Then I saw another angel & he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people. <sup>7</sup>He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

This is a truth that has always been true and will always be true. This is something that is as true to you and true to me as it is true to every person on the earth. And that truth is that at the centre of our lives, actually at the very centre of the world existences lies the call to worship God. For he made the heavens and the earth. He is the one who is in control. And so those who have been made by God are called to fear him and give him the glory. For that is what he deserves. All the glory, all the praise, all the worship.

So, don’t worship mankind. Don’t worship the government. Don’t worship the Church. Don’t worship the family. Don’t worship yourself. Worship God. He is the only one worthy of your worship. He is the one who can withstand the pressure of putting your life in their hands. Besides all those who are following the ways of this world will be judged.

Slide 20

<sup>8</sup>“A second angel followed and said, “‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great,’ which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries.” One day the world’s party will be over. One day the world’s rebellion will be over. One day all evil will get its’ just deserts. Sure, Babylon today looks like it’s alive and kicking, even thriving. Turn on the TV, switch on the internet and you can see it in all its glory. Rich and famous people. Powerful institutions. Beautiful clothing. Modern technology. A can-do attitude. But friends it is not going to last.

Slide 21

God’s wrath on all evil and rebellion is coming. And it is not a pretty picture. In fact, it is so bad John uses the most horrible language to describe it. <sup>9</sup>“A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and its image & receives its mark on their forehead or on their hand, <sup>10</sup>they, too, will drink the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath.”

Slide 22

*They will be tormented with burning sulphur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.<sup>11</sup> And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name."*

Have you ever had a bee sting? Imagine that going on for all eternity. Have you ever been burnt? Imagine burns to all parts of your body lasting not just minutes or hours but forever. This is not a diet judgement it is a full strength, full flavoured, fully immersed judgement. Created for the devil and his demons. But given to all those who have followed them to hell.

Hell is real and is coming to a suburb near you. It is coming to visit the earth very soon. God's fury against sin. God's wrath against injustice. God's justice against evil on all those who are marked by humanism rather than by God. Who have put anything before the following of the lamb. For very soon the harvest of the earth will take place.

Slide 23

Firstly, the grain harvest, verses 14-16 when the Son of Man comes and judges everyone. And then the grape harvest. *"Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth's vine, because its grapes are ripe."<sup>19</sup> The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath.<sup>20</sup> They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia."*

The blood of mankind flowing over a metre deep for 1600 stadia or 320 kilometres. Carnage everywhere. Judgement then hell for all eternity. Friends this is what our world deserves. And this is what it is going to get. Actually, this is what I deserve as well, the full strength, cup of God's wrath. But this is the cup that Jesus drank, to its dregs, on the cross, so that I don't have to drink it myself. This was the cup Jesus drank for you as well, so you don't have to drink it. Someone has to experience God's wrath for our sins. And it is either Jesus or us.

Slide 24

Now we might not like God's judgement but it will happen whether we like it or not. One denomination was so offended by the idea of God's wrath that they changed the line in the modern hymn In Christ Alone from "When on the cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied." "To when on the cross that Jesus died, the love of God was magnified." Yes, God's love is magnified in the cross because God's wrath is satisfied allowing the sinner to go free.

Don't be deceived God's wrath is real. Don't compromise your faith, all those who follow the ways of man will be judged. Don't worry, even if you lose your life, you can be blessed if you die in the Lord. So patiently endure. Keep his commands. Remain faithful to the one who has purchased you for God. Live for him and him alone.

Slide 25

And have tears in your eyes as you reflect on this. Tears of gratitude, that could have been you and me. And tears of fear, that well might be my loved ones, my neighbours, my best friend. Now if there was a fire going on in their house, you would be there yelling out Fire, fire. Escape while you can! No, you would do more than that. You would try and go into the house & help them escape, pull them out danger. You might even be willing to die for them.

Well, the whole world will one day be ablaze. And Jesus is the only one who can save them. How can we enjoy the safety of heaven when we know that some of our loved ones are going to hell? Maybe some of us here today are going to hell. You don't have go to hell. Turn to your saviour and ensure the eternal gospel goes out loud and clear to all those around us.

Slide 26

How did CT Studd put it? "*Some want to live within the sound of church or chapel bell; I want to run a rescue shop, within a yard of hell.*" Well guess what? You and I have a chance to be a part of that rescue shop. Armed with the eternal gospel. We can point people to the real thing not the fake & we can model worshipping God, singing his praises now & forever.

## Song – Come behold the wondrous mystery

1. Come behold the wondrous mystery  
In the dawning of the King  
He the theme of Heaven's praises  
Robed in frail humanity  
In our longing, in our darkness  
Now the light of love has come  
Look to Christ who condescended  
Took on flesh to ransom us
4. Come behold the wondrous mystery  
Slain by death the God of life  
But no grave could e'er restrain Him  
Praise the Lord He is alive  
What a foretaste of believ'rance  
How unwavering our hope  
Christ in power resurrected  
As will we be when He comes
2. Come behold the wondrous mystery  
He the perfect Son of Man  
In his living, in his suffering  
Never trace nor stain of sin  
See the true and better Adam  
Come to save a hell-bound man  
Christ the great and sure fulfillment  
Of the law; in Him we stand
3. Come behold the wondrous mystery  
Christ the Lord upon the tree  
In the stead of ruined sinners  
Hangs the lamb in victory  
See the price of our redemption  
See the Father's plan unfold  
Bringing many sons to glory  
Grace unmeasured, love untold

**Benediction** <sup>12</sup>*This calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God who keep his commands and remain faithful to Jesus.*