

Sunday August 28, 2022

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. ² Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. ³ For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods. ⁴ In his hand are the depths of the earth & the mountain peaks belong to him. ⁵ The sea is his, for he made it & his hands formed the dry land. ⁶ Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; ⁷ for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

Let's Pray. Sovereign Lord, what a great privilege it is to come into your presence this morning. To be able to sing to the rock of our salvation. To be able to come before you in thanksgiving and to praise you with music and song. To be able to humble ourselves in worship, to pray to our maker & to place ourselves under your sovereign care. We admit that we don't come to you often enough, and we don't thank you enough, nor are we humble enough, dependent enough, passionate enough. Please forgive us. Forgive us because for everything we have done wrong, whether we have done or said or acted in the wrong way or failed to do, say or act in the right way, that wrongdoing meant that your Son Jesus had to die on the cross to forgive us that sin. So we thank you for Jesus. May he become more and more real to us today as we sing, listen, pray, reflect and commit this time to you now. And we ask this in Jesus name. Amen.

Song – How Great Thou Art

[How Great Thou Art with lyrics – YouTube](#)

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| <p>1. Oh Lord, my God
When I, in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder
Thy power throughout the universe displayed</p> <p>Chorus
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art</p> | <p>2. And when I think that God, His Son not sparing
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin</p> <p>Chorus</p> <p>3. When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration
And then proclaim, my God, how great Thou art</p> <p>Chorus</p> |
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Bible Reading – Revelation 15:1-8 (NIV)

I saw in heaven another great and marvellous sign: seven angels with the seven last plagues—last, because with them God's wrath is completed. ² And I saw what looked like a sea of glass glowing with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and its image and over the number of its name. They held harps given them by God ³ and sang the song of God's servant Moses and of the Lamb: "Great and marvellous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the nations. ⁴ Who will not fear you, Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."⁵ After this I looked, and I saw in heaven the temple—that is, the tabernacle of the covenant law—and it was opened. ⁶ Out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues They were dressed in clean, shining linen and wore golden sashes around their chests. ⁷ Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever. ⁸ And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

Announcements

Focus for August – Commitment. Our first commitment is to Christ. We then need to be committed to Christ church and to Christ's mission. And lastly we need to be committed to Christ's word. Listening to it read. Hearing it preached. Studying it individually and in small groups, meditating on it, memorising it, applying it to our everyday lives. It is food for our soul and so there needs to be a hunger for it. So are you really committed to the Word?

Refresh Gateway. Our sisters at Anna Bay have invited our women of any age to hear Patricia Weerakoon to talk to them on Saturday 10th September 2-5pm about the new sexual age with all the gender confusion and the like. Just \$5. For more information visit gatewaypresbyterian.org.au/refresh2022 or call Rachel on 0412 467 434.

WMPCA conference – September 19th (9am – 1pm. Men and Women together. Speakers Dani Treweek, Ben Johnson & Sylvia Sui. See Stephen for more details.

Church Redevelopment (if room). 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.

For your diary

- Working Bee – Charlestown Church – Saturday 3rd September 8-12 noon.
- Small Group Leaders meeting – TODAY 11:30-12:30pm in Cottage
- Lords Supper NEXT SUNDAY 4th September
- Church camp. Fri 3 – Sun 5 March 2023

Kids Spot: We are joining in the Revelation series for 2 weeks learning from Revelation 7 this week. We will learn that sin separates us from God, but that Jesus has taken this away when he died on the cross. There are many people all over the world who know and love Jesus and we look forward to one day, being all together praising Jesus. Challenge for the week: Write a letter to someone overseas (e.g. Compassion child, missionary) who loves Jesus and encourage them with this lesson from Revelation 7.

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 cutoff date) capped at 100 places. Speaker Sylvia Sui. Info: Linda Small 0422014250 or lindajs@gmail.com.

Prayer Points for 28th August 2022

Psalm 28:9 "Oh, save your people and bless your heritage! Be their shepherd and carry them forever."

Pray for Ethiopia: Pray for supporting nations to be wise in their programs and not cause diminished work ethic among Ethiopians. Pray for a resurgence of the deep Christian beliefs held by this nation from the earliest Church history. Pray for militant Muslims to know the truth of Jesus Christ & to stop persecuting believers.

Pray our government: Pray that God will guide them as they guide us. Pray they will be wise and discerning, and surrounded by helpful advisers.

Pray For Tear Fund: Tearfund's partners in Afghanistan who have been supporting internally displaced people with relief supplies (food, shelter, and hygiene) as well as supporting the recovery of communities through providing income generating opportunities and mental health support for people who have experienced trauma. God to bring the rainfall that is needed to parts of Uganda, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Somalia and Afghanistan. Pray that this will lead to abundant harvests and for water sources to spring up again closer to communities. provision of nourishing food and clean water for the 50 million people facing great need.

Bible Reading – Revelation 16:1-21

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth." ² The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly, festering sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshipped its image. ³ The second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead person, and every living thing in the sea died. ⁴ The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. ⁵ Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: "You are just in these judgements, O Holy One, you who are and who were; ⁶ for they have shed the blood of your holy people and your prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve." ⁷ And I heard the altar respond: "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgements." ⁸ The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was allowed to scorch people with fire. ⁹ They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify him. ¹⁰ The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast & its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in agony ¹¹ and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done. ¹² The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East. ¹³ Then I saw three impure spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴ They are demonic spirits that perform signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty. ¹⁵ "Look, I come like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and remains clothed, so as not to go naked and be shamefully exposed." ¹⁶ Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. ¹⁷ The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, "It is done!" ¹⁸ Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since mankind has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake. ¹⁹ The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath. ²⁰ Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found. ²¹ From the sky huge hailstones, each weighing about a 100 pounds, fell on people. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.

Song – Nothing but the blood of Jesus

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| 1. What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus | 3. This is all my hope and peace
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
This is all my righteousness
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
Chorus |
| 2. For my pardon this I see
Nothing but the blood of Jesus | 4. Glory glory this I see
Nothing but the blood of Jesus |

For my cleansing this my plea
Nothing but the blood of Jesus

All my praise for this I bring
Nothing but the blood of Jesus

*Chorus: Oh! Precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow
No other fount I know
Nothing but the blood of Jesus*

Sermon – Just Justice! (Stephen T)

Kathryn Rawlins lives in London and up until recently she had a most unusual flower vase on her coffee table. You see when she was about 15 years of age, Kathryn dug up a German shell from her school yard and liked the look of it so much that she unscrewed the conical cap, filled it with water and ever since has placed flowers in her 'vase'. But one day she was watching television and saw a programme about unexploded bombs and so she called in the police to have a look at her vase. And sure enough, there in her lounge room for the past 30 years was an unexploded bomb capable of killing anyone within a twenty-meter radiance.

Friends all of us can live close to danger and not realise how near we are to destruction. And that is what our time in Revelation is doing for us. It is reminding us that this world is in danger. There is something even worse than an unexploded bomb waiting to go off. It is the end of the world. It is the judgement of all mankind. And chapters 15 & 16 are going to bring this home to us even closer.

Slide 2

But these chapters have a context. For ever since the book of Revelation opened up with a glorious picture of God the Father, the Son & the Holy Spirit ruling our world from heaven, we have seen how God has tried to communicate how his creatures can have a relationship with him. In chapters 2 & 3 the Church is to shed God's light to the world. In chapters 6 & 7 we see that God protects his own by sealing them in the midst of violence, war, famine and death. In chapters 8 & 9 we see God sends seven trumpets to warn the people of the earth to repent. In chapter 11 God sends witnesses, angels, prophets, churches, to warn the world. And in chapter 14 He allows the eternal gospel to go to the ends of the earth. In all this he telling people to flee from his wrath. Repent. Trust in Jesus. The time is near.

Slide 3

Just as Moses warned Pharaoh to let his people go or he and his people would be punished. And just as those warnings were accompanied by a series of ten plagues. And just when Pharaoh's heart was still hardened, God saved his people and brought judgement on the Egyptians, so now in Revelation 15 & 16 God says he will do the very same thing but this time with the whole world. He will save his people but he will also bring a just judgement on all those who want to stay in their sin and rebellion. And that firstly leads to

Slide 4

1. A Song of Praise (chapter 15)

"I saw in heaven another great and marvellous sign: seven angels with the seven last plagues—last, because with them God's wrath is completed. ² And I saw what looked like a sea of glass glowing with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and its image and over the number of its name. They held harps given them by God ³ and sang the song of God's servant Moses and of the Lamb:"

Now let's just stop there for a moment. God's wrath is about to come on all the earth & the saints are singing songs of praise? There is something that doesn't seem right there, isn't there? Aren't Christians meant to love their neighbour, even their enemies? Why are they full of joy & thanks when the people of the world are on the wrong end of God's wrath?

Slide 5

Well let's hear what they sing. *"Great and marvellous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the nations. ⁴ Who will not fear you, Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."*

God's people are singing about God being just. God being true. God being holy. God getting the glory he deserves. Having been cleansed from their own sin, they are seeing things from God's perspective not from our world's perspective. Today we might struggle with the idea of God's judgement because it seems too harsh, too unfair, how can the sending of a good person like my friend or family member to hell mean that the punishment fits the crime?

Slide 6

In 1983, Ray, Peter, and Brian Mickelberg were convicted of the Perth Mint Swindle. But in 2002, 19 years later, Tony Lewandowski came forward and admitted to the police that he had framed the brothers. And so in July 2004 their convictions were quashed. You see when justice goes wrong it is a terrible, terrible thing. Those brothers spent the best part of their lives locked away but they were innocent, while Lewandowski seemed to get away scot-free

That's wrong. And even when the brothers were awarded \$500,000 in compensation that still doesn't right the wrong that was done to them. But God is perfectly just. God can right the wrongs of this world. At the end of the world when we see what God has done, we will acknowledge that he is just, he is holy, his judgements are true. That is why the saints sing.

But there is more to it than that. Because God's judgement will wipe evil completely off the map. Evil debases, it deforms, it destroys all that it touches. We have all seen what it does when an individual gives themselves over to one form of evil or another – to the demonic, to gambling, to alcohol abuse, to pride, to pornography, to cheating, to violence. But God's just judgements means that evil is completely removed from this world.

Slide 7

That's also why the saints sing their songs of praise. Do you remember the faces of joy on the people of Berlin when the wall fell and they were free from communism? Do you remember that footage of the dancing man as the people of Sydney celebrated the end of WW2 & the fall of Hitler? There is joy when evil is defeated. There is praise and thankfulness when justice is given. This was not the way we were made to live. But now in Revelation 15 death has been defeated, Satan has been defeated and sin has been defeated. Hallelujah!

That is why the saints sing the Song of Moses, the song that the Israelites sang after they had been freed from Egypt's shackles! And that is why they also sing the song of the lamb which is a celebration that we have been freed from Satan and from sins shackles. For God's ways are just. They are true. He is righteous. He is holy. He alone is worthy of our worship.

Slide 8

So friends we need to get this sort of perspective. We need to put on the lens of heaven. Yes sing about God's love but let's also marvel at his wrath. Praise him for his forgiveness but also for his justice. Honour him as king and celebrate him as judge. And sing about all of these things for all of them should be a part of our worship services.

Slide 9

⁵ *"After this I looked, and I saw in heaven the temple—that is, the tabernacle of the covenant law—and it was opened. ⁶ Out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues. They were dressed in clean, shining linen and wore golden sashes around their chests. ⁷ Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever. ⁸ And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed."*

These bowls of wrath come directly from God. No one else has the authority to bring them. That's why no one else can enter the temple. That's why the crystal sea is now glowing with fire. Justice is about to be done. Evil is about to end its reign of terror. Praise God for that.

Slide 10

2. A song of praise and then a **Series of Judgements I (16:1-4)**

*"Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth."*² *The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly, festering sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshipped its image."* This plague of sores harks back to the sixth plague that came on the people of Egypt in Moses time. But here, those who are marked by the beast get marked with painful sores. Now that seems fair and just.

Slide 11

³ *"The second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead person, and every living thing in the sea died."* Well that is similar to the 1st plague that hit Egypt in the book of Exodus & a bit like what we saw a few weeks ago happen with the second trumpet. But rather than just a third of the fish & the waters being destroyed this time all of it turns to blood. The days of warning are over, the day of punishment has come.

⁴ *"The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood."* Again, we can see the link with the seven trumpets & when we looked at the seven trumpets there was also an obvious link with the seven seals. But as we saw previously the seven seals emphasised God's protection of his own and the seven trumpets pointed the finger at the fact that despite these warnings non-Christians refused to repent. Here we are looking at a similar scene from the perspective of heaven. God is justly punishing the world.

And in these initial bowls he is using the world to bring about his judgements. The Jewish book of Wisdom says "he will use creation to punish his enemies." If we don't look after what God has given us, it will turn against us. Don't you see that is beginning to happen today? Pollution is clogging our rivers. Plastics are killing off sea life. Radiation is bringing cancers. If we don't look after what God has given us, it will come back and bite us!

Slide 12

3. And what God sends on the earth leads to **A Shout of Approval (16:5-7)**

⁵ *"Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: "You are just in these judgements, O Holy One, you who are and who were; ⁶ for they have shed the blood of your holy people and your prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve."* ⁷ *And I heard the altar respond: "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgements."*

Slide 13

Now tell me in our courts and in our law system do offenders get what they deserve? For that is what justice is all about isn't it? So, for example, if I stole \$100 from a shop and I got caught, what would be a just punishment? Is a slap on the wrist fair? Is a week in jail just? What about two? That might stop me from doing it again but have I got what I deserved? A stint in jail might allow me to be rehabilitated, or it might protect society from me doing it again but is that what justice is all about?

At the risk of being over simple, if I steal \$100 from someone and if I am going to get what I deserve, then not only should I pay back the money, but I should be placed in the situation that I placed the shop keeper in. That is I should pay back the amount and be fined \$100. That justice. And justice is different from rehabilitation. And it is different from protecting our society. Justice is getting what I deserve. And there was a simple rule in the OT that the Israelites law courts operated on, "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth."

God is just & in Revelation 16 we see he is giving the world the justice it deserves. If you shed blood, you have blood to drink. If you destroy the environment then the environment will destroy you. If you want to follow the kingdom of darkness you will get darkness, if you decide to make war with God, you will find that God is your enemy. That's justice!

Slide 14

Now we can see that on a smaller scale, when we have been wronged but it is still hard to apply that to the whole world. One theologian Miroslav Wolf a few years ago was having a particularly hard time trying to think this through philosophically and theologically. And he wrote a book about it, Exclusion and Embrace. You see his homeland of Yugoslavia had just been ripped apart by ethnic violence. And while on the other side of the world he could see unspeakable human brutality and ethnic cleaning going on in the places he grew up in.

What does justice on this massive scale look like? And in particular, he asked the question, "How do you deal with violence and the monstrosity of human evil without becoming a monster yourself? ... How do you avoid answering violence with more violence and then descending in a spiral, ever downward into brute savagery, demanding for every wound inflicted upon us an equal and opposite wound to be inflicted on others?"

His answer to those questions is startling. He argued the only way to empower people to respond to terrible evil without becoming the evil they seek to deal with themselves, is to actually affirm the Christian doctrine of hell, of eternal punishment, of divine justice. He realised that you have to let God bring about true justice. For if it is true as the Bible says "That vengeance is mine, says the Lord." Then and only then will you not respond to evil with evil. Only then can you forgive, show mercy and love because you know you can never be truly just. Only God can. And one day God promises to give out his perfect justice.

And yet at the same time God hears our cries, he sees our tears, he knows our heavy hearts. God can heal you in your time of need, he can strengthen you when the world has turned against you, he can change your heart and enable you to forgive. Because his son was on the wrong end of the world's justice. But through the work of his son, God will eventually bring justice to the whole of the world. So let's continue to see what that means in practise ...

Slide 15

4. A Series of Judgement II (16:8-20)

⁸ *"The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was allowed to scorch people with fire.*

⁹ *They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues"* The people of the world find out that if you play with fire you will eventually get burnt. Those who don't look after God's good creation will feel the heat. Maybe, just maybe for us believers, the place to start with climate change then is for us to repent of the way we have treated God wonderful gift to us of his good creation?

Slide 16

So on the one hand, the judgement here is likened to terrible scorching heat. But on the other hand, belonging to the kingdom of the beast is, in fact, to give yourself to a life of impenetrable darkness. ¹⁰ *"The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast & its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in agony."*

Those who enable the prince of darkness to reign will find the punishment that God brings on them for doing that was to throw the whole world into darkness. We will find the entire human system in which life is built upon is thrown into disarray. That sounds like justice to me! But the people who experience that darkness do not have the eyes to see God's justice.

¹¹ “& cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done.” But it gets even worse. Those who want to wage war against God will find themselves overpowered by the Lord. Slide 17 ¹² “The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East. ¹³ Then I saw three impure spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴ They are demonic spirits that perform signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty... ¹⁶ Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon ”

Now we might leave the battle of Armageddon for its fuller treatment in Revelation 19 but, needless to say, it doesn't go very well for all those who want to wage war against God. If you play with evil, you will get caught up in God's final judgement of evil. If you allow the spirit of Satan to lead you to the wrong place, then you will end up being judged alongside Satan and end up in the place that was prepared for him and his fellow demons, hell.

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And we are one step closer to that when we come to the last bowl. ¹⁷ “The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, “It is done!” ¹⁸ Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since mankind has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake. ¹⁹ The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath. ²⁰ Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found. ²¹ From the sky huge hailstones, each weighing about a 100 pounds, fell on people.”

This is the end of the world. The strongest earthquake in history. The biggest hailstones ever. Mountains disappearing. Islands gone. Cities destroyed. God's wrath reaches its climax and its culmination as God ends the world. The wages of sin are death, the book of Romans tells us. And so all those who have not had their sins forgiven receive the wages that are due to them. The justice that is prepared for them. The judgement that is true for them. Which leads us to our final point

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5. A Separation of People (16:9, 11, 14, & 15)

Even in the midst of God's final judgement there are those who will not repent. They will curse God's name. They will gnaw their tongues in agony. They will gather for the great battle on the day of God. But they will not repent. Sometimes I am invited up to the hospital to talk to someone who knows they are dying in the next day or so. And we talk about their life and we ponder what is beyond death and I ask them if they would like to repent and believe in Jesus before they meet their maker. And I am amazed at most of them will say no.

“She'll be right. I'll take my chances. I think I have lived a good life.” And on reflection I suppose if you have ignored God knocking on the door of your life for 80 or 90 years then it would take an enormous slice of humble pie to say “yes I got it wrong all my life and so I will turn to him at the very end.” And here right at the very end of the world there are people who will continue to live for self & still sing the Frank Sinatra hit, “I did it my way!”

Slide 20

But during all the carnage there is also blessing. ¹⁵ “Look, I come like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake & remains clothed, so as not to go naked & be shamefully exposed.”

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If you and I stay awake. If we are found ready when the thief comes to steal, we will avoid our just punishment. Because this passage ends with God words “It is done” and that should remind you & me of Jesus last words “it is finished.” You see because Jesus experienced the full wrath for the sins of the world on the cross, we who put our trust in Him can escape the just judgement of God's wrath on our sins.

Because Jesus swallowed the cup of God's fury to its dregs in our place, we can escape the cup of God's fury at the end of the world.

You see we live in between those two cups. After Jesus took on the punishment for our sins and before God hands out a just punishment for all sin. Friends, God will be just. Our sins will be judged truly. The question is will I take that punishment in the future or will Jesus?

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Friends are you awake to what is going on or have you fallen asleep? Have you put your trust in Jesus or are you still saying she'll be right, mate? If Jesus was to return today, would you be ready? Well, what does it mean to be ready? In Matthew 24 & 25 Jesus tells us three parables about what being ready looks like.

In the parable of the ten virgins, it is those who are watching for the bridegrooms return that will be ready when he comes. So are you watching intently for the second coming of Jesus? In the parable of the talents, it those who are using their gifts and abilities that will be ready for his return? Do you know how God has gifted you? Are you using those gifts now for the extension of God's kingdom? And in the parable of the sheep and the goats, it is those who are visiting the jails, feeding the hungry, showing hospitality to the needy and visiting the sick that are the serving the Lord by treating the people around them as if they were Jesus himself. Do you treat the people are around you as if they are Jesus?

Slide 23

Friends the end of the world is near. God's kingdom is coming. And when Jesus comes all evil will be removed. So, get in early. Ask Jesus to remove it from your being today by asking him to forgive your sins. And put on his righteousness so that you will not be found naked on that last day. For that day will be a day of wrath. A day of justice and truth. A day that is worth living in the light now and it worth singing about for now and evermore!

Song – In Christ Alone [In Christ Alone \(Official Lyric Video\) - YouTube](#)

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| <p>1. In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song
This cornerstone, this solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My comforter, my all in all
Here in the love of Christ I stand</p> | <p>3. There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ</p> |
| <p>2. In Christ alone who took on flesh
Fullness of God in helpless babe
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones He came to save
Till on that cross as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live</p> | <p>4. No guilt in life, no fear in death
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand</p> |

Benediction ¹⁵ *"Look, I come like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake & remains clothed, so as not to go naked & be shamefully exposed."*