



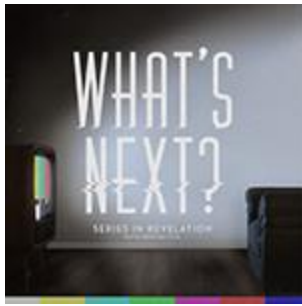
What's Next?

Skip Heitzig

We live in a culture that is constantly asking, "What's next?" We want to know the latest fashions, trends, stocks, and gadgets. In a world that's always looking for the next big thing, we can sometimes forget the most important thing. As Christians, we are called to wait with anticipation for the return of Christ. In this series through the book of Revelation, we look forward and ask ourselves, "What's next?"

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SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	What's Next?
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation I
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/3953

MESSAGE SUMMARY

People have always been fascinated with the future and what's next. As we study prophecy, we can't help but wonder if current events play into an end-time scenario. The book of Revelation is John's written account of the spiritual revelation he received from God about the future return and reign of Christ. As Skip begins in Revelation I, he encourages us to look at the future with faith and hope.

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: January 10, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "What's Next?"

Text: Revelation I

Path

People are fascinated by the future. The ancients sought omens and people today open horoscopes and read palms. But only God knows the future. Pastor Skip began a new series through the book of Revelation—a work by the apostle John, revealing what's next in God's timeline of future events. Here is his outline of Revelation I:

- I. This Book Predicts the Future (v. 3)
- II. This Book Promises a Blessing (v. 3)
- III. This Book Portrays a Person (v. 1)
- IV. This Book Produces a Response (v. 17)

Points

This Book Predicts the Future (v. 3):

- The book of Revelation is a book of prophecies. It predicts future events, giving more detail about Jesus' return than any other book in the Bible.
- It amplifies in great detail the seven-year tribulation, the Antichrist, the rapture, the second coming of Christ, and our eternal state.
- Prophecy shows God's omniscience: He knows all things, from beginning to end.
- **Probe: Pastor Skip mentioned that some people are afraid of—or don't like—prophecy. What was your attitude towards prophecy before coming to Christ? Why is prophecy important for demonstrating the reliability and trustworthiness of Scripture?**

This Book Promises a Blessing (v. 3):

- The book of Revelation is the only book in the Bible that attaches a specific blessing to its reading and study (see Revelation 22:7). By not reading or trying to understand it, you are robbing yourself of joy.
- Even with all the pain and destruction detailed in the book, joy is to be found. Why? Satan loses; God wins.
- **Probe: Why do you think God's people are blessed when they read, understand, and keep the book of Revelation? What perspective do we gain from reading it to the end? What promises and comfort do we find?**

The Book Portrays a Person (v. 1):

- Contrary to popular Protestant leaders such as Martin Luther and John Calvin—who felt that the book of Revelation had a low view of Christ—Revelation puts Jesus at the center of history, both past and future.
- The Greek word for *revelation* is *apocalupsis*, which means an uncovering or unveiling. The revelation is not so much *from* Jesus as it is *about* Jesus:
 - **Chapter 1-3:** Jesus superintends and evaluates His church as exalted, priestly King.
 - **Chapter 4-5:** Jesus is seen in heaven as the glorified Lamb of God and Lion of Judah.
 - **Chapter 6-18:** Jesus will be the judge of all the earth.
 - **Chapter 19:** Jesus will return as King of Kings.
 - **Chapter 20:** Jesus will reign on earth as bridegroom with His bride, the church.
 - **Chapter 21-22:** Jesus will illuminate the eternal state and New Jerusalem.
- **Probe: Using the only physical description the Bible gives of Jesus (see vv. 12-16), compare and contrast Jesus' first time on earth (humbling Himself) to the second time (His millennial reign). What differences and similarities do you see?**

The Book Produces a Response (v. 17):

- As Jesus is revealed in this book, one of our main responses should be worship.
- As we read and heed the truths presented, we will learn to trust more in Jesus.
- **Probe: Pastor Skip reminded us that every tomorrow has two handles: one of fear and one of faith. Read vv. 5-6 and 17-18. How does the vision of Jesus produce faith, giving us confidence in God's plan and purposes for the future?**

Practice

Connect Up: Read Jude 1:17-18 in the ESV. How can prophecy draw you closer to God? What does fulfilled prophecy tell you about God's promises and purposes in the world?

Connect In: Read 2 Timothy 3:16. How does prophecy help build and guide the body of Christ?

Connect Out: Read 1 Peter 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 14:1-3. How can prophecy help you witness to a weary world? Discuss ways you can use the promises of prophecy to evangelize and explain the gospel.

DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
 - A. People have always been fascinated with the future
 - B. "The best thing about the future is that it only comes one day at a time"—Abraham Lincoln
 - C. Some people have used the Bible to make their own predictions
 - D. The events described in the book of Revelation are not improbable in this current day and age
 - E. Revelation was written by John
 1. One of the apostles of Jesus
 2. He was a part of Jesus' inner circle (Peter, James, and John)
 3. At the time of this writing, he was an isolated prisoner on the island of Patmos
- II. This Book Predicts the Future (v. 3)
 - A. This revelation is called a prophecy five times in the book
 - B. This book contains more details about the coming of Christ than any other book in the Bible
 - C. Revelation amplifies themes of the future
 1. Seven-year tribulation
 2. Final world war in the Middle East
 3. The Antichrist
 4. Second coming of Christ
 5. Millennial kingdom
 6. Eternal state
 - D. Some people are afraid of prophecy
 1. Some feel they can't understand it
 2. Martin Luther even doubted it was part of Scripture
 3. *Antilegomena*: written texts whose authenticity or value is disputed
 4. John Calvin wrote commentaries on virtually every book in the New Testament, but did not write one for Revelation
 5. Revelation teaches a literal thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth; Calvin and Luther did not believe in the literalness of that reign
 - E. Do not be afraid of prophecy
 1. One-fourth of the Bible is prophecy
 2. God is omniscient, so He can give messages about what will happen in the future
 3. Isaiah 41:21-23
 - F. Every tomorrow has two handles
 1. Anxiety
 2. Faith
 - G. This prophecy is given in signs (see v. 1)
 1. *Signified*: distinguished from the sign through which it is communicated
 2. The number seven is mentioned fifty-four times
 - H. These things will shortly take place
 1. *Entachi*: it will shortly come to pass (see v. 1)
 2. When these things start, they will happen in a short period of time
- III. This Book Promises a Blessing (v. 3)

- A. Revelation is the only book of the Bible that has a direct and unique promise of blessing to those who read, heed, and keep this message
 - 1. If you avoid this book, you rob yourself of joy
 - 2. *Blessed* means *oh how happy*
 - 3. The more you read it, you will discover God's plan and realize that He wins and Satan loses
 - B. Revelation
 - 1. It can be understood
 - 2. It is meant to make things clear
 - C. The joy will be revealed when you read, heed, and keep the message
 - 1. Many people will only read
 - 2. Live in the light of eternity
- IV. This Book Portrays a Person (v. 1)
- A. This is a revelation about Jesus Christ
 - 1. *Apokalupsis*: to uncover or unveil; a revelation
 - 2. To make something visible
 - 3. He is the main focus of this book
 - B. Make clear the person of Jesus Christ
 - C. Contains the only description of Jesus' physical appearance (see vv. 9-16)
 - 1. This is the description of the second coming
 - 2. The Lord's Day (see v. 10)
 - a. Possibly refers to Sunday
 - b. Possibly refers to John being catapulted in the Spirit to the coming end-time events in the vision
 - 3. Jesus' hair was white as wool (see v. 14)
 - a. Similar to a vision Daniel saw of God in the Old Testament (see Daniel 7:9)
 - b. Affirms Jesus' deity
 - 4. His eyes were like a flame of fire (see v. 14)
 - a. Penetrative gaze
 - b. He knows everything and sees everything
 - c. Hebrews 4:13
 - 5. His feet were like fine brass (see v. 15)
 - a. Fire and brass are symbols of judgment
 - b. References the temple and where sins were dealt with
- V. This Book Produces a Response (v. 17)
- A. This experience changed John
 - 1. He was humbled and worshiped Jesus
 - 2. Similar to the transfiguration on the mount (see Matthew 17:1-11; Mark 9:2-9; Luke 9:28-36)
 - B. "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God"—Corrie ten Boom
- VI. Closing
- A. Revelation contains some terrific, horrific predictions, but keep reading and find out where it leads
 - B. Here is God's eventual, unfolding revelation of how it will all end
 - C. Some of us need another vision of Jesus
 - D. The bigger picture is that He will come in glory

Figures referenced: Corrie ten Boom, John Calvin, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther

Greek words: antilegomena, apokalupsis, entachi

Cross references: Isaiah 41:21-23; Daniel 7:9; Matthew 17:1-11; Mark 9:2-9; Luke 9:28-36; Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 1

Topic: Revelation

Keywords: end times, revelation, apocalypse, rapture, second coming, Armageddon, transfiguration, prophecy, anxiety, faith



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	Come Up Here
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 1:19-20; Revelation 4:1-11
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/3996

MESSAGE SUMMARY

As believers, we look forward to the return of our Lord Jesus Christ and the blessed hope of eternity with Him. Unfortunately, some are put off by the idea of the rapture, because the date has been incorrectly predicted for so many years. In this message, we get a glimpse into the throne room of heaven as we anticipate the joy we'll have at the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ.

STUDY GUIDE

Recap Notes: January 17, 2016

Teaching: "Come Up Here"

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Text: Revelation 1:19-20; Revelation 4

Path:

When Powerball got up to \$1.6 billion, one clerk noted that people were buying "two dollars' worth of hope at a time." But Pastor Skip offered us a better hope—a lasting, eternal, and blessed hope in the glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Here's Skip's outline for John's vision of coming attractions:

- I. John Is Commanded to Write (1:17-19)
- II. John Is Called Up to Heaven (4:1)
- III. John Is Captivated by Glory (4:2-5)

Points

John Is Commanded to Write (1:17-19)

- As Pastor Skip mentioned last week, John's vision was "sent and signified" (Revelation 1:1)—that is, it was given in signs and symbols. Here's why:
 - Preservation: Symbols transcend language, time, and culture; they last.
 - Emotion: Symbols cause an emotional reaction that plain language doesn't.
 - Orientation: These symbols are rooted in the Old Testament—strange to us but familiar to the Jewish audience of John's time.
 - Protection: As Romans persecuted Christians, the symbols of this book would make no sense to their culture and mindset, protecting believers like a code.
- Jesus offered the outline for Revelation (see 1:19): "the things which you have seen" (chapter 1—Jesus exalted and God enthroned); "the things which are" (chapters 2-3—the seven

churches); and “the things which will take place after this” (chapters 4-22—the tribulation and Jesus’ return).

- **Probe: Read 1 Peter 1:3-9. What is our living hope, and how do Peter’s words encourage us in these difficult times?**

John Is Called Up to Heaven (4:1)

- *After these things* refers to after John was called up to heaven, saw Jesus in glory, and heard His message for the churches; after all that, he saw what was coming next.
- John sees a depiction of the rapture of the church. The language reflects another description found in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18: the shout like a trumpet and the “snatching away” (from the Greek *harpazō*, Latin *raptus*—or *rapture*) of the church to meet with Jesus in the “lower atmosphere” (from the Wuest translation). What will Jesus shout? Perhaps “Come up here!” (see Revelation 4:1).
- The church is then tucked away safely for a seven-year honeymoon while the tribulation happens back on earth, followed by Jesus’ return to the earth with the church.
- **Probe: Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 1 Corinthians 15, and John 14:1-3. List the details of the event described in these passages. When people roll their eyes at the rapture, what can we tell them about its coming reality?**

John Is Captivated by Glory (4:2-5)

- When John is caught up to heaven, the first thing that catches his attention is God’s throne and appearance—not his aunt Lucy or some famous person, but God Himself, the main attraction of heaven.
- God’s appearance is like jasper (clear and brilliant) and sardius stone (reddish—maybe to remind us of the blood of redemption). He is the most captivating thing in heaven.
- The number twenty-four was representative in the Old Testament. Here, twenty-four elders represent the church in heaven during the tribulation. Why? Because only one group—Christians—can sing the lyrics of the song in Revelation 5:8-10, a song of redemption.
- **Probe: Only two times in Revelation do we see a door into heaven opened: Revelation 4:1 and 19:11. What differences between them are there? How do those differences help us distinguish the rapture from the second coming?**

Practice

Connect Up: John saw Jesus differently in heaven than he did on earth. When you think of Jesus, what images come to mind? Contrast His appearance and work during His first visit with what they will be like when He returns.

Connect In: Like many today, John faced suffering and uncertainty over the future. How can we use his vision to help encourage and comfort one another through hard times?

Connect Out: Discuss the symbolism of the lampstand, which is decoded in Revelation 1:20. Why did Jesus choose that symbol? What does it mean for us as believers and in our role as the church? How will you live it out this coming week?

DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
 - A. Hope for the future
 - 1. Blessed hope (see Titus 2:13)
 - 2. Living hope (see 1 Peter 1:3)
 - B. Jesus is alive and has promised to come back
 - C. Rapture of the church
 - 1. Many have incorrectly predicted the date of the rapture
 - 2. Because of this, many will dismiss the idea altogether
 - 3. It is a real, distinct event
 - D. Paul and John were the only two people in the Bible to take a trip to heaven
 - 1. Paul did not give any details (see 2 Corinthians 12:1-6)
 - 2. John saw heaven and was instructed to write about it
 - E. Jesus told the disciples that some would not see death before they saw the kingdom (see Matthew 16:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27)
- II. John Is Commanded to Write (Revelation 1:17-19)
 - A. This book is written in signs and symbols (see Revelation 1:1)
 - 1. Preservation: symbols can withstand the test of time and transcend human language
 - 2. Emotion: symbols arouse strong emotion (see Revelation 13:1)
 - 3. Orientation: most of the symbols are rooted in the Old Testament; they made sense to the first-century Jewish reader
 - 4. Protection: the early church was being persecuted by the Roman government; symbols were confusing to a nonbeliever and so it offered protection
 - B. John was given an outline for what he was to write (see Revelation 1:19)
 - 1. The things he had seen
 - a. A vision of Jesus
 - b. Revelation 1
 - 2. The things which were going on at that time
 - a. The seven churches and what was taking place with them at that time
 - I. Literal congregations in Asia Minor
 - II. Represented by lampstands: light to the world (see Matthew 5:14)
 - b. Seven periods of church history
 - c. Revelation 2-3
 - 3. The things that would take place afterward
 - a. *Meta tauta*: meta = after; tauta = this
 - b. Predictions of the future
- III. John Is Called to Heaven (Revelation 4:1)
 - A. John was in the presence of God
 - B. The word *church* appears nineteen times in Revelation 1-3
 - 1. Not mentioned again until the end of the book after Jesus comes back and the new heaven and new earth are established
 - 2. Last mention of the church: Revelation 3:22
 - C. A depiction of the rapture of the church
 - 1. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 4:1

2. The doctrine of the rapture is clearly in the Bible, even though the word *rapture* is not used
 3. *Harpazó*: (Greek) seize or snatch
 - a. To catch up
 - b. To take something by force
 - c. To snatch away
 4. *Rapíos*: (Latin) to seize or to catch
 5. Seven-year tribulation
 - a. Revelation 4-5
 - b. The church will be in heaven
 - c. Afterward, Jesus will return to the earth and the church will come with Him
 - D. The tribulation period
 1. Revelation 6-19
 2. God will pour out His wrath on a Christ-rejecting world
- IV. John Is Captivated by Glory (Revelation 4:2-5)
- A. When John entered heaven, he first noticed the throne and He who sat on it
 - B. *Throne* is mentioned thirteen times in Revelation 4
 - C. Heaven is just being with God
 1. Heaven is not a *where* or a *what*, it is a *whom*
 2. John 14:1-3
 3. Being where God is
 - D. Describes God
 1. Jasper and sardius stones
 - a. The first and the last stones on the breastplate of the high priest in the Old Testament
 - b. Jasper stones are clear like diamonds
 - c. Sardius stones are translucent red stones, possibly signifying the blood of Jesus Christ
 2. Everything on earth pales in comparison
 - E. Twenty-four elders on twenty-four thrones
 1. Twenty-four is a representative number for the church in Heaven during the tribulation
 2. Can only represent believers, because they sang a song of redemption (see Revelation 5:8-9) that is unique to those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ
 - F. When we enter heaven, we will be consumed by the vision of the glorious God on the throne
 - G. While there will be tribulation on earth (chapters 6-19), there will be adoration in heaven (chapters 4-5)
 - H. Door of heaven
 1. The church will go up into heaven (see Revelation 4:1)
 2. Jesus will come down with the armies of heaven (see Revelation 19:11)
 - I. First promise of the rapture in the New Testament (see John 14:1-3)
 1. The disciples could not comprehend Jesus' death
 2. Jesus was going to prepare a place for them
 3. He is coming back

V. Closing

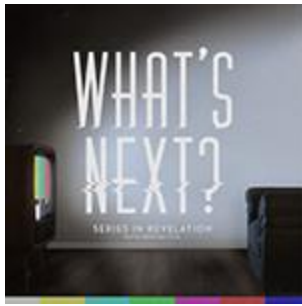
- A. What might God say when he calls the church home to heaven? "Come up here!"
- B. Blessed hope of the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ
- C. Can happen at any moment

Greek /Latin words: harpazó, meta, raptios, tauta

Cross references: Matthew 5:14; 16:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27; John 14:1-3; 2 Corinthians 12:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; 1 Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:1; 1:17-20; 2-3; 3:22; 4-5; 5:8-9; 6-19; 13:1; 19:11

Topic: Revelation

Keywords: blessed hope, living hope, heaven, glorious appearing, rapture, elders, lampstands, tribulation, redemption, throne, church, signs, symbols, end times, return of Jesus, second coming



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	What Is Heaven Like?
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 5: 1-14
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4027

MESSAGE SUMMARY

There are many preconceived ideas about what heaven is like: we might picture ourselves sitting on a fluffy white cloud playing a harp, or we see ourselves sitting on a porch or playing a round of golf. Some even think heaven sounds boring. In this message, we examine what heaven will really look like for believers and what we can expect when we get there.

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: January 24, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "What Is Heaven Like?"

Text: Revelation 5

Path

John received a revelation of heaven—a place that, whether by death or by rapture, all believers will see. John's vision showed him the great tribulation, but first he received a blueprint of heaven, providing us with an idea of what we can expect when we get there. Pastor Skip showed us four of the many characteristics of heaven:

- I. Heaven Is a Real Place (vv. 1-2, 6)
- II. Heaven Is a Relevant Place (vv. 1-3)
- III. Heaven Is a Redemptive Place (vv. 4-7)
- IV. Heaven Is a Responsive Place (vv. 8-14)

Points

Heaven Is a Real Place (vv. 1-2, 6)

- Throughout John's visit, he used phrases like "I saw," "I looked," and "Behold," all of which indicate a real sensory experience.
- Jesus spoke of heaven as a real place. Everything that is truly important will be there: our Father, our Savior, our Comforter, our reward.
- It will be better than most people think—no cloud-sitting or harp-playing, but the ultimate adventure, full of worship and wonder.
- **Probe: What about heaven comforts you most? How does heaven's reality affect your priorities on earth?**

Heaven Is a Relevant Place (vv. 1-3)

- John witnessed the greatest real estate transaction in all of history—one that impacts all of the earth.
- The scroll God held in His right hand was the property deed to the earth. It required someone special to open it: a redeemer who was related, willing, and able to buy it back.
- Earth is God's by creation. He gave it to Adam to tend, but Adam forfeited the title deed when he sinned, which affected all of creation. Now the whole world is under Satan's ownership. The question in Revelation 5 is: "Who will buy it back?"
- John wept convulsively at the thought that no one could buy back the earth, but his tears were premature.
- **Probe: Look at Jeremiah 32. Has God asked you to make an investment as an act of faith—perhaps in a person or an opportunity? Why does He make such requests? Why do they often come during hard times?**

Heaven Is a Redemptive Place (vv. 4-7)

- John was told, "Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (v. 5). When he looked, he saw a Lamb. Jesus is both the Lion and the Lamb, both ruling King and sacrificial Savior.
- In heaven, the only evidence of man's work will be Jesus' scars—tokens of His great love for us. He alone is qualified to buy back the world: He is related to us by His humanity, willing to lay down His life, and able to redeem us by His blood.
- **Probe: Consider the symbols associated with the Lamb: seven horns (omnipotence), seven eyes (omniscience), and seven Spirits (omnipresence). Read Isaiah 11:1-10. How is that prophecy related to what we see in Revelation 5?**

Heaven Is a Responsive Place (vv. 8-14)

- When the Lamb was revealed as being worthy to open the scroll, the response was fitting: rejoicing and worship.
- Some only think of heaven in terms of earthly activities, as if the best it has to offer is the activities we enjoyed doing most here on earth. But John wasn't bored, and there is nothing more fascinating than being face to face with God.
- We will worship in heaven and love to do so! We will also serve, helping rule with Jesus when we return in the kingdom age.
- **Probe: What appeals to you most about heaven?**

Practice

Connect Up: Read Revelation 5:8-14 aloud together. Take turns praising God using the words, phrases, and ideas that will be used in heaven.

Connect In: As W.A. Criswell said, "John's tears represent the tears of all God's people through all the centuries." What things in your life break your heart? If you feel comfortable, share your heartbreaks with others and allow them to bear them with you. As a group, give thanks to God because He will wipe away those tears in heaven.

Connect Out: Randy Alcorn said that Satan slanders three things: God's person, His people, and His place. Chances are you know someone who is hurting or doubting. This week, how can you encourage people you know with the reality and wonders of heaven?

DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
 - A. God gave John a revelation about what heaven looks like
 - B. If you are a believer, you will see heaven one day, either by death or rapture
 - C. The tribulation period will be the worst period of time in history (see Revelation 6-19)
 - D. The rapture will trigger the tribulation
 1. The seventieth week of Daniel
 2. Last seven years
 3. Jacob's trouble (see Jeremiah 30:7)
 4. Day of the Lord
 - E. Revelation 5 is the greatest real estate deal of all time
- II. Heaven Is a Real Place (vv. 1-2, 6)
 - A. John's visit to heaven was both visual and auditory
 1. "I looked" is found twelve times in Revelation
 2. "I saw" is found thirty-four times in Revelation
 3. "I heard" is found twenty-six times in Revelation
 - B. Heaven is mentioned 532 times in the Bible
 1. It is spoken about as a real place
 2. John 14:2; Philippians 3:20
 - C. Heaven is home sweet home
 1. Everything that is important to a believer is in heaven
 - a. The Father, our Savior
 - b. All of God's people
 - c. Our reward
 2. Philippians 1:21
 - D. *Behold* (v. 6) denotes something remarkable
 1. "Check this out; look at this"
 2. Used to inspire awe in readers
 - E. Heaven will be a lot better than most people think it will be
 1. The ultimate adventure
 2. Satan tries to lie about what heaven is like
- III. Heaven Is a Relevant Place (vv. 1-3)
 - A. A scroll in God's right hand (see v. 1)
 1. Heaven has always been concerned with what is going on in the earth (see Luke 15:10; 1 Peter 1:12)
 2. *Codex* (plural *codices*): a book(s)
 3. Scrolls were rolled from both ends toward the center
 4. A portion would be written, then the scroll would be turned and sealed so it could not be opened without breaking the seal
 5. This scroll is similar to a property deed
 - a. Land in Israel could never be permanently lost

- b. If a person was forced to forfeit a piece of land, eventually a relative could buy it back
 - I. This person had to be a relative (a *gaal*: a kinsman-redeemer)
 - II. Had to be willing to pay the price
 - III. Had to be able to pay the price
 - 6. The story in book of Ruth
 - 7. Jeremiah 32
- B. The scroll
 - 1. Highly significant because it is in the right hand of God
 - 2. Involves the fate of everyone on the earth (see vv. 3-4)
 - 3. Jubilant praises erupt in heaven when someone is finally able to redeem and open it
 - 4. It is the title deed to the earth
 - a. The earth is God's by creation, but it was lost to a usurper
 - b. Adam turned over the earth's title deed to Satan in the garden of Eden
 - c. Romans 5:12
 - d. The earth came under a curse (see Romans 8:20-22)
 - e. Satan is called the ruler of this world
 - I. The god of this age (see I Corinthians 4:4)
 - II. The whole world is under the sway of Satan (see I John 5:19)
 - III. Satan even tempted Jesus, telling Him he had the authority to give Him the whole world (see Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13)
 - 5. As each seal on the scroll is broken, the earth will be purged through the judgments
 - 6. It is also a scroll of redemption
 - a. Many people will be saved
 - b. The world will be taken back from the usurper
- C. No one was worthy to open the scroll (see v. 3)
- D. John wept (see v. 4)
 - 1. "I wept much"
 - 2. Cried convulsively, wailed, sobbed
 - 3. If no one could open the scroll, the earth would be forever in the hands of Satan
- IV. Heaven Is a Redemptive Place (vv. 4-7)
 - A. An elder told John to stop crying because the Lion of the tribe of Judah had come and was able to open the scroll (see Genesis 49:9)
 - 1. A lion symbolizes ferocity, a menacing presence
 - 2. The Jews expected their Messiah to be like a lion
 - 3. Jesus was a lamb at His first coming
 - 4. The root of David, or the root of Jesse (see Isaiah 11:1)
 - B. John looked and saw a Lamb that appeared to have been slain
 - 1. This is a picture of the Messiah
 - 2. The Lion was the Lamb, and the Lamb was the Lion
 - C. Lamb
 - 1. Frequent picture of Jesus (see John 1:29)
 - 2. Jesus is referred to as a Lamb twenty-nine times in Revelation
 - 3. Seven horns

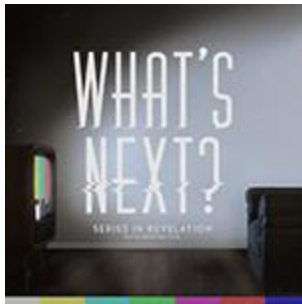
- a. A horn is a symbol of strength and authority
 - b. Seven is the number of completion, signifying omnipotence
- 4. Seven eyes
 - a. Insight, knowledge, wisdom
 - b. Omniscience
- 5. Seven Spirits of God
 - a. Isaiah 11:2
 - b. Omnipresence
- 6. Perfect in strength, knowledge, and presence
- 7. Looks as though it has been slain
 - a. It is alive, but it bears marks of violence from some past event
 - b. It had been killed
 - c. When Jesus rose from the dead, He still bore the marks of His crucifixion
 - d. The only work of man in heaven that we will see are the marks of persecution that we put on Him
- D. Jesus is the only one who could open the scroll and be that kinsman-redeemer
 - 1. He is related to us
 - a. He was fully God, but also fully man
 - b. John 1:14
 - c. He is related to humanity
 - 2. He was willing
 - a. He was not murdered
 - b. He willingly gave His life for us (see John 10:11, 18)
 - c. His love held Him on the cross
 - 3. He was able
 - a. His blood was the payment for us
 - b. He is worthy because He spent His blood
- V. Heaven Is a Responsive Place (vv. 8-14)
 - A. The fitting response to Jesus is worship
 - B. Why do we reduce the glories of heaven to an earthbound activity?
 - C. There is nothing more fascinating than God
 - D. We will serve in heaven
 - E. We will return from heaven and reign with Jesus on the new earth
- VI. Closing
 - A. No matter how bad your sins are, Jesus paid it all
 - B. He came to take the record away

Hebrew words: gaal

Cross references: Genesis 49:9; Ruth; Isaiah 11:1-2; Jeremiah 30:7; 32; Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13; 15:10; John 1:14, 29; 10:11, 18; 14:2; Romans 5:12; 8:20-22; 1 Corinthians 4:4; Philippians 1:21; 3:20; 1 Peter 1:12; 1 John 5:19; Revelation 6-19

Topic: Heaven

Keywords: revelation, elders, Lion of Judah, Lamb of God, redeemer, worship, Savior, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	Stampede
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 6: 1-8
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4042

MESSAGE SUMMARY

The tribulation period will be a time of deception, war, famine, and death for the occupants of the world. The Antichrist will rise to power and masquerade as the Messiah, pretending to bring peace, but instead bringing war. In this message, we learn what will unfold when the first four seals are opened and their terrors are unleashed on the earth.

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: February 7, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "Stampede"

Text: Revelation 6:1-8

Path

Pastor Skip continued to walk us through the book of Revelation, unveiling what the future holds. In this teaching, he spoke of the four horsemen, looking at the ghastly events that will transpire with their stampede across the earth: deception, war, famine, and death—a mad dash that will eliminate everything in their path.

- I. White Horse (vv. 1-2)
- II. Red Horse (vv. 3-4)
- III. Black Horse (vv. 5-6)
- IV. Pale Green Horse (vv. 7-8)

Points

White Horse: Deception (vv. 1-2)

- Though the horse is white (usually a symbol of good), this horse represents deception: the Antichrist will be the impostor riding the horse. He will ride into town proclaiming peace (notice the bow with no arrows), but really he is the "son of perdition" (2 Thessalonians 2:3; see Revelation 17:8-11).
- This rider will have a temporary laurel (a symbol of victory and honor), but he is the ultimate wolf in sheep's clothing. He will seem to solve the Middle East crises and let the Jews rebuild the temple.
- **Probe: Because Christians will be gone from the earth, discuss ways the Antichrist will be able to deceive people during the tribulation period.**

Red Horse: War (vv. 3-4)

- The second horseman rides a red horse, associated with terror, carnage, and death (see Revelation 12:3; 17:3).
- This horseman will usher in war (see Daniel 8; Matthew 24), culminating in the mother of all wars: Armageddon.
- Because of the proliferation of nuclear warheads in today's world, this prophecy is a reality: modern society has the capability to destroy the earth in one hour.
- **Probe:** Pastor Skip pointed out that the United States has an arsenal of 35,000 nuclear weapons, equivalent to 460 million tons of TNT. Though this is powerful, discuss the dreaded danger of what the four horsemen can unleash in a supernatural way (see Revelation 16:14).

Black Horse: Famine (vv. 5-6)

- The third horseman carries scales, used for measuring, rationing, and weighing. He will usher in a food shortage, leading to malnutrition and disease.
- A denarius was a day's wage. All money will be used to buy low-nutrient content food such as barley, leading to a severe famine.
- When you add the nuclear fallout and waste from the second horseman's attacks, imagine the contamination unleashed upon the world.
- **Probe:** Read Mark 13:8. How is Jesus' prophecy fulfilled in this section of Revelation?

Pale Green Horse: Death (vv. 7-8)

- The last horseman, Death, rides along with Hades, bringing untold destruction upon the earth, leaving one-fourth of the population dead.
- There are two interpretations of the text "beasts of the earth":
 - The wild beasts of the earth that prey upon people due to the weakened state of humanity
 - Rats: much like how rats brought the Black Death during the Middle Ages, they could carry disease and death during the tribulation
- **Probe:** Pastor Skip pointed out that the Antichrist is everything Jesus is not. Or conversely, what the Antichrist is not, Jesus is. The Antichrist will be everything the world says it wants, but Jesus will be everything the world truly needs. Discuss how Jesus will make Himself known during the tribulation. Who will He use to proclaim the good news (see Revelation 7)?

Practice

Connect Up: Even in the midst of destruction and death, Christians are called to trust in God (see Job 13:15; Psalm 23), allowing Him to defend and deliver us in times of need. How can God's people use the forthcoming destruction to draw near to Christ? How can evil cause us to enjoy Jesus more?

Connect In: Read Romans 12:13, Galatians 6:2, and Philippians 2:4. Pastor Skip pointed out that Christians will not be on the earth during the tribulation, but for now, how are we to act toward one another in the personal troubles and trials we walk through on a regular basis?

Connect Out: As the reality of the tribulation comes more and more into focus, what effect should

its reality have on your willingness to evangelize? Read Romans 8:14-28, and ask your heavenly Father to show you how He would use you to build His kingdom. Take a few moments to pray for family and friends who don't know the Lord. Develop a strategy of ministering to them, whether it's inviting them to church or providing them with the tools (books, CDs, etc.) needed to answer questions. Pray for an opportunity to share the gospel.

DETAILED NOTES

I. Introduction

- A. A large stampede of animals will eliminate everything in its path
 - 1. A force of destruction
 - 2. Has the potential to kill anything in its path
- B. The figures in this passage have been referred to as the four horsemen of the apocalypse
- C. They are all a different color
 - 1. White
 - 2. Fiery red
 - 3. Black
 - 4. Pale green
- D. They represent the key events from the tribulation
 - 1. Revelation 6-19
 - 2. Seal judgments
- E. Revelation 5
 - 1. The scroll was opened by the Lamb
 - 2. The seals are the judgments that will come to the earth
- F. As each one is opened, it will devastate the earth
 - 1. There are sixty places in Scripture that refer to the tribulation
 - 2. Besides the topic of salvation and prophecies about Christ, this is the most number of references to a single topic
- G. Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21
- H. We have not experienced this yet in history
 - I. The judgments will be progressive and increasingly intense
 - J. The number seven is significant
 - 1. Seven seal judgments
 - 2. Seven trumpet judgments
 - 3. Seven bowl judgments

II. White Horse: Deception (vv. 1-2)

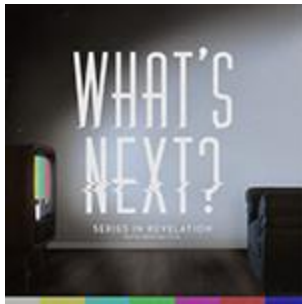
- A. A counterfeit Christ
 - 1. Many people will believe this is the first coming of Jesus
 - 2. Jesus will come on a white horse at the end of the tribulation to end war, carnage, and bloodshed
 - 3. This rider will come at the beginning of the tribulation and will bring war, carnage, and bloodshed
 - 4. Jesus will have many crowns on His head
 - a. *Diademata* (Revelation 19:12)= crowns
 - b. The crowns of a permanent king
 - 5. This rider will have one crown on his head

- a. *Stephanos* = a crown
 - b. A temporary crown made out of laurel leaves
 - c. The kind of crown given to someone who won a race
 - 6. Jesus will come with a sword (see Revelation 19)
 - 7. This rider will come with a bow
 - a. A symbol of the hunt
 - b. Genesis 10
 - c. Nimrod the hunter established the first empire of Babylon
 - d. Flaming arrows of the Evil One (see Ephesians 6:16)
 - B. The Antichrist
 - 1. Will promise peace
 - a. He will have a bow but no arrows
 - b. Indicates he will have victory not by military means; he will be a master negotiator
 - 2. Will overtake the world uncontested
 - 3. A wolf in sheep's clothing
 - 4. Temporary peace
 - a. Will bring peace in the Middle East
 - b. Will break that covenant
 - 5. He will suddenly show his true colors and people will see him for the deceiver he is
 - 6. Sudden destruction (see I Thessalonians 5:3)
- III. Red Horse: War (vv. 3-4)
 - A. The color red = terror and carnage (see Revelation 12:3; 17:3)
 - B. The Antichrist will plunge the entire world into the most devastating kind of war
 - C. He will have a great sword
 - 1. Peace will vanish from the earth
 - 2. Daniel 8:24; Matthew 24:4-7
 - D. We have always seen war
 - 1. Humans have always found ways to kill each other
 - 2. The world has seen more war than it has seen peace
 - E. The wars in the tribulation will escalate to the final battle of Armageddon (see Revelation 16:16)
 - F. Currently, the combined nuclear firepower that exists in all the nations that possess those capabilities has the power to destroy the entire world in one hour
 - G. Luke 21:25-26
- IV. Black Horse: Famine (vv. 5-6)
 - A. Famine is a result of war
 - B. People will spend everything they have to buy food
 - C. The population of the world has increased dramatically in recent years
 - 1. More people means more war
 - 2. More war means more famine
 - D. Warfare can contaminate food supplies
 - E. All of the believers will be gone in the rapture
 - 1. No churches to collect food and clothing for people
 - 2. Church- or believer-run charitable organizations will cease to exist
 - F. Matthew 24:7

- V. Pale Green Horse: Death (vv. 7-8)
 - A. Hades will follow Death on a fifth horse
 - B. Will take out one-fourth of the world's population
 - C. Destroyed by war, famine, and disease
 - D. People will also be destroyed by the beasts of the earth
 - 1. Wild beasts could possibly feed on the weakness of people
 - 2. This could also possibly refer to rats
 - a. They thrive in populated areas
 - b. They are prolific
 - c. They carry disease
- VI. Closing
 - A. Everything the Antichrist is, Jesus is not
 - B. The Antichrist is the false king; Jesus is the true King
 - C. The Antichrist promises peace but brings war; Jesus promises peace and will end all war
 - D. The Antichrist will bring famine; Jesus is the Bread of Life (see John 6:35)
 - E. The Antichrist will bring everything the world says it wants; Jesus will be everything the world needs

Greek words: diademata, stephanos

Cross references: Genesis 10; Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 8:24; 12:1; Matthew 24:4-7, 21; Luke 21:25-26; John 6:35; Ephesians 6:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:3; Revelation 5; 6-19; 12:3; 16:16; 17:3



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	The World's Greatest Revival
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 7
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4044

MESSAGE SUMMARY

During the earth's greatest trial and tribulation will also come its greatest opportunity for salvation. Even after the church is raptured off the earth and ensconced in heaven, there will be gospel preaching during this time of global pain. This is the flicker of hope that will be offered to the world while God pours out His wrath on it. There are three unexpected discoveries we make about the upcoming tribulation period.

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: February 14, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "The World's Greatest Revival"

Text: Revelation 7

Path

During the earth's greatest trial and tribulation will also come its greatest opportunity for salvation. Even after the church is raptured off the earth and ensconced in heaven, the gospel will be preached during this time of global pain. This is the flicker of hope that will be offered to the world while God pours out His wrath on it. There are three unexpected discoveries we make about the upcoming tribulation period:

- I. Good News in the Midst of Bad News (Revelation 6:9-11, 17)
- II. God's Protection for God's People (Revelation 7:1-4)
- III. Great Multitudes Experience Great Salvation (Revelation 7:9-17)

Points

Good News in the Midst of Bad News (Revelation 6:9-11, 17)

- In the midst of the terror of the tribulation, God will work within two groups: the 144,000 and the unnumbered multitude.
 - The first group is 144,000 "sealed" messianic Jews, with 12,000 from each tribe.
 - God will use the Jews in the end times for specific reasons:
 - The God-breathed Bible came through the Jewish nation.
 - The Savior came through the Jewish nation.
 - God has promised to protect and keep His people (see Romans 9-11).

- **Probe:** There is only one Savior who saves Jew and Gentile alike, both in this age of grace and in the coming judgment. God has at least one great revival left on His divine calendar. Knowing there is good news in the midst of bad news, how can you share the gospel in times of trial and tribulation?

God's Protection for God's People (Revelation 7:1-4)

- God will send out the 144,000 Jews to serve as a witness for Him in a world under strict judgment. God will preserve and protect them and make them unyielding in their witness, so they can give a strong gospel witness to the world.
- These 144,000 witnesses will help fulfill a prophecy Jesus made shortly before His crucifixion: "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14).
- **Probe:** How is God protecting you in the midst of the trials and temptations you face in your life?

Great Multitudes Experience Great Salvation (Revelation 7:9-17)

- The second group God will work with is an unnumbered multitude, a group vastly larger than the 144,000 witnesses. They are Gentiles from all nations (see v. 9), standing triumphantly and waving palm branches.
- John does not seem to know where they came from (see vv. 13-14). They are not the church. They are described as "the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (v. 14). It is likely that they are the fruit of the witness of the 144,000.
- **Probe:** With God saving both Jews and Gentiles during the great tribulation—a time of unprecedented trial—what does this tell us about God's character? In theology, this is called *omni-benevolence*, a word meaning *all good*. How is God's goodness manifest during the trials in your own life?

Practice

Connect Up: God never changes. His heart toward His creation is one of love. How is God's love demonstrated even in times of destruction? How can you seek God when you are in your own distressing times?

Connect In: How does revival affect you as a believer? What is the proper response to God growing His kingdom? Praise? Partnership? Both? How can we be prepared to welcome people into the local church when God works in mighty ways?

Connect Out: Take time to pray for family and friends who don't know the Lord. Develop a strategy of ministering to them, inviting them to church or providing them with the tools (books, CDs, etc.) they need to answer questions. Give them an opportunity to hear the gospel, and allow God to work a revival in the hearts of people one life at a time.

DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
 - A. There is a time coming in the future that will be the worst in human history physically
 - B. It will also be the best time spiritually
 - C. A great, incredible revival
 - D. Past revivals in history
 1. The book of Acts
 2. The Great Reformation
 3. The Welsh Revival
 4. The Moravian Movement
 5. The Great Awakening
 6. D.L. Moody and Jeremiah Lanphier
 7. The Jesus Movement
 8. Modern revival currently happening in China
 - E. These all pale in comparison to the worldwide response that will occur during the tribulation
 1. Will sweep the globe like never before
 2. People from every nation will be saved
 3. When the world is at its lowest
- II. Good News in the Midst of Bad News (Revelation 6:9-11, 17)
 - A. Introduces us to two groups who will be able to stand in that time of tribulation
 - B. The fifth seal: souls under the altar (see Revelation 6:9-11)
 - C. The tribulation is going to be the worst time ever
 1. Trumpet judgments (see Revelation 8-9)
 - a. Hail and fire
 - I. Grass is scorched
 - II. Water is dried up
 - b. Hell is opened and demons are released
 2. Bowl judgments (see Revelation 16)
 - a. Sores
 - b. Water sources poisoned
 - c. Sun scorches people
 - d. Hail
 - D. The tribulation period will be:
 1. A time of divine reckoning: God will show He is supreme over nature
 2. A time of demonic troublemaking: Satan and his demons will be very active
 3. A time of spiritual outpouring
 - a. This is the heart of God
 - b. God's heart is to save (see 2 Peter 3:9)
 - c. In His wrath, remember His mercy (see 1 Timothy 2:4)
 - E. How will people be saved if the church has been raptured?
 1. Two witnesses (see Revelation 11:1-14)
 - a. They will come to the city of Jerusalem
 - b. They will do miraculous works
 - c. The whole world will be watching them
 2. 144,000 Jewish evangelists
 3. An angel will fly about the earth preaching the gospel (see Revelation 14:6)
- III. God's Protection for God's People (Revelation 7:1-4)

- A. 144,000 witnesses will consist of 12,000 Jews from each tribe of Israel
 - B. The Jews have always had a special place in prophetic plan
 - 1. God made covenants with them throughout Scripture
 - 2. Three-fourths of the Bible is about the Hebrew people
 - 3. They are God's chosen people
 - 4. The prophetic calendar given to Daniel
 - C. The tribulation is in part to prepare Israel to receive Jesus as their Messiah
 - 1. They rejected Jesus the first time
 - 2. All Israel will be saved
 - D. The seal
 - 1. An imprint made by a signet ring in wax
 - 2. Represents ownership and protection
 - 3. We have been sealed (see Ephesians 1:13)
 - E. The 144,000 are saved Jewish people (Revelation 14:4)
 - 1. Firstfruits of God
 - 2. Their ancestors were sealed in Egypt: Passover blood was the seal (see Exodus 12:12-13)
 - 3. Rahab put a scarlet thread outside her house: seal of her faith in God (see Joshua 2:17-18)
 - 4. Ezekiel 9:4-5
 - F. They will become evangelists in the tribulation
- IV. Great Multitudes Experience Great Salvation (Revelation 7:9-17)
- A. The group of people John saw were standing, unlike the elders that represent the church, who were seated
 - 1. Not the church; they are the now-saved people from the tribulation
 - 2. From all nations
 - 3. They wore white robes signifying sanctification
 - 4. Palm branches signify joy and worship
 - B. God will wipe away every tear
 - C. Once they are in heaven, they will no longer suffer as they did during the tribulation on earth
 - D. The 144,000 will be saved largely due to the two witnesses
 - E. The other group mentioned will be saved largely due to the witness of the 144,000
 - F. In Matthew 24, Jesus talked about the end times and the tribulation
- V. Closing
- A. God will use the world's greatest mess to bring about the greatest revival
 - B. God wants you to change your mess into something amazing
 - C. Roll over your burden to the Lord

Figures referenced: Jeremiah Lanphier, D.L. Moody

Cross references: Exodus 12:12-13; Joshua 2:17-18; Ezekiel 9:4-5; Matthew 24; Ephesians 1:13; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9; Revelation 6:9-11; 8-9; 11:1-14; 14:4, 6; 16

Topic: Revival

Keywords: revival, tribulation, judgments, Satan, demons, rapture, witnesses, evangelists, evangelism, Messiah, seal, elders, the church, comfort, end times



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	What's Next? from Jerusalem
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Matthew 24:1-8
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4048

MESSAGE SUMMARY

One of God's greatest attributes is that He knows what is going to happen before it actually happens, and His Word clearly maps the events of the future. In this message from Jerusalem, we learn why this city is the center of the world, as well as what we can expect to take place when Jesus fulfills His promise to return for the church.

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: February 28, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "What's Next? from Jerusalem"

Text: Matthew 24:1-8

Path

Pastor Skip taught this important message from Jerusalem, the center of the world. When it comes to knowing what's next, we need God's voice speaking through His Word, the Bible. God knows the end from the beginning. He knows all things and has made hundreds of detailed predictions in the Bible, stacking the odds of fulfillment against Himself so when they do happen, we know that they are from God alone. Pastor Skip taught from Matthew 24:1-8 and gave some insight about what the future holds.

- I. The Place—Jerusalem
- II. The Prediction—the Temple Destroyed
- III. The Promise—His Coming

Points

The Place—Jerusalem (Matthew 24:3)

- Jesus was in Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives when He predicted the fall of the temple.
- Jerusalem is the center of the earth in these ways:
 - Geographical center: Israel is at the center of the world; Jerusalem is at the center of Israel; and the temple is at the center of Jerusalem. God established Jerusalem in the midst of the nations; it is a land bridge that connects Africa, Europe, and Asia.
 - Salvation center: Jerusalem is where Jesus died and rose again, bringing hope to a hurting world.

- Political center: Israel is the storm center of the world politically. God said, "I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone.... All nations of the earth are gathered against it" (Zechariah 12:3).
- Glory center: One day, all the nations of the world will flow into Jerusalem. There is a kingless throne in Jerusalem and a throneless King in heaven. When Jesus comes, the two will meet, beginning a new reign of peace.

The Prediction—the Temple Destroyed (Matthew 24:2)

- Jesus predicted the fall of the temple: "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly...not one stone shall be left here upon another" (v. 2).
- In AD 70, the Romans destroyed the temple. A fire broke out and the temple tumbled. Jesus' prophecy was fulfilled, and the religious system of the Jews was forever changed.
- This statement by Jesus shocked His disciples. For the Jews, the presence of the temple was a sign of God's favor.

The Promise—His Coming (Matthew 24:4-8, 42)

- This is a promise of preparation: Jesus went away to prepare a place for us (see John 14:1-3), and though we don't know when He'll return (see Matthew 24:42), He promised He will come back for us.
- We are looking for two future events to happen:
 - Toward the earth—the rapture: Jesus will come in the air; believers will meet Him in the atmosphere. This is when Jesus claims His bride; it will be sudden and unpredictable (see I Thessalonians 4:16-17).
 - To the earth—the second coming: Jesus will come to the earth with the church, His bride. This coming will be proclaimed everywhere, as Scripture predicts (see Revelation 1:7; 14:1-20).
- At the rapture, Jesus will come bodily, bringing the souls of believers from all the ages. At this point, God's people will be resurrected. Once we meet the Lord, He will lead us in a triumphant entry into heaven where we will stand before God and receive our rewards for serving Him during our time on earth. Then, following the tribulation, believers will come back to the earth with Jesus and He will usher in the millennial kingdom.
- Finally, we will rule with Christ in the new heaven and new earth (see Revelation 21:1). This will be our home forever. We will rejoice not for *what* is at this home but *who* is at this home with us.

Practice

Connect Up: Discuss Jerusalem's importance throughout history. Knowing the story ends with a new heaven and new earth, how does the reality of our future draw you closer to the Lord? What do you think the new heaven and new earth will be like (see Revelation 22)?

Connect In: How does the future help shape your present interaction with fellow believers? How does the hope of a new heaven and new earth influence how you help others in our current dwelling place?

Connect Out: Pastor Skip asked the question: "Are you ready?" We hope you are. But here's another question: Are your family, friends, and coworkers ready? If not, make it a point to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, telling them about the place, prediction, and promise of Jesus and His coming kingdom. Take a few moments to pray for the people you know who need Jesus.

DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
 - A. We want to know what happens in the future
 - B. God knows the end from the beginning
 1. Omniscient (see Isaiah 46:9-10)
 2. He continuously stacks the odds against Himself, as the odds that all prophecy in Scripture will be fulfilled are astronomical
 - C. The second coming of Christ is the culmination of all Christian hope for all centuries
 1. We will all be changed in a moment (see I Corinthians 15:52)
 2. We will get an extreme makeover
- II. The Place—Jerusalem
 - A. The city of Jerusalem is mentioned 821 times in the Bible
 - B. Jesus taught on the Mount of Olives
 1. Olivet Discourse
 2. He predicted the future
 - a. The future of the Jews
 - b. The future of Jerusalem
 - c. The future of the world
 - d. His future coming
 3. Jesus taught this message in the very place that is the center of conflict today
 - a. Israel is the very center of God's plan for the future
 - b. This is why it is the center of Satan's spiritual attack
 - C. Jerusalem is the center of the earth
 1. Jerusalem is the geographical center of the earth biblically (see Ezekiel 5:5)
 - a. Israel is on a land bridge that connects Europe, Asia, and Africa
 - b. All biblical references to direction (north, south, etc.) are in relation to Jerusalem
 2. Jerusalem is the salvation center of the earth spiritually
 - a. John 4:22
 - b. Jesus paid for our sins on the cross just outside of Jerusalem at Golgotha
 3. Jerusalem is the storm center of the earth prophetically
 - a. There is a sense of political and spiritual tension
 - b. Zechariah 12:3
 4. Jerusalem is the glory center of the earth ultimately
 - a. Isaiah 2:2-3
 - b. There is a kingless throne in Jerusalem
 - I. The throne of David
 - II. It has not been occupied in over 2,500 years

- c. In heaven there is a throneless King
- d. When they come together, that will be the time of fullness the Bible speaks about
- e. In the tribulation period, God will seal 144,000 Jewish people
- f. God will set up His millennial kingdom in Jerusalem and will rule from Mount Zion
- g. Eternal state with the New Jerusalem

III. The Prediction—the Temple Destroyed

- A. In the mind of the Jews, the temple was a sign of God's favor to the nation of Israel
 - 1. It took 18,000 workers a total of eighty years to complete
 - 2. The pinnacle of the temple sat 158 feet above its base
- B. Jesus predicted that the stones of the temple would all tumble down
 - 1. The prediction was fulfilled in AD 70 when the Romans attacked and destroyed it
 - 2. There is still dispute about where exactly the original temple stood on the Temple Mount
- C. The Scriptures predicted that the nations of the world will come against Israel
 - 1. Zechariah 12:2-3
 - 2. Israel fell in AD 70
 - 3. There are many people who would love to see this happen again

IV. The Promise—His Coming

- A. As tough as these predictions were, Jesus also promised His coming (see Matthew 24:42)
- B. The glory of the world and culmination of prophetic hope is the coming of Jesus Christ
- C. This should fill your heart with hope: your Savior is coming back (see John 14:2-3)
- D. We are looking for two future events to happen
 - 1. Jesus coming toward the earth for His church
 - a. The rapture
 - b. We will meet Him in the air
 - c. This is not the second coming
 - 2. Jesus is coming to the earth with His church
 - a. This is technically the second coming
 - b. Will happen after the rapture of the church
 - c. Every eye will see Him (see Revelation 1:17)
 - 3. The difference
 - a. At the rapture
 - I. Jesus will claim His bride (the church)
 - II. The focus is Jesus and His church
 - III. Sudden, unpredictable
 - b. At the second coming
 - I. Jesus comes with His bride
 - II. The focus is Israel and the kingdom
 - III. Predictable: after seven years of tribulation
- E. What's next for us is the Lord coming back

- F. The combination of what Jesus said in the Gospels, what Peter and Paul said in the Epistles, and what John saw and recorded in Revelation gives us a roadmap of future events
 - 1. Jesus Christ, who is currently seated at the right hand of God the Father, will come in bodily form from heaven to the atmosphere above the earth
 - 2. Jesus will bring with Him the souls of believers who have died and been with Him in heaven to resurrect their bodies (see 1 Corinthians 15:50, 53)
 - 3. The believers who are alive will join Jesus in a triumphal procession into heaven and face the judgment seat of Christ
 - a. Rewards for faithful service on earth
 - b. 2 Corinthians 5:10
 - 4. During this time, the tribulation will be happening on earth
 - 5. Jesus and the saints will come back to the earth for the second coming
 - 6. Then the millennial kingdom: the thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth
 - 7. Eternal state
 - a. New heaven
 - b. New earth
 - c. New Jerusalem coming toward the earth
- G. The eternal state will be our eternal home
 - 1. John 14:2
 - 2. Heaven is a relational place
 - 3. The people who dwell in a house make it a home
 - 4. We will be with our Father and the people we love who have served the Lord

V. Closing

- A. When we think about heaven and that blessed hope, that ought to fill our hearts with joy
- B. There will be no broken hearts, no broken homes, no rehab, no hell
- C. Ultimately we will be with Him in glory (see Luke 21:28)
- D. Are you ready? Have you heeded the warnings?

Cross references: Isaiah 2:2-3; 46:9-10; Ezekiel 5:5; Zechariah 12:2-3; Matthew 24:42; Luke 21:28; John 4:22; 14:2-3; 1 Corinthians 15:50, 52, 53; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 1:17

Topic: Israel

Keywords: future, Israel, Jerusalem, salvation, prophecy, throne of David, millennial kingdom, tribulation, temple, second coming of Christ, hope, rapture, judgment seat of Christ, eternal state, heaven



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	Cosmic Conflict
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 12:1-6
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4050

MESSAGE SUMMARY

There has been an *invisible war* between satanic forces and God's purpose and people since time began. To fail to understand this conflict is to fail to understand both history and prophecy. Without the lens provided by Revelation 12, our vision of everything is obscured. We will never fully grasp the plan of God through the ages, the cross of Christ, the tribulation, and the future reign of Christ unless we can comprehend the cosmic conflict that is displayed in this chapter.

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: March 6, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "Cosmic Conflict"

Text: Revelation 12:1-6

Path

Pastor Skip continued our study through the book of Revelation, discussing a cosmic conflict. Revelation 12 shows us things that are happening around us, unknown and unseen, and they can't be seen without the filter of special equipment. Revelation 12 is that special equipment, a briefing about an invisible war in the spiritual realm:

- I. This Conflict Involves a People (vv. 1-2)
- II. This Conflict Includes a Perpetrator (vv. 3-4)
- III. This Conflict Entails a Pursuit (vv. 4-6)
- IV. This Conflict Ends in Primacy (v. 5)

Points

This Conflict Involves a People (vv. 1-2)

- The Greek word for *great* is *mega*. John points out *mega* signs and symbols in this passage.
- These symbols point to a biblical reality: spiritual events on a huge scale.
- The woman symbolizes the nation of Israel (see Genesis 37:9-10; Jeremiah 30; Daniel 10).
- The Child is the Messiah (see Genesis 3:15; the Seed of the woman), the central person in this cosmic conflict who came from a central place: Israel.
- The conflict of the ages is geocentric because of God's unique promises to Israel.
- **Probe: Discuss the importance of the Jewish nation throughout history. Why has Satan attacked it with such vehemence?**

This Conflict Includes a Perpetrator (vv. 3-4)

- The dragon symbolizes Satan (see Revelation 12:9).
- This is a moral description, not a physical one: he is cruel, vile, and fierce.
- He has seven heads. Seven is a number that symbolizes completeness—Satan's intellect is comprehensive and vast.
- He has ten horns and seven diadems. These symbolize Satan's strength and authority in dominating the world.
- We see Satan as the dragon he truly is, not his deceptive disguise as an "angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14).
- **Probe:** Discuss ways in which Satan disguises himself in our world today. What are some of the evil things happening in our culture that drive people from God's goodness?

This Conflict Entails a Pursuit (vv. 4-6)

- Why does Satan hate the woman? Because the Messiah will come through her—the Anointed One, the Christ who will crush Satan's authority (see Genesis 3; Isaiah 9).
- All of Israel's—and the church's—history centers on Satan's pursuit of God's people and his attempts to destroy them in order to prevent the Messiah's birth and stop His mission of salvation.
- Satan's quest began with the first murder: Cain killing his brother Abel. Satan further induces others to murder (see Genesis 4; Genesis 6; Genesis 27). All murder and hateful violence toward the Jews is a sign of Satan trying to rid the world of God's chosen people and, ultimately, the Messiah.
- Satan thought he won the ultimate victory at the crucifixion, but he neglected the prophecy: Christ would take up His life and rise from the grave.
- **Probe:** How can the church participate in crushing Satan in our society? What more can we do to proclaim the victory of Christ and His resurrection?

This Conflict Ends in Primacy (v. 5)

- *Primacy* means *dominance* and *superiority*.
- The Child will return as King, and He will reign (see Isaiah 9).
- Rod of iron: Christ will quell Satan's rebellion and rule absolutely, shepherding and guiding the Jewish nation.
- Jesus Christ is the tender enforcer and the gentle warrior.
- **Probe:** Christ is the shepherd and guide for Israel and the church. Share how Christ has guided you through a trial or tribulation in your life, showing His primacy for your benefit.

Practice

Connect Up: Pastor Skip reminded us that we are a part of the war that began in heaven and moved to the theater of the earth. How does this reality draw you close to God, knowing you are part of His purpose and plan on earth?

Connect In: Pastor Skip reminded us that Satan took one-third of the angels with him, leaving two-thirds loyal to God in heaven. Imagine what the body of Christ could do with two-thirds of its people

serving one another and the world. How is the church to participate in the drama of the end times? What role can we play now to minister in truth and love to those within the church?

Connect Out: How can the church better proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ as we enter the final stages of history? How can we declare the primacy of Jesus' victory to a world that is becoming more jaded to all things religious?

DETAILED NOTES

I. Introduction

- A. There are things happening around us that are unknown by us
 - 1. There has been a constant war since the fall of Satan
 - 2. The mutiny of heaven became the misery of earth
- B. Revelation is filled with symbols that point to reality
 - 1. Revelation 12 is one of those passages that connects past history and future prophecy
 - 2. By reading the Scriptures, we gain important knowledge about our Enemy (see 2 Corinthians 2:11)
 - 3. There are certain things we need to be aware of concerning this cosmic conflict

II. This Conflict Involves a People (vv. 1-2)

- A. *Megas* = great, massive
 - 1. A great sign
 - 2. Used repeatedly in this chapter (see vv. 3, 12, 14)
 - 3. Everything John saw in Revelation 12 is massive
- B. Who is the woman?
 - 1. The motif of the sun, moon, and twelve stars is only used one other time in Scriptures (see Genesis 37:9-10)
 - a. Joseph's dream was symbolic
 - b. Sun and moon symbolized Jacob and Rachel
 - c. Stars symbolized Jacob's twelve sons and the twelve tribes of Israel that would descend from them
 - 2. The woman symbolizes the nation of Israel
- C. Israel plays a key role in the end-time events
 - 1. The tribulation period is referred to as Jacob's trouble (see Jeremiah 30:7)
 - 2. Seventy periods of seven of trouble (see Daniel 9:24)
 - 3. Jesus spoke about the end times as they relate to the Jews (see Matthew 24)
- D. Israel has been attacked, oppressed, and persecuted more than any other nation in the world, and yet it has survived
 - 1. Taken over by other nations
 - a. Babylonians: 586 BC
 - b. Romans: AD 70
 - c. Romans: AD 135
 - 2. The nation was dispersed for thousands of years
 - a. Spanish Inquisition
 - b. World War II
 - 3. Israel just became a nation again
 - a. A nation born in a day (see Isaiah 66:8)

- b. May 14, 1948
 - E. The conflict of the ages is a geocentric conflict because of the unique promises made to Israel
 - F. The child mentioned in verse 2 is Jesus Christ
 - 1. The Jews have longed for their Messiah for generations
 - 2. The Seed of the woman was prophesied to crush the head of Satan (see Genesis 3:15)
- III. This Conflict Includes a Perpetrator (vv. 3-4)
 - A. The dragon is Satan (see Revelation 12:9)
 - 1. A symbol of a reality
 - a. A moral description of Satan
 - b. Cruel, fierce, violent
 - 2. Many people mistakenly believe this is a literal, physical description of Satan
 - a. They discount him as not being real
 - b. Most Americans believe in God, but do not believe in a literal Devil
 - 3. Two equal and opposite errors concerning the Devil
 - a. Denial
 - I. You cannot have a more powerful enemy than the one you don't believe exists
 - II. He can outflank and outmaneuver you, simply because you don't know he is there
 - b. Obsession
 - I. Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world (see I John 4:4)
 - II. If you are serious about Christ, you can expect opposition
 - B. Description
 - 1. Seven heads
 - a. Seven is the number of completion, totality
 - b. Comprehensive intelligence
 - c. He can craft temptations specifically suited for a particular person
 - 2. Ten horns
 - a. Symbol of strength, a weapon
 - b. Satan has dominated the world
 - c. Authority was given to him
 - d. Ten world empires
 - 3. Crowns
 - a. The earth has crowned him as its king
 - b. Disguised as an angel of light
- IV. This Conflict Entails a Pursuit (vv. 4-6)
 - A. The conflict between the woman and the dragon has to do with the male Child
 - 1. The dragon hates the woman because of the Child
 - 2. The Child would one day rule the world and take away Satan's authority (see Isaiah 9:6)
 - B. Satan was in the garden of Eden after the fall, and he heard the prophecy God made (see Genesis 3:15)
 - 1. God said the Seed of the woman would crush his kingdom

2. Since that prophecy was given, he thought of a counterstrategy to make sure that did not happen
 3. The cosmic conflict has been a pursuit to destroy the Seed that would crush Satan's authority
- C. Examples of Satan's attempts to destroy God's plan
1. Satan inspired Cain to kill his brother Abel (see Genesis 4:1-16; I John 3:12)
 - a. Abel was righteous
 - b. Eve gave birth to another son, Seth, and the righteous lineage continued from him
 2. Satan caused such evil to spread across the earth that God destroyed it with a flood; all but eight people and an ark full of animals survived (see Genesis 6-8)
 - a. The members of Noah's family were the only righteous people to be found in all the earth
 - b. The line that eventually led to Jesus continued from Noah's offspring
 3. Esau tried to kill his brother Jacob (see Genesis 27:41-45)
 - a. Jacob was Isaac's son of promise
 - b. From Jacob came the twelve tribes of Israel
 - c. Jesus came from the line of Judah
 4. The Egyptian pharaoh ordered that all the male Hebrew babies be killed (see Exodus 1:15-22)
 - a. An attempt to wipe out the entire nation of Israel
 - b. An agent of Satan to destroy the Jews
 5. King Saul repeatedly attempted to kill David (see I Samuel 18-31)
 - a. Like a madman, sometimes for no reason at all
 - b. Jesus would be born from the royal line of David
 6. Haman devised a plot to annihilate the Jews (see Esther 3-8)
 7. As soon as Jesus was born, King Herod decided that every child under two years of age needed to be killed (see Matthew 2:16-18)
 - a. He heard from the magi that Jesus was to be the king
 - b. Another attempt by Satan to crush the Seed that would become the ruler of the earth
 8. Satan himself tempted Jesus in the wilderness (see Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13)
 - a. Suggested Jesus throw Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple
 - b. Hoped He would die in the process
 9. When Jesus claimed to be the Messiah in the synagogue at Nazareth, the people became so angry they tried to kill Him (see Luke 4:16-30)
 10. Satan thought he won when Jesus' lifeless body was taken down from the cross (see Matthew 27:50-60; Mark 15:37-46; Luke 23:46-53; John 19:30-42)
 - a. He thought he had destroyed the male Child, the Seed
 - b. There must have been a party in hell, as Satan thought he had been victorious
 - c. He did not read the fine print
- D. Jesus had the power to rise from the dead (see John 10:18)
1. On that day, He defeated Satan
 2. On Easter morning, there was not an Easter party in hell
- E. Satan then turned his wrath toward the early church

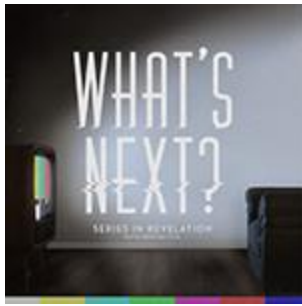
1. The new followers of the resurrected Messiah
2. The church has been persecuted throughout history
- F. Israel has continued to be persecuted as well
 1. The fulfillment of the rest of God's plan is contingent on the nation of Israel
 2. If Satan were to destroy Israel, he could thwart God's plan
 3. There are many Old Testament prophecies that say the Messiah will reign forever from Jerusalem
 - a. This has not happened yet
 - b. Satan is trying to destroy Israel so God's promises will not be fulfilled
- V. This Conflict Ends in Primacy (v. 5)
 - A. Primacy means *dominance* or *superiority*
 - B. Whatever the conflict is, Satan will lose and Jesus will win
 - C. Jesus will rule with a rod of iron
 1. In antiquity, iron was the strongest metal known to man
 2. An iron rule means absolute authority
 3. The word Greek word for *rule* in this verse is *poimainó*
 - a. *Poimainó* = to act as a shepherd
 - b. Greek word for *pastor* is *poimén*
 - c. *Poimén* = a shepherd
 - d. Peter instructed the elders to shepherd the flock (see I Peter 5:2)
 - D. Satan will not be able to stop the eternal reign of Christ
- VI. Closing
 - A. Don't let Satan stop Christ from ruling over you
 - B. We have the power of choice
 1. We can say yes to Him or no to Him
 2. We can choose to reject Him or receive Him
 - C. We are involved in this cosmic conflict, but we don't have to be scared (see I John 4:4)
 - D. Never forget that Satan's army is outnumbered two to one
 - E. Are you under the primacy of Christ?

Greek words: megas, poimén, poimainó

Cross references: Genesis 3:15; 4:1-16; 6-8; 27:41-45; 37:9-10; Exodus 1:15-22; I Samuel 18-31; Esther 3-8; Isaiah 9:6; 66:8; Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:24; Matthew 2:16-18; 4:1-11; 24; 27:50-60; Mark 1:12-13; 15:37-46; Luke 4:1-13, 16-30; 23:46-53; John 10:18; 19:30-42; 2 Corinthians 2:11; I Peter 5:2; I John 3:12; 4:4; Revelation 12

Topic: Spiritual Warfare

Keywords: war, heaven, earth, mutiny, reality, history, prophecy, signs, symbols, Israel, end times, tribulation, Jacob's trouble, persecution, conflict, Satan, Devil, authority, the fall, kingdom, pharaoh, resurrection, church, Messiah, eternal reign



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	Satan's Global Conflict
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 12:7-17
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4052

MESSAGE SUMMARY

"War in Heaven Brings Wrath on Earth!" That could be the headline of Revelation 12. The ongoing battle of the ages that began in heaven and has played out on earth will reach fever pitch in the coming years. If you're asking What's Next?, the answer in part lies here. The cosmic battle becomes a global battle that will be filled with both woe and worship, both fury and freedom. Let's get more insight into the motivations and actions of the archenemy of God's people.

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: March 13, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "Satan's Global Conflict"

Text: Revelation 12:7-17

Path

So many jokes, movies, and books illustrate misconceptions about the Devil—but the Bible reveals the startling truth about Satan: he is real, he has access to heaven, and he is not in charge of hell, nor will he ever be. Pastor Skip unpacked two major themes in Revelation 12: war in heaven and wrath on earth. In considering them, we learn a few character traits about the Devil:

- I. Satan Is Persistent (vv. 7-12)
- II. Satan Is Perverse (vv. 9-10)
- III. Satan Is Pernicious (vv. 12-17)
- IV. Satan Is Preventable (v. 11)

Points

Satan Is Persistent (vv. 7-12)

- We picture heaven as a place of worship, but in the future, it will be a war zone. Satan fell from heaven and failed to destroy God's Messiah (see Revelation 12:4), but he will try once again during the tribulation to conquer heaven and thwart God's plans.
- Satan doesn't give up easily, despite his past failures. He knows he's going down, but he wants to create as much chaos and destroy as many lives as he can—like a "roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

- When God said, "Have you considered My servant Job?" (Job 1:8), He acknowledged that Satan had been watching Job, looking for weaknesses—an unnerving thought. Satan studies us and fashions his attacks around our character and weaknesses.
- One of the biggest lies that Satan tries to spread is that he is the evil opposite of righteous God. God does not fight battles; He wins them. Satan will fight a losing battle against God's angels—particularly Michael, an archangel associated with Israel's protection (see v. 7).

Satan Is Perverse (vv. 9-10)

- These verses contain six names describing Satan's wicked nature:
- Dragon (only seen in Revelation—an indicator of his true character as a fierce tyrant)
- Serpent of old (his subtle treachery, going back to Eden)
- Devil (slanderer, gossip)
- Satan (adversary, enemy)
- Deceiver (he is the world's pastor, promoting false religion, security, and hope)
- Accuser (spews accusations against us in heaven)

Satan Is Pernicious (vv. 12-17)

- Heaven will rejoice at Satan's banishment from heaven, but the earth will recoil: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea" (v. 12).
- The tribulation will be a double-whammy: it will be God's judgment against the earth, but it will also be Satan's great wrath as he and his minions are confined to earth for three and a half years.
- Satan will vent all his violent outrage on the earth, specifically against Israel. Through his servant, the Antichrist, two-thirds of all the Jews will be killed (see Zechariah 13:8), and the abomination of desolation will occur (see Matthew 24).
- Though the details are unknown, God will protect His people from the flood of Satan's wrath; Israel's darkest hour will lead to its brightest dawn.

Satan Is Preventable (v. 11)

- Believers in the tribulation "overcame [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb" (v. 11). Satan has built a case against us, but our defense attorney, Jesus, makes a stronger case by His blood (see 1 John 2:1).
- Like the martyrs, we overcome Satan by the word of our testimony (see v. 11)—our personal statement of faith that tells others who God is and what He has done for us.
- "They did not love their lives to the death" (v. 11). Our spiritual loyalty is more important than our physical life. Satan can't touch—in any way that counts in eternity—the person who puts Jesus first and everything else last.
- Once we know how to die, we know how to live (see John 12:25). When we are pressed to choose either the Lord or our own life, we can take missionary James Calvert's stance when he was discouraged from following the Lord: "We died before we came here."

Practice

Connect Up: Satan studies how to harm us, but he operates within strict parameters—by God's

permission and for God's purposes. God keeps His eye on His children and His finger on the thermostat. What battles in your life do you need to give over to God, trusting that His ultimate victory is sure?

Connect In: The solidarity of Christian brothers and sisters is so important in resisting Satan's influence. What are some ways that you can support each other in the challenges you face?

Connect Out: What is your testimony? Prepare a brief account of what God has done for you and how He has changed your life. Practice it and have it ready at all times. Ask God to provide you with a chance to share it this week.

DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
 - A. People have many misconceptions about the Devil:
 1. He is not real at all
 2. He is waiting in hell to torment people who go there
 - B. Satan has never been to hell and will not go there until after the tribulation
 1. Satan is not in charge of hell—God is
 2. When Satan finally goes there, he won't be the chief tormentor—he will be the chief target (see Revelation 20:10)
 - C. He currently has a certain amount of access to heaven as well as earth (see Job 1:6-7)
 - D. This passage focuses on two themes
 1. War in heaven
 2. Wrath on earth
 - E. We must learn about Satan so we can add to our knowledge about him (see 2 Corinthians 2:11)
- II. Satan Is Persistent (vv. 7-12)
 - A. War in heaven
 1. We usually think of heaven as a worship zone, not a war zone
 2. This passage refers to a future war
 - B. Satan finds it hard to give up, though he is fighting a losing battle
 1. He wants to create as much chaos as possible
 2. He wants to bring as many people down with him as possible
 - C. Satan personally came to Jesus to tempt Him (see Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13)
 1. Satan did not leave Him alone
 2. He departed until an opportune time (see Luke 4:13)
 3. He is constantly looking for ways to lead us astray (see 1 Peter 5:8)
 - D. Satan constantly studies us
 1. He studied Job (see Job 1:8)
 2. Jesus told Peter that Satan had been asking for him (see Luke 22:31)
 3. He fashions his attacks based on information he knows about us
 - E. Satan's final attempt to take over heaven
 1. This is not a battle between God and Satan
 - a. One of Satan's greatest lies is that he is the evil opposite of righteous God

- b. God does not fight battles—He wins them
- 2. This will be a battle between Michael and his angels and Satan and his demons
 - a. They have fought in times past (see Jude 1:9)
 - b. Michael is the great defender of Israel (see Daniel 12:1)
- 3. This war could be triggered by the rapture of the church
 - a. People who will be raptured will pass through the air (the demons' realm)
 - b. The demons may try to hinder their passage
- 4. Michael is an archangel (see Jude 1:9)
 - a. There is only one other reference to an archangel in the Bible
 - b. I Thessalonians 4:16: the shout mentioned here could be from Michael as this battle takes place

III. Satan Is Perverse (vv. 9-10)

A. Names of the Devil

1. The Dragon

- a. Revelation is the only book that refers to Satan as a dragon
- b. Mentioned thirteen times
- c. A picture of his character as revealed in the end times
- d. A fierce tyrant

2. Serpent of old

- a. Genesis 3
- b. Cunning

3. The Devil

- a. Slanderer, gossip, one who defames another
- b. *Diabolos* = slanderous, accusing falsely

4. Satan

- a. Enemy
- b. Adversary

B. If you have any relationship with the Devil, make sure he is your enemy and not your friend

- 1. He is a fierce tyrant who is very subtle and crafty, who slanders and defames us and is our enemy
- 2. "There is something...very comforting in the thought that [the Devil] is an adversary—I would sooner have him for an adversary than for a friend!" — Charles Haddon Spurgeon

C. He deceives the whole world

- 1. He is the world's pastor
- 2. He shepherds the flock and uses any type of deception he can to get people to not think about spiritual things

D. Accuser of the brethren

- 1. He has access to both heaven and earth
- 2. He accuses us before the throne of God (see Zechariah 3:1)
- 3. Some of that spills over into our thought lives
 - a. We have feelings of inadequacy
 - b. We doubt our salvation
 - c. We think there is no way God could want us

IV. Satan Is Pernicious (vv. 12-17)

- A. There will come a time when Satan will no longer have access to heaven
 - B. There will be a great tribulation for two reasons:
 - 1. God's wrath
 - a. Wrath of the Lamb
 - b. God's judgments on the earth
 - 2. Satan's wrath
 - a. Reaction to banishment from heaven
 - b. Satan and his minions will enter earth en masse
 - C. Second half of the tribulation = the great tribulation
 - 1. Three and a half years
 - a. 1,260 days (see Revelation 12:6)
 - b. Forty-two months (see Revelation 13:5)
 - 2. During this time, Satan will be filled with wrath
 - a. He will have no more access to heaven or the air
 - b. "Satan is now like a caged lion, enraged beyond words by the limitations now placed upon his freedom. He picks himself up from the dust of the earth, shakes his fist at the sky, and glares around, choking with fury for ways to vent his hatred and his spite upon humankind" —John Phillips
 - c. He will use the Antichrist, who will have made a seven-year peace pact with Israel (see Daniel 9:27)
 - I. Will be broken at the three and a half year mark
 - II. Abomination of desolation (see Daniel 12:11)
 - III. Israel will flee to the wilderness (see Matthew 24:15-25)
 - d. There will be a wave of anti-Semitism like the world has never seen
 - I. Two-thirds of the Jews will be slain (see Zechariah 13:8)
 - II. One-third will be saved (see Romans 11:26)
 - D. Revelation is a book of symbols that speaks about a reality that will happen in the future
 - 1. Eagles' wings (see Exodus 19:4)
 - a. God provided protection
 - b. He will protect Israel again
 - 2. Flood
 - a. Possibly speaking about a flood of attackers sent to destroy the remaining remnant of Jewish people
 - b. The earth will help them
 - c. Possibly an earthquake
 - I. Five specific earthquakes are mentioned in Revelation (see 6:12; 8:5; 11:13, 19; 16:18)
 - II. Jesus predicted earthquakes in different places (see Matthew 24:7)
 - E. Israel's darkest hour will be followed by Israel's brightest dawn
- V. Satan Is Preventable (vv. 11)
- A. He can be overcome by the blood of the Lamb
 - 1. In the Old Testament, God told the Israelites to put the blood of a lamb on their doorposts as judgment passed over them (see Exodus 12:21-23)
 - 2. Apply the blood of Christ to your life when Satan hurls accusations at you and tries to get you to doubt
 - 3. God will bless you by your understanding that you are unworthy
 - 4. Because of the work of His Son on your behalf, you are forgiven

- B. Satan is the prosecuting attorney who accuses us before God
 - 1. Jesus us our Advocate, our defense attorney (see I John 2:2)
 - 2. God is the judge
 - 3. All of Satan's accusations are accurate
 - 4. But Jesus shed His blood to cover our sins so we can overcome all of the accusations
 - C. Your testimony is your statement of faith
 - 1. Confidence
 - 2. Witness
 - D. Spiritual loyalty is greater than physical death
- VI. Closing
- A. Satan hates you and has a miserable plan for your life
 - 1. As Satan studies us, he plans attacks
 - 2. He operates within strict parameters
 - 3. Satan will be sent to hell
 - B. God loves you and has an amazing plan for your life
 - 1. He allows Satan to attack you to strengthen you
 - 2. He anticipated everything Satan has done and will ever do
 - 3. He always keeps His eye on His children and His hand on the thermostat
 - 4. He created heaven for people

Figures referenced: John Phillips, Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Greek words: diabolos

Cross references: Genesis 3; Exodus 12:21-23; 19:4; Job 1:6-8; Daniel 9:27; 12:1, 11; Zechariah 3:1; 13:8; Matthew 4:1-11; 24:7, 15-25; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13; 22:31; Romans 11:26; 2 Corinthians 2:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Peter 5:8; 1 John 2:2; Jude 1:9; Revelation 6:12; 8:5; 11:13, 19; 12:6; 13:5; 16:18; 20:10

Topic: Satan

Keywords: Devil, Satan, torment, hell, tribulation, heaven, earth, war, spiritual warfare, chaos, temptation, attack, battle, angels, archangel, demons, Israel, evil, rapture, dragon, serpent, enemy, tyrant, cunning, adversary, deceive, pastor, shepherd, accusation, salvation, tribulation, wrath, judgment, banishment, Antichrist, anti-Semitism, eagle, earthquake, flood, blood of the Lamb, Advocate, sins, testimony



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	The Most Interesting Man in the World
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 13:1-10
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4059

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Unlike the fictional beer commercials, the most interesting man in the world is coming. Dynamic, persuasive, and a breath of fresh air, this leader's diplomatic skills will be off the charts. On one hand, he will be everything the world has been waiting for; on the other hand, he will be its biggest nightmare. Since the number *six* is often the designated number of *man* in Scripture, let's examine six characteristics of this most interesting coming ruler.

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Recap Notes: April 3, 2016

Teaching: "The Most Interesting Man in the World"

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Text: Revelation 13:1-10

Path

Unlike the fictional beer commercials, the most interesting man in the world is coming. Dynamic, persuasive, and a breath of fresh air, this leader's diplomatic skills will be off the charts. On one hand, he will be everything the world has been waiting for; on the other hand, he will be its biggest nightmare. Since the number *six* is often the designated number of *man* in Scripture, Pastor Skip examined six characteristics of this most interesting coming ruler, most often called the Antichrist:

- I. Wickedness (v. 1)
- II. World Dominance (vv. 1-2)
- III. Wonder (v. 3)
- IV. Worship (vv. 4, 8)
- V. Words (vv. 5-6)
- VI. War (vv. 7-10)

Points

Wickedness (v. 1)

- In his vision, John saw the Antichrist as an insidious man---a beast, from the Greek *thérion*, meaning *a wild, venomous monster*.
- Though starting as a man of peace (see Revelation 6:2), the Antichrist will reveal his true colors halfway through the tribulation, showing himself not as a hero but a beast.

- In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul called the Antichrist "the man of sin" (v. 3), "the lawless one" (vv. 8-9), and "the son of perdition" (v. 3).

World Dominance (vv. 1-2)

- Daniel prophesied that the Antichrist will pull the world's political leaders together into one world-governing empire (see Daniel 7).
- He will rise from the sea, or the nations (see Isaiah 17; Revelation 17)---possibly from the Mediterranean region.
- He will promote globalism: a global network of political alliances with a single law and economy.

Wonder (v. 3)

- The number associated with the Antichrist is 666 (see Revelation 13:18). There is much speculation as to what the number means.
- The Antichrist will be fully possessed and led by Satan, which will be a marvel in many people's eyes. They will admire and wonder at his ability and be mesmerized by his talent.
- Wonder is the first step toward worship; many will see him as a political savior, the bringer of peace in the Middle East and ultimately the world.

Worship (vv. 4, 8)

- People's fascination with the Antichrist will turn to adoration.
- In 2 Thessalonians 2:4, Paul said the Antichrist will "oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God" (NIV).
- The prefix *anti* means *against*, but it also means *instead of*.
- The Antichrist will be a counterfeit Christ, part of an illegitimate and unholy trinity: Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet.

Words (vv. 5-6)

- The Antichrist will have the ability to sway people with his words. He will be a master speaker and politician, exuding self-confidence.
- Daniel 7:8 describes him as "a mouth speaking pompous words."
- Throughout the centuries, almost all dictators rose to power through the persuasive use of words.

War (vv. 7-10)

- Once the Antichrist succeeds in dominating the world, he will begin another holocaust as he seeks to eradicate the Jewish people and new believers (tribulation saints: those saved after the rapture).
- Daniel 7:25 states that he "shall persecute the saints of the Most High."
- The Hebrew word for *persecute* means *to wear out a garment*. The Antichrist will continually harass God's people physically, legally, and spiritually.

Practice

Connect Up: Pastor Skip noted that the first three and a half years of the Antichrist's reign will be peaceful, but the last three and a half years will bring about an abomination during which two-thirds of the Jewish people will die (see Zechariah 13:8-9). Why will God allow such desecration on the earth? How does this narrative show the delicate balance between God's control and God's judgment?

Connect In: As Pastor Skip noted, the most interesting man in the world is also the most deceptive. Read Matthew 24. How can the church protect itself from deception?

Connect Out: There are stark differences between the Antichrist and Jesus Christ:

- Antichrist is called the *man of sin*; Jesus is the *Sinless Man*.
- Antichrist is the *idol shepherd*; Jesus is the *Good Shepherd*.
- Antichrist is pictured as a *beast*; Jesus is the *Lamb*.
- Antichrist's false death will be meant to deceive; Jesus' death was meant to save.

How can we use the coming world reality to partner with the Holy Spirit in proclaiming the good news, seeing many saved? Pray for friends and family who are not yet Christians.

DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
 - A. There is coming to this world someone whom the world will designate as the most interesting man in the world
 - B. He will be charismatic, dynamic, charming, compelling, and full of himself
 - C. He will have his own number (see Revelation 13:18)
 1. The number of man: 666
 2. Mankind was created on the sixth day of creation (see Genesis 1:26-31)
 3. Bondmen were set free after six years of slavery
 - D. This world ruler is typically known as the Antichrist
 1. The name *Antichrist* first appears in 1 John 2:18
 2. He is called many other names in Scripture
 - a. The man of sin (see 2 Thessalonians 2:3)
 - b. The lawless one (see 2 Thessalonians 2:8-9)
 - c. The beast (see Revelation 13)
 - d. The little horn (see Daniel 7:8; 8:9-12)
 - e. The prince who is to come (see Daniel 9:26)
 - f. The willful king (see Daniel 11:36)
 - g. The idol shepherd (see Zechariah 11:17, KJV)
 - E. The world's view of the Antichrist
 1. Many people do not believe the Antichrist exists
 2. Others think he will be someone dark and sinister due to how he is portrayed in many Hollywood films
 - F. In reality, the Antichrist will come on the scene as someone who is poised, polished, and perfect
 - G. A large amount of Scripture predicts the arrival of the Antichrist

1. Old Testament prophets
 2. New Testament apostles
 3. Jesus Christ
- H. Many people throughout history have attempted to guess who he will be
1. Caligula the emperor: erected a statue of himself in the Jerusalem temple in AD 37
 2. Caesar Nero
 - a. Persecuted Christians
 - b. Given the designation *the beast* by the early church
 3. Many others throughout history, including several United States presidents, many popes, and even the Internet
- II. Wickedness (v. 1)
- A. A beast
 1. *Thérion* = a wild beast
 2. Out of the sea
 3. John did not receive a dictation; he saw a vision
 - B. The symbols point to realities: the beast represents a beast-like person
 - C. Vicious and savage
 1. Man of sin and son of perdition (see 2 Thessalonians 2:3)
 2. The lawless one (see 2 Thessalonians 2:8-9)
 - D. He will not initially appear like a beast
 1. He will come as a peacemaker (see Revelation 6:2)
 2. Though he will begin very wonderfully, he will have a seven-year plan that will end very wickedly
- III. World Dominance (vv. 1-2)
- A. In this vision, John saw the beast in a similar way Daniel the prophet did (see Daniel 7:3-8)
 1. Daniel's vision was of a succession of world-governing empires that would come to the earth from his time forward
 2. First beast
 - a. A lion with the wings of an eagle
 - b. The nation and kingdom of Babylon
 - c. Fierce and ferocious like a lion
 3. Second beast
 - a. A bear with three ribs in its mouth
 - b. The Medo-Persian Empire
 - c. Slow, but sure and strong
 4. Third beast
 - a. A leopard with four wings that moves swiftly across the earth
 - b. The Grecian Empire
 - c. Alexander the Great moved very swiftly and took over the world at a very young age
 5. Fourth beast
 - a. A vicious and ferocious beast
 - b. Has ten horns
 - B. John saw something similar, but in reverse, and all wrapped up in one creature—in one kingdom

1. Has all the elements and characteristics of the others, but is unified in a more dreadful power
 2. A final, world-governing empire
 - C. John saw the beast rise from the sea
 1. The sea is emblematic of nations
 2. A picture of humanity, especially Gentile nations (see Isaiah 17:12; 57:20; Revelation 17:15)
 3. Perhaps the Mediterranean Sea
 - D. The beast will form a global confederacy (see Daniel 7:23-24)
 1. Globalism has been the political buzzword in recent years
 2. Democratic World Federalists
 - a. Says the United Nations, League of Nations, and NATO have all failed to prevent major wars in the world
 - b. The only way to do that is by a global government with a global constitution, world parliament, world law, and world economy
 3. The Vatican started pushing the idea of globalism, a global economy, and global leadership in 2011
- IV. Wonder (v. 3)
- A. This beastly ruler is going to be Satan's masterpiece
 1. Satan's perfect man
 2. An ideal specimen
 - B. He will get his power from Satan (see Revelation 12:3-17)
 - C. One of his heads will be mortally wounded and then healed
 1. Some believe this is a reference to a revived Roman Empire
 - a. There have been six world-governing empires throughout history
 - I. Egyptian
 - II. Assyrian
 - III. Babylonian
 - IV. Medo-Persian
 - V. Greek
 - VI. Roman
 - b. The seventh head could refer to the resurrection of the dead Roman Empire
 2. Others believe the Antichrist will receive a head wound and will be able to stage some sort of a resurrection
 - a. This would cause wonder and marvel
 - b. *Thaumazó* = to marvel, wonder
 - c. This could be what Jesus meant when He said another would come that the world would receive instead of Him (see John 5:43)
 - D. The world will wonder at his rise to power
 1. Mental agility
 2. Ability to solve complex problems and issues
 - E. Wonder is always the first step toward worship
- V. Worship (vv. 4, 8)
- A. This is what Satan has wanted all along
 1. He was an angelic being created by God
 2. In the hierarchy of heaven, Lucifer was submissive to God

3. He was not content and was cast out of heaven (see Isaiah 14:12-14)
 - B. He will claim to be God (see Thessalonians 2:3-4)
 1. One definition of *anti* is *instead of*
 2. The Antichrist will want to be Christ instead of Christ
 3. He will be the counterfeit
 4. There will be an unholy, illegitimate Trinity of Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet
 - C. "He will be Satan's masterpiece of deception, the world's false messiah. With boundless enthusiasm the masses will follow him and readily enthrone him in their hearts as this world's savior and god" —John Phillips
- VI. Words (vv. 5-6)
- A. This ruler will have the ability to sway people with his words
 1. In Daniel 7, he is described four times as having a mouth speaking "pompous words" (vv. 8, 11, 20, 25)
 2. Almost all dictators in world history have risen to power at least in part by their ability to use persuasive speech to sway crowds
 3. Adolf Hitler
 - B. The Antichrist will be able to solve the problem between the Jewish and Arab world
 - C. He will appear to be the solution to all the world's problems—at first
- VII. War (vv. 7-10)
- A. Once this ruler succeeds in influence and domination, a holocaust will break out
 1. This will take place right in the middle of a seven-year tribulation
 2. This will begin the great tribulation
 3. Jesus and Daniel called this the *abomination of desolation* (see Daniel 11:31; 12:11; Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14)
 - B. The Antichrist will persecute the saints
 1. Daniel 7:25: the Hebrew word *bela* means *to wear away or out*
 2. Physical harassment, legal injustice, seizure of property, blatant punishment
 - a. Will require everyone to take a mark for commercial purposes (see Revelation 13:16-18)
 - b. Anyone who does not take the mark will be branded a revolutionary
- VIII. Closing
- A. Timeline
 1. The first three and a half years will be peaceful
 2. At the midpoint of the seven years, the abomination of desolation will come
 - a. A peace treaty that he will have signed with the Jews will be broken (see Daniel 9:27)
 - b. He will immediately kill two-thirds of all Jews (see Zechariah 13:8-9)
 - c. He will conquer the city of Jerusalem (see Zechariah 14:2)
 3. He will then go on a rampage to kill believers around the world (see Revelation 13:7)
 - a. Jesus predicted this (see Matthew 24:9)
 - b. But Jesus said He would protect the church (see Matthew 16:18)
 - I. This group of people are not the church
 - II. The church will have already been raptured
 - III. This group of people are the tribulation saints: people who will come to faith during the tribulation period

- B. Antichrist versus Jesus Christ
 - 1. We are not called to identify the Antichrist; we are called to look to the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ
 - 2. The Antichrist
 - a. Man of sin
 - b. The idol shepherd
 - c. A beast
 - d. His death is meant to deceive the world
 - 3. Jesus Christ
 - a. Sinless Man
 - b. The Good Shepherd
 - c. A Lamb
 - d. His death was meant to save the world
- C. The most interesting man in the world is the most insidious man in the world
- D. The world is already being deceived
 - 1. Everything we traditionally called right is now called wrong and everything we traditionally called wrong is now right
 - 2. Deception is on the move and will increase in epic proportions

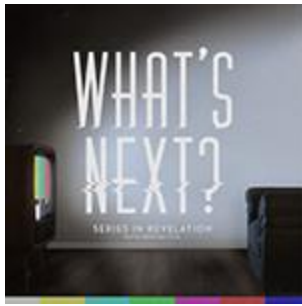
Figures referenced: Alexander the Great, Caligula, Caesar Nero, Adolf Hitler, John Phillips

Greek/Hebrew words: *bela, thaumazó, thérion*

Cross references: Genesis 1:26-31; Isaiah 14:12-14; 17:12; 57:20; Daniel 7:3-8, 11, 20, 23-25; 8:9-12; 9:26-27; 11:31, 36; 12:11; Zechariah 11:17; 13:8-9; 14:2; Matthew 16:18; 24:9, 15; Mark 13:14; John 5:43; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 8-9; 1 John 2:18; Revelation 6:2; 12:3-17; 13:16-18; 17:15

Topic: Antichrist

Keywords: 666, Antichrist, beast, little horn, empire, Democratic World Federalists, globalism, resurrection, worship, counterfeit, Satan, tribulation, great tribulation, abomination of desolation, mark of the beast, rapture, tribulation saints, end times



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	The Coming Deception
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 13:11-18
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4061

MESSAGE SUMMARY

We know for sure that a ruler who will have international authority is coming to the earth. We also know that he will not be alone. There will come a religious deceiver who will aid and abet this global leader. Today, we consider the end-time teaching of the world's fastest-growing religion to see if there is an interface with the Bible's predictions about *what's next*.

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: April 10, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "The Coming Deception"

Text: Revelation 13:11-18

Path

We know for sure that a popular but wicked ruler who will have international authority is coming. We also know that he will not be alone; a religious deceiver will aid and abet this global leader. Pastor Skip considers the end-time teaching of the world's fastest-growing religion to see if there is an interface with the Bible's predictions about *what's next*:

- I. What We Know (vv. 11-18)
- II. What We're Told (assorted writings)
- III. What We Hope (v. 8)

Points

What We Know (vv. 11-18)

- There will be strong delusion during the last days, caused by the Antichrist (see vv. 1-10) and the False Prophet (see vv. 11-18).
- The Antichrist will be known by his wickedness, world dominance, wonder, worship, and war (see Revelation 7-11; Daniel 9).
- The False Prophet will work for the Antichrist, cultivating a global religion and economy. His authority will be spiritual—not political—and his intent will be to deceive (see v. 14).
- His primary incentive to encourage people to worship the Antichrist will be economic (see vv. 16-17), supported by a system of global government.
- Many scholars believe that the Antichrist's power will be seated in a revival of the Roman Empire, specifically in the western European nations that once comprised the Western Empire.

- The Eastern Roman Empire, seated in Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul), survived another 1,000 years after the fall of the West. Sixty percent of the old Eastern Empire is now inhabited by Muslims.
- **Probe: Discuss how the 1.8 billion Muslims in the world might fit into future prophecy (see Daniel 7:8-11; 7:24-27; 9:24-27).**

What We're Told (assorted writings)

- Muslims have an eschatology (a view of the end times) based on two writings: the Qur'an and the Sunna (words and works of Muhammad).
- Islamic theology says there will be three signs of the end times:
 - First sign: the Mahdi will come (the Muslim messiah, also known as the Awaited Savior, Lord of the Age, and the Twelfth Imam). He will establish a seven-year treaty with Israel and bring global peace. Once the Mahdi comes, people will have two options: convert to Islam or die.
 - Second sign: Jesus (known to Muslims as the human prophet Isa al-Masih) will follow. Muslims teach that Jesus will come back and say that Allah is the true God, and Muhammad is his prophet. In short, Jesus will come back as a radical Muslim.
 - Third sign: the Dajjal—the Muslim antichrist—will come as a false miracle worker, claiming to be Jesus. The Dajjal will attempt to stop the Mahdi and Isa al-Masih.
- **Probe: Take a moment to discuss the differences between the Bible's true Christ and Muslims' understanding of Christ (see Daniel 7). The Bible's Antichrist is Islam's savior, the Bible's False Prophet is Islam's Jesus, and the Bible's Christ is Islam's antichrist.**

What We Hope (v. 8)

- Revelation 13:8 implies that during the tribulation, some will resist the Antichrist, finding hope in the true Christ, Jesus.
- Muslims live without assurance of salvation: Allah can remove his blessing at any time, and becoming a martyr is the only guarantee of paradise. But Christ brings lasting forgiveness for those who believe; it's His work on the cross, not ours, that saves us (see Ephesians 2:8-9).
- **Probe: Millions of Muslims are converting to Christ after discovering the truth of Islam's teachings and contrasting it with Christ's forgiveness. This is the best hope to thwart radical Islam. Pray for the newly converted and those needing miraculous intervention.**

Practice

Connect Up: How can understanding the end times draw you close to God? Why is it important to have a general understanding of eschatology? Take time to learn a general timeline that includes the rapture, the tribulation, the battle of Armageddon, the millennial kingdom, and the new heaven and new earth.

Connect In: Knowing that Christians live with the assurance of heaven—that we'll be with one another throughout eternity—how should we treat one another now? How do we balance the importance of unity and compassion with regard for biblical truth?

Connect Out: Though the end times will unfold as God intends, how can we partner with the Holy

Spirit in reaching out to Muslims? Here are good starting points: prayer, loving conduct, hospitality, listening, answering questions, avoiding argument, and simply and openly presenting the gospel (<http://jesustomuslims.org/content/bridge-points-reaching-muslims>). Remember who the real Enemy is: Satan.

OUTLINE

- I. What We Know (vv. 11-18)

- II. What We're Told (assorted writings)

- III. What We Hope (v. 8)



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	The Return
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 19:11-21
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4063

MESSAGE SUMMARY

We now come to the culmination of all redemptive history—the second coming of Jesus Christ. After history runs its sinister course, after the final period of man's rebellion, Satan's retaliation, and God's judgment, the end of the world will come. But the end of this world will actually be the beginning of a new one. The event that hinges these together is the future coming of Christ to the earth. Let's consider five aspects of His return, spoken of here and throughout Scripture.

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: April 17, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "The Return"

Text: Revelation 19:11-21

Path

We now come to the culmination of all redemptive history—the second coming of Jesus Christ. After history runs its sinister course—after the final period of man's rebellion, Satan's retaliation, and God's judgment—the end of the world will come. But the end of this world will actually be the beginning of a new one. As Pastor Skip showed us, the event that fuses these together is the return of Christ to the earth:

- I. His Coming Is Anticipated by Prophecy (v. 10)
- II. His Coming Will Interrupt Hostility (vv. 11-21)
- III. His Coming Will Be Seen Universally (vv. 11a, 17a, 19a)
- IV. His Coming Results in Humility (vv. 11, 16)
- V. His Coming Ushers in Tranquility (vv. 15-16)

Points

His Coming Is Anticipated by Prophecy (v. 10)

- Christ's second coming is mentioned 1,845 times in the Bible: 1,527 in the Old Testament and 318 in the New Testament.
- The second coming will be the culmination of redemptive history—what God's people have been waiting for. Jesus is the star on the center stage of biblical prophecy.
- The second coming will fulfill the promise of:
 - Satan's defeat: his head will be crushed (see Genesis 3:15).

- The tribe of Judah's restoration (see Genesis 49:8-12)
- The culmination of the kingdom:
 - Son of David (see 2 Samuel 7)
 - Future kingdom (see Daniel 2:35-45)
 - Awaited rule: "Your kingdom come" (Matthew 6:10)
- The Messiah's birth, life, and death: "unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given" (Isaiah 9:6; see also Isaiah 53).
- Judgment: "the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 24:30).

His Coming Will Interrupt Hostility (vv. 11-21)

- At the second coming, Christ will come as a conqueror with crowns.
 - During His time on earth, Jesus viewed people with eyes of compassion; at the second coming, He will have eyes "like a flame of fire" (v. 12).
 - At His crucifixion, Jesus had a crown of thorns on His head; when He returns, He will come with many crowns of authority.
 - Jesus told Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36); Revelation shows us that Jesus will return with armies, as judge and conquering King.
 - Now, we think of Christ's clothes stained with His own blood; when He returns, Jesus' robe will be dipped in the blood of His enemies.

His Coming Will Be Seen Universally (vv. 11a, 17a, 19a)

- Jesus ascended physically, visibly, and at the Mount of Olives (see Acts 1:11); His return will be the same.
- "Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him" (Revelation 1:7).

His Coming Results in Humility (vv. 11, 16)

- There are 700 names given to Jesus in the Bible—evidence of His greatness and incomprehensibility.
- In this text, we find:
 - Faithful and True: Jesus keeps His promises.
 - A name no one knows except Himself: no one has the right to name Him and usurp His authority.
 - King of Kings and Lord of Lords: His identity will be realized as He comes and "all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him" (Revelation 1:7).

His Coming Ushers in Tranquility (vv. 15-16)

- Jesus Christ will ride a white horse of victory, ruling and reigning over His kingdom.
- The purpose of prophecy isn't to cause fear but to create faith.

Practice

Connect Up: Discuss the importance of Christ's return, both biblically and historically. Why is it considered an essential belief for biblical Christianity and a proper understanding of God?

Connect In: Knowing that Christ will return physically to earth to rule and reign, what does this say about God's created world? As saved individuals in God's kingdom, how are we to treat God's creation as we wait for the consummation of the kingdom?

Connect Out: Using the acronym KING as a model, discuss ways in which you can reach out to people who don't know Christ:

- **Keep it real:** telling others about Jesus doesn't have to be forced; be yourself, and keep the message real and relevant.
- **Invite people to church:** even if you have trouble articulating the gospel, you can simply ask a person to join you for a service.
- **Notice the details:** if someone is in need, show them the love of Christ by helping; be practical (see James 2:15-17; 1 John 3:17).
- **Give them answers to their questions:** study the Bible and search for biblical answers that can help settle the doubts and fears of inquiring minds.

OUTLINE

- I. His Coming Is Anticipated by Prophecy (v. 10)
- II. His Coming Will Interrupt Hostility (vv. 11-21)
- III. His Coming Will Be Seen Universally (vv. 11a, 17a, 19a)
- IV. His Coming Results in Humility (vv. 11, 16)
- V. His Coming Ushers in Tranquility (vv. 15-16)



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	Heaven on Earth
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 20: 1-6
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4065

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Mankind long ago gave up on the idea of a future utopia. The thought of perpetual peace and undisturbed harmony became the stuff of fairy tales. But that is precisely what God promised He will bring to this earth one day. Though Satan has exercised a temporary authority over God's creation for several millennia, the story isn't over yet. Jesus will return to rule for a thousand years. And it won't just be a *spiritual kingdom* in the *hearts* of His followers. This will be a literal dominion over a renewed earth. Let's explore this thousand-year phase of your eternal future.

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: April 24, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "Heaven on Earth"

Text: Revelation 20:1-6

Path

Though Satan has exercised a temporary authority over God's creation for several millennia, the story isn't over yet; Jesus will return to rule for a thousand years. And it won't just be a *spiritual kingdom* in the *hearts* of His followers. This will be a literal dominion over a renewed earth. Pastor Skip explored this thousand-year phase of our eternal future:

- I. The Extent of It (vv. 1-6)
- II. The Explanation of It (v. 2)
 - A. Premillennial View
 - B. Postmillennial View
 - C. Amillennial View
- III. The Essentiality of It (v. 3)

Three Reasons the Millennium Is Necessary

Points

The Extent of It (vv. 1-6)

- Both the Old and New Testament state the precise amount of time of the millennium: 1,000 years.
- The millennium will begin with an incarceration: an angel bearing a key of God's authority will seize Satan and bind him for 1,000 years.

- The millennium will continue with administration: Jesus will set up His kingdom on earth and give certain groups authority to rule:
 - Tribulation saints (see v. 4)
 - Old Testament saints (see Daniel 12:13; Jeremiah 30:9)
 - Twelve Apostles (see Matthew 19:28)
 - New Testament saints (see I Corinthians 6:2-4; Revelation 5:9-10)
- Dallas Willard said, "Perhaps it would be a good exercise for each of us to ask ourselves: Really, how many cities could I now govern under God? If, for example, Baltimore or Liverpool were turned over to me, with power to do what I want with it, how would things turn out? An honest answer to this question might do much to prepare us for our eternal future in this universe."

The Explanation of It (v. 2)

- Three views of the kingdom:
 - Premillennial: Jesus will return before the millennium and then rule physically from earth. This was the dominant view of the early church and is the most compelling and accurate interpretation.
 - Postmillennial: Jesus will come after a golden age—the Christianization of the world, which Christians will present to Christ. This view came to prominence after the Enlightenment and through the Industrial Revolution. It viewed civilization as continually improving, but it lost steam after the twentieth century was filled with war and genocide. It has made recent comebacks in the forms of Liberation, Kingdom, and Dominion theologies.
 - Amillennial: there is no literal 1,000 years, and the book of Revelation is figurative and spiritual. This view says that the church age we live in now—the age after Christ's resurrection and ascension—is, in fact, the kingdom age.
- What will the kingdom be like? Among other things, we will see:
 - The animal kingdom tamed (see Isaiah 11:6-8)
 - A lush biosphere (see Isaiah 35:1-2, 6-7)
 - Disabilities healed (see Isaiah 35:5-6)
 - Great longevity of life (see Isaiah 65:20-22)

The Essentiality of It (v. 3)

- The millennium is essential for three key reasons:
 - To redeem creation from judgment—to release us from the curse of Genesis 3:15. It's God's answer to the prayer, "Your kingdom come" (Matthew 6:10; see also Luke 11:2).
 - To realize God's promises to Israel, especially about David's throne (see 2 Samuel 7; Psalm 89)
 - To reveal man's true nature—even under perfect conditions, those born after the kingdom is set up will sin, showing once and for all that sinful man is in need of a Savior

Practice

Connect Up: Read Luke 19:11-27. How does God expect you to serve Him in this life? How will that be rewarded in the kingdom? Because Christians will reign with Christ, how are you preparing now for

life during the millennium?

Connect In: Pastor Skip quoted C.S. Lewis: "If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world." Discuss how you think living under Christ's direct rule in the kingdom will be more satisfying than living in our current world.

Connect Out: Pastor Skip ended this teaching with two questions: He asked believers, "Are you seeking the kingdom?" Then he asked unbelievers, "Will you be part of God's kingdom?" Take time to pray about greater involvement in God's kingdom and how you can help others find a place within it. All of this requires service and evangelism. In what ways can you better serve and reach out for the cause of Christ?

OUTLINE

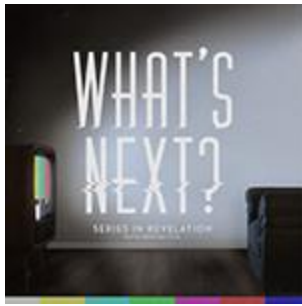
- I. The Extent of It (vv. 1-6)

- II. The Explanation of It (v. 2)
 - A. Premillennial View

 - B. Postmillennial View

 - C. Amillennial View

- III. The Essentiality of It (v. 3)
 - Three Reasons the Millennium Is Necessary



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	What's Next...for Everyone!
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 20:4-7; Revelation 20:11-15
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4073

MESSAGE SUMMARY

My mom used to wake me up early every morning with her sweet voice saying, "Rise and shine!" It took a few times, but I eventually got up out of bed. Jesus too will call everyone who has died to "Rise up!" But not everyone will rise up to shine; some will rise up to suffer. Let's consider three inevitable and unalterable truths about the future for all of us: *We will all live, we will all die, and we will all rise again to live forever.... But where and how?*

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: May 22, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "What's Next...for Everyone!"

Text: Revelation 20:4-7, 11-15

Path

Pastor Skip's mom used to wake him up early every morning saying, "Rise and shine!" It took a few times, but he eventually got up out of bed. Jesus too will call everyone who has died to "Rise up!" But not everyone will rise up to shine; some will rise up to suffer. In Pastor Skip's path through the text, he considered three inevitable and unalterable truths about the future: *We will all live, we will all die, and we will all rise again to live forever.*

- I. Everyone Lives
- II. Everyone Dies
- III. Everyone Rises

Points

Everyone Lives

- It's a basic truth that everyone lives. Revelation 20 shows two related scenes with two different groups that will take place 1,000 years apart. These two groups will have lived different lives and have different resurrections (see v. 6):
 - One group will be raised after having been martyred during the tribulation. They will live and reign with Christ for 1,000 years in the millennial kingdom (see v. 4).
 - The other group consists of unbelievers who have died throughout history (see vv. 5, 12) and will be raised after the millennial kingdom to face judgment.

- Both groups will have lived, died, and been raised---one to heaven and the other to hell, or the second death (see v. 14).
- The Bible uses three different words for *life*:
 - *Bios*---life on the physical plane, focused on external things
 - *Psuché*---the inner, mental and emotional life; our personality
 - *Zóé*---spiritual, eternal life; a quality of life that begins on earth and continues in eternity--a born-again life; used 143 times in the New Testament
- **Probe: What does a zóé life look like on earth (see Galatians 5:22-23)?**

Everyone Dies

- Death is mentioned 394 times in the Bible. With the exception of a few people (e.g., Enoch and Elijah), every human will die.
- Death gets worse for people who are unprepared to meet God; it leads to eternal separation from God and eternal punishment in the lake of fire (see vv. 14-15).
- Everyone dies and everyone lives forever. The question is, *where* will you live forever?
- **Probe: What do you think heaven will be like? Read Revelation 22 to see some of the interesting elements concerning its construction.**

Everyone Rises

- Upon death, the body decays but the soul lives on in a conscious state. One day, the soul and body will be reunited for eternal life (see John 5:28-29).
- There are two resurrections:
 - The souls of believers---the resurrection to life (see vv. 4-7)
 - The souls of unbelievers---the resurrection of condemnation (see vv. 11-15); it will be a sobering courtroom scene with a judgment and no appeal.
- Why do we need resurrected bodies in eternity?
 - To reverse the effects of original sin
 - The restored physical earth and millennial reign will require new bodies.
 - The new heaven and earth will require resurrected biological bodies to enjoy eternal life; the same is true for those enduring eternal punishment.
- Every religion in the world besides Christianity is based on human achievement: our merits and efforts to be good enough. Those are the works by which unbelievers will be judged (see v. 12).
- The Book of Life is based on divine accomplishment---the merit of Christ's finished sacrifice. It lists the names of those who truly believe (see v. 12).

Practice

Connect Up: How does the reality of hell demonstrate God's ultimate justice? As one theologian said, "Hell is about God keeping His word. That God sends the wicked to hell shows God to be faithful and just. If God does not enforce the terms He has set, He does not keep His word and He is unfaithful.... In fact, if there is no hell, we might conclude that the righteous were wrong for having trusted God." fn. 1

Connect In: In heaven, we will live eternally with our brothers and sisters in Christ. How should this affect our behavior toward one another now? (See John 13:34; Romans 12:10; 1 Corinthians 1:10;

Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 4:2-3; Colossians 3:16.)

Connect Out: This teaching is both spectacular for those who believe and sobering for those who don't. How should a biblical understanding of heaven and hell influence our outreach to the world? At Calvary, we desire to "extend hope to a hurting world by proclaiming the gospel and demonstrating Christ's love." How are you extending hope to the hurting?

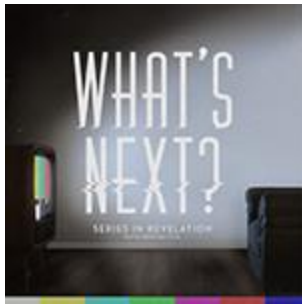
fn. 1 James Hamilton, "How Does Hell Glorify God?" 9 Marks, August 20, 2010, <https://9marks.org/article/how-does-hell-glorify-god/>.

OUTLINE

- I. Everyone Lives

- II. Everyone Dies

- III. Everyone Rises



SERIES:	What's Next?
MESSAGE:	Surprising Facts about Your Eternal Home
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Revelation 21-22
URL:	http://SkipHeitzig.com/4077

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Through the years, I have observed that most people (even Christians) have ideas about what heaven will be like that are vastly different from how Scripture describes heaven. In this series, we have followed the chronological flow of the book of Revelation from the rapture through the tribulation, from the second coming to the millennial kingdom. We turn now to what the Bible describes as the final phase of heaven—the eternal state. Here are a few things that might further surprise you about your future home:

STUDY GUIDE

Connect Group Recap: June 5, 2016

Speaker: Skip Heitzig

Teaching: "Surprising Facts about Your Eternal Home"

Text: Revelation 21-22

Path

Most people, even believers, have misconceptions about what heaven will be like. In the What's Next? series, Pastor Skip has followed the flow of Revelation from the rapture through the tribulation, from the second coming to the millennial kingdom. In this final installment, he shared some surprising biblical facts about our future home, showing us that heaven is truly the final frontier.

It Will Require Destruction

- I. It Will Be a Fresh Design
- II. It Won't Have an Ocean
- III. It Will Have a Capital City
- IV. It Will Feel Unfamiliar
- V. Not Everyone Will Be There

Points

It Will Require Destruction (Revelation 21:1)

- At this point in Scripture, many things have happened: the rapture, the tribulation, and Jesus' second coming and millennial reign. Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet have all been sent to their eternal punishment.

- John saw "a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away" (v. 1). This includes the restored earth of the millennial kingdom.
- Jesus holds all things together (see Colossians 1:17), and the Bible indicates that one day, He will let go and it will all come apart.
- Probe: Read 2 Peter 3:10-11. Since everything's going to burn, how should we conduct ourselves as believers?

It Will Be a Fresh Design (Revelation 21:5)

- In verse 5, *new* means something completely different from what has gone before—something new in quality, not just in chronology. The new heaven and earth will be different from the old ones.
- Probe: God created the wonders of this world in six days; imagine what He can do with a couple thousand years!

It Won't Have an Ocean (Revelation 21:1; 22:1)

- There will be no sea, sun, or moon (see Revelation 21:1, 23). But we won't care because God will be there, and it will be wonderful.
- There will be water (see Revelation 22:1), but the point is that the new heaven and new earth won't operate on the same principles as ours: we won't be water-based creatures living in a water-based ecology anymore.
- Probe: No oceans also means no separation among peoples. How are you building community now?

It Will Have a Capital City (Revelation 21:2-3)

- The new earth will have a headquarters: New Jerusalem, a cube-shaped city roughly the size of the moon, possibly hovering above the earth or orbiting it.
- It will be 1,500 miles cubed; 1,500 miles is the distance from Albuquerque to Spokane.
- The city will be the new tabernacle (see v. 3). In the old tabernacle, the innermost room—the Holy of Holies—was also a cube (15 feet cubed).
- Probe: Read John 20:19-21, 26-27; Mark 16:12; Luke 24:36, 43. Think of how Jesus' glorified body functioned. What might our lives in New Jerusalem be like?

It Will Feel Unfamiliar (Revelation 21:4-6)

- Heaven is described in negative terms—by what it's *not*—because we can hardly imagine what it will be like.
- There will be no more tears, death, sorrow, crying, or pain. No death means none of the conditions that bring death will exist; therefore, there won't be a need for doctors, hospitals, or funerals. You will have a perfect, glorified body that will not age or wear out.
- Probe: Which of these missing things will you be the happiest about? Why?

Not Everyone Will Be There (Revelation 21:4, 24, 27)

- There will be three surprises in heaven: who is there, who isn't there, and that *you're* there.

- How do you become one who overcomes (see v. 7)? One word: faith.
- Probe: Take hope: many who have committed the sins listed in Revelation 21:8 will be in heaven because they came to Christ, repented, and had their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life (see v. 27).

Practice

Connect Up: Heaven will be God continually blowing your mind with His majesty, glory, power, and love. Paul said God's intent is that "in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:7).

Connect In: Read Hebrews 6:10; Galatians 6:10; Romans 12:9-13. Do you know someone who is dealing with chronic pain or sorrow? How can you pray for them, reach out to them, and serve them?

Connect Out: Knowing the common and widespread misconceptions people have about heaven, what can you do to surprise them with these facts about heaven? Pray for an opportunity to share not just the glory and wonders of God's eternal state, but the forgiveness available in Christ that gains them entrance—that gets their name written in the Book of Life.

OUTLINE

I. It Will Require Destruction

II. It Will Be a Fresh Design

III. It Won't Have an Ocean

IV. It Will Have a Capital City

V. It Will Feel Unfamiliar

VI. Not Everyone Will Be There

