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Ransom paid: God's glorious plan of redemption

Good morning, Bridge family.

Welcome back to our *Ransom Paid* series.

Over the past few weeks, we've been walking through the Bible—tracing God's promise to send a Messiah.

From **Genesis to Malachi**, we saw the promise made.

Then in the New Testament—we saw that promise fulfilled.

Jesus paid the ransom—in **full**.

And after the Gospels, the good news began to spread...

A kingdom was born.

A kingdom made up of people like us—**saved, sealed, and sent**.

And that's where we are now.

We're in the kingdom-building stage—

Making disciples.

Living on mission.

Serving King Jesus...

Until He comes back.

Title slide: The Triumph of Jesus and the End of All Things

And that's what today is all about—

What happens when Jesus returns?

Because church—**He is coming back**.

He promised in ([John 14:3](#)) that he would.

So grab your Bible and turn with me to the book of Revelation.

It's the last book in the New Testament.

The final words of Scripture.

Now let me say this before we dive in—

Revelation is the **most controversial, most misunderstood, most explosive** book in the Bible.

And that's not meant to scare you...

Or confuse you...

Or send you down a YouTube rabbit hole.

Through this book God intends to bless us.

For it says [Revelation 1:3](#):

"Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear the words of this prophecy and keep what is written in it, because the time is near."

It goes w/out saying—we're not unpacking every seal, every trumpet, or every symbol today.

We're doing a **survey**.

A big-picture look at the whole book—

To see the full arc of what God wants us to know.

And here's my prayer:

That you leave here in **awe** of Jesus.

That you walk out **convinced**—
Even when the world looks chaotic...

Christ reigns.
And He's coming soon.

Let's dive in. I divided the text into sections, so that it would be easier for you to follow along and go back and study for yourselves. Section...

I. The Outline of Revelation (1:19)

God gives us the structure of the entire book in a single verse.

Jesus says to John:

"Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is, and what will take place after this."

What you have seen – Chapter 1: the glorified, risen Christ.

What is – Chapters 2–3: the seven letters to real churches.

What will take place after this – Chapters 4–22: the future unfolding of God's redemptive plan.

This book is heaven's view of history, judgment, and victory. And Jesus is the hero of it all.

II. A Glimpse into Heaven (Ch. 4–5)

In **chapter 4**, John is caught up into the throne room of heaven.

He sees sights beyond imagination—creatures covered in eyes, thunder and lightning, a sea of glass.
And at the center of it all—God is on the throne.

Then in chapter 5, the scene shifts.

God holds a scroll—His plan for justice and redemption—but no one is worthy to open it.

John begins to weep... until an elder says, *"Weep no more. The Lion of Judah has conquered."*

But when John looks up, he doesn't see a lion—he sees a Lamb who was slain.

Jesus.

The only one worthy to open the scroll and finish the story.

This moment makes it clear:

There is no hope, no justice, no salvation apart from Jesus.

Next comes...

III. The Judgments of God (Ch. 6–16)

Now this next section—

It's *sobering*.

And to be honest...

It's meant to be.

This is **God's righteous anger**—

poured out with **purpose**...

and **precision**.

These chapters remind us—Judgment is not random.

It's not chaotic.

It's not God losing control.

It's the **holy, measured** response

of a God who has patiently endured our sin

long enough.

He is gracious—yes.

But hear me—

He will not be mocked.

And He will not let evil go unpunished

forever.

God's judgment comes in **three escalating waves**:

The **Seal Judgments**...

The **Trumpet Judgments**...

And the **Bowl Judgments**.

And with each wave—

the intensity builds.

Like **contractions before birth**—

they're **painful**,

they're **deliberate**,

and they're **leading somewhere**.

Let's walk through each one.

A. Seal Judgments (Ch. 6–7)

It all starts in **chapter 6**, when Jesus—the Lamb who was slain—begins opening the scroll from **chapter 5**.

This scroll holds God's plan to bring history to its end.

Each seal reveals another layer.

The **first seal** unleashes a rider on a **white horse**—This is not **peace**.

It looks peaceful, but it's setting the stage for war.

The **second seal** brings a **red horse**—war and bloodshed.

The **third seal** releases a **black horse**—economic collapse and famine.

The **fourth seal** is a **pale horse**—death itself, sweeping the earth.

This isn't poetic imagery.

It's **real**.

It's **terrifying**.

When Jesus opens the scroll, **judgment begins**.

Then the **fifth seal**.

Under the altar in heaven are the souls of those killed for following Jesus.

They cry out:

“How long, O Lord, until you avenge our blood?”(6:10)

These are **real people** who died for the gospel. People like Stephen who was stoned for the gospel.

Their cry is sincere.

God sees them—**He has not forgotten** them.

The **sixth seal** shakes the universe.

Earthquakes.

The sun turns black.

The moon becomes blood.

Stars fall.

Creation unravels.

But before the **seventh seal**—we pause.

Chapter 7 is a moment of mercy and mission.

God seals **144,000 Jews**—12,000 from each tribe—to be His witnesses.

And through them, a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language comes to faith.

Up to this point, many Jews had not confessed Jesus as Messiah.

But even in judgment—**God is still saving.**

After the seventh seal is opened, it sets off the next wave—the Trumpet Judgments. And they're brutal.

B. The Trumpet Judgments (Ch. 8–9)

The first four bring devastation to the natural world: hail and fire burn a third of the earth, a blazing mountain crashes into the sea killing a third of marine life, drinking water turns bitter, and the sky goes dark.

Then it gets worse.

The next two trumpets unleash demonic forces. Locust-like creatures rise from the abyss to torment everyone without God's seal—they can't kill, but they torture. Then the sixth trumpet releases four angels who lead an army that wipes out a third of humanity.

Now you'd think—after all this pain, after all this judgment—people would finally break. That they'd fall to their knees and cry out for mercy.

But instead... they double down.

[Revelation 9:20–21](#) says,

“The rest of the people... did not repent of the works of their hands... they did not repent of their murders, their sorceries, their sexual immorality, or their thefts.”

They saw God's wrath. They felt the consequences. But they still refused to turn.

That's what sin does. It hardens hearts until even judgment can't break through. That's why we say it often at Bridge: *Don't wait to repent. Don't harden your heart.* Because the danger isn't that God stops saving—but that your heart grows too calloused to care.

The third and final wave of judgment is called the Bowl Judgments—the full and final outpouring of God's wrath.

The Bowl Judgments (Ch. 16)

They come fast, hit hard, and shake the whole world.

Painful sores break out on those who worship the beast. The sea turns to blood. Rivers become undrinkable. The sun scorches with fire. Darkness covers the beast's kingdom. Then the Euphrates dries up, preparing the way for the final battle—**Armageddon.**

And just when it seems like it can't get worse... it does.

The seventh bowl unleashes the greatest earthquake in history. Cities collapse. Islands vanish. Mountains crumble. Then hailstones—nearly 100 pounds each—fall from the sky.

Still, people curse God.

[Revelation 16:21](#) says, **“They blasphemed God... because the plague was extremely severe.”**

When a person's heart has determined to do what it wants to do, there's no changing it, not even when their demise is imminent.

The next main section is...

IV. The Spiritual War Behind the Scenes (Ch. 10–14)

These chapters pull back the curtain on what's really happening behind the chaos on earth. While the world sees war, persecution, and political unrest—Revelation shows us the deeper reality: a spiritual war.

The headlines—wars like Hamas and Israel, Christian persecution in Somalia and China, political tensions like trade wars—are just surface-level symptoms of an unseen battle. Behind it all is a cosmic conflict between God and Satan, truth and lies, light and darkness.

Ch. 10-12 – Satan's rage and war against God's people.

This chapter gives us a symbolic vision. A woman gives birth to a child, and a red dragon tries to devour the child the moment He's born.

The child is Jesus.

The woman. That's Israel—God's chosen people through whom the Messiah came.

The dragon. That's Satan.

Satan hates Jesus. He hates Israel. He hates the church. And because he couldn't destroy Jesus, he now turns his fury on the rest of the woman's offspring—those who follow Christ.

Here's what we're told in [Revelation 12:12](#):

“Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you with great fury, because he knows his time is short.”

Let me explain: Satan is in his final moments. He knows his time is almost over. God has thrown him down and taken away his ability to accuse believers in heaven. Now he's in full attack mode—doing everything he can to pull others down with him.

That's why the world feels heavier. Why lies are spreading faster. Why truth is being resisted more than ever.

It's not just culture shifting—it's a desperate enemy fighting back.

Satan isn't becoming stronger. He's becoming more frantic.

Next...

Ch. 13 – The Antichrist rises, demanding global worship

In chapter 13, we meet two beasts. **The first is who we often call the Antichrist.** He rises to power, is given global authority, and demands worship. People follow him because he seems strong—even miraculous.

[Revelation 13:3](#) says,

“The whole earth marveled...and they worshiped the beast.”

He talks big, attacks God's people, and rules the world. This is Satan's last shot at taking over—using a fake messiah to do so.

Then a second beast shows up—the False Prophet. He backs the Antichrist, does signs to impress people, and pushes everyone to worship him. He even convinces people to take the mark—666—as a sign of loyalty.

But this isn't just about politics or power—it's about worship.

In the end, everyone will follow either the Lamb or the beast.

There's no middle ground..

The third and final scene in this section is...

Ch. 14 – God keeps His people.

After all that darkness, chapter 14 is a breath of fresh air.

We see **the 144,000**—God’s sealed people—standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion. They’ve made it. They’ve been preserved. And they’re singing a new song that no one else can sing. It’s their victory song, their testimony, their praise to God for keeping them.

The chapter ends with a glimpse of final judgment. There’s a harvest—those who belong to Christ are gathered, and those who reject Him face wrath. It’s a clear picture: **judgment is coming, and no one will be overlooked.**

Next is section...

V. Babylon and the Fall of the World System (Ch. 17–18)

[Revelation 17](#) and 18 pull back the curtain on two pillars of the world’s rebellion against God—**false religion** and **worldly wealth**. In these chapters, both collapse. And are judged by God.

Let’s walk through what John sees.

Chapter 17 – The Fall of Religious Babylon.

John is shown a vision of a woman—described as a prostitute—riding a scarlet beast. She’s dressed in luxury, covered in jewels and purple and scarlet, holding a golden cup. But the cup is filled with filth and immorality.

On her forehead is written a name:

“**Babylon the Great, the Mother of Prostitutes and of the Detestable Things of the Earth.**” ([Revelation 17:5](#)).

She represents *religious Babylon*—a global, spiritually corrupt system that looks good on the outside but is completely opposed to God. She deceives the world, seduces leaders, and pretends to be spiritual—but it’s all fake.

She rides the beast—the Antichrist—for a while. But eventually, the beast turns on her.

[Revelation 17:16](#) says:

“**The ten horns you saw, and the beast, will hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, devour her flesh, and burn her up with fire.**”

What’s happening?

Satan will use false religion as long as it’s useful—but once it’s not, he’ll destroy it. That’s how deception works: it promises power but always leads to ruin.

Here’s the warning for us:

False religion doesn’t always look evil. It can look beautiful, moral, even spiritual. But if it’s not centered on Jesus, it’s not from God.

This chapter reminds us: **not everything spiritual is godly.** Test everything by the truth of Christ.

Then comes...

Ch 18 – The Fall of Commercial Babylon.

If chapter 17 is about false religion, chapter 18 is about **worldly wealth and materialism.**

John sees a vision of a great city—*Babylon*—a symbol of global greed, luxury, and economic power. This city is built on riches, trade, and excess. But in one moment—it all comes crashing down.

[Revelation 18:10](#) says,

“**Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the mighty city! For in a single hour your judgment has come.**”

Merchants who made their fortunes from Babylon’s wealth start to mourn. Trade stops. Cargo ships sit still. Business collapses. The economy crashes—and no one can fix it.

[Revelation 18:17](#) puts it plainly:

“**For in a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste.**”

Everything the world trusted—its economy, luxury, power—is destroyed in a moment.

In section...

VI. The King Returns (Revelation 19)

This is the moment the whole story has been leading to.

Everything we've seen so far—the chaos, the deception, the judgment, the cries for justice—has been building up to this one, breathtaking moment:

Jesus returns.

Not quietly.

Not in weakness.

Not like the first time, as a baby in a manger.

This time, the heavens split open, and Jesus comes riding as a Warrior King on a white horse in full glory.

As described by John in (19:11):

“11 Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider is called Faithful and True, and with justice he judges and makes war.”

He's coming to bring justice.

The world rejected Him. Mocked Him. Waged war against His people. But now, the rightful King is coming to take back what belongs to Him.

John describes Jesus with powerful detail:

- His eyes are like flames of fire—nothing is hidden from Him.
- He wears many crowns—because He holds all authority.
- His robe is dipped in blood—a symbol of His sacrifice, and also of His victory over His enemies.

And on His thigh is written a name:

“KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” that's v16

That's not a title He's hoping to earn.

That's who He already is—and now the whole world know it too.

But here's the part I don't want you to miss:

[Revelation 19:14-15](#) says,

“The armies of heaven, wearing fine linen, white and pure, were following Him on white horses.”

15 A sharp sword came from his mouth, so that he might strike the nations with it.

The that's us!

If you're a Christian - when Jesus returns you're not just a spectator. You're riding with Him.

Dressed in white—not because we've lived perfectly, but because He's made us clean.

And notice verse 15:

We don't fight this battle. Jesus wins it—by the power of His word.

But we ride with Him in glory.

For everyone who's ever wondered if evil would go unpunished...

For every martyr who died waiting for justice...

For every believer who has suffered quietly in the dark...

This is the day we've been waiting for. Riding into Victory with Jesus.

The next section is...

VII. The Final Judgment and Eternal State (Ch. 20–22)

This brings us to the end of the Bible—and the beginning of eternity.

Let's see how it unfolds, starting with the Millennium—the thousand-year reign of Christ.

A. The Millennium – A Thousand-Year Reign (20:1–6)

[Revelation 20](#) opens with Satan being bound and thrown into a bottomless pit for 1,000 years. During this time, Jesus reigns on earth, and His people reign with Him.

This period—often called the Millennium—is a literal, future age of peace, justice, and righteousness under the visible rule of Christ.

V4 says: **“They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”**

Those who were faithful—even unto death—will be raised to reign with Jesus.

After the Millennium, Satan is released for a short time and leads one final rebellion—but it's crushed instantly.

Then comes one of the most sobering moments in all of Scripture...

B. The Great White Throne Judgment. (20:11–15)

V11 says... **“Then I saw a great white throne and one seated on it. Earth and heaven fled from his presence, and no place was found for them.”**

This is the final judgment of those who rejected God.

The Bible says books are opened—records of every life.

But then another book is opened: **the Book of Life.**

V15 says... **“Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.”**

That may sound harsh—but it's not. It's justice.

God has freely offered salvation through Jesus Christ. But if you reject that offer, you're choosing to stand before God based on your own record. And the truth is—none of us are good enough on our own.

So let me say this as clearly as I can:

If your name is not written in the Book of Life, nothing else matters.

Not your success.

Not how good of a person you think you are.

Not how many Sundays you've sat in a church pew.

Only one thing saves: the blood of Jesus and your name written in His book.

C. The New Heaven and the New Earth. ([Revelation 21–22](#))

After the judgment, something beautiful happens.

[Revelation 21:1](#) says: **“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.”**

God doesn't just clean up the old world—He creates a new one.

No more sickness. No more funerals. No more tears.

It says in [Revelation 21:4](#): **“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away.”**

But the best part? God is there with us, just like in the Garden before the fall.

V3 says... “Look, God’s dwelling is with humanity, and He will live with them. They will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and will be their God.”

And in [Rev 22:4](#)

“They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.”

This is what we’ve been waiting for.

Not clouds, harps, and cupids - but life with god, in a real, restored, perfect world.

Always and forever.... That’s where we will be!

Which brings us to our final section...

How to apply the future to your now.

Church, Revelation doesn’t end with confusion—it ends with clarity.

And here’s what it demands from us:

1. Choose your side—because there is no middle.

[Revelation 22:14–15](#) shows us two groups of people:

Those inside the city, washed and welcomed.

And those outside—still in their sin.

There’s no “almost.” No neutral zone. No purgatory.

You’re either with Jesus or you’re not.

Or to say it another way... Is you is or is you ain’t?

Have you washed your robe in the blood of the Lamb?

If not—do it today. Don’t gamble your soul on “someday.”

Heaven and hell are real. And the gates of eternity swing on what you do with Jesus.

2. Remember—eternity isn’t a metaphor.

Revelation says “forever and ever” thirteen times.

You won’t be in heaven temporarily.

And no one will be in hell “just for a little while.”

This life is a vapor. But what you decide in it—lasts forever.

3. Trust the One who already won.

Jesus doesn’t just make it through the end—He *writes* the end.

When evil seems to win in chapter 13, remember: chapter 15 is coming.

The Lamb wins.

The throne still stands.

And every person who follows Him shares in that victory.

So here’s the question:

Are you going to leave here just knowing about Revelation—or living in light of it?

Conclusion:

"Come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20)

Bridge family, after walking through the book of Revelation—from the throne room of heaven to the fall of Babylon, from the return of Christ to the new creation—we’re left with one simple but powerful response:

“Come, Lord Jesus!”

That's not a phrase we whisper. That's a cry of **hope, faith, and readiness.**

It's what we say when we've seen enough of this broken world... and we long for the one to come.

And when he returns, may he find us faithful.

And may He use us to reach as many people as possible with the Gospel until he returns.

Hard questions honest answers

And with that in mind, I want to personally invite you back **next Sunday** as we launch a brand-new series called:

Hard Questions, Honest Answers.

Every week—we're going to open God's Word and talk about the topics most churches avoid... but everyone's already thinking about.

We're going to talk about:

Marriage. Divorce. Gender identity. Sexuality. Abortion. Addiction.

And more.

But hear me—

We're not coming with opinions.

We're coming with **open Bibles...** and **open hearts.**

We're going to ask:

What does God actually say?

And how do we live it out—with conviction... and compassion?

So if you know someone wrestling with these issues...

If you've got questions yourself...

If you're ready for clarity in a world full of confusion...

Be here.

Bring someone with you.

Next week—

Hard Questions, Honest Answers.

You don't want to miss it.

Will you pray with me?

Lord God thank you for revealing yourself to us as God, and for having mercy on by saving our soul. We didn't deserve, you you took it upon yourself to do the necessary work. And for that that we are eternally grateful and forever in your debt. Lord help us to long for heaven and to serve you faithfully with life we have left to live. Thank you for leaving us with you your Word through which we get to know you more and be further shaped. King Jesus we yearn for you to come now, and until you do give us the strength we need to endure. It's in your name Jesus that we pray and trust. Amen!

Closing...

CC, Foundations, LGPHP