

The End of the World - Part 2

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[0 : 00] And let me invite Sue Simmison to come and read for Mark's Gospel, for us Mark chapter 13 verses 24 to 37. It is on page 850 in the black Bibles.

But in those days after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. And the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the sun of man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

From the fig tree learn its lesson. As soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near.

So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near at the very gates. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

[1 : 19] Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven nor the sun, but only the Father.

Beyond God, keep awake, for you do not know when the time will come. It's like a man going on a journey. When he leaves home and puts his servants in charge each with his work and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake.

Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know when the master of the house will come. In the evening or at midnight or when the cock crows or in the morning, lest he come suddenly and find you asleep.

And what I say to you, I say to all, stay awake. This is God's word. We are working through the last four chapters of Mark's Gospel from now till Easter.

And last week, we started looking at Mark chapter 13. We're going to look at it this week and next week. So we're really considering the whole chapter these few weeks. And it's about the end of the world.

[2 : 34] Jesus is talking here about what's going to happen at the end of all of history, history as we know it. And Christians have thought a lot about that because the Bible talks about it a lot. And it's not just about thinking about the events at the end of history.

But when you think about what's coming, what is life everlasting, you also think about your destiny. You think about who you are. You think about your identity. You really start to think about what is life actually for?

What is it all moving towards? And so Christians have thought a lot about this, but really everybody thinks about this. So in our city, everybody's interested. What's going to happen? What's the ultimate?

What is life everlasting? What is life beyond life as we know it right now? So the richest people in Edinburgh, they're thinking about it. And the poorest people in Edinburgh, they're thinking about it. And the most free and the most imprisoned person in all the world is thinking about, what is it that's coming?

Is there life beyond the grave? Is there life everlasting? And what does that mean for me? Now, what is my destiny? We have to think about this. This is something humans have to think about, and we always have.

[3 : 38] We always will. And that's exactly what's happening in this chapter, right back at the beginning of the chapter in verse four. Four of the disciples asked Jesus while they're sitting on the Mount of Olives, overlooking Jerusalem from about 300 feet above it.

They say, when will all these things take place? And that's exactly the question they're asking. They're saying, when is the end coming? When is the end coming? When will all this stuff you've

been talking about Jesus happen?

What is it going to be like? And you notice there when they say, when will these things take place? It's plural. And they're saying, what's all the stuff that's going to happen at the end of the world? And last week we said that Jesus gives you two big events here in Mark 13. He says, first look for the destruction of the temple.

That's the first thing you need to think about, disciples. That's coming. That happened in 8070. We saw that last week. And then the second thing he says, but also there's something beyond that. And it's in verse 25.

[4 : 36] He says, the Son of Man is going to come down with the clouds. He's talking there about his second coming. One of those things has already happened, the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 8070.

One of those things has not yet happened, the coming of the Son of Man, the second coming of Jesus Christ. Jesus came, in other words, this passage is about the fact that Jesus came once. He came as a little bitty baby in a manger. And that he's also going to come again one day, the second coming. And so then he says, okay, so what you say today, so what.

And Jesus four times throughout this whole chapter says, here's the so what, be on guard, be watchful. Verse 33 says, be on the lookout, stay awake.

You heard Sue read that, the very last two words, stay awake. And he's talking to you metaphorically as if you are a soldier sitting on a city wall, looking out and saying, do not fall asleep, be on the lookout for what Jesus, the second coming.

[5 : 36] So he's saying, here's what you need to do today, friends, you need to be looking for the second coming. Like it's just on the doorstep, like the master of the house is about to come and knock on your door.

That the end really is near. That's what he says. So Christians are being, if you follow Jesus to today, you're being asked, to think about the second coming, to ponder it, to look for it, to make it matter for your life today.

And so last week we saw a couple ways that thinking about the second coming transforms you today. Can change your life now? Let me give you three more this morning. Three more ways that thinking about the second coming of Jesus will change your life now.

And today the big idea is that we're being asked here by Jesus, I think, to think biblically. In other words, to put on a Christian worldview. So thinking about your life in the light of the first coming of Jesus and the second coming of Jesus really means that you just have a Christian worldview.

You think about things biblically. You read the world biblically. The Bible becomes a lens through which you see your life. So that's what we're doing here. So let me give you three of these. First, Jesus is saying, think about the second coming, think biblically.

[6 : 46] Because thinking about the second coming makes better sense of your desires. So here's the first thing. And this is one that's just about the life of our minds and what's going on in our hearts.

That when you put on a Christian worldview, which is really just to say Jesus came once, Jesus is coming again. That's the Christian worldview. That that actually fits the reality we live in today.

It makes a lot of sense of it. It makes a lot of sense of the things you long for and your life. John Calvin said that when you think biblically, it's like putting on spectacles.

So he says it's like putting on glasses that all of it, you know, you're born and you're nearsighted. You're farsighted. But then you put on the biblical worldview and now all this smudges and the fuzziness is gone.

You can see the world correctly. Now, of course, everybody in our city thinks that's true about their own worldview. That their worldview gives them the lens to see the world rightly. And that's what we're doing here.

[7 : 39] That their worldview gives them the lens to see the world rightly. So let me say here that I think Jesus gives a better worldview. He gives a better reason to believe in the first and second comings, that they fit reality better.

Lots of ways. There's just one here. When you think about the second coming, it's like light shining from the future into the present and illuminating the space around you, being able to see things a little more clearly.

Now, here's how that works in this passage. The disciples all the way back in verse four, if you have a hard copy of the Bible, you can see all the way back in verse four, the disciples said, when are all these things going to happen?

When will these things be? Now, why did they ask that question? You know, they were sitting there, they're relaxing on the Mount of Olives, overlooking this great city, and they say, when is all this going to happen?

And it's because they longed for it to happen. You know, they wanted it. They wanted to be out from underneath Roman occupation, and they believed that when the end would come, that would happen.

[8 : 42] They wanted salvation. They wanted a Messiah to come and rescue them. They longed for it, but part of that, and this should be all of our experience, you look out at the world, you're sitting on not the Mount of Olives, but on Arthur's seat, and you're looking out about 300 feet above our great city, and you say, you know, I long for these things to take place.

Why? Because I see the pain, I see the misery, I see the injustice, I see the brokenness, I see the hurt, I see the poor, I know it in my life, I know it in other people's lives. They longed for it to take place.

Now, everybody feels this. Modern people are really good at this. Modern people look out at the world really well and see injustice. You know, modern people love to march for injustices.

We're good at that. We see injustice, we feel, we have empathy, more than ever in human history for people, perhaps we feel people's pain. We're good at that.

Christianity comes and says, yeah. The second coming is that time when there is a King who really can give a life of justice, peace, and rightness forever.

[9 : 48] You know, anytime you march for justice and you hope for it, you're only ever hoping for temporary justice. You know that as soon as the next government is installed, there's going to be new forms of injustices all the time, any institution.

But the second coming says, you know what? Christianity teaches that there is actually a hope for permanent justice. The thing that we want so much, we long for the end to come, life everlasting. Everybody does. And that makes sense. But now at the same time, on the other hand, on the other hand, you say, you know, I long for a better world. I long for life beyond this life. And at the same time, you say, but I really love this life.

Now, have you ever feel that tension where you say, you know, there's days where I want nothing more than a second. I want to be in the next life. I want to be in life everlasting. And then the next day you say, you know what?

I really love my friends. And I love to sit around the table and I love the laughter and I love the food and the drink and I love the board games and I love books. And I love my library.

[10 : 47] You know, some of you say that, some of you don't. There's all sorts of things that you look out and you say, I actually love this life too. Here's a tension. Some days you say, I love life.

I don't want to leave it. I don't want to die. Other days you say, I long for a better world. And probably in every day you feel that tension between both those things, existentially, every person does.

And Christianity comes and says, you know what? The first coming and the second coming makes complete sense of that. That there really is a time where Jesus is coming back to save everything. But look, look down. Let me show you this. Real specifically here, the passage we started with verse 24, you see what it says? It says that in those days, the days just before the second coming, right at the second coming, the sun is going to be dark and the moon will not give its light.

The stars will fall from the sky. The sun, moon and stars will all be demolished. Now that's not most commentators, I think rightly take this not to be literal, but these are metaphors.

[11 : 49] And they come from the Old Testament. We mentioned this briefly last week. They are metaphors based on the Old Testament where the sun, the moon and particularly the stars refer to the principalities and powers of darkness in the heavenly realms in the Old Testament.

And the prophets, that's what they refer to. And you say it means that when Jesus is coming a second time, the first thing that's going to happen is personal, conscious, evil.

Personal, conscious, evil is going to be destroyed. The sun, moon and stars, these metaphors for the powers that seem to be governing our world right now, they're going to fall.

He says step one, first order of business for Jesus Christ when he comes back again, is he's going to send personal evil, Satan, death, the cosmic powers that are destroying our world, the supernatural powers into hell.

That's what that metaphor means. But then at the same time, right after that, verse 26, it says, And then you will see the Son of Man coming down with the clouds. Now, very important here, there's the tension.

[12:57] Number one, Jesus is coming, he's going to send every bit of evil into hell, every bit of it. And then verse 26, when he comes, he'll come with the clouds.

And that is not a reference to Jesus, just you look up and you see Jesus floating around some nice clouds, some stratus cumulus, you know, whatever it may be.

No, instead, it's picking up also on an Old Testament idea that whenever God comes down, he comes shrouded in glory, the glory cloud, the Shekinah glory, that's the Hebrew word.

That's what it's referring to. And it's not a he comes down in the clouds so that you go up to the clouds. No, people have believed that at times in the Christian tradition called the rapture, but that's not what's being taught here at all. No, not at all.

Instead, it's saying that Jesus is coming down in the Shekinah glory like God came down on Mount Sinai and he's staying. He's not going anywhere. He's sticking around. You see, there's the tension. On the one hand, he's coming and he's going to put every single evil into hell. On the other hand, he's going to stick with us. He's going to stay in the world.

[14:05] You know, you know that tension, that life is good, the world is great. God made it good. Food and drink and friends and laughter, all of it. It's so good. You know, you know how you know that Jesus Christ, God become human, is going to have a human body forever. And he's coming down. He's bringing his body down into earth and he's sticking around to renew this place. You see, the world is good and the world is bad. It's good. He made it good.

He's going to renew it to the good, but yet it's broken at the same time. Only Christianity can fit those two poles together. Only Christianity can resolve that tension that we all feel.

The first coming and the second coming teach you that. They tell you that, do you vacillate? Life is good. Life is bad. Life is good. Life is hard. Do you feel that tension in your life? I love it. I hate it. It goes back and forth and that's, yes, it's good, but it's broken.

But Jesus is going to fix it. At the return of the king, Tolkien's Lord of the Rings trilogy, the very last book he titled it, The Return of the King, for a good reason. I think he had the second coming of Jesus in mind. And at one point in the book, after the ring has been destroyed, the ring of power and Mordor has been defeated in a great battle, one of the little hobbits, Sam Gamgee, the protagonist, Frodo's best friend, he turns to Gandalf, his friend Gandalf, and he discovers that Gandalf is not dead, Gandalf is alive. He thought that Gandalf had died in the battle. And this is what he says. He says, I thought Gandalf, I thought you were dead, but I also thought I was dead. And then he asked this very famous question, now, is everything sad going to come untrue? Is everything sad going to come untrue?

The answer to Christianity is yes. The first coming and the second coming is the worldview that can make you say that, that can give you the hope to say that. It's the only one. And somehow, some way, the fact that everything has been broken, but will be renewed, somehow, some way, that means that the renewal will be better than it ever would have been.

[16:27] Now, secondly, we not only need to think biblically about this tension we feel between the pain of life and the greatness of life, that the second coming makes sense of that, but secondly, briefly, also, the second coming will change your perspective on the time you live in, how you read the times.

All right, so look, all of us read the times. We talk about what is this generation like? What is Gen Z like? We love to sit around the water cooler and complain about Gen Z or whatever generation you like to complain. We all do that. Actually, the historians have helped us see that every single generation, pretty much in all of human history, has always said that this must be the worst generation in human history. Every generation has always said that. This must be the generation with the worst moral decay ever. We always think that, no matter what time we live in.

So today, there are six, seven generations alive, Alpha, Z, millennials, X, baby boomers, silent generation, all the way back to 1924. That's the oldest, about the oldest. You say, I'm part of this generation, the time I live in is the time of moral decay, however you read it, we all read it differently. The Bible comes, Jesus comes and says, Christian, if you're a Christian today, a

follower of Jesus, there's a primary way you should think about time, about the generation you're living in. Let me show it to you. It's right here. Just if you have a Bible, you can back up just for a moment with me and just notice this. Verse 17, he says, how dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers. Now, he's talking about the days of the destruction of the temple. So one of the phrases Jesus likes to use is those days. You'll see it throughout the Gospels. In those days, in those days, in those days, in those days, the days of tribulation, that's what those days mean. He's saying, first, there's going to be those days. That's 66 to 70 AD when the Romans are going to come and destroy Jerusalem. That's what he was talking about. And in those days, if you have a baby in those days, you better hope it's not winter. It's just going to be a lot harder to get out of the city and flee to the mountains if it's in the middle of wintertime. He's saying, I hope it's not winter. Those days, in other words, sometimes when Jesus says this time marker, those days, he's talking about an immediate future, something that's about to take place. But then just look down at verse 19, for instance. Then he says, those will be days of distress, those days unequaled from the beginning of creation. Now, I said this last week, but when you start to read about this twofold movement, the temple is going to be destroyed. That's one of the ends of the age. But then also, there's a bigger end of the age, the second coming. You start to see that you read it almost like a sing-song narrative. It's like poetry where you say, I don't know in this verse if he's talking about the destruction of the temple or something much bigger than that. He goes from saying those days when the temple is destroyed to those days will be worse than the beginning of all creation. Then from the beginning of creation, you say, is that 8070? I don't think that that fits 8070. It must be something bigger than that. And you see that he's moving back and forth actually between the immediate future and the ultimate future. He's saying there's going to be little tribulations all throughout history that are like prototypes of the great future, the ultimate future. And then in verse 24, he finally gets to it what language does he use? But in those days, but in those days following the previous days, that age of distress, the sun will be darkened and the sun of man will return. Now, you see he's saying then in other words there's going to be ages and stages of tribulation. But then one day, you'll enter the age, the final age, the end of the age when the sun of man will return. When is that? Now, if you read, if you just thought about this with me for a moment, very closely, he actually says that the final days, the last generation, the last era of history, he says is right after the destruction of the temple. In those days, the final days of tribulation, that's when the sun will dark and that's when the powers will fall from heaven and that's when the sun of man will come back. Now, here's what I'm saying. Here's what Jesus is saying.

[20 : 51] He's saying, what time do you live in? What generation are you living in? Jesus is teaching you live in the last days. You live in the end of history, the end of all of history. Do you know that? That's what the Bible teaches. Paul says that in 1 Timothy 3 and 4, he says, Timothy, you are living in the last days, the latter days. And that means that you live in the age just before the second coming of Christ, meaning there's no other big major redemptive historical events to take place. We're awaiting the coming of the King. That's the time we live in.

That's the generation we live in. That's why he's saying, don't you realize the master can come knock on your door at any moment? You're living in the last days. Now, do you think about your life like that? I'm living in the moments before the coming of the King. And you say, it's been 2,000 years. It doesn't kind of feel that way. But you know, 2 Peter 3, to the Lord who stands outside of all space and time, a day is 1,000 years and 1,000 years is a day. To the God who stands outside and apart from time, he looks at every moment, he looks at all of world history in a moment. And that means that it's only been a couple of days. It's only been a couple of days for God. A day is 1,000 years and 1,000 years is a day. You're living in the last times. Now, let me move towards our ending with a couple specific applications about that. That's a biblical worldview, a Christian worldview. That means that tomorrow, when you're at work, if you're at work, you know, your colleague comes to you and says, hey, what time is it? You say, it's the latter days, my friend. You know, that's what you say. It's the end of history. No, don't do that. Don't be weird, all right? But that is the time. That's what the Bible teaches. That's the age that you live in, the time just before the second coming. Here's the specific application Jesus gives us.

It's a negative one first, and then we'll close with a positive one. The negative one is, look down at verse 28. He says, learn the lesson of the fig tree. What do I do with this? Well, here's the lesson from a fig tree. This is what you need to learn. He says, as soon as you see the twigs get tender, the leaves come out of the branch, you'll know that the flowers are coming, that the blossoms

coming. And he's saying, as soon, what he's saying there is, as soon as the temple is destroyed, that's like the early blossom. That's like the leaves coming out the first time, just before the beginning of spring. He's saying, as soon as the temple is destroyed, which he's compared the temple to a fig tree many times in the gospels, he's saying, you will know that you have now entered into the end of history, the latter days, the time before the coming of the king.

All right, so on the one hand, that's how you should read your life. That's what he says. But then on the other hand, look down at verse 32 and 33, then all of a sudden he says, but when is that day going to come? You do not know. No one knows the hour. Not even the angels know. Not even the son of God himself knows. So Jesus, in his incarnate state on earth, he's saying, I do not know the day that I'm going to return. He says, only the father knows at this moment. Right? Okay. What is he saying to us? He's saying, look, live your life as if the king is about to be here tomorrow. Today, live life in such a way. And at the same time, never, never try to read the news cycle next to that idea. He's saying, never try to get specific.

[24 : 14] Never try to read the times and say, well, if this government topples, then that'll be the end. If this happens in this war, then that's surely going to be it. 70 years from now, 10 years from now. Now there have been thousands of books written that do exactly that. They try to predict the exact day that the end will come so far they've all been wrong. Why? Because Jesus said, you don't know. Stop it. Don't do that. In other words, live your life as if Jesus is knocking at the door.

He's about to come, but never try to get specific. And instead, James Edwards, one of the commentators, he says, when he comes, you will not miss it. Every eye will see him. You're not going to miss it.

Don't worry. You will see it when it happens, but don't try to guess when it's going to be. Instead, live your life in such a way that you are awaiting the coming of the King. It's coming at any moment. Now, lastly, let's get more personal here with what that can mean for you today.

That Christian worldview needs to drive us all, no matter what you believe in this morning, to self-awareness. And that's what it has the power to do, to drive you and to look at your heart, to use your mind to really look at yourself this morning. Verse 33, he says, what do you do with this Christian worldview, first and second coming? Be on guard. Be watchful. Be awake. Be alert. Have your mind opened and ready. Be looking. One of the first things you look at, we'll look at two more things you look at next week, but one of the first things you have to look at, if you are willing to believe in the first and second coming of Jesus today, is your own self.

[25 : 53] That's what I think one of the first things he teaches us here. Here's how. Verse 26, what is it going to be like when Jesus comes back? Well, we're told you are going to see him coming in the Shekinah glory. So every single one of us, not just us, it says every single human being, the living and the dead will see him when he comes. You'll put your eyes on to him. You will actually see him. That's what we're told here. And what will you see when he comes with the clouds?

What kind of, what will you see? What will your eyes be put on? Look, remember, he came, he came in swaddling clothes, laid in an animal's feeding trough. But when he comes back, he's going to come back, he's going to come riding the clouds in full array of glory. He came the first time, poor, nowhere to lay his head. He's going to come back in regal majesty. That's what you'll see. He came the first time as one from whom men have to hide their faces, one who is not beautiful, one who is not, who men did not want to look at, we're told in Isaiah. And when he comes again, he will come as the fairest of 10,000. He came the first time as weak, humiliated. He came to die. He came to be murdered by his own creation. That's the first time, but when he comes again, he's going to come. What's the picture as king? That's what you'll see. You'll see a king, a king like you've never seen before. A king like you cannot imagine. That's what you'll see. Now, let's close with this. One of the things that means is that when you see the king, you learn from the rest of the Bible that what you're putting your eyes on is the judge of all the earth. The king in the Bible is the judge. He is the one who determines justice. He sets things to right. He says what's wrong. He issues punishment. We need a government to do justice, and the king is coming to do justice. He's coming to be the judge of all the earth. Okay, good, right.

Lord Jesus, king, come and get all the injustice out of the world. Punish all the bad people. Get all the bad wicked injustices of the people around me out of this world. Look, friends, when you realize what you will see, the king is judge, you've got to look at your heart. You've got to look at yourself. Because if this is actually God we're talking about that's coming back, the king of all the earth, what does the creed say? He's coming again to judge the living and the dead. That's what he's coming

for. When you say that you've got to be willing to admit that in your heart, in your life, deep down, that sometimes you're not just the victim, you're the oppressor, all of us. That there's deep injustices at the bottom of every one of our hearts and interactions. Want to try this? This is something I did for myself this week.

[28 : 53] What if, forget the standards of the king himself, forget the standards of God for a moment, don't forget them, but set them aside and just ask, can you pass this test? What if we held ourselves, everyone of us, to the standard of everything that we tell kids? What if just for a moment, you say, if you're a parent, what if you held yourself to the standard of every command you've ever given your children? Maybe you're not a parent today. What if we're all held to the standard of everything you were told by your parent, every command that you were given? Now, what do we say to kids? What do you say to your children? You say, you have to be honest, no matter what. You say, you must always tell the truth. If you do something wrong, you need to come and confess and tell me immediately so we can reconcile. You tell your kids, do not speak badly about other people, don't think badly about other people, don't judge people, be fair, be honest, don't cheat, don't cut corners, do it right the first time, right? Do everything you do well the first time. We say, you've got to be kind. We say, you've got to use your tongue to build people up and encourage people, not to cut people down, not to slander people. You've got to love your family, you've got to love your siblings, you've got to share, share your stuff, share your time, share your money, share your talents, share everything that you love in this world.

You've got to turn the TV off. You've got to stop watching so much TV. You're addicted to screens. You've got to put your phone away. You've got to stop spending so much time on social media. You've got to do that. We say, you've got to stop wasting your time. You've got to study. You've got to work harder. You've got to be more dedicated. You've got to be humble, but you've got to be confident. You've got to be an encourager, right? You've got to build people up, but you also got to know that you're really valuable and you're really worth something. Don't roll your eyes. Don't roll the eyes of your heart. Be patient with other people. You've got to have more self-control in your life. You're not self-controlled enough. We say, don't do what you want to do. Do what you have to do. Do your duty. Do what's necessary. Do what's required. You've got to be disciplined. You've got to work harder. You've got to be great. You've got to be humble. You've got two ears, one mouth for a reason. You need to listen more. Now listen, what if God took the divine recorder, you know, the iPhone above that can film everything and he played back for you just one hour, 60 minutes of your life after every one of those commands were given. And it played for you the depths of your heart. Every thought, every word that came through your mind, every way you viewed other people around you. Look, talk about standing before the king of all the earth, the one who does right all the time. We cannot measure up to our standards. You can't measure up to your standard. I can't measure up to my standard. I can't measure up to the standard I expect of my children. Who is going to stand when the king comes? Who will stand on the day of judgment? Nobody. And look, no matter what you believe in today, no matter what your worldview is, you've got to be willing to admit that. I cannot even live up to the standards I expect for eight-year-olds. I can't do it. And we've got to be willing to say, what is the hope?

[32 : 13] What is the hope for a world of justice, a world of peace? What is the hope when the king comes again and he's coming? He's coming. And the only hope that we have in the second coming is that you realize the beauty of the first coming. You realize what he came to do the first time.

Jesus is coming back to be the judge of all the earth. This is when he's saying all this, this is Wednesday of Passion Week. So we're 48 hours from the cross at this moment. We're 24 hours from the Passover. 48 hours away from the cross, he has his eyes set to Golgotha right now as he says this. You know, in his heart, in his mind, he knows the only hope these people have. And the second coming is this moment, the first coming. And here's the truth. The judge is coming again. He will judge the living and the dead. But when he came the first time, the judge himself was judged in our place. The only way that you're going to be able to stand on the judgment day is if you lift up your head and you look and you see and say, the judge himself was judged for me. The judge himself has already stood in my place so that on the day of judgment, I'm not going to be judged. I'm going to be called friend. I'm going to be gathered. I'm going to be part of the community. Why did Jesus Christ come the first time? He came to set the world to right. He came to judge the world actually. He came the first time to judge the world, but how did he do it? He judged it in himself. He judged the world the first time by judging himself, by bringing justice down on his own

soul and his own body, by going to hell for us so that we never have to. I'll give the last word, the Heidelberg Catechism this morning. Question 52. Last question, the Heidelberg Catechism. Heidelberg Catechism was written in the 1500s during the time of the Reformation in Germany. And it really summarizes everything that we've talked about this morning. And here it is. What comfort is it to you that Jesus will come again to judge the living and the dead?

[34 : 20] What comfort can you get from that? And here's the answer, that in all my sorrows, all my hardships, and we might add, and even the depths of my sins, I lift up my head and I look for the very same person who offered himself to God for my sake the first time, and thereby has removed from me every curse of judgment forever. He shall cast all my enemies and his enemies into condemnation, but he will bring me into every joy and every glory. That's the hope of the second coming.

Let's pray. Father, would you today cast us with a biblical worldview, give us a biblical worldview, that we might think of our lives in between the first and second comings, that that would mean everything to us? Lord, we give thanks today that the most important thing it means is that the judge has already, that the judge was judged in our place so that we don't have to be judged.

We are found in him. You are a God of mercy and love. How can you set the world to rights without sending us into condemnation? Oh, because Jesus has already been judged. Thank you, oh Lord.

I do pray this morning that somebody would realize that for the first time, that that's not mythological, but real. I pray, Lord, that you would help us this morning realize that that is no tale that has been told throughout the centuries that was invented, but one that actually is not only historical, but makes the most sense of life now, that every other worldview has huge issues.

Lord, so speak to us now by the Spirit, both the intellectual value of believing this, and then the deep soul value. Give us both of those things, mind and heart, meaning this morning.

[36 : 19] And we ask for that, we pray for that, we plead for that. Come Holy Spirit and do work on our hearts now as we sing, our closing hymn. Don't leave this word void. We know you won't. Make it powerful to us, make it flow over us as we sing now, and we pray this in Christ's name. Amen.