Preparing for Eternity: God’s Prophetic Calendar

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References: Leviticus 23, Romans 1:1-2; Exodus 12:2; Leviticus 23:4-8; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8; Leviticus 23:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:22-24; Leviticus 23:15-16; Leviticus 23:22; John 4:35; Matthew 16:18; John 14:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Jude 1:9; Daniel 12:1; Romans 11:26; Isaiah 53:4-5; 1 John 3:3

Preparing for Days vs. Preparing for Eternity

Daughter was shopping at Costco in Abbotsford. Anybody shop at Costco here? Anybody been to Costco? Yeah, yeah, it's a—it's a—it's a good spot to go. So they were shopping at Costco.

Now listen to this: the water—you know how important water is for life; we were reminded of that this morning—the water was not out on the floor. It was in the back. Why do you think that was? Why do you think the water was not out on the floor, it was actually in the back? You had to ask for water at Costco. Why do you think that was? What do you think the reason was? Anybody want to guess? It's logical.

Okay, well, all right, how about this: do you remember not that many years ago when you couldn't buy toilet paper? Do you remember that? Why couldn't you buy toilet paper? Why couldn't you? Because everybody was buying it all! And so they couldn't leave it out. You would actually ask for it, and then they were limiting it.

Well, that was what was happening at the Costco in Abbotsford. Now, I'm not sure if that's everywhere in the Lower Mainland, but they were limiting people because people were going in and buying all the water. Have you heard about this? Is this familiar to anybody? Well, this is apparently—apparently, now I'm not sure if it's just in small towns or whatever, but I think it's a lot of places. They're talking about preparing. That's the word they're using: preparing for some kind of tragedy, you know, loss of power. I'm not sure all the details; it's pretty extensive. There's lots of people that talk about it, and so the point is you've got to prepare. And so now they've got to put the water in the back because people are going and trying to buy all the water in Abbotsford.

Say, "Well, those guys are all country bumpkins out there." I'm not sure if they are country bumpkins or not, but anyways, they're trying to buy all the water.

So I asked somebody—because the challenge for this, where it comes from, it comes from social media. And so I asked someone I know, "How true is social media?" And so I wrote down what they said. Listen to what they said: they said, "Social media is mostly a curated—that's a word that means carefully organized—carefully organized, exaggerated, manipulated version of reality rather than an accurate reflection of truth." Now, who do you think wrote that? Then they said, "Algorithms push engagement over accuracy." Who do you think wrote that? You know him, her, it, whatever it is—AI wrote that! So I asked AI, "How accurate is social media?" And AI told me it's not; it's mostly exaggerated manipulation of the truth. That's what AI says of itself or whatever is going on.

So the point is, as we think of preparing, that's what people are doing. They're preparing by buying water or saving rice. I'm not sure—there are all sorts of ways, videos, algorithms; you can watch all these things about people that are preparing for three days. And, hey, I'm not against that. If that's where you're at, I'm not against that. But I would say this: it does seem a bit odd to me. It does seem a bit odd and foolish, actually, to prepare for three or four days or three or four months and not be prepared for **eternity**, right? To have really thought nothing about the next life. You say, "Well, people don't do that. They think about it." Well, actually, no, people don't think about that. People aren't as prepared. I'm not as prepared for eternity as I ought to be.

The Foundation of Scripture and God’s Calendar

And so we want to start back in Leviticus chapter 23. It's a very important passage of Scripture. As we were reminded in the singing, the Old Testament was the book that the New Testament was built on. In fact, the great treatise of the gospel, the best overview of the gospel in the New Testament, is the book of Romans. And Paul says in the book of Romans, he says this right at the beginning:

> [Romans 1:1-2 NKJV]
> [1] Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God [2] which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,

He's talking about the Old Testament.

And so this morning in the Lord's Supper, we had an extensive reading from the book of Romans from chapter 3, or fairly extensive. Do you remember that? Remember that you were there, Brother Josh read it, and it was all Old Testament quotations, right? And so Paul is saying in Romans that what he's writing about is nothing new; it was all contained in the Old Testament. And so it's not like we have to stand here and prove to you that the Old Testament is valuable. The New Testament says it is. Paul used the Old Testament. He, in fact, built the gospel message, that treatise that he proclaimed in the book of Romans, on the Old Testament.

So in Leviticus chapter 23, we have the seven feasts of Jehovah, the seven feasts of the Lord. And these seven feasts, amongst other things, give us some kind of a timeframe, right? Some kind of a timeframe. There's a calendar: what we call Israel's ceremonial calendar. You know, they had a civil calendar, and they had a ceremonial calendar. They weren't the same, right? You're aware of that, right? That Israel's calendar was different than the calendar we use.

The calendar in North America is a Gregorian calendar, right? What's the calendar in China? Is it the same? No. What is it? What do they call it? It's a lunar calendar. And so how does it work? Is it 30 days a month, for 12 months, and then pick up a whole month after? Yeah, but with different windows. Right, and that's close to the Jewish calendar, isn't it? The Jewish calendar was 12 30-day months, and then every certain period of time the priest determined when this additional month would be put in. So they would put an additional month. We do leap year, right? We do 365, and then we have a leap year. And so clearly the Jewish calendar is somehow connected closer to the Chinese calendar. It seems like at least it's more similar.

Okay, so God's calendar: that's what we have in Leviticus chapter 23. This is connected to the calendar. And so in Exodus 12, at the institution of the Passover, God says to the nation of Israel—it was actually the seventh month—and He said, "Now this day is going to be the first day of the first month for you." So He says, "This is going to be your ceremonial or your religious calendar in contrast to your civic calendar." So Israel then had two calendars. And so this, Leviticus chapter 23, would be their religious calendar, okay?

And so this is important, you know, because when you get to the New Testament, you could do this—we don't have time to do this, or you could get online and you could read. Obviously, you'd have to be a little bit careful who you read online because, remember, social media is not that accurate; it's curated, exaggerated, you heard what I read. But you could find men who have gone to great lengths to show how it was prophesied that the Lord Jesus would ride into Palm Sunday on a very specific day, and He actually did it! It was prophesied 500 years before that that would be the day. And He actually did: He rode in on that day, on that Sunday.

I mean, I'm just amazed as I read through the New Testament. It was prophesied in the Old Testament that the Lord Jesus would be sold for 30 pieces of silver, and then the money would be returned. And you know what it said in the Old Testament they would do with the money? They would buy a potter's field to bury the dead. And you know what they did? Actually, when Judas brought the money back and threw it at the feet of the Pharisees in the temple, he said, "I have betrayed innocent blood." And they took the money and said, "What should we do with it?" You know what they did with it? They bought a potter's field! They did exactly what the Old Testament said they would do.

And so this is what Isaiah says about prophecy: he says that God is the only One who can make prophecy come true. You know, I have a friend who was down serving the Lord for a short-term mission in Louisiana, in New Orleans. Has anybody ever been to New Orleans? Yeah. Okay, so New Orleans is pretty—lots of voodoo and witchcraft. It's a wicked place. I mean, yes, there's Christians there, people who love the Lord Jesus, but there's a lot of wickedness. And so there's tarot card readers, fortune tellers all over. They've got these booths set up, and they're offering, "Five dollars, I'll tell you your future," right? And so my friend says to the fortune teller, he says, "Listen, I'll give you $20 if you can tell me what I did yesterday." You know what she said? "Move along!" Yeah, they'll take $5 to tell you your future; $20 if you tell me what I did yesterday, they can't do it!

So, hey, there's lots of untruth mixed in there, but not with regards to the Bible. The Bible says that God is able to make His prophecies come true. And He was—listen, He was very precise about this. He would say, in fact, how many times was a prophet allowed to be wrong before he was kicked out of the profession? One time! One time. He said if a man makes a prophecy one time and it doesn't come true, he's not a prophet of God.

The Spring Feasts: Fulfilled in Christ

Okay, so this, Leviticus chapter 23, is some kind of a timeline, okay? And so the first feast, the first feast is the Feast of the Passover, okay? And so this is in verse 4:

> [Leviticus 23:4 NKJV]
> 4 "These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.

Appointed is a very Old Testament biblical concept. It goes all the way back to Genesis chapter 1, and God says way back in Genesis chapter 1 that the sun is working on an

appointed time, okay? In fact, God says to His people that, hey, if the sun doesn't rise and doesn't set, "I can't keep My promises to you." Well, of course, every day it does; maybe we don't see it, but it's there every day. And so, appointed times:

> [Leviticus 23:5-8 NKJV]
> 5 On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD's Passover. 6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. 7 On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. 8 But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it."'

And so the Lord lays out in His calendar the Passover, and then follows it up with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, okay? And so He gives us the exact days, the date.

Well, I mean, you can read endless commentaries that will show you that this has already been fulfilled. It actually fulfilled on the day that the Bible said it would. On the day that God said it would happen, these things were fulfilled. The Passover was fulfilled.

And so where was it fulfilled? Well, it was fulfilled at the death of the Lord Jesus. He's God's Passover Lamb. God, the Bible says, would provide Himself a lamb, and the Lord Jesus is the Passover Lamb, provided by God. And He died, was buried, resurrected, exactly when Leviticus chapter 23 says that He would. We don't have to speculate.

Keep your finger here and turn to 1 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians chapter 5. In 1 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 7, Paul says:

> [1 Corinthians 5:7-8 NKJV]
> 7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

And so where's he getting that from? Well, he's getting that from Leviticus chapter 23, right? That's what it says in Leviticus chapter 23: it says the Passover followed up by the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Well, that's what Paul says here, okay? "Christ, our Passover, was

sacrificed for us," 1 Corinthians chapter 5. And so when we read it in Leviticus chapter 23, the Passover was already fulfilled, okay? So that's easy; that's not hard.

Okay, then the next feast. This would be number three, because the Bible has one and two joined together, and Paul joins one and two together in 1 Corinthians 5. So then number three is in verse 9: it's the Feast of Firstfruits, okay?

> [Leviticus 23:9-11 NKJV]
> 9 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: "When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. 11 He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.

Okay, "on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it." So what day is that? The day after the Sabbath, what day would that be? The day after the Sabbath: so the Sabbath is Saturday, so the day after the Sabbath is Sunday, right? It's good, we're not forcing this stuff on you, right? That's what it would be: the day after the Sabbath would be Sunday.

Okay, so what's the Feast of Firstfruits a picture of? Well, again, don't have to speculate. Turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 15 now. Keep your finger in chapter 23. 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verse 22 says:

> [1 Corinthians 15:22-24 NKJV]
> 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. 24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.

And so there it talks about Christ being raised up as the firstfruits. And so the Feast of Firstfruits in Leviticus chapter 23 is fulfilled in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 in the person of the Lord Jesus. He's the firstfruits, and it mentions it multiple times.

The point is that Christ fulfilled that feast in Himself; fulfilled the Passover, then fulfilled Firstfruits Himself on the exact day. The Feast of Firstfruits was celebrated the day after the Sabbath, and so that was Sunday. What day did the Lord Jesus rise from the dead? Anybody?

What day? Sunday! Is that right? That's right, isn't it? On Sunday, first day of the week, He rose from the dead. So again, we see that here in Leviticus chapter 23.

Okay, back to Leviticus chapter 23. Then the number four feast is in verse 15, and it's the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Pentecost—not Tabernacles, that's number seven.

> [Leviticus 23:15-16 NKJV]
> 15 "And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. 16 Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.

So again, whatever this feast is, it's happening on a Sunday, the day after the Sabbath, and it's now 49 days—49 full days covered—and it's on the 50th day. So it goes seven weeks, seven Sabbaths completed, and then on the day after, so on a Sunday as well. And so the word Pentecost means 50.

And so was this feast fulfilled? Well, it was fulfilled in Acts chapter 2, right? How many days after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus did Pentecost happen? Well, it was 50 days, right? It was 50 full days, and then came Pentecost. And so you can put this together and see—you could draw yourself a timeline and you could figure out that this is true, that it's accurate, it's on track. All of these events that God recorded in Leviticus chapter 23, He doesn't have any problem seeing these fulfilled to the exact date, because He's God. He runs a tight calendar, so it's not a problem for Him.

So the first four—the Feast of Passover tied to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, that's being fulfilled, and fulfilled on the day that God said it would. And then the Feast of Firstfruits, again, fulfilled on the day that the Father said it would happen; the Lord Jesus was resurrected, we have that in 1 Corinthians 15. And then the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, again, that's fulfilled in Acts 2.

The Summer Harvest: The Church Age

Then we move on in verse 22:

> [Leviticus 23:22 NKJV]
> "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of

> your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God."'

And so now in Israel's economy—now listen to this—in Israel's economy, now God makes allowance for the stranger and the poor person. That's what's happening. You see that, right? That's what it says.

So Israel has its harvest, and then there's a break. And we know that if we had laid this out on a calendar, there actually is: this would be the summer. So you have the springtime, that first harvest, and then there's this break, this time of leaving for the stranger and for the poor. And then the calendar is going to activate again. It's going to activate again in verse 23: the Feast of Trumpets. But there's a space between.

And then the next three—the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles—this would be five, six, and seven, right? Five, six, and seven are going to happen rapidly; they're all going to happen in like three weeks.

So you have all that first four, fulfilled on the exact day. And then this break, this time of harvest, which I'm going to suggest is what we're living in today. This is the time we're living in! The Lord Jesus said to His disciples that, although they couldn't always see it, in John chapter 4 He said, "Look to the fields, they're white for the harvest." And so our experience often is connected with where we live or our circle of acquaintances. But, you know, the Lord is doing a great work in the world right now. There's a huge harvest happening. And the Lord Jesus is building His church, and the gates of hell are not prevailing against it. And so that's the time we live in.

The Fall Feasts and the Coming of the Lord

And so then that time of harvest ends with the Feast of Trumpets. Then comes the Day of Atonement, and then shortly thereafter comes the Feast of Tabernacles, this seven-day period, this last seven-day feast. And so the first four have already been fulfilled to the day, then the break, and then the last three. I'm going to suggest to you the last three spiritually have not yet been fulfilled.

So we say, "Well, where are they? How are they going to be fulfilled?"

Turn to the New Testament, John chapter 14. John chapter 14, remembering our subject: preparing, okay? You know, we thought about people preparing for three days or three months or whatever it is; they're preparing. But the Lord Jesus said to His disciples in John chapter 14:

> [John 14:1-6 NKJV]
> [1] "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. [2] In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. [3] And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. [4] And where I go you know, and the way you know." [5] Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" [6] Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

And so as we think of so much exaggeration, so much manipulation of the truth in the world, it is good to be reminded that the Lord Jesus declared Himself that He was the way, He was the truth, He was the life. And as we were reminded in our singing, the Word of God is true; it has stood and continues to stand the test of every critic who comes against it. And so we're thankful for the words of the Lord Jesus.

And in this passage, the Lord Jesus talks about preparing. In fact, this would be the night before He goes to the cross. And so when He says to His disciples—He talks about heaven and death, and what He's going to do in preparation for His disciples in eternity to come—probably there's some connection to the physical in that day, too: that the next day the Lord Jesus would go to the cross. And at some level, what He did on the cross is what prepares heaven for sinners. That's how sinners get into heaven: because of what the Lord Jesus did at a place called Calvary.

And so His disciples are troubled, and there's all this outside pressure, very similar, no doubt, to where people are at today. And the Lord Jesus is very concerned about their mental challenges, their anguish with all that's going on. And so He reminds them: He reminds them of what He's about to do and what He's going to do for them in eternity. He's going to go and prepare a place for them.

And so we thought about Leviticus chapter 23, and we thought about all the timing we've seen in the feasts of the Lord. Now we come to the last night before the Lord Jesus goes to the cross, and He's talking about eternity. He's reminding His disciples that He speaks truth. Yeah, there isn't much truth in the world, but there is truth in the Word of God.

The Comfort of His Coming

So now keep your finger here in John chapter 14, and turn to 1 Thessalonians chapter 4. 1 Thessalonians 4, verse 13. The Apostle Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, writes:

> [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 NKJV]
> 13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

And we could show from 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 and John chapter 14 there's at least five direct correlations, five direct statements that perfectly match. What the Lord Jesus is talking about in John chapter 14 is what the Apostle Paul is writing about in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4: a comfort to the people of God. A comfort to think about what could potentially come out of this so-called tragedy.

And I suggest to you what it is: it's the coming of the Lord. Jesus is coming back! He said He would; He said He would come again. We say, "Well, when?" Well, anytime. **Anytime.** This is what the Apostle Paul taught: that these doctrines, the coming of the Lord, was tied to the Old Testament.

You know that in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, he talks about three events in one sentence, three events broken up by commas. It says, "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout," okay? And so Jesus is coming back with a shout. Say, "For who?" For believers! For believers in this age, what's called the Church Age, right? If you're a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you're part of the universal church, you're part of the body of Christ, and He's coming back for His body. That's what the Lord is coming for.

And then it says this: "with the voice of an archangel." Now, we don't know much about archangels. It's an interesting trivia: we hear the word often, but how many archangels were there in the Bible? Do you know? It's a lot less than you think: one! There's only one archangel. Does anybody know what his name is? Michael, the archangel. Yes, Michael the archangel, that's in Jude. He's only one. You say, "Well, maybe there were others." Who'd say that? That might or might not be true; we don't know, but only one archangel listed in the Bible. His name is Michael, the archangel.

And so we know of Michael the archangel from the book of Daniel that his direct care, his service in the work of God—he was chosen for a purpose, and his purpose was protection of Israel, right? That's what it says in the book of Daniel chapter 12: that the archangel was protector of the nation of Israel. That's in Daniel chapter 12.

And so in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, we have the Lord Jesus Himself descending with a shout—that's for the church, believers in this dispensation. And then the voice of the archangel: so that's for believing Israel who died and passed away, gone—not present tense, but in the past. The nation of Israel and Old Testament saints, they were full of believers. I mean, Hebrews chapter 11 can go through a long list of men and women who made incredible sacrifices for their faith in God, their love for Christ. And so God hasn't forgotten them. And so the Lord Jesus Himself will descend with a shout; then, comma, it says "the voice of an archangel"—this is for the Old Testament saints.

And then another comma, and it says "the trumpet of God." It comes last. And so what's that connected to? Well, that's connected to Leviticus chapter 23. This break that we're in, this time of harvest, it's going to come to an end in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, this dispensation in which we live: the shout of the Lord Jesus, the voice of the archangel, the trumpet of God.

And what's God going to do? He's going to start His prophetic clock again. And so you read Leviticus chapter 23: it'll be the Feast of Trumpets, followed by the Day of Atonement. What is the Day of Atonement? The Day of Atonement is what Paul wrote about in Romans chapter 11: that actual event when all Israel will be saved. You say, "Is that going to happen?" That's what the Bible says.

You know, we often quote Isaiah 53 because we love it: the idea that the Lord Jesus was wounded for our transgressions, that He was bruised for our iniquities, that the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. We love that! That actually is Israel; that's their testimony. Isaiah 53, at the beginning, it says that somebody is saying, "We esteemed that He was stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted." Where did that happen? Well, that happened at the cross. You remember the Jewish multitudes riled up by the high priest? This is what they said of Christ as He hung on the cross: "Well, if You're really the Son of God, come down!"

And so Isaiah prophetically is writing about an event that's going to happen when Israel sees the Lord Jesus, and they say, "We thought that He was stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But now we realize"—that's what it says—"now we realize that He was actually bruised for our iniquities, that it was actually the chastisement of our peace that was upon Him. And by His stripes," says Israel, "we are healed." And so you say, "Well, when does that

happen?" Well, that's what the Bible talks about in Romans chapter 11 and in the Old Testament prophets: that a nation will be born in a day. Well, that is the Day of Atonement, Leviticus chapter 23. The Day of Atonement, all Israel. And we can read about that; that's lots in the New Testament. The whole book of Revelation from chapter 5 onward has all this weaved in there: the nation being born in a day.

And then what comes in? Then comes what? Number seven, the feast of Leviticus chapter 23: the Feast of Tabernacles, which is a picture of the millennial reign of Christ. Christ is going to come back and reign on this earth for a thousand literal years. He'll set up His kingdom in Israel, and He is going to reign in righteousness. And He's going to forever squash this idea that people have: "If we had a good government, we could be a good people," right? That's what people think: "You know, if we just had a good government, it would all work out." But they're going to have a righteous government for a thousand years, and guess what? At the end, men are still going to reject the Lord Jesus!

Prepared to Meet God

And so the Bible goes to great lengths to write these truths to help us to prepare. And so, again, we come back to where we started: that, hey, it's good to have some water stored up. If you go to Costco in Abbotsford, you have to ask for it; it's in the back, but you can get it. You can get a few, and it's probably a good idea. Probably having a little food—not against that.

Yeah, but it would be a tragedy to think of people who had prepared for three days or two weeks or three months and weren't prepared to meet God. Jesus is God, and He's coming back!

And so, you know, this is what Thomas in John chapter 14 is like: "Lord, I hear what You're saying. I don't want to miss out on heaven, and I want to make sure I'm..." This is Thomas, who had been with the Lord Jesus for three and a half years: "I don't want to miss out. How can I make sure?"

And the Lord Jesus said, "Thomas, I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life. No man comes to the Father," says the Lord Jesus, "except through Me."

You know, they said at—this will close—at Bill Clinton's inauguration, his first time, they have religious leaders come and pray over the president. And so he invited Billy Graham to come and pray. And they said to Billy Graham, "You can pray as long as you don't mention the name Jesus." So Billy Graham agreed. And they say that at the end of Mr. Graham's prayer,

he said, "I close in the name of Him who said, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me.' Amen."

So we say it's a relationship with the Lord Jesus. And if you're sitting here today and you're not sure you have a relationship with the Lord Jesus, then don't leave. Stay behind; somebody will help you. Make sure that—yeah, you can prepare for present-tense things that are going on, but be prepared for eternity, for the next life.

Let's close with a word of prayer.

Closing Prayer

Father, we're grateful for the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We're thankful that the Lord Jesus Christ 2,000 years ago went to the cross of Calvary and prepared a way for us to enter into having our sins forgiven, to enter into the hope of a home in heaven.

Father, we just pray for Your Word that it might, by Your Holy Spirit, be applied to our hearts. We might have help in understanding. And Lord, we're just so hopeful for the future. Help us to live in the expectation of the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Father, we're reminded that John the Apostle taught that those who have the hope, the coming of the Lord Jesus, that they live different; they purify themselves. And we want to be those people.

Bless each one here, each family represented. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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