

Consummation

The Seven C's of History, Part Seven

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Our Scripture lesson is taken from Revelation chapter 22 on page 1938, beginning at verse 1.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. 4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever. (Revelation 22:1-5)

The Word of the Lord. [“Thanks be to God.”]

May we pray.

Lord, please help me clearly, concisely, compellingly to sum up these Seven C's of History in a way that they are written on our hearts and our memories in an unforgettable way. For Jesus' sake we pray, amen.

1. What Is Heaven Like?

On Saturday night, September the 26th, 1987, I read chapter 21 and chapter 22 to my father in Rapides Regional Hospital in Alexandria, Louisiana.

Two days before, I told him what my dear friend and former family physician, Dr. Bill Brown, had told me. And I said, “Daddy, Dr. Brown told me that you’re dying.”

And he said, “I know, Boy. I can’t help it.”

Two days later, I was with him, and I was reading to him on Saturday night. and I read these two chapters. And the last words my father ever spoke were, “I see it. I see it.”

My father fell asleep in Jesus, and he woke up shortly after that in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a dying man, he was able to see things you and I can’t see.

You know, when people are dying, they often have one foot in this world and the other foot in the world to come, and they see things you and I can’t see.

We’re surrounded by an unseen world. My father saw heaven and he said, “I see it. I see it.”

I want us to ponder what it’s like.

What is heaven like?

What is the new world that God has ordained going to be like?

This is the Seventh C’ of *The Seven C’s of History*.

Now I had planned to talk about this tomorrow night, but I’ll do it, God willing, in August.

I want to show why this little pamphlet is a vital way of sharing Christ, and that all the other things, from *The Three Circles* to *The Four Spiritual Laws*, or you name it, are somewhat inadequate. And it’s because people today do not realize they live in a fallen world.

2. We Live in World Under a Curse.

Do you realize we live in a world that is under a curse? Look there at Revelation chapter 22, page 1938 and verse 3.

No longer will there be any curse. (Revelation 22:3)

We live on a cursed planet. We live under cursed presidents—every single one, going back to George Washington: under a curse. Every single one. All political parties: under a curse. All universities and institutions of higher learning: under a curse. Every single hospital and clinic: under a curse.

Why is it that I have trouble with my knees? My body is still wearing out under the curse of Adam.

3. The Lord Jesus Christ Has Conquered that Curse.

But beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ: Hallelujah! that curse is conquered in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so the *Seventh C' of History* is the Consummation. And if we look, for example, back, let's take, for example, Romans chapter eight, which I trust is a very familiar passage to us because it contains my favorite Scriptures of all time. But if we turn back to page 1757, we see something very powerful in verse 18.

4. But we Live in a Time of Suffering.

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. (Romans 8:18)

Suffering. You suffer? Anybody here suffering psychologically? physically, mentally.

You know, I used to be able—I memorized arias in German and in French, and I could sing them even though those are two languages I've never studied. I could sing them without a problem.

And anyhow, now, even sometimes I've been in giving the benediction, giving the Aaronic benediction, I forget, I lose my place.

And we may mock certain politicians for losing their memory, and that's part of old age, and we may mock other politicians because they remember all too well and then start breaking promises and telling people, "No, no, no," even though it's "Yes, yes, yes."

We're under a curse. We're under a judgment: Republicans, Democrats, Independents, Socialists, Communists, Libertarians—all under a curse. A curse. And so they're suffering.

We get disappointed. You get married. And then what? The honeymoon comes to an end. Wow! It does. What do we mean when we say the honeymoon's over?

It means that you finally put on the glasses of reality and see the other person for what they really are.

Sandy isn't perfect. I thought she was perfect. This beautiful girl I fell in love with, in the basement of a church on a Sunday night in February of 1967. When I followed—I'd accidentally—on purpose by God—but accidentally sat next to her, and we were sharing a hymn book, and I looked at that hand, and I looked up, and I saw her face.

You know that song, I won't sing it. I saw her face.

Anyhow, I fell in love with Sandy then and there. And she went out on one date and wouldn't go out on another date with me again.

And if I was sure that God was in it, I never took "no" for an answer.

But how did I wage war? On my knees every morning at 5:30 I said, "Lord, I believe in manipulating people. But it's not legal for me to do it, Lord. And I can't be effective at it. I'm asking you to manipulate her will. I'm asking you to change her mind. I'm asking you to cause her to fall in love with me."

And we got married July 6th, 1968.

And she thought I was—once she fell in love with me, she fell head over heels in love with me. But on our honeymoon, when I went to turn—we were going to a dinner theater. And she hollered, because I was in her mind, turning in front of a car. I said, "Mama!"

And she knew then and there, this guy's a jerk.

Anyhow, the point I'm making is we live in a fallen world. And reality is, once we see people for what they really are, the honeymoon's over, and then you get down to the real business of loving somebody.

I remember I was smuggling Bibles in China back in 1981, and I was with a Catholic priest by the name of Michael Manning, and he had a TV show on the Eternal Word Network. And he filmed Hollywood stars, and he had them in that show. So anyhow, he and I are sitting together, and we're talking, and he said, "You know, I interviewed Ricardo Montalbán."

Anybody remember Ricardo Montalbán, Mr. Roarke of *Fantasy Island*? And he said, "Ricardo, you have been married to the same person for over 50 years. What is the secret of your success in marriage?"

And this is what Ricardo said, and I'll imitate him. "Every day I choose to love my wife."

When you fall out of love, you begin to choose to love your spouse. It's a matter of your will. And if you don't choose that way, things will get rocky pretty soon. It's very easy to go from a defense attorney, that's before the honeymoon's over, to a prosecuting attorney, that's when the honeymoon's over.

But Ricardo Montalbán, "Every day I choose to love my wife."

We live in a world where we have to choose to love what's right. Our natural inclination is not that way. We live in a fallen world. And that's why he says in Romans 8:18:

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing
with the glory that will be revealed in us. (Romans 8:18)

See, there's a better day coming. There's a day when the curse will be over. There's a day when no longer will people have that sense of Robert Robinson's hymn, "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love" will no longer be that way.

Now listen to what he says. He says, verse 19:

The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay. (Romans 8:19-21)

I want to stop right there. “Its bondage to decay.”

My knees are in bondage to decay. My left rotator cuff is in bondage to decay. And the man that works me out twice a week now is also working out Sandy just before me. And I said, “Don, what do you think about my going ahead and having surgery on my rotator cuff?”

And he said, “Bob, don’t ever do that if you can help it because you’ll only be able to lift five pounds with that at that point.”

I can lift much more than that, but there’s pain. And there’s pain in my knees, as I discovered two weeks ago when I couldn’t get up after sitting next to Aubrey. Wow!

He says, “bondage to decay.” That means every single solitary one of us is decaying.

How do we know that? Well, I think about poor Steve and having to have a second knee replacement. And I think about going into hospitals and how many people go into hospitals and get a staph infection. Wow! I don’t want to be in a hospital if I can help it. And I sure don’t want somebody cutting on me unless everything is absolutely, totally sterile. And in spite of their best efforts and the best hospitals in our world, there’s still things that lurk there: Bondage to decay.

I’d like to have new knees, but I don’t want to risk it. Not at this point. And then he says in this next clause there of verse 21:

And brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.
(Romans 8:21)

What does he mean?

He says in verse 22:

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. (Romans 8:22)

Now I missed one child's birth. My middle daughter was always too fast for me. And I got a call when I was in seminary in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the second seminary I attended, and it was an icy day. And they came and got me out of class, and they said, "Bob, you better get to your house. Sandy's in labor."

So I raced home, and as I went to go out to get in my car, the ice was so slick, I fell and ripped my jacket. But anyhow, I still got out there. I got there, and Sandy had left our baby, Lydia, with a friend, and she was standing there right by the street.

She got in, and we pulled out, and she said, "If you don't want to deliver this baby, you've got to get me to that hospital now."

And I drove over 70 miles an hour with my flashers flashing and blowing my horn through every red light. And when I got there,

They were waiting. And a man came up and said, "Would you like me to park your car?"

And of course, I wasn't thinking at all at that point. I said, "Sure."

You never know. That could have been working for the Pittsburgh Mafia, whoever. But he parked my car, brought my keys in, and by the time I finished registering Sandy and got on the elevator to go upstairs, my little daughter Amy was already born. I missed her birth.

But I was present at the birth of all our other children and one grandchild. And I'll tell you this, watching childbirth, may I say something honest? "I'm so glad I'm a man!" Wow! And St. Paul uses that as an illustration of what the world's going through.

"It's the agony of childbirth," he says, and "has the groanings as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time."

And then notice here in the next verse 23:

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. (Romans 8:23)

5. Our Souls Have Been Redeemed, But not Yet our Bodies.

In other words, 2025: our souls have been redeemed.

There's no doubt if you've trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ, your soul is redeemed. You can never be lost. You can never lose your salvation. Your sins were paid for.

But your body—it hasn't yet experienced redemption. And he says "Our adoption as sons."

In other words, in the present time, the fact that I'm a child of God is not manifested in a way that's different from the world.

Why? Because Christians have knees that wear out and hips that wear out and pain in our backs, and if we fall we experience injury.

There's no difference in the Christian and the non-Christian when it comes to the physical sufferings of this life.

Then he goes on and he says something else.

Verse 24:

For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. (Romans 8:24-25)

So here we are.

We "groan inwardly" (Romans 8:23)

You know the greatest groaning in my life is the fact that I still sin. I don't want to sin. I want to be a better man than I am. Do you know the mark of a Christian is that he is more sinful than he wants to be? Think about that for a moment. The mark of a Christian is that he is more sinful than he wants to be. I still commit sin. Now as I age, some things are limited, but I still have thoughts that are evil.

And sometimes I say things and write things that are wrong and evil. And the thing is this, I would to God I didn't do that anymore.

But then he says this in verse 26, what is our present comfort as we await this redemption?

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. (Romans 8:26-27)

And then he says that everything's working for our good.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)

6. How Could the Deaths of Those Little Girls Be Part of God's Plan for Good?

How could the death of all those little girls in the Guadalupe River, how could that be for good? I'll tell you this. You're going to find out in a minute. Because what you're going to see is the Holy City. And the Holy City is described for us in Revelation 21 and 22. And if you could ever see heaven, you would never want to go back. And if you could ever see heaven as it is, you wouldn't be worried about people who died believing in Christ because they went to a better place.

I think back to October 10th, 1988, when Sandy was run over by that log truck on the old Calcasieu River Bridge in Hineston, Louisiana. And for

three days she went somewhere else. We have a recording of her testimony on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/IaSzxf100lM>).

And I actually have her being filmed because she was transported by helicopter to Cabrini Hospital (<https://youtu.be/F4NT39GU6J4>), St. Francis Cabrini Hospital, part of the Christus Network. And she went somewhere for three days.

She's always been a kind woman, a gentle woman, a sharing woman, a generous woman, but she was raised by a woman who was terrified of virtually everything: thunderstorm—hide in the closet.

When she came back from heaven three days later, all her fear was gone. And she had this sense: the time is short. We must be busy.

In other words, a glimpse of heaven, such as my father had on September 26, 1987, and such as Sandy had on October 10th, 11th, 12th of 1988, changes you.

Once you've seen heaven, once you see the glory of heaven, then nothing in this life is a tragedy anymore. "Because for me to live is Christ," said Paul, "and to die is gain."

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. (Philippians 1:21)

Now if you analyze those last two chapters of Revelation, they explain and confess and follow what's found in Isaiah in several places, and we'll just look quickly at some passages in the book of Isaiah.

7. Revelation 21-22 Fulfills Isaiah's Prophecies of Heaven on Earth.

First of all, Isaiah chapter 2, where he talks about the mountain of the Lord's house being exalted in the last days, and you'll find that on page 1062. He says:

In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. (Isaiah 2:2)

And he goes through, and he talks, and he shares how we'll then have peace. And notice he says in verse 4, Isaiah 2:4:

He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. (Isaiah 2:4)

Wow! That's a beautiful world. Donald Trump promised he was going to bring peace, but he wasn't successful, was he? And you can look over at Isaiah chapter 11, and you find these words, Isaiah chapter 11. And the beautiful world that God would bring, page 1077.

The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. 7 The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. 8 The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. 9 They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:6-9)

And then at the very end of Isaiah chapter 65 he says similar things.

“Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. 19 I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. 20 “Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. 21 They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22 No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands. 23 They will not toil in vain or bear children

doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the LORD, they and their descendants with them. 24 Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, but dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the LORD. (Isaiah 6:17-25)

8. Heaven and Earth Will Be Purged of Corruption.

Now if you would turn with me for a moment to Second Peter chapter three. And that is after the book of Hebrews, and we find there 2 Peter chapter 3, these words, and that is on page 1896. He says, and I think it's important to read much of this chapter, in verse 3 of chapter 3 of 2 Peter.

First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. 4 They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." 5 But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. 6 By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. 7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. (2 Peter 3:4-7)

And we reflected on that when we considered the catastrophe of the flood.

But then he says in verse 8:

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. (2 Peter 3:8)

And so he doesn't say that they are a day. He said they're **like** that. They're similar to that.

In God's eyes, there is no time. God's outside of time. Time is something he created. I can't comprehend that. Can you comprehend that? Can you comprehend how a being can be without time, not subject to time?

Everything I do is subject to time. And I'm constantly running late. Constantly. Constantly. Hope to have surgery soon and make that not happen so frequently.

But anyhow, time. Everything we do here is subject to time. Everything. And then he says this. Verse 9:

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

Think about that. God wants you to come to repentance.

And if you're watching this on the Internet, as people can watch all over the world, including in the most radical Muslim country in the world, Saudi Arabia, God wants you to come to repentance.

He wants you to turn from your life of sin and come to Him. God's delaying the return of Christ so that people will come to repentance. And then he says in verse 10:

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. (2 Peter 3:10)

Think of it. You know, I read certain things. It's so hard to understand what's true and false on the Internet because AI has made the most incredible things possible.

I saw a picture, and it looked so genuine. where Benjamin Netanyahu was standing here, Jeffrey Epstein was standing here, and Donald Trump was putting the Presidential Medal of Freedom around Jeffrey Epstein.

Do I think that happened? Of course not.

But the point is people cannot distinguish between reality and non-reality on the Internet.

That's why I like books. I have a massive library in my house because I don't trust the Internet. Who's telling the truth? Who's lying? Is this manufactured or not? It's just amazing.



But what we do get some picture of things is this, that the Pacific Rim appears to be awakening with tsunamis, with volcanoes under the earth, under the sea rather, and with volcanoes happening here and there.

Are those signs that Christ is about to return? I don't know. The point I want to make is this.

There's coming a day.

It could be today, the 20th day of July 2025. When the day of the Lord, verse 10:

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. (2 Peter 3:10)

Verse 11:

Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. (2 Peter 3:11-12)

“As you look forward to the day of God...” For the believer, for the person who’s put his or her trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, that’s a glorious day. That’s a wonderful day. Because this old world is going to come to an end.

It’s going to be thoroughly purged, covered not with water, but covered with fire. And this is how he describes it. He says:

That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. (2 Peter 3:12)

And then he says in verse 13:

But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. (2 Peter 3:13)

This whole world, this sad world of corruption, of deception, of decay, of knees that don’t work, and rotator cuffs that hurt us whenever we roll over at night, and of other things.

This old world where there’s the sadness of the death of loved ones, this old world where there’s the divorce from someone we love, this whole world where people lie to us and deceive us and trick us, this whole world is going to come to an end.

But for the believer, it's glorious because it's a New Heaven and a New Earth.

And I'll just close by reading those words again that I read to my daddy on September 26, 1987, when he said those words before he died: "I see it. I see it." Revelation 22 verse 1:

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 down the middle of the great street of the city. (Revelation 22:1-2)

Revelation 22 and 21 described for us a return to the pristine beauty, harmony, wholeness, and healthiness of Eden. And that is what we have to look forward to. Everything consummated, everything completed, and the tree of life growing on both sides of the street.

I don't know about you, but I'm ready to get out of here. Are you ready to get out of here? I'm ready to get out of here. I don't want to die yet, because I feel I still have a mission. As long as I can preach, I'm not ready to die.

The moment I can no longer preach, may God Almighty take my life, because that's the most significant thing in my life, is preaching the gospel to people.

But listen. I'm ready to get out of here. I'm tired of crooked politicians who lie and point the finger at others but don't fail to realize they've got three pointing back at themselves. I'm tired of used car salesman telling tales. I'm tired of insurance companies selling me a bill of goods. I'm tired of this old body broken down and weak and weary. I'm tired. I'm tired. I'm tired. I'm ready to go.

I'm ready to see this world transformed and become Eden again because our hope is not just dying and being with Jesus. Our confidence as Christians is that we will live on a new world.

This planet is going to be transformed by fire. All of the molecules that comprise our earth are going to be transformed. Every single molecule of this planet is going to be transformed. And we're going to live in a New Heaven and a New Earth.

Heaven and earth will be one. We will see loved ones in glorious state. As I said to Aubrey two weeks ago, that one day you see people, and you would be overwhelmed with a desire to worship them because they're so glorious. They're so wonderful. And that's going to be how you'll look and how I'll look. No more weakness. No more disfigurement. No more sorrow and sighing and pain. A New World Order, not brought on by George Herbert Walker Bush, messed up the world in some terrible ways.

A New World Order brought on by the Lord Jesus Christ because he can transform every single molecule of every single cell in your body, including your brain. No longer forgetting a song in the middle of it that you've sung probably a thousand times. No longer forgetting a Scripture. Every single thing rewired, reworked, and redone.

Wow! I'm looking forward to that. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

May we pray.

Lord, we pray that you would give us, not simply to look forward to heaven, an incomplete state, where bodies and souls are separated. But Lord, to the New Heaven and the New Earth "in which righteousness dwells in every single molecule of every single cell of living creatures, and even of rocks, every single molecule of every single rock, full of righteousness, no more curse, no more death, no more pain, no more parting. Lord, give us to look forward to your return and to say again, "even so come, Lord Jesus." In Jesus' name, amen.