



river west church

Final Judgment and the Lamb's Book of Life

Revelation 20:11-15

Pastor Guy Gray

6.26.2011

The End of the Epic Story

The Book of Revelation is epic. It's the story of cosmic conflict. It's the story of world history. It's the story of Christ's victory over evil.

Think of Revelation 20 as the end of the story. That makes chapters 21 and 22 the epilogue.

All the conflict comes to an end in chapter 20. This is the climax, the final battle. This is when evil is finally and forever defeated. Revelation began with this dramatic statement, "And he made us a kingdom of priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." (1:6). Now, finally, we see the ultimate fulfillment of these words (20:4).

This is the great reversal. Those who ruled with oppression are thrown down. Those who served Christ and therefore suffered oppression begin to rule. This is how the story ends.

How do you see your life? How do you see the future? Do you believe that your life is part of an epic story that is cosmic in scope? Do you believe in the ultimate victory of Christ? Do you believe the "great reversal" that is described in this chapter? Do you think it matters? How does it impact your life, right here, right now?

The Moment of Personal Accountability

The power of chapter 20 is how it moves from the epic to the personal. The first part is sweeping in its scope. It spans a thousand years. It pictures an epic battle. The second part is focused and intimate. Everything else recedes from view. All that is left is the throne of God almighty and every individual life standing before God. The books are opened. Each individual stands before God to give an account of every action, every choice. This is how the story ends.

How do you see your life? How do you see the future? Do you believe in individual accountability before God? Do you believe that you will stand before the throne of God to give an account? Do you think it matters? How does it impact your life, right here, right now?

Jesus, the Gospel, and a New Beginning

Then there is that one last book that gets opened, the book of life. Keep your eye on this book. This is the book that changes everything. The book of life is the book of God's grace in Christ. Jesus spoke of this book (Luke 10:20). Apostle Paul spoke of this book (Philippians 4:3). First God opens the book of works. Then He opens the book of life.

Is your name written in the book of life? Do you know how to get it there? Do you believe it matters?

This is how the story ends. But it doesn't really end, does it? It actually leads to a whole new beginning. Do you believe this? Do you live like it matters? This is the point of the Book of Revelation. We need to apply it to our own lives, right here, right now.