

Upgrade Your Destination

Rick Blackwood: Well, hey everybody. Hey I love that song because that's exactly what we're going to be talking about today from the book of Revelation. The book of Revelation is a book about going home and I'm so excited about today's message. I want to take a moment to welcome all of you to Christ Fellowship. I want to welcome all of our campuses joining us livestream, streaming, our local campuses, our global campuses and our online campuses. Let's give it up for everybody, Christ Fellowship.

Yeah, if you're a guest with us for the first time today, we're so glad and so honored to have you. My name's Rick and I serve as the Lead Pastor. You caught us at a great time, if this is your first time. Because just a few weeks back, we kicked off this study of the book of Revelation and we're still in chapter 1, right? What an incredible book it is and today we're going to continue that study.

I want to ask all of us to remain standing as we read God's word, in honor of God's word. If you have your bible, you can open it to Revelation chapter 1, verse 1. That's what we're going to read. If you don't have a bible, don't worry about it. All of the text will come up on the screen, and you can track with us that way. Just to get us started, I want to read one verse and then we're going to come back and unpack a bunch of verses today.

Here's what the bible says in verse 1, "The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants, watch this, what must soon take place." Now you can hold your place there and at all of our campuses, you can grab a seat. I want to set the message up today by saying this, sharing this with you. Today, Rhonda and I are celebrating our 40th wedding anniversary. Yeah. 40 years ago, today, and today at the conclusion of this service, I'm taking Rhonda to our downtown campus, and we're going to repeat our vows to each other. I can hardly wait. So excited.

But folks, check this out. To show Rhonda how much I really love her, I want to take her and take her on an anniversary vacation this summer. And mind you, not just any old vacation. The fact is, I want to take her on a vacation journey that leads to a vacation destination that's going to be extra, extra special for her. Now folks, I say all of that because for the past 34 years, I've basically taken Rhonda on the same old, same old vacation. I mean year after year and decade after decade.

By that I mean, at vacation time, every summer, we pick the same old week. We go to the same old place in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, to the same old campground. We get the same old campground sight. We rent the same old campground golf carts and every day we get on the same old campground golf cart and we drive around the same old campground. We see the same old campground sights, wave at the same old campground people, go to the same old campground beach and do the same old campground stuff. The next day we get back in the golf cart, we drive around the same old campground. Yeah. We see the same old

campground sights, wave at the same old campground people, go to the same old campground beach and do the same old campground stuff.

Folks, we have done this for 34 years. Don't get me wrong. We love Ocean Lakes campground, but folks it seems like to me that our vacation life is stuck in this circle of sameness. There's nothing new to it anymore. There's no more wows about it anymore. I'll tell you what. Hold that thought because what an image of how many people spend not just their vacation life but their whole life.

By that I mean their life is not a journey that's going to a destination, but rather it's more like a circle of sameness because every day they get out of the same old bed, go to the same old bathroom, look in the same old mirror, at the same old face. They go to the same old table, have the same old breakfast. Get in the same old car, drive through the same old traffic, to the same old place of work and do the same old job. Then they get back in the same old car, they go back through the same old traffic, home to the same old house, sit down in this same old chair, pick up the same old remote, surf the same old channels and watch the same old stuff.

Folks, they're going to do that again tomorrow the same thing again. I want you to follow me here because what gets lost in that circle of sameness is all of the firsts. By that I mean, if you'll remember when you were younger and there were all of those firsts in your life that made you go, "Wow." For example, there was your first steps in life, and you went wow. Then there was the first grade, and you went, wow. Then you rode your first bicycle and you went wow. Then you got your first bicycle, and you went wow. Then maybe you had your first girlfriend or boyfriend, and you went wow. Then you drove your first car and you went wow. You got your first car, and you went wow.

You went out maybe on your first date and you went wow. And you went to your first college, and you went wow, and you got your first job, and you went wow. And you got your first paycheck, and you went wow. So folks, life was this journey for you. It was a journey and there was all of this newness that caused you to go wow, along the way. But I don't have to tell you that life has a way of settling into a circle of sameness, doesn't it? The sameness is your job, your home, and your family.

So it's like, I'm doing my job. I'm going home. Spending time with my family. Going to the job. Going home. Family. Job. Home. Family. Vacation, woo. Job. Home. How many of you are going to relate to that? Yeah. Again, folks what gets lost is the journey and all of the newness to life. Tell you what? Back to our vacation. Because this year, I'm upgrading our vacation from this circle of sameness to this journey of newness. I'm going to take my bride on a vacation journey, to a vacation destination. It's going to be extra, extra special.

Can I share the journey that I've got planned for Rhonda? Can I share it with you? Okay, here it is. First of all, we're going to fly from Miami, the city that we love. We do. We love Miami. We're going to fly from Miami and we're going to fly to Italy. Yeah. We're going to spend several days and nights in Rome, Italy. Then we're getting on a boat and we're cruising from Rome to Athens, Greece. I always wanted

to go there. Then we're going to cruise from Athens, Greece to Turkey, where the Apostle Paul planted all of these churches we're going to get to see. Then we're going to the ultimate Christian destination, and I'm talking about Israel. Yeah.

Now folks, this is the timeline that I have planned for Rhonda. This is the journey that I can't wait to take her on. Because she's going to see things her eyes have never seen before. She's going to hear things her ears have never heard before, and she's going to experience things that she's never experienced before and I know she's going to say wow. That's what I'm so excited about.

Now, let me turn a corner and bring that all over to our study of the book of Revelation because what an image of the journey that Jesus has planned for all of us, who by the way, he calls us his bride. Here's my proposition. This is what I want you to walk out the door with at all of our campuses today. Listen. The moment you trusted Christ as your savior, let's give it up for our volunteers. I feel so blessed. Listen, the moment you trusted Christ as your savior, you became his bride. Not only that. You entered into a journey with him.

As you're going to see today, this journey is the antithesis of the circle of sameness that we may feel in this life, because this journey begins in this life and it lasts forever and ever and ever. Here's what you're going to see today. Along the way, in this journey, you're going to hear things your ears have never heard before, first time. You're going to see sights along this journey, that your eyes never even imagined. And you're going to have experiences that you've never had anything like before, never even imagined. All along the way in this journey, you're going to be saying, wow.

Let's practice it. You're on the journey so let's practice it. Wow. Yeah. Now you might be saying, "Well, Rick, how do I get on this journey with Christ and where is this journey actually leading me?" Well I'm glad you asked because that's what the book of Revelation is all about. Revelation reveals the timeline. It reveals the plan for the journey that God has planned for you, his child.

So with that in mind, I want to give you two thoughts about the book of Revelation today. How many of you have your listening guides? Wave them in the air at all of our campuses. Listen, let me say this. Today is going to come across a lot more like a study than a sermon. Study. Think study because this is going to, this is even harder for me to get across to you. You got to get your study mind on and lean into this. I want to give you two thoughts with that in mind as we unpack this text.

Number one, Revelation reveals the future. Revelation reveals the future. Now with that in mind, let's pick it up with chapter 1, verse 1. Here's what the bible says, "The revelation from Jesus Christ ..." Now stop right there. Let me give you a quick review. You'll recall the word Revelation is the key word in the whole book. In fact, that word revelation in the English has been translated from the Greek word apocalupto. Remember your bible's originally written in koine Greek, translated to English, Spanish, French, whatever. Every time you see that word Revelation, it comes from the Greek word apocalupto.

The prefix apo in the Greek means away from. Calupto means to cover something. Apocalupto then means to take away the cover. It means to reveal something that has previously not been revealed. What is being revealed in the book of Revelation? It tells you in chapter 1, verse 1. Look at it. Here's what's revealed. "The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave to him to show his servants what, watch this, what must soon take place."

Now stop right there because that phrase, what must soon take place, answers what is being revealed in the book of Revelation. What is being revealed in the book of Revelation? Here it is. God's plan for the world's future. God's plan for the world's future. Folks, as we unpack this book over the next weeks and months to come, here's what you're going to discover, and this is so important, so write this down as A and B. Here's what you need to know. The book of Revelation reveals God's timeline for the future. Here's what you need to know about the timeline. Revelation reveals the future, the future timeline, watch this, in chronological sequence.

In fact, folks, everybody heads up. It's in chronological sequences, you're going to see chapter by chapter by chapter. Here's what the book of Revelation does. I'm going to give you a bird's eye view of it. We're going to ignore the trees and look at the forest. Here's what Revelation does. Revelation reveals in chronological order, the sequence of events that will lead up to and usher in the return of Christ to the earth. Happens in chapter 19. And that will lead to the establishment of a whole new world, that Jesus Christ will rule and reign over.

That is the bird's eye view of the book of Revelation. So, I want to give you the quick timeline. Ready for that? Okay here's the timeline of the book of Revelation. Remember it starts in chapters. Starting in chapter 1, the book of Revelation starts the future sequence of events at the cross. By that I mean the death and resurrection of Jesus. Listen to what we read in chapter 1. Listen to this.

Jesus is talking and he says, "I am the Living One; I was dead," that was the cross. "Now I am, now look I am alive forever and ever. And I have the keys to death and Hades." Everybody, everybody heads up because God's plan for the future of this world, listen, it begins with the death and resurrection of Christ. Because it was at the cross and the resurrection that Jesus conquered death and Hades and made it possible for you and I to have everlasting life and to go on this everlasting journey.

Chapter 1 begins with the death and the resurrection of Christ. Get it? All right. Good. Because after the death and resurrection of Jesus, the first thing that Jesus did after his death and resurrection was he launched this movement that's called the what? The church. The church is comprised of all of God's people. We are not a church. We're actually part of the church. We're living right now in the church age. The church age started right after Jesus' resurrection. He launched the church, and it's revealed for us in chapters 2 and 3 of the book of Revelation.

In fact, just to give you an idea, listen to chapter 2, verse 1. "To the angel of the, to

the church ..." So the church age is the age we're living in. In fact folks, we're living in Revelation 2 and 3. You can think of it like this. When Jesus was telling John to write the book of Revelation, he said, John I want you to write what happened in the past. I want you to write what happened in the present. And I want you to write what's going to happen in the future. The cross in chapter 1 is the past. Okay? Yeah?

The church in chapters 2 and 3, we're living in chapters 2 and 3. That's the present. Everything else after that is in the future. Get it? Good. Because, because the next event on God's calendar is what is called the rapture of the church. We read about that in chapters 4 and 5. How many of you've ever heard that term rapture? Yeah, some of you have. If you haven't, here's what it is, simply put. It is a future time when all believers who are alive on the face of the earth, watch this, will be extracted off the planet from earth to heaven. It will be the most remarkable event in the history of the world, but all believers will be extracted off the face of the earth.

By the way, this is not only a picture of what we call the rapture. This is also an image of your death. Because as a believer, when you die, this is what happens. The same thing. Your spirit will be extracted from earth to where? To heaven. To be with the Lord. So get it, the cross chapter 1, the church age we're living in right now, chapters 2 and 3. The next event, chapters 4 and 5 all believers in heaven. Why are we taken to heaven? It's because once all believers are off the earth in heaven, a period of time known as the great tribulation will start back down on the earth.

Jesus spoke about the great tribulation and it is revealed in Revelation 6 through 18. What is it? It will be seven years, a seven year period on this earth, when God and Jesus will go to war with Satan, demons and evil men. The objective will be for God and Christ to take back the rule of the earth. The great tribulation again is spelled out in 6 through 18, 13 chapters, so a lot of ink is given to that. It unfolds in three judgments, the seal judgments, the trumpet judgments and the bowl judgments. We'll get into all of that later on.

But that's ... Do you see the sequence? Chapter 1, death and resurrection. Chapter 2 and 3, the age we live in now, the church. The next event, chapters 4 and 5, the rapture. After that, back to the earth, the great tribulation gets started, for seven years. Then at the conclusion of the great tribulation, in Revelation chapter 19, Jesus comes back to the earth in what is known as the second coming, or the second advent. He comes back at the battle of Armageddon, but he comes back to the earth.

Once he gets back to the earth, Jesus will establish a what? A kingdom on the earth. That kingdom is spelled out in Revelation chapter 20. At the end of that, by the way that kingdom will last 1000 years. It's called the Millennial Kingdom, a 1000 year reign of Christ on this earth. Then at the conclusion of that 1000 years, Jesus will destroy the universe and this earth. Destroy it.

In chapter 21 and 22, he creates a new earth and a new universe that lasts forever and ever and ever. So folks, watch the sequence. Chapter 1, death and resurrection of Christ. Chapter 2, the church age, the age we're in right now. Chapters 4 and 5, either your death or removal to heaven. Chapter 6 through 18, the great tribulation. Chapter 19, Christ comes back at the end of the great tribulation. Chapter 20, he sets up the kingdom on this earth for 1000 years. At the end of that 1000 years, he establishes the new earth and the new heavens which take us into eternity.

Now, here's a question. Get it? Let me say it again, get it? Good, because here's what you need to know. If you understand this timeline, you will understand the book of Revelation. It's not that complicated. Not only that, if you understand this timeline, you'll understand the future of the world. Now I can hear some of you thinking. You're thinking, so what? You're thinking so what because you're saying, "Rick, that's all about the world's future. What about my future? What about my world? Does Revelation have any relevance to my world and my future?"

A lot of people think not. But nothing could be further from the truth. You see, Revelation's not only about the future. Write this down, this big number two. Revelation reveals your future. Revelation reveals your future. In other words, listen. Revelation not only reveals God's plan for the world, but Revelation, don't miss this, reveals God's plan for your world, and your future.

You see, once you become a Christian, as a child of God, your life, don't miss this, is wound up in this timeline. This timeline, listen, is all about your journey. It's all about your future, and it's all about your destination. You see, here's what we need to realize. Write this down as A and B. This is so important. Many people if not most people have a short range view of their destination. By that, I mean many people think this life is it. In other words, in their mind, the one to about 100 years or less is all they get. This deal is it.

In their minds, this life is short-lived. It is a dead end and the clock is winding down on them, which is why so many people get depressed about life when life doesn't go as they planned it to go, because this is the only deal in their mind they've got. In their mind, the clock is winding down. It's ticking down now. Now folks, here's what I love about the book of Revelation. You see the book of Revelation lets us know that once we come to Christ and once you have come to Christ, you became an everlasting person. This is not the only deal for you. You are an everlasting person and you are on an everlasting journey.

In fact, write this down as B. Revelation reveals the timeline of your journey. In other words, when you came to Christ, watch this, your life got put on this timeline. Like a train on a track, and you need to understand, this, look at it. This is your journey. This is not just a bunch of eschatology. This is your journey. This is your future. It's all about your destination, that God has planned for you.

Here's what I love about our journey that we read about in Revelation. Write this down as C. The journey is all about newness versus sameness. Let me take you back

to the beginning. Life has a way, doesn't it, of settling into sameness, so that there are less and less wows and more and more of been there. Done that already. Got a t-shirt for it. It settles into sameness but listen. The journey that God has you on, is filled with newness. It's filled with firsts and it's filled with wows along the way.

Can I take a moment and show you the journey that God has planned for you? I want you to see how personal all of this is. Can I take a moment to share the journey that God has planned for you? All right. So I want to do that and I want to do it ... By the way, listen to the newness in verse 5 at the end of the book almost. God say, "He who was seated on the thrown said I'm making everything ..." what? New. Just a footnote. The word new there, from the Greek word, kainos, doesn't mean just new in terms of time. It means new in terms of quality. It means new in terms of experience. We're going to have all of these new, first time wow experiences on this journey.

Here's the journey. Are you ready? I want you to write the journey down in eight stages. Here's where you're going. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. The clock is ticking down on me, so I got to hurry. Okay? So here we go, write them down as one, two, three through eight. Here we go. Number one. Your journey began with Christ. To put it another way, it began at the cross. Listen to chapter 1 again. Here's where it starts. Jesus says "I am the living one. I was dead, and now look, I am alive," how long? Forever and what? Ever. Now think about it. Put your thinking caps on.

The cross represents that moment in time when Christ died and then rose again to live forever and ever and ever. But not only that, the cross in chapter 1 represents that moment in time when you came to Christ and listen. You became an everlasting person and you now are going to live forever and ever and ever. That's why you're already on the journey. You see, child of God, you're not going to get eternal life. You've already got it. It's already in you and you've already started this journey.

So with that in mind, here's what you need to know. Write this down as number two. Your journey places you on a mission in this life. Your journey's going on right now. You've got a mission. Listen to chapter 2, verse 1. "To the angel of the church," listen in chapter 3, "To the angel of the church in Sardis." So the word church tells us there that we're still in this life, right? We're still in the church age.

Listen, as a child of God, you are a part of God's church. You're a part of the church's mission. Now we're going to look at that mission in chapters 2 and 3 in a few weeks. But let me give the mission to you in short. You've heard me say it many, many times. Our mission, your mission is to bring people who are far away from Christ into a loving relationship with him, so that they become followers of him. That's the mission we have right now. That's your mission.

Listen, that mission will determine whether people receive eternal death or receive eternal life. So nothing in this world rivals that mission that you've been given in terms of scope and in terms of significance. You know what that means about your

mission right now? That means wow. Wow. My life is not a circle. I'm on a mission for the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Nothing rivals that mission.

Listen. Listen. Here's what I love. When your mission is over, when your time on this earth is over, and when your life in this world is over, listen, it's not over. You're just getting started. Because write this down as number three. I love this. So important, listen. Your journey will take you from earth to where? To heaven. Listen to chapter 4, so you see, one where you got saved. 2, you were in the church age. Here's the next event for you in the journey. Listen to this.

"After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open," where? "In heaven." Now listen, yeah, that describes the rapture and we're going to talk about that, but more than that, that actually is a description of the death of God's people. Because listen to verse 2, "At once I was," what's the next three words? "In the Spirit, and there before me was a throne," where? "In heaven." Everybody, heads up. That phrase, in the Spirit, that's the bible's way of describing death for the child of God.

Here's what happens when you die, child of God. Your body dies, goes back to the grave, but as soon as your body dies, your spirit which is on the inside, will now be out of your body. Your body's dead. Your spirit's still alive. So you are now in the Spirit. That's what death is. Body's dead. You're now in the Spirit. What happens to your Spirit when you die? Listen. At once, I saw a tunnel. I saw a weird thing. I got scared. Is that what happens? No. At once, when I was in the Spirit, at death, there before me was a throne, where? In heaven.

Let me tell you something. Death for the child of God, instant heaven. Instant heaven. No tunnels. No lights. Instant heaven. We're going to talk about that but for right now, here's what I want you to wrap your arms around, your mind around about heaven. Listen to this. Heaven is going to be a wow like you never even thought about. Here's why it's going to be a wow. Because it's going to be your first sight of God Almighty. It's going to be your first sight of your maker, your creator. It's going to be your first sight of your savior.

Can you imagine? Jesus Christ. It's going to be your first sight of angels whose power is incredible. Not only that. It's going to be your first experience with those people, your first experience with those people that you felt like you lost, and for the first time you're going to see them since they left and went to heaven, and it will be your first sight. I think of my mom and my dad, I believe. To first see them. Rhonda, I know loves her mother. They were such friends. The first time to see her mother Goldie, to walk with her, to be with her. Can you imagine? That first time again.

When you think about that first time, it's like wow. Not only that. It will be your first time to experience life with absolutely no pain, no sorrow, no depression. Anybody depressed? Don't worry about it. It's short-lived stuff. No depression. No regrets, no disease, no cancer and no death. That's heaven. Folks, I tell you, that's why when people talk to me about cancer, I'm like, either way it's good. I can't wait

to see them. I like a few wows. I'm ready for some wows.

But listen, you need to know this. Heaven's not the final stopping place. I'll say more about that next, but listen. After we're in heaven, everybody, all believers in heaven, the great tribulation starts back on the earth, again. Seven years back on the earth. When God and Satan will go at it. There will be judgment poured out by God in three different judgments, the seal judgments, the trumpet judgments and the saucer judgments. God just basically carpet-bombs his enemies.

In fact, listen to chapter 6, verse 1, I got to hustle. Here's the beginning of the tribulation. "I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals." The opening of that seal launches the great tribulation in chapter 6, verse 1. Then for 18 chapters, listen to this, "Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a loud voice like thunder, Come. And then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth."

Make no mistake about it. Seven years when peace will be taken from the earth because God goes to war with Satan. Sound scary? It sounds scary but here's the good news. Write this down as four. Your journey will include extracting you from the great tribulation. In other words, if you happen to be alive when this hits, no problem because before God begins to go to war, he's going to pull you out of the way. It's like extracting his soldiers off the battlefield.

We get a glimpse of it in chapter 7, verse 13. This scene is in heaven. Watch what happens. "Then one of the elders asked me, these in white robes? Who are they and where did they come from? And he said these are those who have come out of," what? The great tribulation. He's going to pull us out before he begins to just carpet-bomb Satan, demons and take this world back. Here's what I love even more. Write this down as number five. Your journey will bring you from heaven back to the earth with Christ.

That is called what? The second coming. As Christ comes from heaven back to the earth at the end of the tribulation. Watch who comes back with him. Listen to this. Chapter 19, verse 11, here's the second coming. "I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse whose rider is called faithful and true. With justice he judges and wages," what? War. He's coming back to fight the battle of Armageddon. The battle of Armageddon is basically Jesus destroying Satan, his demons and his enemies.

"His eyes are like blazing fire and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself." This is Jesus. "He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood and his name is the word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean." Listen to this. That's you and me, coming back. We've been in heaven through the tribulation. Now we're coming back with Christ to the earth. Watch this.

"Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the

wrath of God Almighty, and on his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of kings and Lord of Lords." Child of God, don't miss it. Part of your journey ... Can you imagine? You're in that entourage, coming in all of the glory and power of the angels and all the armies of God, us coming back with him, king of kings and the Lord of Lords.

He comes back as the king of kings in chapter 19. Guess what he does in chapter 20? He established a kingdom on this earth. So write this down as number six. Your journey will take you into the 1000-year reign on the earth. The king comes back to set up his kingdom. Listen to it in chapter 20, "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent who's the devil or Satan, and bound him," how long? 1000 years. So as this kingdom starts, Satan is bound for the 1000 years.

Verse 6, "Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection." That's all believers. "They will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him," how long? 1000 years. What is Jesus coming back for? King is coming back to establish a 1000 year kingdom. By the way, this is the fulfillment of Jesus' pray, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Listen, what politicians, what diplomacy and what war has not done in 6000 years of history, the king of kings, the prince of peace, will do, when he comes back. He establishes that kingdom, and you and I are going into that kingdom. We're going to spend 1000 years in that kingdom, reigning with him.

By the way, when you come back, write this down as number seven. Here's an important part of the journey. God will give you a new body for the rest of your journey. You see, you weren't meant to be a spirit. That's not too attractive, is it, to think I'm a spirit, a ghost. What's that? Well don't worry about it because you won't be that long. You were meant to be just like you are right now, body, soul and spirit. You will get that.

With a body, soul and spirit, but it will be one that will not know pain. Hard to imagine isn't it? Sorry, death, depression, sadness, hate, none of that. All of that will be passe, and then with that new body, that will never die, write this down as number 8, your home destination will be the new earth. Chapters 21 and 22. See how your journey flows through the chapters?

So let's look at this new world. Chapter 21, verse 1, "Then I saw a new heaven," by the way, that's the Greek word, uranos. It's not like the heaven where God lives. It's the word we get the planet Uranus from, and it means the universe, the galactics. So I saw a new universe is the idea and a new earth. "For the first universe and the first earth had passed away." God will destroy this current universe and create a whole new universe and a whole new earth.

You say what's it going to be like? Well listen to verse 3, "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying look, God's dwelling place is now among the people and he will dwell with them." God's coming to earth. They will be his people and God

himself will be with them and be their God and he will wipe every tear from their eyes and there will be no more what? Death nor mourning nor crying or pain. Why? For the old order of things is passed away.

"He who was seated on the throne said I am making everything new and then he said, write this down. For these words are trustworthy and true." This is it, child of God. This is the journey your savior is going to take you on. This is where the destination is that lasts forever and ever and ever. Listen, I don't know what you may be going through in this little brief stint of this life. Maybe people aren't treating you like you want to be treated. Let me just remind you. It's like the song said, "All I know is I'm not home yet. This is not where I belong. Take this world and give me Jesus. This is not ..." listen, this is not your destiny. This is your destiny.

You're not home yet. Remember that. It's amazing how we hear preachers talk about, you got to have your destiny on the earth. This is not your destiny. This is your mission. This is your mission. You have a mission here. Your destiny is this way, forever and ever and ever. You're not home yet. Remember that.

I want to close with this story. Years ago, back in the day, there was a missionary by the name of Henry Morrison. He and his wife had served on the mission field for 40 years. After 40 years, they retired and they were on a ship coming into New York City where they were coming home to retire. As they were coming into the port, they saw thousands of people gathered on the dockside, cheering, shouting and Henry turned to his wife and he said look at all of those people who've come to welcome us home.

But folks as they got closer, they realized the welcome home was not for them. It was for then President Teddy Roosevelt who was coming home from a hunting trip. Henry Morrison was so distraught, he said to his wife, he said this is not right. He said, we spend 40 years of our life serving God and nobody's here to welcome us home. This guy goes on a hunting trip and the world comes out to welcome him home. He said I can't believe. Why is there nobody here to welcome us him.

His wife looked at him and she said, "Henry, we're not home yet. We're not home yet." This is your home, child of God. Are you on the journey? Are you ready for the rest of the journey? It only gets better. This is where our God is taking us. And listen, listen, listen. If you're not on the journey yet, he welcomes you. Even the last of the book of Revelation is an invitation for you to join the journey.

I want to challenge you to do that today if you never have. At all of our campuses, I'm going to ask us to bow our heads, every head bowed, every eye closed. I want to ask you a question. The question is this. If you died today, do you know for sure, not do you hope so, not do you think so, but do you know that you would go to be with God in heaven? If you know that beyond any shadow of a doubt, while nobody's looking around, if you know that, would you slip up your hand as a testimony to God? As your way of saying, God I know if I die right now, I'm coming to be with you.

In all of our campuses, just lift up your hand. You can put your hands down. I always know when I ask that question that there are folks who couldn't raise their hand. Maybe that was you. You'd say, "Well Rick, the reason why I didn't raise my hand is because I don't know if I died that I would go to be with the Lord." But maybe at the same time, you wish you did know that. In fact, maybe as you've listened to this talk today from God's word, maybe you thought, I wish I was on that journey. I wish I was a part of that journey. I wish I had eternal life.

Well listen. If that's what you feel in your heart, I've got great news for you. Here's what the bible says you have to do, you need to do to receive eternal life. Here's what it says. The bible says everyone, that means you, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Will be given eternal life. Translation, will go to heaven. Will go on this journey.

So what do you need to do to receive everlasting life? You don't have to join a church. You don't have sign anything. You don't have to become a member of anything. God says all you have to do is ask him. He'll give it to you and put you on the journey with him. So why don't you ask him, right there where you're seated, in the quiet of this moment. You might be saying, Rick, I don't know what to say. Well listen let me lead you in a prayer, and you pray this prayer, not to me. You pray it to your heavenly Father because he's listening with all of his heart.

You pray this quietly in your heart. Dear Heavenly Father, this journey is amazing. I thank you for inviting me to come along with you. I realize that it's what I've really been longing for, my whole life. I've had enough of this same old, same old, same old. I long for the newness of this journey with you. So right now, I open the door to my heart. I open the door to my life. I ask you to forgive all of my sins. I ask you to give me everlasting life. Take me on this journey with you.

Lord thank you for loving me. Thank you for caring about me. Thank you for giving me eternal life. May I from this day forward, spend the rest of my life on this mission for you, loving you. May I be faithful to be here at church to worship you and to learn about you and may I spend my life experiencing your love. I pray this in your precious name, amen.

Christ Fellowship, if you're glad for all of those who just trusted Christ as their savior, starting this journey, let them know it. Yes. Now listen. At all of our campuses, for all of you, give me that camera right there. Yeah, for all of you who just prayed that prayer, you just started this journey with your Maker and nothing you can do, right or wrong, good or bad will ever take you off the track. But here's what we love about our Lord. He loves is when we let other people know that we love him.

I always tell you, I wear this ring to let the world know that I love Rhonda. Listen, Jesus loves it when we let the world know that we love him. So for all of you who just prayed that prayer at all of our campuses, here's what I'm going to ask you to do. In a moment, I'm going to count to three. When I do, if you just prayed that prayer, I'm going to ask you to raise your hand in the air, like that, okay? Here's

why. It will be your way of saying I love him. I just started the journey with him, and I want folks to know it.

But number two, also if you'll look at the aisles of all of our campuses, you'll see folks standing in the aisle, and they have a card in their hand and when you raise your hand, they want to put that card in your hand and here's why. At the end of the service, at your campus, take that card to the next step booth. You'll see a big sign, next step. Every campus has them. Give them that card and they're going to give you a new copy of the bible, the word of God. You see, you just started this journey with your maker, and you're going to need this book to light the way.

The bible says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." We want to give you a copy. So when I count to three, I want you to raise your hand if you just prayed that prayer. By the way, Christ Fellowship, if you're praying for all of those that they'll raise their hand, let them know it. Yes. All right. Here we go. If you prayed that prayer, raise your hand on three, at all of our campuses. You ready? One, two, ready, three. Raise your hand. Don't be shy. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you at all our campuses. Keep your hands up. Wait till you get that card. Amen. Amen.

All right. Let's all stand together. We're going to sing this song again, All I Know. (singing).

Speaker 2: Come on. Let's put our hands together as we sing this. Come on. Come on.