

the **BIG** Story

RESTORATION

DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Reckoning

(Revelation 19.11 - 20.15)

Week of April 28th, 2019

This guide is designed to be used for community group discussions, but can easily be adapted for personal reflection.

Leader's Notes

As we've been working through our series the Big Story, we've been saying that the Bible is not a series of isolated moral tales, but rather each of the smaller parts help to form a bigger story. This story can be summarized: Creation, Fall, Redemption and Restoration. Since January we have been trying to work through these themes by drilling down into 3 places in Scripture: Genesis 1-4 (beginning), Romans 1-4 (middle), and Revelation (19-22).

This week we're jumping into the final section and the final chapters of the Bible.

NOTE: This week we're looking at Revelation 19.11-20.15 - "The Reckoning." Next week, we'll actually jump back to Revelation 19.1-10 - "The Wedding Supper of the Lamb." We only do this because The Wedding Supper passage is more suited to our Flying Pig weekend.

19.11-21 — At long last, Christ comes to save his people through the judgment of their enemies. Unlike every antichrist or satanic beast, Jesus is Faithful and True (v. [11](#)).

Jesus is able to save because he knew no sin ([2 Cor. 5:21](#)), and he will reign in a way that is worthy of trust: in righteousness he judges and makes war ([Rev. 19:11](#)). He will slay his enemies with the sword that comes from his mouth (v. [21](#); cf. the power of the word of gospel truth represented in [1:16](#); [2:12, 16](#); [19:15](#)). Because the battle has not yet begun, the description in verse [13](#) that he is clothed in a robe dipped in blood seems to refer to his own blood from his death on the cross rather than to the image of [Isaiah 63:3](#), where the divine warrior wears a robe spattered with the blood of his enemies. People will either be saved by the blood of Jesus through faith in him or they will be judged and will pay for their sins with their own blood. One way or another, all sin will be punished.

John is encouraging persecuted Christians to keep the faith, to reject the world-pleasing idolatry that would end their persecution, and to keep the commands of God and avoid sexual immorality. He has shown them how Satan, the beast, and the false prophet have used the wicked world as a prostitute to sell what could be had for free

in covenant with God ([Revelation 13 and 17](#)). Now John shows the beast and false prophet captured and thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur in [19:20](#). Strengthening believers in the conviction that the deceivers will one day be judged is a powerful argument to be vigilant against deception and to adhere to the truth.

[20.1-10](#) - The argument for vigilance against deception continues in chapter 20, verses [1-3](#), where Satan is seized and bound for a thousand years, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer (as he was doing in [12:9 and 13:14](#)). During the thousand years in which Satan is bound, those slain while he was deceiving the nations (cf. [11:7; 13:7, 15](#)) are raised from the dead to reign with Christ ([20:4-6](#)). These who believed the gospel and were faithful to it during the persecution (described in [11:1-14; 12:1-13:18; and 17:1-18](#)) are now raised from the dead to receive their reward. The rewards received (chs. [20-22](#)) correspond to the promises made to those who conquer (chs. [2-3](#)), encouraging the churches to overcome and receive what has been promised.

[20.11-15](#) - After the final rebellion (vv. [7-10](#)), the dead are judged according to what they have done (v. [12](#)). This judgment is in keeping with the moral order of God's universe, and is not in conflict with the gospel of grace. Indeed, the very same verse speaks of the book of life, which contains the names of those who are saved (v. [15](#); cf. [13:8; 17:8](#)). God, then, who has written their names there, is ultimately responsible (rather than the believers' works) for their salvation. We are saved by grace through faith in "the word of God and the testimony of Jesus" ([1:2, 9](#)).

Those who are saved have "overcome" sin by faith in Christ ([1 John 5:4-5](#)). They have made white their heavenly robes by washing them in the blood of the Lamb ([Rev. 7:14](#)), so that the crowns of the best of these are cast at the feet of Jesus, who alone is to receive glory ([4:10-11](#)). At the same time, those who have been truly saved have clearly demonstrated their salvation by grace through a faithful and transformed life, even through tribulation (cf. [7:14](#)).

NOTE: Though we're not working through all of Revelation, and thus not trying to work through all the nooks and crannies of eschatology in this series, some of your folks may have some questions. This week we'll send you a short essay by Tim Chester explaining the three dominant millennial views that have been held throughout church history. This is for your background reading and personal edification, but you can also pass it on to folks in your group if you'd like.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Share the following things coming up in the life of the church:

Flying Pig Weekend: The first Sunday of May is always a BIG day for our city and we've taken to making a weekend of it! The Flying Pig Marathon runs Sunday morning (right through our neighborhoods). So, *we will NOT meet to worship on Sunday morning, May 5.* Instead, we'll worship all together in one service on Saturday afternoon May 4th @ 4p & then feast together afterward.

Eli's BBQ is catering most of the goodies for our "pig out" (pulled pork, mac and cheese, etc.), but we need you to sign-up to bring a few items for the meal. We're also looking for volunteers to help before and after the dinner. We ask that for your contribution to the feast you bring the following to share; last name starting with: A-M : Dessert and N-Z : Drinks

We'll provide water as well as some special drinks courtesy of Karrikin. If you're on drinks - last name N through Z - (i.e. beer, soda/pop, juice boxes, etc.), we'll have coolers and ice to keep them cold.

Remember: no worship services Sunday, May 5th!

Summer Studies: [Discuss your group's plans for winding down for the year] As our community groups wrap for 2018-2019 let's not give up meeting together but rather take this opportunity to switch it up and try one of our various *Summer Studies!* There are men's Proverbs groups, women's Bible studies, a group for mom's and daughters and *more!* Check them out online: <https://newcitycincy.churchcenter.com/groups/summer-studies>

Intro to New City | Saturday, June 1st 8a- Noon: Our next Intro to New City class is coming up in June! Intro to New City is a seminar designed to help you get to know the church a little better: hear the story of the church's origins, our Vision, Values, Beliefs, and Philosophy of ministry, some things that are distinctive about New City, etc. It also provides a basic framework for understanding the gospel, and the church's role in God's plan of redemption.

Intro to New City is a pre-requisite to membership at New City, however, attending the seminar does not commit you to membership. If you need childcare for the class we will be glad to provide it. ****The REGISTRATION DEADLINE for adults and children is May 27th.**

ENGAGE (15-20 minutes)

Real Biblical community involves people “doing life together.” As much as we can, we want to create an atmosphere where people get to know one another, and feel comfortable sharing the ups, downs, and in-betweens of life. So take some time for people to get acquainted. A possible icebreaker question: Share a high and a low from the previous week. Or, rate your week 1-10. Or, make up one of your own.

REFLECTION AND STUDY (30-35 MINUTES)

Read Revelation 19:11-21

1.) Christ is described in a flurry of images and ideas. Summarize what we learn about Jesus’ character and deeds.

(If you have a marker board or poster board, list out what you brainstorm as a group)

2.) What is the significance of the sword in 19.15 and 19.21?

(See also Hebrews 4:12-13 and Revelation 1:16)

3.) How effective is the war effort of the beast and the kings of the earth? How effective is the mission of Satan and his forces after his release?

4.) How would this chapter affect the perspective of a Christian undergoing persecution in the first century? today?

5.) How does knowing the fate of these forces affect our own strength and courage? How is the judgment of God good news for the world?

Read Revelation 20:1-15

6.) There are lots of details here that can be difficult to interpret. What would you say is the big picture message of chapter 20?

7.) On what basis are we judged? Who is saved? The Bible is very clear on this. Is that good news or bad? And if that’s the case how do we reconcile what is stated in v. 13-15 with the biblical doctrine of being justified (counted righteous) by faith and not good works?

8.) How can you have assurance that your name is written in the book of life? Consider these passages: John 3:16-18, 3:36; Romans 5:1-5, 8:33-39, Hebrews 10:19-23, 1 John 1:8-9

9.) If you really believed this passage, what would be different about your life?

Spiritual Formation: The reality of a final judgment reminds us of the urgency and opportunity we have to reach out to others. Consider this spiritual practice over the next few weeks. *Make a list of 2-3 people you are praying will respond to God. Beside each name, list one intentional way you can be a witness for Christ and his kingdom to them in the next month. Pray for opportunities to act on this.*

PRAYER (15 minutes)

Break into men and women for prayer. Share prayer requests and pray for one another. Pray especially areas where you long for God to make things right in your life, or the lives of neighbors, co-workers, family, or friends.