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The Second Coming of Christ with John Piper

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Life and Books and Everything - Clearly Reformed

Kevin sits down with John for a return visit to LBE to talk about John's new book, "Come, Lord Jesus: Meditations on the Second Coming of Christ" (Crossway). Hear what John Piper thinks about the rapture, the millennium, and why it is essential that we love Christ's appearing. Kevin and John also talk about the long list of books John has written, what he does for fun, and what very long audiobook he is listening to.

Transcript

[Music] Well hello John, greetings and salutations of those who are listening to some of them. I know I do, I'm sorry. There's nothing different between greetings and salutations.

Well there you go. So some people may be watching this and probably most people are going to be listening to this. The podcast Life and Books and Everything and burning herbs from my guests, John Piper.

John, thank you for being here. Life and Books and Everything. We're going to talk about your new book, Come, Lord Jesus in just a moment.

I do want to mention Crossway grateful for them sponsoring LBE. It's abbreviated now and I want to mention the ESV Church History Study Bible edited by Stephen Nichols. So Stephen Nichols works with the near and the Bible college there.

And I listen to him regularly with this five minutes of church history. I love it that it's five minutes to get it. And so I'm sure he's put some of that expertise into this church history study Bible and it features hundreds of study notes of specific passages written by historical figures like Calvin Edwards, Virgin, many others, includes an introduction to the book.

And articles about different phases of church history's verbal figures has some of the mathematical breeds. So do look at that I love church history. I know John does too edited by Stephen Nichols from Crossway.

And thank you for coming along and talking about your book. I think you were on maybe two years ago talking about the Prophet's book. So I just, here it is if anyone's watching Come, Lord Jesus.

And on the, what first struck me is on the inside cover, you probably just go buy this but other books by John Piper. It's a very long list. And this isn't everything.

I think there's five books here and there's more. When you hear that or someone introduces you or you think, and you see 35 books, did you ever, did you ever think you would write this many books? No. No.

I didn't think I would write books at all. It wasn't part of the dream. I think it's been sort of organic, you might say.

Oh, cool. So it wasn't a dream. I'm interested in that because I, if you would have asked, and I think my why we're not emerging came out 2008, you would have asked me before that one bucket list.

I would have just said, man, if just sometime in my life in the next 50 years, I could write a book. That would be amazing. And the Lord's open more doors than I ever thought possible.

But you didn't even have that. You didn't have, you know, when you were getting your doctorate and you were teaching and going to have an image. And once you're, once you're, I wanted to finish my dissertation.

Okay. But beyond that, you didn't have, you didn't think of yourself as an author or have that dream. I thought of myself as a teacher.

Yeah. If there was overflow in articles or books that was quite secondary. I loved the classroom when I finished graduate school, I had a method for six years and considered it very fulfilling, very rewarding.

But I was writing on the side. And I suppose it was an overstate we said, a dream brain book because I did want to publish the dissertation. And I did submit it almost immediately to a place and it was published.

But the first popular book, *Desiring God*, was a complete surprise. It was a sermon series. And along came Steve Halliday from Mo'Noma.

And he said, what are you doing? What are you preaching on? And I said, I'm working through a series. I'm calling it *Desiring God* or *Christian Hedonism*. And say, can I see him? So I gave him the manuscript and he fell in the hole.

He says, can we work with you on this? And that was a surprise. It wasn't planning to be. That was your first popular book.

Yeah. There were two academic books, just in case you got it. And love your enemies.

And then came *Desiring God*. And *Desiring God* was popular enough. And still is that once you do that, a publisher is willing to take another risk.

So that will, I mean, who knows what the Lord will do, but there's a good chance that will be the book you're most known for. I mean, that's a ministry is named after. And that was the first one.

The first one I had in the popular traction. And what it did in the church, and this one of the encouraging professors, is I went to the deacons at the time. I mean, I have elders.

So a couple of years later. And I said, look, it seems like God is blessing this book. They would like me to do more.

Is that something you would want to encourage me to do? Because I don't want to use the church as a springboard to do my own thing. And if you can consider it part of the ministry of spreading passion for the supremacy of God and all things from the joy of all peoples through Jesus, I'm willing to do that. And the upside of that was that for the pleasures of God, which came next, they said, why don't you just take a leave in the summer, just four weeks in to do what you can with that.

And I brought them a book and they basically said, okay, if you can do that every year, you can have four weeks. And that's what we did for years. We just, we just, and since my books were basically sermons, we reworked into books.

I did a book a year or so. I was going to ask that because I think most of my books, some, most are non sermons. And I don't write out my manuscripts.

So that's part of it. It's very laborious for me to take a transcript of my sermons, usually, and make it into a book. And I don't think, I don't know that my preaching makes for good books, but some, some have gone that way.

I don't say which ones of the people say, I knew that's why I didn't like that. But have most of most of yours has started as sermons? I don't know the percentage, but I'm also saying yes. I mean, either sermons or star articles that is going to be on there, and by three books came out of those at least, or coverage messages or devotions for the, for almost, I've almost written nothing from scratch.

That would be, maybe fair to say. And even even a big book like *Proverbs*, which was the least sermon oriented. That was not built on 50 sermons.

That was just written from scratch. But if people ask me, how long take you to write, that's 758 book, I said 40 or 15 years. Meaning simply, that's all I thought about pretty much.

Is God sovereign? Is God good? How does that work together? What does the Bible say? Notes, articles, devotions? I keep some material. So you can look in here if you want to refresh yourself what you've written. In any of these, I'm asking all the questions I didn't put on here.

I just thought of them this afternoon. So I apologize. But as you look at these books, were there a couple that particularly fenjour soul during them, or some on the opposite, and thought, I still believe it, but I'm glad it's done.

I didn't really enjoy the process of writing. Some of that stand out, either particular joy in writing. You can think of it.

I'll tell you, I did not enjoy writing the book I wrote at homosexuality. I think I've mentioned that before. I thought it would be, I'd written so much on the topic.

I thought I could just pull some blog posts and some articles and sermons and put it together and I'd have a book. And then I realized, I needed to rework things. And then I read a lot in the Greco Roman world and it's really dark.

And the whole thing felt heavy and I didn't. I'm glad I did it and I hope it serves people. So that one stuck out for me is, I was just so glad it was done.

What do you have on either end of that spectrum? Well, it would be interesting maybe to say that I both enjoyed and returned to seeing in Savior Jesus Christ. Because I wrote that book from the leaders. Well, God was used in the whole unbelievers.

But I wanted to be a kind of apologetics, meaning if I could just show how beautiful he is, how wonderful he is. And so the chapters are simply exaltations about traits of Jesus. And that's what I'd need for my soul almost every day.

So I'm not going back to read my own meditations. And I enjoyed Jesus that way. I'm trying to think of what I was doing.

There have been some really hard moments. Proverbs was hard, but I'm simply not doing it. I think it's got a new title.

I used to be called What Jesus demands from the world. It's called All That Jesus, we're just republishing it now. And that was a challenge.

And yet I'm so happy with it. We still don't know what I want people. Because I said, look, it says in the Matthew that you should go and make disciples of all nations teaching them to observe everything I command you to observe everything I commanded you.

And I said, where's a manual for missionaries or anybody else who would take a book and say, this is everything he commanded us. Everything he commanded us. So it's not everything he talked.

But I looked up all 500, either explicit or implicit imperatives in the gospel. That's how many 500 can take. Yeah, different taken.

And I said, I'm going to write this book without using Paul. I'm thinking in terms of higher criticism, German criticism, who say they call wrecked Christianity. And I'm finding Paul in theology all over the gospel.

Right. Right. And I think I'm being faithful.

So I think it's a missionary handbook for everything he commanded. But it was very difficult because Jesus commands very hard things. And what do you have still percolating? You're sure you've got ideas? What do you want to write on? We're going to get to this book in just a moment.

And then I am just finished a three week leave, what do we call it? Writing assignment from the desire in God to work on a book which would have a subtitle, something like a foundation for lifelong learning. And it's grown out of our conception of education that I'm called the seminary, where we say we've got six habits of mind. We like to build in students.

And they're basically taking over the mortar and I read a book. Observation, understanding, evaluation, feeling, that's our peculiar one application expression. Those six habits of mind.

And I wrote a 5000 words on each of them. And so there's a 45,000 book ready to go there. But we think about surrounding it with maybe some other authors.

But that's the most immediate present thing. And nothing else on the horizon. So there's a hard question.

Maybe can't answer. Do you do you just surveying the landscape and I hope you're not coming to the end of your life but you're closer to the end and to the beginning. So, yeah.

What do you do you think of a book that, man, this book needs to be written, but John Piper just isn't the person to write it but somebody out there I hope you do. That's a good question. Lots of them say think about it.

Yeah, I know what that's like. You think you can let me know, especially if you think Kevin DeYungshott writes it. Yeah, I will let you know.

I'm going to have to give some. Alright, but I thought you were going to. It has to be written quick before you die.

Okay, well you might have that too. I just I have referred to the glory of God a billion times. It is supremely central to reality and to the Bible.

And I know there are books out there with the title, what is the glory of God. I want to say what are we talking about? We throw it around and use it so often. So, you know, a manageable book.

What is the glory of God? That would be good. I hope you do that. And what do you so you were pastor for how many years have been served 33 years so you're how old when you started 34 34 34.

You've been there for 33 years. So now you've been retired is not the right word at all, but you've been doing D.G. and writing and Bethlehem for 10 years. So how is your your routine different because you have for 33 years.

Think about some days. I always tell people is there is one every week. It gives a wonderful shape to your life.

And it's also relentless. What different is your weekly daily schedule of the last 10 years versus 33 before that. Well, that would be right at the top of the list of differences because the way I worked after the first one or two years of trial error was to devote Friday and Saturday to getting ready for that certainly so.

I'm not sure if you're interested in the individual and certain Saturday night. That's not there anymore. So that relentless push is not what my friends said.

That's one. The one I feel the most is my evenings are free and meaning I felt both on call and in meetings regularly evenings did not feel mainly relaxed. They felt like the phone is about to ring.

And it doesn't ring anymore. And I sit there with my wife for two hours after supper. This is weird.

Yeah. What you do. What are you going to do with this? They do bad things.

They do. Watch dirty movies. Especially if you don't have a gackle of kids to take care of.

That helped. Oh my goodness. Yeah.

We used to joke at Bethlehem that no meeting started for seven, fifteen. And people would say, why do meetings around here not start for seven fifteen. And yes, it was the pastor plays with his kids until seven.

Yeah. And he took 15 minutes to give me. And he comes over.

So that's the way it felt. So those are two significant differences. There's one of their differences.

The pastor is ever responding to utterly unexpected. Yes. Don't look off your sin.

You want to say the harsh thing about ministries that you're always responding. You never your own creator. You just respond and responding and responding.

Certainly your response. Everything's response to other people's claim. You're a firefighter and there's fires and that's a true anymore.

My ministry is laid out for me, my desire and God. I have these things in what we do with Aspen's, you know, get the book and preaching class that I do and the chance to ministry that they're just all laid out and do more. I've had a lot of listeners wonder, does John Piper relax? Does John Piper do things for fun? Yes.

Well, in the summer, I love yard works. I'm going to get a quick answer is I write my own leaves. I pull my own weeds.

You're the same house you've been in for decades. I've been in for four years. I show my own snow.

I do 52 inches of it this year. And that piles on the side are about this high. I put that snow there.

That's good. And you run on the treadmill. That's not fun, but it's what I do anymore.

And we play Scrabble. My wife and I, we do word, crossword puzzles. We talk.

That's good. Sometimes during supper, we'll watch Perry Mason reruns. I just saw them making a remake of it.

We found one of the streaming services. Probably be the kind of movie I don't watch. Yeah, yeah, it'll probably be 50 years in order to find something my level of tolerance of nudity will then go around.

Or just worldviews that are so in your face. I can't take them. Do you, thank you for doing this podcast.

Do you actually listen to podcasts? You don't have to say you listen to this one or not. I'm not asking that. Listen to other ones.

I have a long list of podcasts on my phone and I almost never listened to. I enjoy podcasts and I used to listen to more, but my priorities have shifted over onto listening to books. Yeah, I have very little time to talk to podcast.

So everything is brushing your teeth, getting dressed. I don't even drive anywhere. So I can't listen to the car.

So it's all these little three or four little lava teas are steeping and these little three to five minute segments. And I'm listening to Ron Chernow's Hamilton, which is 36 hours.

Yeah, he doesn't like short books.

36 hours that three minutes a shot is a long time. But I've just decided that the kind of thing I need is not mainly what podcasts are doing, like what we're doing right now. About immediate and interesting and helpful guidance from doing that anymore.

I want the bigger picture history and the logical help. Do you listen to sermons? Not anymore. I used to.

I used to listen to Ian Murray and J.I. Packer and R.C. Sproul and you. This isn't encouragement to you, but if I'm sick, I'm suddenly mad. I'm going to be sick because I'm going to chart.

And if I don't, I'll just find Kevin to you. He's online. I was in the Kevin's.

That's true. I mean, there are not many pastors who are exegetically careful enough for me. Believe enough, right? I got a few things from him.

I know. Yeah, but those are not things. I'm worried.

Well, good. Well, thank you for that. Oh, you're grateful to answer all of those intro questions.

So come Lord Jesus, meditations on the second coming of Christ. So the very beginning to George Elden Lad, and he shows up a lot in this book. Who was George Elden Lad? I just listened to you do the podcast with Colin and you got in to talk about land.

But many people wouldn't know who he is anymore. Who was he? Why was he influential in your life? He was a professor at Ford. He was a pastor before that.

He was a psychological, to be careful, unwell, man. And I think that's a great thing. As not a few of our teachers were, which always was a great testament for me as a student.

I would look at the condition of these men. I thought, I don't think I'd want to be that unhealthy. Was that known and seen at the time? I mean, we've heard about this.

You're not telling things that people, other people haven't said. I think young students didn't have categories at the time, probably, that we do now for assessing the nature of the issues of what they were dealing with. But the interesting thing and the relevant thing about the book is that Lad was a pastor who got his doctorate Harvard, I believe.

And once it's so bad with all that generation at Ford to make a whopping impact on the guilt of the New Testament world from Germany on down. And we're finding themselves hitting a very unwelcoming wall. And when Norman Parry reviewed Lads, a book on the kingdom, it was so negative, it almost sent him into an institution.

Which put too much eggs in the basket. But when he wrote the New Testament theology, which is the last things he did, he went down the hall waving a \$9,000 check for royalties and saying, I did. And it was better.

It was received better. Yeah, at least it was selling. Yeah, it wasn't so academic that it couldn't sell.

But it's book in the kingdom. It's now called presence in the future. I think it's still important.

And it's good. It was my introduction to the ubiquity of that mythology, the New Testament. Meaning, eschatology is not a chapter at the end of the systematic theology.

It is right shot through because we're in the last days, we're in the last days. And all of the categories of salvation are categories that are in time categories have gone now. Right.

So redemption is something I've got now forgiveness is called redemption. And then Paul says, we await the redemption of our bodies. So that's the kind of already not yet that land.

He did that for thousands of people. He opened the already not yet reality of the New Testament. So that was you.

He was known among popular folks as writing a good bit on the second. So the blessed hope was a defense of post tribulation or pre novellas. And is that your position? Yeah, I'm still at home there.

I've tried to understand Revelation 20 another way and cannot get beyond the. Seems to be pretty obvious there. So I'm not on bill.

Do I get along with people that are a mill? And I'm just not post. So this book is, it's, I mean, you're, we'll get to that you're not pre trip that comes out clearly. I think people can see that you're pre male, but this is not a book about the millennium.

Here's an interesting fact, because we've talked, we've been talking about this a little bit about the prioritizing of doctrine. Yeah. And what you have to tell them what you do and how you maintain coherence and unity in your staff and your friendships.

If you take the collective works of John Pike, go to the index and look up free mail. You know, anytime it's there. Zero.

Yeah. In 50 books. I have never mentioned the word.

I think that's true. Intentionally? No, it just didn't mean. I mean, I think it's instinctually intentional, meaning.

I don't want it out to anybody. And when I think about how I'm a millennial people and pre millennial people face the culture and face the end. The differences are mainly beyond the second coming, right? Beyond the second coming is where we don't understand history unfolding in the same way.

But like me, think it unfolds. There are more stages yet to unfold, not all done. And that, as far as I can tell, I may be stupid here in naive.

That does not affect presently the way we go about doing world evangelization or conceive of interacting with the culture. So I have not seen fit to emphasize that. Now, if you were a dispensational pre millennial, in the very extreme version left behind the series, sort of, that's how it seems like that would affect.

There are some churches that you go into. I went to a Baptist church when I was in college and never been gone to Baptist churches. A lot of my friends at my public school who were serious about the Bible and who had this thing called devotions in the morning, they were Baptist.

So I appreciate the Baptist. And I just went to a Baptist church in college because the guy preached good exegetical sermons. But it was news to me that all of a sudden we're getting a sermon on the 77s every year.

We're getting a Ezekiel and a Daniel stuff. And this was all new. How important the in times timeline was.

So the fact that you haven't mentioned pre male probably in some 50 books, does that suggest we make too much of it? Or is it, I heard you say, pre male and on male, about the dispensational pre male or about post note? Does that make a bigger difference and just day to day out of the question? Okay, well, answer whatever you want to answer. How important is the one's millennial view? It is possible to make too much of it. And especially if you have it down with such precision that you can predict the end.

Right. How Lindsay think you're supposed to be 40 years after 48 and it came and went in 1988 and it didn't happen. And I think the movies probably didn't help.

So the pre tribulation understanding that the church is to be snatched out of the world. And then there's a seven year tribulation. And then there's the second coming is very popular view among conservative Christians.

I think it's a mistaken view. I have a section given my eight reasons why I don't believe what my dad believed on that. And we got along really, really well.

So that it is possible to make too much of that. I think that skews your understanding of suffering and the wrath of God and the sovereignty of God in the wrath of God. And how wrath can be purifying for Christians and punishment for non Christians.

And there's a way to understand walking through tribulation is believers that I think is really crucial for us to understand post millennialism. Yes, as far as I can tell from the series post millennial is I know makes a big difference in the way they tend to approach Christen building or culture transformation in a way that I find skews the New Testament, emphasis and pattern of world evangelization and the worsening of the situation at the end rather than the improving in the situation. So I wouldn't encourage anybody to go there.

And I think that historically some of our heroes would have been post know that it can be hard to determine all male from post know some of them. It's a funny thing about that. Johnson every is known as being a post meal.

I read Edwards and was totally transformed by his theology for 20 years before I knew that. Yeah, go figure, I'll see in the index here where there's no mention to post know how could I do that. I mean I read book after book after book after book and didn't know that.

So something's a little different there in the way he went about teaching and preaching that enabled me a pre meal guide to read this post new guy and not even know. I mean clearly I was a nut not to know you're supposed to know these things if you're an Edward scholar which I wasn't I was an Edward's lover. Right.

What I wonder if there's a difference between post mill as a cultural project and post mill as I know that you can be fully separated but post mill as an understanding of what God's been doing in history. So when I think of, and I don't know that all these guys were post mill but you know Samuel Miller, the first two professors at Princeton on Princeton. You know he writes very optimistically about, you know, he writes favorably about the enlightenment.

I mean he thinks there's problems but he thinks this 18th century we've just been through. Oh my God has has opened our eyes to so many things and we're better with politics we're better with with natural sciences. We have seen a lot of new things so I think there was that sort of we are in the middle of God doing something in our world and look at the advances we have made.

That's not how many of us, not many people see it that way so it seems like most of the post mill folks we would know today would actually see we are in a moment of profound cultural at least in the West and in America. Degradation and therefore lends itself to the need for a project to be playing. But even those folks will give you some amazing statistics about poverty being overcome.

The blessings of the modern age are staggeringly. And so much lead to anybody would be don't fall into the trap of saying in bad times we're going to be preem as a pre trip secret rapture. Am I saying that? How do you say it? Now did you have you must have

had because I'm in a Presbyterian church and yet I will sometimes get people who will say no pastor.

And they sometimes start the question like this which is always dangerous. Now I'm sure you believe in the rapture and then they asked her question. They have to say well I love you.

I don't believe in the rapture as you're as you're explaining it and then it's mine. Well, but you believe the Bible pastor you preach the Bible so much I thought I was good around. And it is just very hard for me to explain to people wonderful godly saints who have grown up with that.

That I do believe everything the Bible says and I don't believe in this secret rapture. And in fact, historically I don't think very many people have. Did you encounter that a lot? His name was Clayton to be representative.

So I came to Bethlehem. There were about 300 people. They were almost all over 60 and my guess is virtually all in that way.

And I told the search committee, this is not what happened. They were kind of surprised. I gave them my reasons and they still caught me.

And I didn't love those cards on the table in church in a public gathering for quite a while. And I did it on Sunday evening and I was just laying out my understanding of how the end times would flow in very general terms and a lot of detail. And Clayton at the fact said no.

Really? I just said no. And I said Clayton, I understand you and probably a lot of others in the room here. And I said, I don't see it this way.

I just wanted to love you. And we're going to find out at the last day you're right or I'm right. And you know, he was very antagonistic for a few years.

His heart toward me changed so profoundly that when he and his wife moved to Iowa and she passed away, he called me on the phone as we could do. So I say that to pastors to say, you know your early adversaries, don't give up on them. That's right.

Don't. They're going to be some of your sweetest supporters. Even if you don't change their mind.

Because people believe that because they believe Bob and if I see this pastor is a Bible lover and you earn their trust long enough, they'll say, okay, we'll get along with that. One of the most important revelations to me in pastoral ministry and I make sure students here, you know, or Paul tells the Corinthians, my heart is wide open to you. They think he's thick-walled.

They think he's phony. They're upset with him and angry with him. And I'm not saying it's easy.

There's been a lot of times where my heart starts drinking down the wrench light to somebody and I want to, that's shut. You're not my heart shut to you because you shut your heart to me. But Paul, just you have to hear that as a pastor.

It doesn't mean you're naive, but you have to keep your heart open to people for the Clayton's that love the Bible. And not everyone, I mean, some people never come around, but some do and you have to have your heart. Yeah, it was another one.

I think she's going to use her name Flossie. She took my hand after the service after I would figure out an article that she didn't like. She took my hand and she said, "Pastor, you're sick.

You're sick." And I call her on the phone and said, "Can I come visit you?" Well, that was my effort to send a heart attack to you. I never want her back. She went to the left church and thought I was just a unwell, proud, misguided, bad emphasis bastard.

But years later, I always meet her at funerals, right? Yeah, I have to show up at their friends. You know, there was a little church and so we'd see each other. And in those early years, it was always cool, very cool, near the very end that she was approaching Jesus.

She really warmed up to the sweet. I had the same thing happen. Those were on this.

Yeah, this is so cute. This is so good. So Don Larson taught at the Palmsian Bible.

Don was pushing the edges all the time. He's pushing the edges like I said, "What do you mean about inspiration, Don?" He said, "Moses wrote it and God blew the aim dry." He didn't mean that. He just pushed him pushing the edges.

And he and I were just quite just in faculty meetings. He called me on the phone when I'm a pastor 10, 20 years later. And I was like, "Don't you John? It's Don Larson." But okay, hi Don.

I had a heart attack and I'm pretty sure I'm not long from this world. I just want to make sure we're okay. We're okay.

I love you John. And don't want you to be mad at me. Jesus said we do.

Isn't that great? Yeah. So if you take long enough to give people a chance and you keep loving them, getting near death or making a pretty serious bond. That's right.

So what? You don't have to give all the answers responses, but when somebody says, "But Pastor John is says..." Jesus said there's going to be two in the field. There's going to

be two at the mill and one's taken, one's left. There's the rapture.

Why don't you believe that? I have no problem with the rapture. You said rapture as you believe it. Right.

I mean it says in 1 Thessalonians 4, 17 that the Lord will come and we will be caught up together. The heart pogy would be the word is there. Caught up together to meet the Lord in the air.

So the first one caught up is rapture. I mean it comes from the old Latin, I guess, of the vogate that translated it somehow with rapture. So if you mean by rapture, the sights are caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

That's a given. Right. The word says that.

The word says that. The only question is do you turn and go back to heaven for 70 years or do you welcome a man? And the up-pot-tussy or the next word is for a meeting to call up to meet the Lord in the air for a meeting. That word is used.

This is one of the arguments that Vlad used that just powerful for me. He said that word is used twice elsewhere in the New Testament. One is when the saints come at the end of the book of Acts and Paul and his head and end of Rome, they come out to meet him and turn around and go back in.

And the other one is when the virgins go out to meet the bridegroom coming home, they come out and meet him and go back into the program. I said, oh, well maybe meeting doesn't mean meeting and leaving, finding and welcome. And I think that is what it means.

So that's not the first thing I do. If they said to you in the rapture, I would probably say yes, but in the early years. Jesus just pulled up the car in the driveway.

Let's go out and meet him. Hey guys, I came to go driving. You're here.

You're coming in the house. I'm not the sufferer, Sid. Oh my.

I might try to divert their attention on something glorious. I might say at that moment, we're going to welcome him in. And do you know one of the questions you asked me on your sheet was anything surprising, anything? Yeah, yeah.

So here's one of those things that relates. I mean, I find this to be the most stunning picture of the second coming in the Bible. It's a little 12th and the picture is that the king is coming and he finds the servant doing what he's supposed to do, which is what he'd do another issue, we'll talk about maybe first time.

And it says he will have them sit at table and he will come and bind himself like a

servant and serve the deocognito. Like he's going to become a table waiter after he gets off his horse. Which is amazing.

And takes off his Kingly garment and the millions of angels are going to be standing around while he serves the... I mean, it says that. How can you put together something so lowly and so servant-like with something so majestic, so glorious, so terrifying as the actual splitting of the sky, the lightning flashes, and there's a trumpet sounding in the command of God. And he then... Now, I don't know how the timing works there.

Could be a hundred years to turn yours to him, that's fine. But it's going to be amazing. And here's my theological take on that.

He will never surrender the privilege of being the benefactor instead of the beneficiary in this relationship. He has no needs. That's right.

He has no needs. You don't get to serve him that way. He sure... He is not to be served.

And he never gives it up. He never gives it up. His mindset is always, "I've got the riches they've got the need." So, let me follow up on that.

I'm... where are we? Okay, we're maybe more than halfway. So, I want to mention... We've got another... I want to mention... another sponsor. Scriptura.

And I'm going to give you this. If you're watching, you can see this. If not, you can imagine a very nice black box with a very nice leather Bible inside.

Has your name on it. Scripture Bible, they craft beautiful long lasting heirloom quality Vibles. They just sent me two.

And my wife is using one because hers was worn out. And I have one list of this podcast where you see 15% off their first order with LBE 15. If you go there.

So, I really do use them. Yeah. Wow.

Yeah. It's wonderful. So, Scriptura, thank you.

Well, two... Yeah, I've got all these questions I want to get to. I... one thing that you mentioned in this book, and I've preached on the temptation of Jesus a number of times. But I had never thought of this that you said to section, as on page 4950, why did Satan prefer being worshiped over ruling all? That was so good.

I never thought because of course that's the temptation that he gives to you. So, just unpack that a little bit. What you saw there and what is the answer to that question? Why did Satan want to be worshiped over ruling of all? Because some people might think, "Hey, if you could... I don't need praise and adoration.

I'd love to be in control of everything." But Satan didn't see that way, and what does that teach us about what Christ is doing in his second cut? Well, I hadn't seen that connection either. And I've always been puzzled. Number one, did Satan have the wherewithal to offer Jesus? To forgive Jesus.

Yeah. And I think it ties in with him being the God of this age, and being the head rulers, and the far East. And so, in a sense, Satan had the right to say to Jesus, "If you will bow down in worship, I will give you the glory of these nations." And so, as I've wondered why would he do that? It struck me that to be ruler is one thing, and why would he give it up? And the answer is, "If, because the deal is, you get it, I get to worship." That's right.

Yeah. I get the praise, I get the glory, I get the honor, and I inferred from that that really what the human soul craves is to be worshiped. And that's how you get most glory for someone is to not just say they're very powerful, but to say that they are worthy of worship, and that Jesus wants that.

He wants to be glorified that way. He wants to be marbled up for that value that he is. Which makes sense why we are given rulership in the New Heavens and the New Earth.

That doesn't circumvent the worship of Christ. And I almost said you were explaining it in the book, thinking it's almost like Satan understood, "If I give you rule, because I am the God of this age, but I'm worshiped, you're really still my vassal, and I'm the suzer in them." And I'm the Lord, and you can have public control over these kingdoms. Go to it.

And to what end are you doing all these national things and getting all this low-level glory? You're doing it to the end that I might be seen as infinitely valuable and infinitely worthy. And so what good is that if you are supposed to be free? And the application I felt in my own life was the way in which my sinful heart can want to make the same sort of bark. Okay, Jesus, your wise, you're in control.

You may be the Lord of my life, can I? Can I still be the most important one in this equation? You can tell me what to do, Paul. You can be the Lord, but I sure like the strokes and the adulation. We just heard a message in this conference from the car right now where he defined sin as the hate of creatureliness, the hate of God being our God.

And it confirmed me in a habit that I have for some time of just getting all my knees once a day and saying out loud and I'm not God. I'm just saying to God, I'm not God. You are God, enough glad.

I think that is so fundamental for every human to say, but every pastor, especially to say, is your God, or not, or you to know I'm good with that. You have a section which I think the subheading is Jesus delivers us from the wrath of Jesus. And you go on just pulling for Bible verses, but Jesus destroys the wicked, Jesus strikes them.

Very graphic description of what Jesus is going to do. I think of revelation that weird,

weird is not the right word, but striking the wrath of the Lamb. I don't think of the Lamb's having wrath, but this is like, and they're cowering.

How do you help people? Because I'm sure you're this is a pastor. And I do too. How do you help people who recoil from any idea of God's wrath? In fact, it can be these stumbling blocks, hell, conscious, torment, Jesus coming back to punish people, speak to the pastor to help, really, you know, exegetically, but even existential.

How do you get people to not recoil at that? I doubt that you can in these two, in other words, I think that is the fruit that is not recoiling at the wrath of Jesus and the wrath of the Lamb, and eternal hell, and eternal conscious torment. Not rebelling against that is the fruit of an ever growing sense of the majesty and holiness of God. The bigger your God is, the more horrible the offense against him is, and the more reasonable hell seems.

That's the significance. Your God is small, hell has to be white, can be hot. God is just too small, meaning the principle is this.

You determine the seriousness of an offense, not simply by how long it lasted, but the honor and dignity of the one against him that has performed. And if God is the one who gets sin is performed, then the majesty of your God will govern your sense of the rightness of punishment for not doing it. That's the significance.

So I'm going to say to those people, I know this may seem hard to you, but please give me a chance to display God in such a way that that begins to be less of a problem. I'm going to say my first response, my second response might be more immediate would be to say, how serious do you think the death of Jesus is? How horrible was that? How utterly uncalled for and unworthy? And I don't know what they're going to say, but what I'm going to say is he came from infinite worth and beauty and glory and majesty and suffered the most ignominious shame for suffering imaginable. What would that be? And basically I'm trying to get at the same point from the other direction, namely, if he did that because of how bad you are, to or that bad.

I am that bad. You who think of sin but lightly nor suppose the evil great, the other, the hystric and cement and afflicted. Exactly.

So look at Jesus. That's hell taken on. And if you reject that, then you get the other hell, what would be the corresponding thing? How horrible was that and how horrible is this? And if they think that's not very horrible, then this won't be very horrible either.

So you've got to help them know Jesus in such a way that for the Son of God, it's right, to come into the world and suffer what he suffered. It's so outrageous. So here's one more thing that I have found.

The wrath of God in the New Testament, this might jolt them. Maybe I'd say this first.

You've got to know who you're talking to, right? I might say the function of the wrath of God, the function in the New Testament is to make you impatient.

Romans 12. Do you think in a Romans 12? Yeah. Vengeance is mine, I will retain.

If your enemy is hungry, feed him with these thirsty, give him something to drink. When you think about the wrath of God, the effect is supposed to happen. You just make you love your enemy.

And they're probably kind of like, well, it doesn't. That's your problem because Paul is using vengeance is mine. I will repay to say, you dare not.

It's not your job. Your job is to love and die for me. And he is the sentence.

He's the judge. He takes care of that. So those would be my three of us.

That's good. And I think people instinctively feel almost as strongly as any emotion, a sense of injustice. I mean, it can be you're trying to get through to your insurance and you're going through the Byzantine layer of phone tree and you can't get there or like I was flying two weeks ago and flight was delayed and then we didn't get on this flight and we were the first standby people and they didn't call our name.

It was up on the board and I went up to say, my name is in green. Am I getting the standby? And they just said, sir, all of the standby. Go over here.

We'll call your name. Just shoot aside. And they went through all the names.

And my wife and I were standing there and they said, you didn't call. You had call my name. They said, well, your tickets were printed here.

Don't you know that when it's no, you never told. I mean, and there was another woman who was in the same thing. There are the three people with the most miles and we didn't get on standby.

Such a small inconvenience in life. And you were, you know, you're ready to pound out a 10,000 word, you know, complaint. And you don't think God has a right to have justice? The other thing, I'll just suggest any pastors in particular if you're counseling or even just parents.

Sometimes I want to say to people who have that question, I want to try to understand. I'll say, how much do you really want in answer to that question? Because there is the person who's very earnestly, I want to get there. I want you to help remove some of these obstacles.

I want you to connect the dots. I want to get there and it just doesn't feel right. And then there's the person who's already decided the way they want to live, the person they

want to sleep with, the deconstruction road they're on.

And this seems like kind of the most convenient hardest question to answer. So go at it. And it's not even.

And it's an intellectual issue masquerading the deeper heart issue. Which might lead you to don't cast your pearls before a swarm. I mean, there comes a point where some things are too precious to share with those who are going to spit on them and it takes a great little discernment to know when you've gotten a trail.

A couple more questions about the book. One of the last chapters, go to work, go to church. What do those two exhortations have to do with Jesus' second coming? Yeah, that's in the section.

There's a section on why we should love the Lord's appearance, the section of the timing, the section of holiday, and that's how to live section. And those simply grow out of two texts, right? The only thing we go to work text is that when the master comes and finds his servant so do. In other words, I gave you a job when I left.

And I gave you some talents, some money, just symbolic of whatever resources we have. Do business while I'm going. And what I want is not for you to be on mountaintop, looking into the sky when I come.

I want you to be busy. I just took great comfort from that as a pastor for myself. I don't need to know the timing of the Lord.

I just need to be doing what he comes, doing what he's calling to do. And I just say that to all the lay people in my church, if you believe you're in the job that God is equipped you to do and you're doing it responsibly for his glory, get out and go to work and be happy that if he comes to the end of this morning then you will be found doing it right there. That's where that comes from.

And the other text I could use to defend that would be, "Second Thessalonians is all built around the fact that some of the folks were so hysterical about thinking the Lord had trauma, they couldn't have jobs, and causes get back to work and stop giving a black eye to the name of Jesus by being a mooch-er off of other people." That's the argument. The go to church is Hebrews 10. Don't forsake the assembling of yourselves together, but encourage one another every day as long as he is called today and all the more as you see that they have a coming.

So, he makes the connection between the normal, steady state, mutual encouragement and uses of the grace, means of grace in relationship to coming. I make that out. All right, two more questions are over.

Coming up on an hour. Let me ask this. You say, okay, a couple of number chapters

related to, "Well, Jesus, come soon." And you have these three phrases.

Can I get this right? Potentially near, holistically near, divinely near, on-pathos. That's probably the freshest discovery in my effort. So, I know that exegetically, probably the biggest problem people have it.

C.S. Lewis had it. A lot of people have it is, did Jesus make a mistake when he predicted that he would come soon? And I mean, the soon language, the at-hand language, the at-the-door language, it's not just Jesus, it's James, it's Peter, it's Paul. They all use this language of soon.

And the question is, oh, two thousand years, that's what's going on soon. And I think there is not just one way of dealing with that question exegetically. And the potential in there does something like this.

If you say, "My mastery is delayed," and begin to beat your sermons, and drink, and get drunk, your master will come an hour, you do not know. Now, my understanding of that text is not that you've misread the hour, but you fail to see this. Suppose the Lord is going to come in twenty-five years.

It's a thing he could easily do. In fact, nothing can be allowed to. And you say, "Okay, twenty-five years, my master is delayed," and then beat and drink means you become spiritually oblivious, and just do your own thing, and say, "I'll confess it twenty years out." You won't.

You won't. That's the point. You will unfit yourself and fail to realize what you thought was twenty-five years, and long way off is potentially like tomorrow, because you're going to be dead in your sins and blind as the bat, and inebriated, and have no spiritual sense of the son at the time, and he's going to take you off-guard.

So potentially, he will show up at a time you don't expect. You try to say he's delayed, and therefore I can do my own thing. And then holistically, near? I was used to the word prophetic in there, but I thought, "Holistically, if you're not going to communicate to anybody, let's say read the chapter." Here's the picture.

Both in the Old Testament and the New. Land taught me this, probably how to see this, namely the fact that when the province spoke in the Old Testament, I think Jesus talks his way in the New, and they look at the future, it's telescoped in the sense that there are these ranges of mountains, right? And on a misty day, they all look like one mountain. In Tennessee, I could count 12 mountain ranges, except on a misty day, it was one.

And they predicted something would happen. They see it. But they didn't distinguish whether it was near or the far mountain.

Now, the whole mistake that I'm referring to is the whole mountain. One mountain is 2,000 years out, and one mountain is 30 years out, 70-80. And they talk without any distinction as to which is soon, temporally, and which is soon as part of one mountain.

That's one white holistic means. The prophetic perspective is such that both in New and Old Testament, things are going to happen soon when it actually was. Babylon's going to be destroyed soon, and the day of the Lord comes later.

And they're going to collapse into one event, which is happening soon, because they're all one piece. And I think the New Testament was happy to leave it at that. That the one piece is at the door.

The one, of course, that's the most explicit, is the divinely near and the second Peter, where the naysayers, the skeptics are already saying, "Where is Lord appearing?" It's been 30 years. So where is it? I mean, 30 years must have seemed like a long time. Like, where is he? He just went back, he's supposed to fix things and come back, and he's not.

And Peter gives several answers. You think there's a kind of uniformitarianism going on here. Nothing ever changes from the beginning to the end.

He says, "Yes, it does. There was a flood, and there's a lot of things changing when he comes. Boy, that's going to be a big change." But the main thing he says, and don't forget one day with the Lord, it is just a thousand years, and a thousand years is one day, which means for us, he's been gone two days.

Two days, and two days is near. And if that sounds like double talk or escape hatch, that's apostolic. Peter said that, and I think it's there in the Bible precisely to help us, to say, "What's wrong to us?" He said, "Do not count slowness as God counts slowness." You don't judge that sweet.

He has his reasons for why he's delaying, and that relates to world of androidization. Like, hasten with man. That's right.

That's right. But I often think as a parent and just realize what things make sense to me as a father and don't make sense to my children. And one of those is your conception of time.

When you're an adult, you think in months and years, and you say to a child, "We're going to do this exciting vacation in 2024." It might as well be another lifetime. No, no. Yeah, but you can realize, "No, we got to get that's not very far away." Or if you said, "I'll be back soon." You go on a trip and you're delayed in another couple of days.

Yeah, so I always think, if there is this, there is this kind of gap between me and my children such that some things I do would say just do not make any sense to them. Surely, we can allow for a much bigger gap between us or finding God who is infinite. Let

me ask this as my last question.

The first sentence of the book, the aim of this book is to help you love the second coming of Jesus Christ. You put the question positively or negatively, you can answer either one negatively. Why is it so hard for us Christians to love the second coming of Christ? Or if you want to answer positively, what makes John Piper love the second coming of Christ? Or do you just make sure that that goal of loving the second coming is taken from a Bible verse, which is why I wrote the book, the second typically, for a thousand love is appearing.

And you explained that that's the second one. Paul says you get the crown of righteousness if you love the Lord's Spirit. This is not an option.

You can't be indifferent to the Lord's appearing and expect a crown of righteousness. But back to your question. What outside of mind would be, yeah, I'm simply saying, but that's not it.

This world is very much with us. I mean, the language of sleep and drunkenness is in Jesus and it's in Paul. And it is intended to say that's what's going to happen to you unless you fight with great urgency.

You're going to go to sleep spiritually and you're going to be drunk. And drunk people are sleeping people don't know what's going on in the world. And so we don't have any sense of desire, passion or expectation because we're drunk and we don't think reality.

But I'd rather end on the positive side. Paul said even though he hated the thought, then he hates him at the right room. He shrunk from the thought of dying and leaving his body.

Even though he said to be away from the body is to be at home with the Lord, he wanted the second coming. He wanted to be over-clothed with life. And either way, I want the same thing.

His goals were, number one, the alive when Christ comes. Number two, die good with Jesus. Number three, stay and deal with these kind of things.

And those are my priorities. I believe at 77 I think the Lord can come before I die. I give reasons for that even though I'm not an any moment guy.

Because there are some things I think yet to happen though. It's valuable as to how my read of the signs of the times I think there are things. And yet I don't think they are such that a 77-year-old can't at last.

So that would be my preference. I want to see the Lord. I want to see him in glory.

It says that he's coming to be marveled at by all who believe in him. I think that's what

we're made for. John Piper was made to see Jesus for who he is.

To marvel at him in an emotionally fitting way. And Allah's second Corinthians 3 18 be changed by that sight into his glory forever and ever. Made to marvel.

That would be a good title. Pretty much all I talk about. Yeah, that's pretty much.

You should, you should, you should, you should. All right. John, thank you.

Crossway has just released this. Come Lord Jesus, meditation is on the second coming of Christ. John Piper.

John, thanks for teaching us so much. Thanks for being pastor. Thanks for being my friend.

Thanks for being on Life and Books and everything. And so for all of our listeners, watchers out there, until next time. Lord, if I got enjoyed forever in reading my book.

Yeah. Thank you.

[Music]