

THE END OF THE BEGINNING

Once Upon A Time, Part 9

November 20th, 2011

We know the last chapter in the story of redemption will be good, we're not sure how good

We have such a small, insignificant, insufficient view of God and what lies ahead, that we don't look forward to it

Most see or think of Christ's second coming as an interruption to our plans

We spend a lot of time & money trying to carve out a little piece of heaven on earth

We think, "If I have enough time, opportunity, & money, I can have a wrinkle-free life right here on earth."

One day we realize all our dreams won't come true, and this world has promised more than it can deliver

As hard as we work to have a "wrinkle free" life and world, deep in our hearts we know better, and we yearn for something more

"If there is an experience I long for that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world." C.S. Lewis

Since the very beginning of creation, God has desired an intimate relationship with mankind

Every parent can understand there is a desire to connect and re-connect with our children in spite of their rebellion

It's not enough to just have your child physically home, you want an intimate relationship

One day God's wooing of us into a love relationship with Him will end

When God gives a prophecy we typically respond to it skeptically

Revelation 21:1-4

The first thing God will do is touch us at the core of our deepest hurts & fears

If you define God by your life experience, you'll mis-define Him and shrink Him down to something you can manage

Revelation 21:5-7

“overcomes” in verse 7 doesn’t refer to something we accomplish but to one who has a status given to them, granted through faith

Revelation 21:8

Verse 8 is a reminder that sin must be dealt with in a final way & completely removed

We are far more comfortable with sin than with the judgment of sin

We underestimate the significance of sin, & consequently we underestimate the significance of what happened at the cross & God’s promise He isn’t finished yet

The Bible teaches there will be a final judgment, and for those who haven’t put their faith in Christ, there will be no more provision

Revelation 21:22,23

We need to base our faith, not just on what we see & experience in our life, but also on God’s faithfulness throughout time

If God fulfilled His promises in the past, do you have any reason to believe He will not fulfill His promises to you in the future?

Revelation 22:17

Whoever is thirsty and knows there is more, is invited to come – there are no qualifications

Your decision about Christ determines your eternal destiny

Your belief about God doesn’t shape and define God – God is already God. He is simply giving you a warning and an invitation

(not in message outline – but in Media Shout, on the screen)

“Who wants to fill up with snacks on Thanksgiving Day? Who goes out to buy presents for himself on Christmas Eve? Is there anyone in his right mind who looks for someone to date at his wedding rehearsal? When we are convinced that something delicious is about to be ours, we are free to live in expectation. It draws us on in anticipation.” John Eldredge - Journey of Desire

We need to learn to see all of life through the lens and grid of eternity

My Next Step Today Is:

- For the first time in my life I want to receive God’s free gift of eternal life
- My prayer, “God help me begin to see life through the fact that one day You will come to dwell among mankind. Help that reality shape & impact my life – all my relationships, my work, how I use my money, my family, & how I see those who don’t know You. ”