

Main Idea: We want to examine three significant factors in Daniel's dream as recorded in Daniel 7:1-14.

- I. Consider the preparation for the dream (1).
 - A. What are possible responses to prophecy?
 1. Fascination: "I'm intrigued by prophecy."
 2. Dogmatism: "I've got prophecy all figured out."
 3. Skepticism: "I can't understand it, so why try?"
 - B. What is the purpose of prophecy?
 1. It exalts God.
 2. It humbles us.
 3. It motivates us to live for God now.
- II. Consider the particulars of the dream (2-14).
 - A. Daniel saw four beasts (2-7).
 1. The first was like a lion.
 2. The second was like a bear.
 3. The third was like a leopard.
 4. The fourth was dreadful and different.
 - B. Daniel saw a little horn (8).
 - C. Daniel saw a scene in heaven (9-14).
 1. The Ancient of Days sat at the judge's bench (9-10).
 2. The beasts were defeated.
 3. One like a son of man came in the clouds (13-14).
- III. Consider the purpose of the dream.
 - A. We may be troubled by the dream (15).
 - B. We must not miss the obvious.
 1. God has a plan for His world.
 2. There is a rival to God's plan.
 3. The kingdoms of men are sure to fail.
 4. The kingdom of God will last forever.
 5. We must make sure we're right with the One who holds the future.

Scripture Reading: Revelation 7:9-17

What in the world is going on?

Now there's a question a lot of us find ourselves asking these days. Especially when we consider the state of today's world, and the rapid changes we see all around us. It's also a question that God Himself addressed by giving his servant Daniel a dream.

I've had some crazy dreams in my life, but I've never had a dream like the one we're going to see in today's text. It's the dream that the prophet Daniel had one night in the sixth century BC. To say it was a fascinating dream is an understatement. It was a God-given, prophetic dream, a series of visions pertaining to future events.

This morning we want to examine Daniel's dream from three perspectives, as we look at the first part of it in Daniel 7:1-14. The preparation for the dream (1), the particulars of the dream (2-14), and then the purpose of the dream.

I. Consider the preparation for the dream (1).

Notice Daniel 7:1, "In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying in bed. He wrote down the

***Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

¹ For an earlier development of this passage, see the Daniel series at WBC in 1996.

substance of his dream.” The AV says, “Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed; then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters.”

When we arrive at Daniel 7, we find ourselves in the chapter that begins the second major division of the book of Daniel. The first six chapters of Daniel are primarily historical narrative, so they tell us what happened to the people of God living in the sixth century BC while in exile in Babylon. The final six chapters of the book, however, are not the record of history, but prophetic visions. They look not at the past, but at the future.

So the second half of the book records a series of visions which God gave to Daniel, four visions to be specific, four prophetic visions.

So this is prophecy, and it raises a question we need to address?

A. What are possible responses to prophecy? Allow me to suggest three common responses, all of which, by the way, I've experienced in my own spiritual pilgrimage.

1. *Fascination: "I'm intrigued by prophecy."* As a teenager in the 1970s, movies (in church we called them “films”) like "A Thief in the Night" and "A Distant Thunder" captured the attention of many of us. I found it breath-taking to consider the fact that Jesus was going to return. Lots of my peers were intrigued by prophecy as well (even my non-Christian friends), and we pondered the biblical events such as the rapture, the tribulation, the marriage supper of the Lamb, and the millennial kingdom.

Thinking about what the Bible says is good. Unfortunately, for many, fascination with what the Bible says about the future had little impact on living in the present. And that's not good.

In fact, it's dangerous. I've met many people who love to talk about what God is going to do in the future, but they don't know the God who revealed what He is going to do in the future. That's a dangerous place to be, when knowing Bible truth becomes a substitute for knowing God.

2. *Dogmatism: "I've got prophecy all figured out."* Some of you will remember the popular prophecy conferences back in the 1970's. I do. I remember being fascinated by the charts that expert teachers had developed to detail what the future would hold. They had it all figured out, from who the anti-Christ was (Henry Kissinger secretary of state under President Nixon, was a popular suggestion), to which European nations corresponded with the prophecy of the ten toes in Daniel 2.

I remember becoming enamored with trying to guess when it would all happen. I had a good friend, and together we developed a time-frame of our own. We were sure that the Lord would return by 1983!

But of course Jesus did not return in 1983. And this in part led to a third response.

3. *Skepticism: "I can't understand it, so why try?"* For many, the subject of prophecy tends to be divisive, with various camps raising their flags and waving their banners.

"I'm a pre-millennialist."

"Well, I'm a post-millennialist."

"Not me. I'm an a-millennialist."

"Me? I'm a pan-millennialist. I believe it will all 'pan out' in the end."

After being bombarded by the labels for a while, we're inclined to throw in the towel and say skeptically, "Why study prophecy? Who can figure it out anyway? We might as well not even try. Let's just stick to what's relevant, living for Jesus in the present."

But in so doing we consequently choose to ignore a significant portion of our Bibles.

I don't know where you're at in your pilgrimage this morning, but I want you to consider something Charles F. Kettering said, "We should all be concerned about the future because we will have to spend the rest of our lives there."

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable, says 2 Timothy 3:16. Yes, some of it is easily understood and applied. Other parts of Scripture are quite mysterious and perplexing. But of this we can be sure. It's all good, and God knows we need it all, including the prophetic sections.

Think about the following statement. Just because I can't figure out something does not mean it's not important, nor does it give me sufficient reason to avoid it.

In fact, did you realize that Daniel himself didn't understand much of what he saw? Even before we look at it, I want to show you how Daniel responded to the prophetic truth he learned. According to 7:15, after seeing the first vision, "I, Daniel, was *troubled in spirit*, and the visions that passed through my mind *disturbed* me." Verse 16 says, "I approached one of those standing there and asked him the meaning of all this." Verse 28 says he turned "pale."

After his second vision, he responded this way (8:27, AV), "And I, Daniel, fainted, and was sick certain days...and I was astonished at the vision, but *none understood it*." The NIV says, "It was beyond understanding."

Isn't that interesting? Daniel himself said that when he received his vision, it was beyond understanding. His words in 12:8 are similar, "And I heard, but I *understood not* (AV)."

Daniel's admission after his third vision is quite riveting (10:15-17), "While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, 'I am overcome with *anguish* because of the vision, my Lord, and I am helpless. How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My *strength is gone* and I can *hardly breathe*.'"

So here are the words Daniel used to describe the effect prophetic material had on him: grieved in my spirit, troubled, my strength gone, can hardly breathe, and I did not understand.

You say, "I don't get it. If I can't figure something out, or at least to my satisfaction, what value is there in studying it?" That's a good question. There must be value, or the Lord would not have given Daniel these prophetic visions. Value for Daniel, and his generation of peers, and future generations.

So even though we may not understand it, or at least understand it presently or fully, the Lord knows there is benefit for us to ponder His prophetic revelation.

That leads to this question...

B. What is the purpose of prophecy? There is value, because studying a prophetic section of the Bible like Daniel 7 accomplishes at least three purposes in our lives.

1. *It exalts God.* The truth is, only God knows everything about everything. Have you ever worked with someone who had an answer for everything? Some people

act like they know everything about everything, but of course they are just kidding themselves.

Let's turn for a moment to another prophecy text, Revelation 1:1, and notice something very important. You could make a good case for the fact that the greatest book of prophecy in the Bible is the final canonical book. We called it Revelation.

But what did God call it? Notice 1:1, "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place."

So yes, this is a book about the future events, but in actuality, that's a secondary purpose. Why did God give us this book? To reveal end-time events? Yes, it does that, what's the primary purpose? The opening line makes it clear. This is *the revelation of Jesus Christ*.

So this book is designed to reveal a person to us, specifically the second person of the triune Godhead. This prophetic book unveils the person and coming work of Jesus the Christ.

Which points to the first purpose of every prophetic text. The purpose of prophecy is to exalt God. If God is not exalted this morning, we have missed the aim of this text.

2. *It humbles us.* God has told us enough about future events both to cause our hearts to quake, and to quiet them again. Corrie Ten Boom once said, "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God."

Josh Harris wrote a theology book that he called, *Dug Down Deep*. In it he presents what he believes regarding a series of Bible doctrines. And I love the title he uses for his final chapter.

Humble Orthodoxy. He explains, "Does embracing deeply held beliefs require that we let go of humility? Most people want to choose between the two, but the Bible doesn't give us that option. It tells us that we need both. We need conviction, and we need gentleness. We need orthodoxy, and we need humility."²

So when we study a prophecy text rightly, it should drive us to our knees. Yes, we should wrestle with what it means, and draw conclusions as we're able, but doing so humbly.

And studying prophecy does that. It humbles us for it forces us to admit at times, "What I have just read is good, but I don't know for sure what it means."

3. *It motivates us to live for God now.* Prophecy is God revealing what will happen in the future, and while we can't change what He said is coming, we can and should prepare for it. If you knew you were going to lose your job next Friday, would it affect how you spent your money this week? Or if you knew you were going to lose your closest friend next year, would it affect how you treated him or her this year?

So knowing God's prophetic plan should motivate us now, specifically motivate us to live for the One who is in control of what's coming.

Now with that lengthy introduction, let's look at the introduction to this prophecy in verse 1. When did Daniel say the dream came? "In the first year of Belshazzar."

Don't miss that. There was a new king on the block. Daniel had served under Nebuchadnezzar for many years, but the stability of his powerful reign was gone. There were a couple of kings that reigned in between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar—one

² Josh Harris, *Dug Down Deep*, p. 219.

was assassinated, another was knocked off by a conspiracy, and another left the country on an archaeological dig in search of the moon god. That king's son, Belshazzar, actually ruled in his father's absence.

It was King Belshazzar's first year. It was a year of political transition. Perhaps Daniel was wondering, "What will happen to me and to God's people now that this new ruler is on the throne?"

It was right then that God gave Daniel the dream we're about to consider, a *dream* comprised of a series of *visions* in which God revealed His plan for world history.

In terms of the big picture, there are four primary visions in Daniel 7-12. The first (chapter 7) was a vision of four beasts. The second, which occurred two years later and is recorded in chapter 8, was a vision of a ram and a goat. Daniel saw the third vision, that of a man, as recorded in chapter 10, in the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia. We see the details of Daniel's final vision in chapters 11-12, a vision of the kings of the north and south, which he saw "in the first year of Darius the Mede" (11:1; Darius is also the king who had Daniel thrown into the lions' den in chapter 6).

After seeing vision #1, Daniel did not write down all that he saw, but according to verse 1 wrote down "the substance of his dream" (the AV says he "told the sum of the matters"), that is, the main thrust of it.

So with the preparation for the dream in mind, let's take a look at the particulars.

II. Consider the particulars of the dream (2-14).

Daniel saw three particulars in his dream.

A. Daniel saw four beasts (2-7). Verse 2, "Daniel said: 'In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea.'"

Notice some details here, keeping in mind that when we do Bible study, *observation* must always come before *interpretation*). The vision occurred at night. The first thing Daniel saw were four winds of heaven stirring up the sea, "strove upon the great sea" says the AV. So it was a scene of turbulence.

And out of it Daniel saw four unusual creatures in verse 3. "Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea."

He saw four beasts, *great* beasts, *diverse from one another*, says the AV. So they're all beasts, but they're quite different from each other.

1. *The first was like a lion.* But quite unlike a lion too. Verse 4 says, "The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an eagle. I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a human being, and the mind of a human was given to it (AV, 'a man's heart was given to it')."

Hard to picture this, isn't it? Sort of a science-fiction-like mixture of images. This first beast Daniel sees resembled a lion, but with wings like an eagle, and its wings were eventually torn off, after which it stood like a man, and was given a man's mind/heart.

Daniel has little time to ponder this mysterious beast before another appears.

2. *The second was like a bear.* Notice verse 5, "And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told [AV 'and they said thus unto it'], 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!'"

So beast #2 looked like a bear with its paw raised, ready to strike (LB). But this was no Gentle Ben for in its mouth were three ribs, and a voice was telling it to get up and devour much flesh (AV).

Before Daniel could process this second bizarre creature, he saw a third.

3. *The third was like a leopard.* Verse 6, “After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule.”

So like the first beast, this third beast can fly. The first had wings of an eagle, the third with wings like those of a bird. But the third leopard-like beast had something else, four heads. And “it was given authority to rule,” says the text, a passive verb implying that this dominion was given to it.

Again, astounding. But before Daniel can process it, he sees a fourth beast. Verse 7, “After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns.”

4. *The fourth was dreadful and different.* The *Living Bible* describes it this way, “A fourth animal rose up out of the ocean, too dreadful to describe and incredibly strong. It devoured some of its victims by tearing them apart with its huge iron teeth; and others it crushed beneath its feet. It was far more brutal and vicious than any of the other animals, and it had ten horns.”

Wow! What bizarre beings! When you see a creature, your first thought, though instinctive, is to ask yourself, “Have I seen this before?”

So if it’s a snake, you look for familiar markings. Do I recognize it? Because if I don’t, I have reason for alarm.

Now magnify that feeling by tenfold. Friends, Daniel has never before in his life seen creatures like these, and neither have we. Fear producing, run for your life, no category to put them in, creatures. A lion with wings, a bear with three ribs in its mouth, a leopard with four wings and four heads, and a dreadful beast with iron teeth and ten horns!

It’s important at this point to mention that Daniel’s vision in chapter seven parallels the vision God gave Nebuchadnezzar in chapter two. That vision also had a four-fold division, with an image consisting of a gold head, a silver chest and arms, a mid-section and thighs of bronze, and legs and feet of part clay, part iron. The four parts represented four, successive world empires (2:37).

So in chapter seven, the four beasts likewise represent four kingdoms. That’s what Daniel was told later in chapter 7. Notice verses 16-17, “I approached one of those standing there and asked him the meaning of all this. So he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷ ‘The four great beasts are four kings³ that will rise from the earth.’”

Who are these four kings/kingdoms. They are four powerful empires. The first unquestionably was the Babylonian kingdom. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar in 2:38, “Thou art this head of gold.” Most conservative scholars interpret the following three

³ So reads the NIV revised in 2011. The original 1984 NIV says “four kingdoms.”

beasts as representing the Medo-Persian empire, the Greek empire, and the Roman empire.

But I find it interesting to note what caught Daniel's eye. He tells us in verse 8. It wasn't the beasts per se, but something else.

“While I was thinking **about the horns**, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a human being and a mouth that spoke boastfully.”

So Daniel was *thinking about the horns*. Something about the horns seemed to capture his attention, so he exercised his intellect and devoted some brain power, as it were, to mental activity regarding the subject.

The ESV and the KJV both use the term *considered*. “I considered the horns.” I think that’s significant. The meaning of the vision was not obvious to Daniel. He had to think.

Which raises an important sidelight for us. For the past generation or so the American church has been influenced by a spirit of anti-intellectualism. Many Christians don't go to church with the expectation of *thinking*. They go to church in order to “feel good,” to be inspired.

And what happens on Sunday is merely a reflection of what happens the rest of the week, at least as far as our approach to spirituality goes. We want to feel deeply, which is fine for we are emotional beings, but we don't want to think deeply and carefully, which is by God's design what will fuel the highest and most God-glorifying expressions of feeling.

When is the last time the average evangelical Christian read a good theology book? We'd rather watch a video, or listen to music, again nothing wrong with those activities. But there's something terribly amiss when fail to do what Daniel did.

To *think*. Ephesians 4:23 calls us to be renewed in the spirit of our *minds*.

And to God be the glory, here's one of the great evidences of grace at this church. God is assembling a people who gather weekly to worship Him by renewing their minds through the study of His Word, which in turn leads to transformed lives, which results in joy-filled hearts, which overflows in further expression of praise to His glory.

That's what expositional preaching fuels—informed, deep, rich, substantial worship. And this is what our Sovereign Lord desires and deserves.

So while pondering the horns on the fourth beast, Daniel saw a second particular which he describes in verse 8.

B. Daniel saw a little horn (8). “While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.”

So this little horn had eyes and a mouth, in other words, human characteristics. Apparently Daniel is seeing something that represents a human being. This little horn represents a man, and no ordinary man but an ungodly ruler who “spoke boastfully”. It seems likely then that the other ten horns which preceded this little horn were also men who were rulers associated with the fourth kingdom.⁴

⁴ Walvoord, 162

Ten horns, that's five times the natural number of the two horns possessed by most animals. Ten horns speaks of the extraordinary power of this fourth beast. Yet Daniel beheld this little horn uproot three of the ten horns, indicating some type of power-play.

Thus far in his vision, Daniel observed an earthly scene. In verse 9, however, he began to behold a quite different perspective.

C. Daniel saw a scene in heaven (9-14). Don't miss what's happening here. It's like watching a television that has a picture in a picture. Daniel sees the first scene, what's happening on earth. He sees what's happening from the human perspective, as kingdoms of men come and go. Then he sees the big picture, the scene in heaven, and that changes his entire perspective of what's happening on earth.

Here's what he saw, three images.

1. *The Ancient of Days sat at the judge's bench (9-10).* Follow the action of verses 9-10, "As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat." Who is this "Ancient of Days" who is seated on a throne in heaven?

Listen to His description, "His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him."

Stop there for a moment. Do you see what's happening? Daniel saw God, or at least this self-disclosure, for God is a spirit and is invisible. He saw God on His throne. He saw a river of fire flowing out from His throne.

Why fire? In the Bible, fire frequently depicts God's presence, and specifically God's judgment (Malachi 4:1).

Notice what else Daniel saw in the courtroom of heaven. Verse 10, "Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand⁵ stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened."

What's going on in heaven in verses 9-10? The heavenly court is in session, and the Ancient of Days has taken His seat at the judge's bench. The court is about to begin.

The scene corresponds to what John saw in Revelation 4-5. The Ancient of Days apparently refers to God the Father, as distinguished from God the Son whom we'll see in verse 13. God has man's number, and He's about to call it. A countless host of men and angels minister before His glorious throne. The Judge of all the earth is about to do right.

A voice from the earthly scene captured Daniel's attention in verse 11, "Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire."

Here's the second image.

2. *The beasts were defeated.* These powerful beasts that took our breath away in the first part of the dream are now eliminated. In verse 12, we learn that though stripped of their power, the other beasts were still living. They had been "stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time."

But now, Daniel learns, their time has come. They will all be destroyed. By whom?

3. *One like a son of man came in the clouds (13-14).* Here's the climax of Daniel's vision. Verse 13 (in the AV), "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like

⁵ That's 100 million, but the image likely speaks of an innumerable sea of faces.

the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.” The NIV, “He was led into his presence.”

Who is this one who is like a son of man that has access to the very throne of God? I believe that this is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 14 is convincing proof, “He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”

The beasts have come and gone. The kingdoms of men are no more. Jesus reigns.

III. Consider the purpose of the dream.

Robert F. Kennedy said this, "Some men see things as they are and say why. I dream things that never were and say why not."

But Daniel's dream is no mere creation of his mind. This is a God-given disclosure of what's happening, and will happen, in the world, which is His world. How should it affect us?

A. We may be troubled by the dream (15). Daniel himself was. Verse 15, “I, Daniel, was troubled in spirit, and the visions that passed through my mind disturbed me.”

I think that's significant. We want to feel good. What God caused Daniel to see created inner turmoil for him. The truth is, there's a time not to feel good. When you contemplate the present God-defying, self-centeredness of the nations of the world who are robbing the true God of the glory He deserves, and then, beyond that, the hopeless eternal future of people who are not right with God, it ought to disturb us and trouble us.

It ought make us think differently about what we're going to do with our time this week, and with our money, and the way we interact with our neighbors.

B. We must not miss the obvious. I want to offer a word of caution. When it comes to interpreting Bible prophecy, let's say no more than, and no less than what the Scriptures clearly warrant. It's fine to have a grid, an eschatological system, that we've gained in the past from our study of the Bible. But every present time we open the Bible our goal is not to protect our system, but answer the question, what is the Bible really saying, comparing Scripture with Scripture?

When we look at this text I see five truths that should encourage and motivate us.

1. *God has a plan for His world.* That's good to know, isn't it? A former president of the Moody Bible Institute, William Culbertson, once said, "Sometimes those of us who hold that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming are spoken of as pessimists. I think it can be truly said that we are really the only ones who have any right to be optimistic."

Friends, we know in the ultimate sense what's happening in the world. We know that God has a plan for His world.

2. *There is a rival to God's plan.* From the first day he committed cosmic treason in heaven, to the day when he will be cast into the lake of fire, Satan has and will seek to rival God. He rebels against God, and seeks to lead humanity to follow him.

Will he succeed?

3. *The kingdoms of men are sure to fail.* Babylon failed. So did Medo-Persia, and Greece, and the Roman empire. And so too in the end, will the revived Roman

empire crumble, as Daniel's dream seems to indicate, when the little horn arises and creates quite a commotion, but in the end, is slain and thrown into the blazing fire (11).

4. *The kingdom of God will last forever.* The day is coming when the wicked will be destroyed, yes. And the godly? They will worship the Son of man forever.

The Puritan Thomas Watson said, "Eternity to the godly is a day that has no sunset; eternity to the wicked is a night that has no sunrise."

We see the goal of history in Daniel 7. The Son of God is going to destroy the kingdoms of men, and establish His eternal kingdom so that the people He has redeemed will worship Him forever.

That's God's goal. The question is, is it your goal? The scene in verse 14 reveals that one day people from every nation will gather before the throne of Christ to worship Him.

Perhaps the most obvious lesson of Daniel's dream is this...

5. *We must make sure we're right with the One who holds the future.* Are you in right standing with the Ancient of Days? There's a German proverb that says, "Forever is a long bargain."

Are you ready for the future? Are you ready for the events that Daniel 7 says are sure to come? A question we must all ask is, "How can I be ready?"

The answer is this. Make sure you are right with the One who holds the future.

How does that happen? There are two approaches, one that doesn't work (that the majority of the world keeps trying), and one that does. The one that doesn't work is man's attempts to make himself right with God—by being religious, by living a good life, by doing something for God.

But God says that all our righteous deeds are as filthy rags to Him.

No, the only way to be right with God, according to God's Word, is the way God Himself provided. And to find that way you must read the rest of the Bible and get to know the One Daniel saw in his dream, the Son of man. This One, who will in a future day come to earth to destroy rebels and reward the righteous, has already come to earth. And He came to make a way for sinners to be righteous.

Read the four gospels and you'll see His perfect, loving, obedient to God life. And then you'll see how He willingly gave His life to make a ransom payment for sinners on the cross, and three days later conquered the enemy of death, and now offers forgiveness and eternal life to all who repent and put their total trust in Him.

That's how a sinner becomes right with God.

We're going to take time to respond now, to reflect on God's Word. With our heads bowed, consider some questions.

Do you know for sure you are saved? Do you know that your future is secure in Jesus Christ? You need not fear the future. If you will call out to God right now, repent of your sins, and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you can be saved.

To those who are saved... Is there anything in your life of which, if Christ returned today, you would be embarrassed? Is there any area in which you're resisting His control in your life? Confess it to Him now, and joyfully submit to His good plan for you.

**Time of Response in Prayer*

**Hymn of Response: O Worship the King (#10)*