

REVELATION – SERMON 89

ALL IS SAID, NOW ALL MUST BE DONE

Revelation 22:6-11

INTRODUCTION

- It has been remarked that “the secret to a good sermon is to have a good beginning, a good ending, *and to have the two of them as close together as possible*”
- Just as the two most important notes in a musical composition are the first note and the last note, so that principle is true when it comes to a sermon
- But it is particularly the conclusion of sermon, the *peroration*, that is the most critical part, where the main thoughts of it are recapitulated, and a call to action is pressed upon the people
- The Lord Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, concluded with a stark illustration of two men, one who obeyed Christ’s sayings, and one who did not, and the final end of them both (Matthew 7:27)
- The book of Revelation begins with a prologue (1:1-8) which establishes purpose of the book, followed by the body of the prophetic vision (1:9-22:5), then concluding with the epilogue (22:6-21)
- It is here that the Holy Spirit through John brings to a climax, not just the Revelation, but the entire Bible
- After unveiling the throne of heaven, the horrors of the tribulation, the lake of fire, and the new Jerusalem, the focus turns squarely upon the reader and the urgent and immediate response God expects of him

- The appropriate question of a soul that has been provoked by the doctrines God's word is, "What shall we do?" (Luke 3:10,12,14; Acts 2:37)
- God has given his word to man so that he may both *know* the truth (orthodoxy), and *do* the truth (orthopraxy)
- The teaching of scripture is "the doctrine which is according to godliness" (1 Timothy 6:3), and "the truth which is after godliness" (Titus 1:1), and is profitable "for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- Now, having come to the end of John's prophetic vision, we ask of the Lord, "What shall we do?"

I. HOLD DEAR HIS SINCERE WORDS (6-7,10)

A. The angel assures John of the veracity of the vision (6)

1. This applies not just to the preceding vision (21:9-22:5), but to the entire book of Revelation, containing "things which must shortly be done"
2. The enormity of what John had seen may have led him to question whether it was a dream
 - a. It is wisdom to examine the truth of those things that are said or shown to us, rather than to be as the "simple" that "believeth every word" (Proverbs 14:15)
 - b. The devil has many deceivers (2 John 7), preaching false Christs (Matthew 24:24; 2 Corinthians 11:4), false gospels (Galatians 1:6)
 - c. Such agents of Satan can appear as ministers of righteousness (2 Corinthians 11:15), and carry away

the spiritually heedless (Romans 16:18; Ephesians 4:14)

B. The words of scripture are altogether trustworthy (6)

1. The word “sayings” (*logoi*) indicates “words”
 - a. It is not “ideas” or “concepts” that God has given to man, but “words”
 - b. These inspired “words” are a major emphasis in the closing exhortations of the Revelation (6,7,9,10,18,19)
2. They are faithful and true (cf. 19:9; 21:5)
 - a. This is in contrast to the dragon, false prophet and Babylon who deceive the whole world (12:9; 3:14; 18:23; 19:20; 20:3,8,10)
 - b. Nothing else we have in this world can be called faithful and true
3. God’s words are given by inspiration through his holy prophets (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21)
4. God’s words foretell future events

C. The imminence of the events of Revelation (6-7)

1. As the book opens declaring these “things which must shortly come to pass” (1:1), so it concludes with “the things which must shortly be done”
2. The Lord Jesus comes “quickly” (*tachu*), that is “suddenly” (3:11; 22:12,20)
3. From the time of the apostles until now, the Lord’s coming has always been “at hand”

4. The rapture may take place any moment (1 Corinthians 1:7; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:15; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 10:25; James 5:8; 1 Peter 4:7)

D. Those who keep the words of prophecy are blessed (7)

1. This is the sixth of seven beatitudes in Revelation (1:3, 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7, 22:14)
2. “To keep these sayings is to read them with observation, to take notice of the accomplishment of them, so far as it has taken place, to keep them in mind and memory, to meditate upon them, and through the grace of God to steer the life and conversation according to the instructions, directions, and cautions here given” (John Gill)
3. The Greek word for blessed is *makarios* and means happy, blissful, contented of heart
4. Contrary to popular thinking, God’s primary purpose for us is not that we be *happy*, but *holy*
5. Yet blessedness/happiness does come to “the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD” (Psalm 119:1)
6. Such are blessed in life, in death and through all eternity
7. Christians and churches that neglect the study of this book are not only denying themselves the promised blessing, but are sinning against God

E. The words of the prophecy are not to be sealed (10)

1. In contrast, Daniel was commanded to shut up his vision and seal the book to the time of the end (Daniel 8:26; 12:4)
 - a. Daniel's prophecies of the events surrounding the second coming of Christ were largely incomprehensible to him and his readers 500 years before Christ's first coming
 - b. But now, with God granting the unsealed vision of Revelation, all the prophetic Scripture is open to us showing us the events that will shortly take place
 - c. For us in the 21st century, witnessing world events that are in clear preparation for the events recorded in Revelation, the book is all the more "unsealed", and the time is all the more "at hand"
2. God's forbidding to seal this book is a rebuke to many who claim that the imagery of these visions is too difficult to understand, and thereby seal it up in defiance to God's command
3. If God has declared the Revelation as unsealed, it is therefore our duty to declare its open truths to the world

II. HUMBLY DEVOTE TO HIS SACRED WORSHIP (8-9)

- A. John worships the angel a second time (cf. 19:10)
 1. This is an indication of the overwhelming effect the extraordinary visions must have had upon John
 2. The angel shows that no created being, not even a mighty angel, should receive worship
 3. Though the saints and angels are of different natures and perform different functions in God's kingdom, ultimately

both are simply fellow-servants (*sundoulos*), co-slaves of the Lord

B. The necessity of true worship of the true God

1. In an age where “Christian worship” is tailored to accommodate the lusts of man, the seriousness of the sin of false worship in God’s sight has been forgotten
2. Corrupt worship of the Lord has been at the heart of the apostasy of many throughout Scripture, provoking God’s severe judgment on their idolatry
 - a. Cain (Genesis 4:4-5)
 - b. The Israelites at Sinai (Exodus 32)
 - c. Saul (1 Samuel 13:12-13)
 - d. Solomon (1 Kings 11:1-8)
 - e. Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:16)
 - f. The Jews (Matthew 15:7-9)
 - g. The Corinthian and Galatian, Pergamon and Thyatiran churches

III. HEED DILIGENTLY TO HIS SOLEMN WARNING (11)

- A. Presently, in this day of grace, there is opportunity to repent and believe, to be saved from hell, and to made holy
- B. But the day is fast approaching when man’s eternal state will be fixed

1. Whether taken from this world by death, or whether alive when the Lord comes in glory, there comes time when the door of opportunity is forever closed
2. When the bridegroom comes, those who are ready will go in with him, but upon those who are not ready, “the door was shut” (Matthew 25:10)
3. There is also a point even in this life, where an unbeliever, having continually rejected the gospel, “sins away the day of grace” and God “gives him up” to a reprobate mind (Romans 1:24,26,28)
4. “Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.” (Daniel 12:10)
5. Those condemned in the lake of fire will certainly regret their folly of unbelief, but the scriptures nowhere indicate there is repentance in hell, but rather they become more and more entrenched in their filth and hatred of God

C. This gives perspective and urgency to the church in its role of evangelism

1. As when God sent Ezekiel to preach to the rebellious house of Israel with the knowledge that they would not hear him (Ezekiel 3:27), so our responsibility is to preach the gospel, and leave the results to God
2. The message of the gospel will either convert sinners or condemn them (1 Corinthians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 2:15-16)
3. There must be an urgency in our efforts to reach the world with the gospel, knowing that time is running out (2 Corinthians 6:2)

CONCLUSION

1. The apostle John was deeply affected with wonder and worship by the Revelation he was given (1:17; 17:6; 19:10)
2. The scriptures describe a cohort of God's favoured people who "tremble at his word" (Ezra 9:4; Isaiah 66:2,5)
3. How can we not tremble at his word when we consider that all these prophecies will *surely* and *shortly* come to pass?
4. If these words are faithful and true, then we can be *absolutely certain* that God will judge the unbelievers, both in this world and the next, and that he will eternally bless those who trust in him
5. Since this is true, then preparing ourselves and others for eternity ought to be the number one priority in our lives
6. Do you have a sense of urgency, knowing that the Lord may return at any moment, and the day of grace will be over?
7. If even the apostle John could lapse into idolatrous worship *twice*, how careful must we be that our worship is regulated according to the Scriptures, in spirit and truth, and not according to the whims of man?
8. Verse 11 clearly shows that a person's spiritual state is displayed in their outward behaviour
 - ✓ The unjust will *be* unjust, the filthy will *be* filthy
 - ✓ The righteous will *be* righteous, the holy will *be* holy
9. There are many who claim to be righteous, yet have lives characterised by filthiness
10. If you profess to be saved, is there a discernible progression in sanctification and holiness as you grow in grace?