

Revelation 22:6-21

6 Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. 7 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

8 Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things.

9 Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." 10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.

11 He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." 14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. 15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly."
Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

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The Book of Revelation “The Conclusion”

This message brings us to the Conclusion of the Book of Revelation.
The prophecy it ends as it began. Cf. 22:6 and 1:1-3.

Revelation 22:6

Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.

Revelation 1:1-3

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants — things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, 2 who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. 3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

The Lord Jesus Christ sent His angel to John to give to the Church a prophecy of the final condition of those who read and hear and keep the words of this prophecy. It is an encouragement to all believers some who through fire and flood have come to God through the blood of the Lamb. At the same time it is a warning to those who are religious but in the end are found to be hypocrites.

The Word of God everywhere demands obedience.
The command is to repent and believe in the Gospel.

Jesus began His public ministry, “The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Gospel. Mark 1:15

Repentance is obedience to God.
Obedience to the principles of righteousness and holiness.

We could recite the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, or we could be reminded of the role of our conscience:

“... for whatever is not from faith is sin.” Rom 14:23

In this Conclusion of the Book of Revelation the emphasis is on holy living is seen in {7, 9, 11-12, 14-15, and 18-19}.

The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

Believers are encouraged to live holy lives as the evidence that they belong to the Lord Jesus Christ in a saving relationship. I said “saving relationship” because everyone has a relationship to Jesus but not everyone is saved.

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The first encouragement to holiness is the “words are faithful and true.”

6 Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.

“The he said” It is difficult to determine who is speaking in this passage. Is it Christ, His angel, the Holy Spirit, or the Church?

There are scholarly works available that discuss the Greek verbs and their subjects in order to indicate the speaker. It is enough for me to know that ultimately the words written here are from the Holy Spirit and “are Faithful and True.” That may be a convenient way of escape for me, but I am convinced that the correct identity of the speaker will not alter the truth or the force of the words.

As is his method throughout the Revelation, John recalls the words of the OT prophets and in this case it is the prophet Daniel.

Daniel interpreted King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream as a vision of a succession of world empires; Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, but then a final kingdom that is the Gospel Kingdom of Christ.

Daniel 2:45

Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold — the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

The “dream is certain” says Daniel;
“... these words are faithful and true” writes John.

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The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

7 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

If “quickly” means soon after John wrote this prophecy then we must make it a comparison of time versus eternity. A thousand years is as a day with the Lord.

It is my view that “quickly” takes the meaning of “suddenly”.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-4

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. Cf. Rev 16:15

One preacher said that Jesus was like a thief who comes suddenly and with a purpose. Jesus is coming suddenly and without further warning.

My eschatology says that there is nothing yet to be done in this present age, between the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ until He comes quickly [suddenly].

We are told to live expectantly: as though Jesus will return at any moment.

The story is told that Mr. Charles Spurgeon asked several people before he preached if they thought Jesus would come back today?

They said, no, they didn't think He would come today.

Then Spurgeon preached on:

Matthew 24:44

Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

KJV

The blessing is for those who keep [obey] the words of the prophecy of this book. This echoes 1:3

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.”

The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

Be careful to continue in holiness for the time is near for Jesus to come. What happens when Jesus returns: Eternal punishment and eternal blessing and Jesus will determine where you spend eternity. There is no “purgatory” and you will not be annihilated and there are no second opportunities to repent.

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In verses 8-10 we have a second encouragement to continue in holiness.

8 Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things.

9 Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." 10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand."

In verse 18, John makes an emphatic claim to be a prophet. The prophets of the OT warned against idolatry and all manner of sinful living. The last OT prophet was John the Baptist who preached repentance. The prophets warned the people that God was serious about His commandments. So John the apostle and prophet here warns his readers and hearers to take the Word of God very seriously.

Each of the letters to the seven churches in chapters 2 and 3 repeats “he who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

John fell down to worship before the feet of the angel.
 Did John not learn from 19:10?

Revelation 19:9-10

9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." 10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

I am reminded of a song, “Christmas times a coming;” the person in the song is so excited about Christmas that he can’t walk for running.

The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

If I knew that I was in the presence of the angel I can't say what I would do. But the rebuke is severe. The angel, and John, and the prophets, and all of the saints of God are merely servants of God. So John, “Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Flee from any form of idolatry, be it a statue, so-called relics, and especially angels.

In verse 10 the angel commands John not to seal up the words of the prophecy of this book. Why? The time is at hand.

This Book was written for the Church. There are seven letters given by Jesus for John to send to seven churches in Asia Minor. Those letters and the rest of the words of this Book are:

1) for the encouragement of the Church, and 2) to warn hypocrites.

Again we are reminded of the words of Daniel who was told to do the opposite of what John was told to do with his book.

“Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.”

Daniel was commanded to shut up the words

Daniel 12:4

"But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."

Daniel 12:9

And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

Daniel 8:26

"And the vision of the evenings and mornings
 Which was told is true;
 Therefore seal up the vision,
 For it refers to many days in the future."

The reason is that the prophecies of Daniel would not be understood or fulfilled until the end of the present age.

The message is to Worship God!

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In verses 11-12 we have a third encouragement to continue in holiness.

11 He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

Here John recalls Daniel 12:9-10

9 And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. 10 Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.

There are some commentaries that question how the angel can command the unbeliever to continue in wicked and filthy behavior while commanding the believer to continue in holiness.

It is my view that because we are dealing with the final state of individuals **after** the return of Jesus Christ that the encouragement and the warning has to do with how you live your life and the choices you make.

There is no place for evangelism after Jesus returns. There are no second opportunities; today is the day of salvation! If a person dies in unbelief he will become a believer, but not for justification, but for judgment.

John 8:24

Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

The person who dies in unbelief will for all eternity remember how often God was merciful to him. Even the person who dies never having heard of the Gospel will have rejected the knowledge of God in creation.

The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

The awful words of Abraham to the rich man in torment who begged for a drop of water for his tongue was, “Son, remember....”

Rolf Barnard preached on Luke 16:19-31 and called the memory of the lost soul in hell “God’s Bloodhound.”

Likewise the believer who upon justification has lived and died striving against sin; who has lived in a life of repentance and who loves Christ more than self will continue in that state of holiness, and will never again need to repent because everything that was a source of temptation to sin will have been removed.

12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

Jesus is coming suddenly and He will reward every one according to his work.

The word “reward” means a “pay for services.”

In this verse John calls on the prophecy in Isaiah 40:10:

Isaiah 40:10
Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand,
And His arm shall rule for Him;
Behold, His reward is with Him,
And His work before Him.

The Hebrew word translated “reward” in Isaiah means, the payment of contract; salary, compensation....

The meaning of “reward” is the same in Isaiah and in Revelation.

Just as we are sure that justification is by grace through faith, we are as sure that there is another truth in the Bible that says that saving faith results in good works and unbelief results in wicked deeds.

Therefore the Bible can say that we are not justified by faith alone if there are no good works to show that we indeed have faith.

The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

James 2:14-26

14 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? 17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe — and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. NKJV

What Paul writes in Romans 4 about faith and works in no way contradicts what James says. You are not justified by works but if you are justified you will produce good works.

Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. NKJV

You are not included in verse 8 unless you live in verse 9 and 10!

The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

Then we have a fourth encouragement to holiness

13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

In 1:8 and 21:6 God is “the Alpha and the Omega” and God is “the Beginning and the End” 21:6; Christ is called “the First and the Last” 1:17 and 2:8.

These titles which are used to describe characteristics of God are used of Jesus Christ to emphasise His deity.

You cannot say more about the sovereignty of God in Christ than what these terms convey. Christ is sovereign over creation and all of the events from the beginning until the end of this present age and into eternity.

14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

Those who persevere until the end, the same shall be saved.

The image is of the New Jerusalem, the holy city, the gates, the church of the redeemed, who have the blessing of the tree of life.

15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

But outside the city of believers is the city of unbelievers [Cf. 21:8]. These are hypocrites who said they were Christian but loves and practices a lie.

The term “dogs” appears and is used throughout Scripture as despicable and despised creatures and sometimes refers to unbelievers.

Matt 7:6 "Do not give what is holy to the dogs;"

Philippians 3:2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!

The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

The message is not only for John but “you” plural, in the churches.

Jesus is the source [Root] and the Son [Offspring] of David.

The answers forever question that Jesus asked the Pharisees:

Matthew 22:41-46

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42 saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?"

They said to Him, "The Son of David ."

43 He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 44'The LORD said to my Lord,

"Sit at My right hand,

Till I make Your enemies Your footstool"?"

45 If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" 46 And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

* * *

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

The Holy Spirit speaks for the Church and encourages believers to “Come”.

Those who are “thirsty” and have ears to hear continue to come to Christ.

Coming to Christ is not a one-time act of making a profession of faith and then continuing to live as though there were no Holy Spirit; it is a life of desiring Christ.

And the water of life cannot be bought; it is free!

The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

Isaiah 55:1

"Ho! Everyone who thirsts,
Come to the waters;
And you who have no money,
Come, buy and eat.
Yes, come, buy wine and milk
Without money and without price.

* * *

We have a fifth and final encouragement to holiness.

18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Here John takes his illustration from several warnings in Deuteronomy:

Deuteronomy 4:1-2

"Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you. 2 You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Deuteronomy 12:32

"Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.

The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

Deuteronomy 29:19-20

19 and so it may not happen, when he hears the words of this curse, that he blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, even though I follow the dictates of my heart' — as though the drunkard could be included with the sober.

20 "The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and the LORD would blot out his name from under heaven.

The context of the Deuteronomy passages is a warning against idolatry. Cf. 21:8

In our day the warning is still about idolatry that takes its form in materialism.

The warning includes preachers that twist the Scriptures as do the Health and Wealth and the Prosperity hucksters.

One final word about idolatry; in verse 16 the Lord Jesus says that He is the Bright Morning Star. This is a reference to Numbers 24:17: the fourth oracle of Balaam.

Numbers 24:17

Star shall come out of Jacob;
 A Scepter shall rise out of Israel,

Balaam wanted to curse Israel but God would only allow him to bless Israel. However, King Balak was astute enough to pick up from Balaam the key to the overthrow of Israel. Allow his women to marry the men of Israel and that would lead to idolatry and Israel's downfall.

Both Peter and Jude remind us of Balaam.

2 Peter 2:15

They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

Jude 11

The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

And Jesus to the church at Pergamos.

Revelation 2:14

14 But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

Idolatry takes many forms; and not so much bowing before carved images as it is in putting your trust in something that is not God. Men can make an idol of their family, their job, or even pornography, anything that absorbs your thoughts to the extent that you compromise your commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ.

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20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly."

Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

“These things” must mean the entire Revelation of Jesus Christ.

The reason for the warnings is that Jesus is coming “quickly” [suddenly].

The only response is “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!”

* * *

21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

The Book of Revelation is a letter addressed to the Church and is an encouragement to believers and a warning to hypocrites.

The theme of obedience cannot be stressed too much.

The Book of Revelation
“The Conclusion”

If you are a believer you will persevere in any circumstance.

If you are a hypocrite you will find yourself in the category one of the three unprepared kinds of soils that seemed to be true but the aggravations of everyday living overcame your profession and in the end you quit God.

The story of the Book is that faithful endurance in faith in Christ will be more than compensated when you are finally and forever secure as a citizen of the New Jerusalem.

This 39th message concludes my efforts to preach the Book of Revelation.