

**Revelation #58****October 1, 2023****Series Title: The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Behold I Am Coming Soon****Today's Message: Responding to the Majesty of the Glory of Christ, pt 1; Revelation 22:12-21**

As we draw very near to the conclusion of the book of Revelation it is important that we don't miss the mercy and grace of God. All through this book of prophecy we have watched the future judgment upon the enemies of God unfold through the terrible, unimaginable yet calculated acts of God. Yet, it should become apparent that God has graciously revealed these coming judgments in order to, among other things, wake up and strengthen the Church (Rev. 3:2), and lead sinners to repentance.

The Revelation was given as a testimony of Jesus to the Churches. We see this confirmed in Revelation 22:16 when Jesus says, "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches." It is a call to repentance! And in Revelation the call is at once loud and clear, but is also subtle and yet nevertheless, real and living! Even here, at the end of Revelation I can still hear the echoes of the words of Jesus in the first few chapters of Revelation as He says, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches." (Revelation 2-3)

He who has ears to hear, hear the praise and adoration of God resounding in the chambers of heaven as the living creatures, the elders, the angels, the church surround the throne praising Him who sits on the throne, and the Lamb of God! (Revelation 4-5)

He who has ears to hear, hear the thundering voice of God as the seal judgments, trumpet judgments and bowl judgments are unleashed against the enemies of God! (Revelation 6-18)

He who has ears to hear, hear the sound of victory as the rider of the white horse rides out in triumph over his foes, destroying them in an instant by the word of His mouth! (Revelation 19)

He who has ears to hear, hear the voice of Him who was seated on the throne say, "It is done!" (Revelation 20-21)

He who has ears to hear, hear the Lord Jesus declare on oath, "Behold, I am coming soon!"

Hear and respond! Come to Him! Believe on Him! Trust in Him! Live for Him!

And John does not fall short in communicating exactly what the Revelation was intended to do and that is to exalt the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God, the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star (22:13, 16b)

So, this book, like John's gospel, certainly was written "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name."

Let's begin the first of two messages on this final section of Revelation by looking closely today at 22:12-16. In this we will 1) Hear the Promise of Jesus to everyone who responds to Him in faith (22:12). 2) We will the Hear the Blessing of Jesus for everyone who responds to Him in the obedience of faith (22:14-15); and 3) We will Hear Jesus' own testimony of who He is! (22:13,16)

# I. (22:12) Hear the Promise of Jesus to everyone who responds to Him in faith

## A. (22:12a) The First Promise: Behold, I am coming soon!

1. Remember, this promise is in reference to His coming at the Rapture of the Church
  - a) An imminent return is promised
    - (1) It could happen at any time
    - (2) There are no signs given prior to His second coming.
2. Respond: With having a mindset of preparedness
  - a) Scripture does not tell us *when* to expect His coming, but it does tell us what to do: **Wait!** Be ready, anticipating His return with joyful expectation!
    - (1) Wait eagerly:
      - (a) "Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you **eagerly wait** for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed." (1 Cor. 1:7)
      - (b) "Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; **wait** till the Lord comes." (1 Cor. 4:5a)
      - (c) "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we **eagerly await** a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phil. 3:20)
    - (2) Wait energetically: Eager waiting does not mean that we should be in "park" running at "idle speed". Work.
      - (a) The Thessalonians believed in the imminent return of Christ, but according to 2 Thess. 3:10-12 they were idle.
    - (3) Wait expectantly: Be patient. Know He is coming soon.
      - (a) "Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near." (James 5:7-8)
  - b) **Imitate** the first believers in the early church! They lived day to day eagerly waiting for His coming but actively employing the spiritual gifts for the good of others, energetically pushing the message of Christ forward, and waiting expectantly like a farmer waits for harvest.
    - (1) I'll add one more thing. Waiting Empathetically: And because they had a clear picture in their minds of Christ standing at the door ready to judge they were encouraged to have empathy for one another.

- (a) “Don’t grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door.” (James 5:9)

B. (22:12b) The second promise: Jesus refers to the Judgment Seat of Christ (Bema)

1. He comes and His rewards for His people are with Him!
  - a) Positively: what we did **by faith** in service for Christ on earth will be rewarded.
  - b) Negatively: whatever we denied ourselves, **by faith**, and refused to partake in because it was displeasing to Christ will be rewarded!
2. The judgment seat of Christ will take place right away at His second coming!
  - a) The bema judgment is for believers. NOT pertaining to salvation. Christ was judged on our behalf on the cross. This judgment pertains to our works— whether good or bad.
  - b) Paul reminded the Corinthians of the bema judgment. “He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men’s hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.” (1 Cor. 4:5b)
  - c) Since our sins were judged in Christ, and because there is now NO CONDEMNATION for those in Christ, I believe that even a loss of rewards cannot have a sense of condemnation. Of loss, yes. Of condemnation, no!
    - (1) 1 Cor. 3:12-15: “If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. I will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, **he will suffer loss**; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.”

C. Application: We are promised again and again in the NT that Jesus is coming soon. But we often forget. We forget the promises of great rewards for faithful living, and choose rather to settle for the temporal, corrupting pleasures to this life. We have the testimony of many faithful Christians who lived very hard lives, yet hopeful as they waited for a Savior. We have the persecuted church. You can read stories about their faithfulness to Christ because they expect Him at any time. And, we have Jesus: “who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. 12:2).” And on the night before His crucifixion, It was Jesus who prayed, “And now, Father, glorify Me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. (John 17:5)” We must develop a faith for the long run!

## II. (22:14-15) Hear the Blessing of Jesus for everyone who responds to Him in the obedience of faith

A. Blessing! The last beatitude of Revelation! From Promise (22:12) to Beatitude.

1. *The homestretch of Revelation was "written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope!"*
- B. Who are the blessed ones? "Blessed are those who wash their robes"
  1. MacArthur: "That phrase graphically portrays the believer's participation in the death of Christ."
    - a) In Revelation 7:14, the angel talks to John about who were the people John saw in white robes, and where did they come from. And the angels said:
      - (1) "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."
  2. The Blessed ones are everyone who has believed on Jesus.
    - a) Believing on Jesus means that we in essence die with Him.
      - (1) Colossians 2:12-13: "...having been buried with Him in baptism and raised with Him through your faith in the power of God, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ."
      - (2) The blood of Christ, which was shed for you, washes away the guilt and stain of all your sins!
- C. The Blessing of having access to the Tree of Life and the New Jerusalem!
  1. Only for those whose robes have been washed in the blood of the Lamb!
- D. (22:15) Heaven is ONLY for everyone whose robes have been washed.
  1. All other people are excluded. EXCLUDED! That is tragic and very sad.
  2. What is meant by "outside"?
    - a) The lake of fire
  3. Who are these people described here in 22:15
    - a) Everyone "who loves and habitually practices any such sin, stubbornly clings to it, and refuses Christ's invitation to salvation." (MacArthur)
- E. Application: Does your heart thrill at the good news that the blood of Christ alone cleanses you from all your guilt, and the stains of your sins? If not, why not?

### III. (22:16) Hear Jesus' own testimony of who He is

- A. First, keep in mind where we are in Revelation.
  1. The Epilogue. The future acts of God have a bearing on the present moment.
  2. In heaven what we have read is finished. God knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10)!
    - a) "I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.'"
- B. We see Jesus as He truly is!
  1. (22:13) Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.
    - a) Eternal; (John 1:1-5; Col. 2:9; Hebrews 1:2-3)

2. (22:16) The Root and Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.
  - a) God-man: Hypostatic union: Root of David (Before David) and the Offspring (seed) of David (descendent): **Romans 1:3-4**