

The New City - Revelation 22:6-21

Jesus Is Coming

6 And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place."

7 "And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, 9 but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

10 And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. 11 Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

12 "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

14 Blessed are those who wash their robes,[c] so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. 15 Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

16 "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

17 The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

The Centrality of God's Word

A Christian should ask himself every day, "How central is the Word of God to my life?"

The answer to that question for most of us on most days would probably be "not central enough."

As I prepared this discussion guide, I have been given a timely challenge to make the Word of God more central to the time we spend in small groups within the church.

Review the points of the sermon for this text:

- God's Word is justifiably authoritative
- Obeying God's Word brings blessing
- God's Word should cause us to worship Him
- God's Word is the only way to be saved
- We must handle and proclaim God's Word correctly

Which of these points most challenged you in your own relationship with God's Word?

"These words are trustworthy and true..." v. 6.

This phrase brings out an aspect of the truth of God's Word that is not popular in modern American culture. Revelation, as well as the entire Bible (the word of the Spirit to the prophets and apostles) is propositional truth. We don't get to sit around and decide which parts of God's Word we would like to follow and which ones we don't. We don't get to decide which parts are true and which ones are false. God's Word is a proposition. You either believe the proposition or you don't.

This does not mean that we don't struggle and wrestle with God's Word. That is part of our sanctification. It simply means that we have a daily choice to make whether we will submit to God's Word or try to make God submit to us. BTW, the Bible gives ample testimony to what happens when we try to make God submit to us. You may have your own personal story to share about the time you tried to make God submit to you. It is always a very painful experience.

Verse 7 gives us a blessing to consider in this choice:

"Blessed is the one who keeps the words of prophecy of this book."

If you had not become acquainted with the nature of prophecy over the course of our study of Revelation, the whole notion of keeping prophecy might seem strange. Isn't prophecy simply meant to inform us? How do we keep information? Are we simply to memorize it?

Discussion Guide for October 29, 2017

Memorization is certainly included in keeping the words of prophecy, but I hope you have been encouraged and strengthened in your resolution to live for Christ as you have memorized and meditated on the Words of the Book of Revelation.

- What do you think it means to keep the Words of prophecy?
- What changes in your life are required to truly keep the Words?
- How has this book enhanced your own worship of God (v. 8-9)?

“Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.” (v. 10)

The language of verses 10 and 11 seems odd at first. What do you mean “let the evildoer still do evil?”

One of the most basic functions of prophecy is to provide a mirror with which men and women can examine themselves for who they truly are. Revelation has just given us many, many images to compare the world under the dominion of Satan with the church under the dominion of Christ. We should be able to read the book, hold it up as an image of our lives, and know whether or not we belong to the camp of the evil and filthy or to the camp of those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

This is why we are told not to seal up these words. They must be proclaimed so that men can know whether or not they stand to inherit eternal life.

- What will it look like for you to “unseal” the Word of God to those around you?
- How do you proclaim God’s Word without being a preacher?

By God’s grace we will stand firm in the correct handling of the Word of God. We live in a day in age where many Christians either flippantly disregard the need for theological precision and doctrinal correctness or they go out of their way to engage in meaningless disputes over things that are not central elements of Christian faith. The warning throughout the book of Revelation is that the church should avoid both pitfalls and vigorously contend for the truth that brings eternal life.

- What is the warning and promise for doctrinal integrity in Revelation 22:18-21?
- Do we do a good job as individuals and as a church to advocate for the truths that matter and avoid meaningless disputes that don’t?
- How do you know which truth needs to be defended at a given moment?
- How do you decide which disputes to avoid?