

The Book Of Revelation Study 103

Revelation 22:7-12 (NASB)

⁷ *"And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds 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, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things.*

⁹ *But he *said to me, "Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed 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 one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy."*

¹² *"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.*

As we studied this passage last time together we saw that the reality of our Lord's imminent return calls for four responses on the part of every believer.

Immediate obedience,
 Immediate worship,
 Immediate proclamation,
 Immediate service.

Last time we talked about the immediate obedience.

Tonight we will start with the second response, which is immediate worship.

IMMEDIATE WORSHIP

Revelation 22:8-9 (NASB)

⁸ *I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things.*

⁹ *But he *said to me, "Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God."*

Now in these verses we see John speaking again and he names himself for the first time since **1:9**.

The inspired apostle adds his testimony of the truthfulness of Revelation to that of the angel;

Revelation 22:6 (NASB)

⁶ *And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true"; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place.*

John overcome by what he saw and heard, fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed him these things.

He has the proper response, worship, but being overwhelmed with amazement, John inadvertently directed it to the wrong object.

The apostle knew that angels were not to be worshiped; in fact, he had earlier been rebuked for attempting to do so (**19:10**)

But like Ezekiel, and Daniel, and Peter, James, and he himself at the transfiguration, John simply collapsed in wonder and worship.

Ezekiel 1:28 (NASB)

²⁸ *As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.*

Daniel 8:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ *So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end."*

Daniel 10:9 (NASB)

⁹ *But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.*

Matthew 17:6 (NASB)

⁶ *When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground and were terrified.*

Because God alone is to be worshiped, the angel said to John, **"Do not do that"** he hastily reminds the apostle that he too was a created being, declaring **"I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book."**

Far from being a legitimate object of worship for John, the angel was actually his created fellow servant, and not only his, but also of John's brethren the prophets, and of all believers, who are defined here as **those who heed the words of this book.**

Throughout Scripture, angels are seen serving God's people.

Calling the bewildered apostle back to the one and only object of worship, the angel commanded John to **worship God.**

A proper understanding of Revelation should elicit worship; thus, worship is a major theme in the Apocalypse.

God alone is the only acceptable Person to worship. The Bible forbids the worship of anyone else, including angels, saints, the Virgin Mary, or any other created being.

Colossians 2:16-22 (NASB)

¹⁶ *Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—*

¹⁷ *things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.*

¹⁸ *Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,*

¹⁹ *and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.*

²⁰ *If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as,*

²¹ *"Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!"*

²² *which all refer to things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?*

Now there was to be an immediate Proclamation;

IMMEDIATE PROCLAMATION

Revelation 22:10-11 (NASB)

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 one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy."*

Continuing his message to John, the angel commanded him, *"do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book."*

The message of the Apocalypse is not to be hidden;

Revelation 10:11 (NASB)

¹¹ *And they *said to me, "You must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."*

It is a message to be spread and proclaimed to produce obedience and worship.

Thus unlike Daniel, John was instructed **not to seal up the words of Revelation.**

Daniel 8:26 (NASB)

²⁶ *"The vision of the evenings and mornings Which has been told is true; But keep the vision secret, For it pertains to many days in the future."*

Daniel 12:4-10 (NASB)

⁴ *"But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase."*

⁵ *Then I, Daniel, looked and behold, two others were standing, one on this bank of the river and the other on that bank of the river.*

⁶ *And one said to the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long will it be until the end of these wonders?"*

⁷ *I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed.*

⁸ *As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, "My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?"*

⁹ *He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time.*

¹⁰ *"Many will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.*

John was not to seal up the words but to proclaim them.

Immediate proclamation of **this book** is called for because the coming of Christ has been imminent for every generation from John's day until the present.

That the specific words of Revelation are not to be sealed up stresses again that there is no hidden, secret meaning apart from the normal sense of the text.

If the truth is not clear in those **words** then this command is nonsense.

If the plain normal understanding of the **words** of Revelation does not convey the meaning God intended its readers to grasp, then those **words** are sealed.

At the beginning of Revelation, John was commanded,

Revelation 1:11 (NASB)

¹¹ *saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."*

The message of the Apocalypse, that Jesus will return bringing blessing for His own and horrifying judgment on the ungodly, is too critical not to spread.

Thus, to fail to preach Revelation is not only foolish, but sinful.

Any Christian who fails to learn its truths is forfeiting blessing;

Any preacher who fails to proclaim its truths is sinfully unfaithful to his mandate.

Not to preach the book of Revelation is to fail to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ with the glory that is due Him.

Being more than just a failure to teach the whole counsel of God, it is outright disobedience to the command not to **seal up the words** of the Apocalypse.

It robs believers of the end of the divine story of history in all its wonder and fullness.

No one should preach who doesn't rightly divide and proclaim this book.

Now, the angel's next statement seems strangely out of place in this context;

Revelation 22:11 (NASB)

¹¹ *"Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy."*

Some may think its connection with the command that preceded it is not immediately apparent.

The truth however, that it dramatically conveys, is that people's response to the proclamation of the truth will fix their eternal destinies.

Those who hear the truth but continue to **do wrong** and **be filthy** will by that hardened response fix their eternal destiny in hell.

On the other hand, the one who continues to practice **righteousness** and **keep himself holy** gives evidence of genuine saving faith.

The adverb *eti* (still) may have the sense of "yet more."

In that case, the meaning is that those who do **wrong** and are **filthy** in this life will be even more so in eternal hell, where there will be absolutely no good influences to mitigate their evil.

And in contrast, those who are **righteous** and **holy** in this life will be perfectly holy in their glorified bodies in heaven.

It is sobering to realize that people's response to God's gospel truth in this life will determine their eternal destiny when they die, or when the Lord returns, their character will be forever fixed.

Those who respond to the warnings in Revelation will live forever in heaven.
But those who fail to heed those warnings and repent will remain forever in their sinful state.

Preaching Revelation draws the line.
Its truths will melt the hearts of the repentant and harden the hearts of the unrepentant.

Those same truths thus become either an instrument of salvation, or an instrument of Judgment.

1 Corinthians 1:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ *For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

2 Corinthians 2:15-16 (NASB)

¹⁵ *For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing;*
¹⁶ *to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things?*

The truths must be proclaimed so men and women can hear them while there is still time.

Now, that leads us to the last response;

IMMEDIATE SERVICE

Revelation 22:12 (NASB)

¹² *"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.*

Again now the voice changes and we see the Lord Jesus Christ speaking about his return.
He says, *"Behold, I am coming quickly."*

As we noted in the introduction to this chapter, Jesus' statement means that His coming is imminent.
It teaches the same truth that He expressed in *Mark 13:33-37*

Mark 13:33-37 (NASB)

³³ *"Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come.*

³⁴ *"It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert.*

³⁵ *"Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—*

³⁶ *in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep.*

³⁷ *"What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'"*

When He comes, Jesus will bring His reward with Him, to render to every man according to what he has done.

Believers' eternal rewards will be based on their faithfulness in serving Christ in this life.
Their works will be tested, and only those with eternal value will survive;

1 Corinthians 3:9-15 (NASB)

⁹ For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

¹⁰ According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it.

¹¹ For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

¹² Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,

¹³ each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

¹⁴ If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward.

¹⁵ If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

2 Corinthians 5:9-10 (NASB)

⁹ Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.

¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

The rewards believers enjoy in heaven will be capacities for serving God;

The greater their faithfulness in this life, the greater will be their opportunity to serve in heaven.

Matthew 25:14-30 (NASB)

¹⁴ "For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them.

¹⁵ "To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey.

¹⁶ "Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents.

¹⁷ "In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more.

¹⁸ "But he who received the one talent went away, and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

¹⁹ "Now after a long time the master of those slaves *came and *settled accounts with them.

²⁰ "The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.'

²¹ "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

²² "Also the one who had received the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents.'

²³ "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

²⁴ "And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed.

²⁵ ~'And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.'

²⁶ "But his master answered and said to him, 'You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed.

²⁷ ~'Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest.

²⁸ ~'Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.'

²⁹ "For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.

³⁰ "Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

John exhorted believers;

2 John 1:8 (NASB)

⁸ Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.

The knowledge that Jesus could return at any moment should not lead Christians to a life of idle waiting for His coming;

2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 (NASB)

¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.

¹¹ For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies.

¹² Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread.

They were rather, to let these truths produce diligent, obedient, worshipful service to God, and urgent proclamation of the gospel to unbelievers.