

The Book Of Revelation Study 104

Revelation 22:13-21 (NASB77)

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¹⁴ Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.

¹⁵ Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying.

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

¹⁷ And 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 wishes take the water of life without cost.

¹⁸ I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which 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 tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

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

God's Last Invitation (Revelation 22:13-21)

In these last verses the Bible comes full circle.

It opened with the promise of a coming Savior, who would redeem His people from their sins.

That promise, which came immediately after the Fall, is recorded in Genesis;

Genesis 3:15 (NASB77)

¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

Just as the Bible opens with the promise of Christ's first coming, so it ends with the promise of His second coming.

W.A. Criswell writes;

First the Savior is to come that He might be crushed, bruised, crucified and made an offering for sin. He is to come to die as the Redeemer for the souls of men.

After God made that promise in Eden, hundreds of years passed, millenniums passed, and the Lord did not come.

When He did come, He came unto His own and His own did not receive Him. He was in the world which He made, and yet they refused to know Him. Thousands of humanity had forgotten the promise or else they scoffed at its fulfillment.

Finally when the announcement came that He had arrived, the learned scribes pointed out the place where He was to be born, but never took the time to journey the five miles from Jerusalem to Bethlehem to welcome this promised Savior of the world.

But however long He delayed and however men forgot the scoffed and however few of a faithful band waited for the consolation of Israel, as old Simeon, yet He came.

*In keeping with the holy, faithful promise of God, the Lord Jesus came.
It is thus in the text that God speaks in closing His Bible, "Surely, I come quickly."*

*Here a second time, however infidels may scoff and however others may reject and however the centuries may grow into the millenniums, this is the immutable Word and promise of the Lord God, "Surely, I come"
(Expository Sermons on Revelation [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969], 5:176-77)*

The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is a compelling theme in both the Old and New Testaments. But nowhere is it given greater emphasis than in the Apocalypse, the Revelation of Jesus Christ (1:1)

It is only fitting that this book, whose focus is on the Second Coming, ends with a final invitation in light of that glorious reality.

THE INVITATION

Revelation 22:17 (NASB77)

¹⁷ And 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 wishes take the water of life without cost.

There are two distinct invitations in this verse, delineated by the two exclamations, "*Come.*"

The first part of the verse is a prayer addressed to Christ; the second part is an invitation addressed to sinners.

The first part calls for Christ to come; the second part is the last call for sinners to come to faith in Christ.

To Jesus' promise of His imminent return, the Holy **Spirit**, the third Member of the Trinity responds, "*Come.*"

The Text here does not specify why the **Spirit** especially desires Jesus to return, but the rest of Scripture suggests both a negative and a positive reason.

Negatively, men and women throughout history have continually rejected, ignored, and denied Christ. They have mocked and blasphemed the work of the **Spirit**;

Matthew 12:31 (NASB77)

³¹ "Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven.

Who's ministry is to point them to Christ.

The sinful world's blasphemous rejection of Jesus Christ will reach its apex during the Tribulation. That seven-year period will see Satan promote to power the two most vile and evil blasphemers who will ever live; the beast (Antichrist) and the false prophet.

To those two wretched, demon possessed sinners will go the dubious honor of being the first people cast into the final hell, the lake of fire (19:20)

So when the Lord Jesus Christ says He is coming, the long-suffering, grieved, blasphemed Holy **Spirit** echoes, "*Come.*"

He pleads with Christ to return, to subdue His enemies, to judge sinners, and to end the Spirit's long battle to produce conviction in stubborn, hard hearted sinners.

On the positive side it is the desire and ministry of the **Spirit** to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ;

John 16:14 (NASB77)

¹⁴ *"He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you.*

The Holy **Spirit** longs to see Jesus exalted in beauty, splendor, power, and majesty. That will happen when Christ returns in triumph at His second coming.

The Holy **Spirit** is not the only one that longs for the return. The Bride also pleads for his coming. Throughout centuries God's people have waited for , prayed for, hoped for, and watched for Christ's return.

They are weary of the battle against sin and long to see Jesus Christ exalted, glorified, and honored. They long for Him to return and take them to heaven to live with Him forever;

John 14:3 (NASB77)

³ *"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

They long for the day when their perishable, mortal bodies will be transformed into their imperishable, immortal resurrection bodies.

Believers are, in the words of Paul those;

2 Timothy 4:8b (NASB77)

⁸ *who have loved His appearing.*

The second use of the exclamation, "**Come**" signals a change in perspective. The invitation is no longer for Christ to return, but for sinners to come to saving faith in Him.

The phrase, "*let the one who hears say, Come*" invites those who hear the **Spirit** and the **Bride** to join with them in calling for Christ's return.

Obviously they cannot do so until they come to faith in Him;
Only the redeemed can truly long for him to appear.

The **one who hears** with faith and believes is the one who will be saved, because faith comes from hearing, and hearing, by the word of Christ (Rom 10:17)

Hearing in scripture is often combined and associated with obedience.

Those who hear and obey the gospel will join with the **Spirit** and the **Bride** in calling for the return of Jesus Christ, because they desire His glory and their own deliverance from sin's presence in the realm of perfect holiness.

Now note also, the **one who hears** is further defined as **the one who is thirsty**.

Thirst is a familiar biblical metaphor picturing the strong sense of spiritual need that is a pre-requisite for repentance.

Isaiah 55:1 (NASB77)

¹ *"Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost.*

Adding another dimension to the invitation, John writes, *"let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost."*

That unlimited invitation is typical of the broad, sweeping, gracious offers of salvation made in Scripture. It also illustrates the biblical truth that salvation involves both God's sovereign choice and human volition.

God saves sinners, but only those who recognize their need and repent.

The **water of life** is offered **without cost** to the sinner because Jesus paid the price for it through His sacrificial death on the cross.

Romans 3:24 (NASB77)

²⁴ *being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;*

God freely offers the **water of life** to those whose hearts are thirsty for forgiveness, whose minds are thirsty for truth, and whose souls are thirsty for Him.

THE INCENTIVES

Revelation 22:13-16 (NASB77)

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, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.*

¹⁵ *Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying.*

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

Revelation 22:18-21 (NASB77)

¹⁸ *I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which 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 tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.*

²⁰ *He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*

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

Surrounding the invitation in verse 17 are four incentives for sinners to accept it:

Because of the Lord's Person,

 Because of the exclusivity of heaven,

 Because of the truthfulness of Scripture,

 Because of the certainty of the Savior's return.

BECAUSE OF CHRIST'S PERSON

Revelation 22:13, 16 (NASB77)

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

The first reason for sinners to accept God's final invitation is because it comes personally from the exalted, majestic, glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord's three fold identification of Himself repeats the same truth for emphasis.

Since the original readers of Revelation spoke Greek, Jesus identifies Himself first as **the Alpha and the Omega**. These respectively are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet.

Together with the parallel phrases **the first and the last** and **the beginning and the end** they express Christ's infinity, eternity, and boundless life transcending all limitations.

This threefold description describes the completeness, timelessness, and sovereign authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This description of Jesus Christ is also a statement of His deity.

Obviously, there can only be one **Alpha and Omega, first and last, and beginning and end, God**.

That all three titles, which can apply only to God, are used here of Jesus Christ offers convincing testimony to His deity.

He is not a created being; He is not merely a great prophet or a great moral teacher; He is not a misguided martyr.

He is God the Son, the second Person of the eternal Trinity.

Salvation in Jesus Christ is the theme of Scripture.

In the Old Testament the ark in which Noah and his family were saved, the Passover lamb, and the kinsman redeemer are all pictures of Christ.

In addition Christ fulfilled more than 300 Old Testament prophecies at His first coming.

He is the focus of the New Testament as well.

The gospels record His life and ministry, and the rest of the New Testament expounds their doctrinal and practical implications.

To be saved is to be saved by Christ;

To be a Christian is to be in Christ;

To have forgiveness is to be forgiven by Christ;

To have hope is to have hope in Christ;

In short, for the Christian, *"to live is Christ" (Phil 1:21)*

Christ further identifies Himself in His own words in verse 16. But before doing so He tells John, *"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you."*

Though angels communicated the Apocalypse to John, its source was Jesus.

The expression, *"I, Jesus"* appears only here in the Bible.

It establishes that this final invitation in Scripture is not a human invitation, but a divine call issued personally to sinners by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apocalypse is addressed to **the churches (1:11) however**, even though it is written to believers, they are to proclaim it to the entire world

Revelation 22:10 (NASB77)

¹⁰ *And he said to me, " Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.*

Then now in an astounding, seemingly paradoxical statement, Jesus declares Himself to be both **the root (ancestor) and the descendant of David.**

This phrase sums up the biblical teaching on Christ's two natures; only the god-man can be both David's ancestor and his descendant.

In His deity, Christ is David's **root**, and in His humanity, He is David's **descendant.**

And finally now, Jesus describes Himself as *"the bright morning star."*

To call someone a star was in biblical times (as it is today) to exalt him.

Daniel 12:3 (NASB77)

³ *"And those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.*

(In extra biblical Jewish writings, the coming Messiah was call a **star.**)

You remember Balaam? He was a greedy prophet for hire, God nevertheless used him to make an accurate prediction of the coming Messiah;

Numbers 24:17a (NASB77)

¹⁷ *"I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, And a scepter shall rise from Israel,*

Peter wrote:

2 Peter 1:19b (NASB77)

¹⁹ *the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.*

Jesus promised to give the overcomers of Thyatira the *"the morning star"* Himself

As the morning star heralds the arrival of the day, so Jesus' coming will herald the end of the darkness of man's night, and the glorious dawn of His kingdom.

Christ is the Light of the world, who calls sinners to drink of the water of life. And to those who heed that call He promises;

Matthew 11:28 (NASB77)

²⁸ *" Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.*

He also promises;

John 6:37 (NASB77)

³⁷ *" All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.*