

## The Book Of Revelation Study 105

*Revelation 22:13-21 (NASB77)*

<sup>13</sup> "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

<sup>14</sup> 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.

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

<sup>16</sup> "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."

<sup>17</sup> 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.

<sup>18</sup> 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;

<sup>19</sup> 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.

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

<sup>21</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

We have been talking about the last invitation in the Book Of Revelation. It is a twofold invitation, first a prayer for the return of the Lord to come and reign, judge sin, set up His Kingdom.

Secondly a call for the unrepentant, left in the world to come to Christ and to God.

And as we looked at this last time we were together, we became aware that there were incentives given here for man to come to God.

Four to be exact.

They were to be incentivized to come to Christ because:

**Of the Lord's Person,**

**Of the exclusivity of heaven,**

**Of the truthfulness of Scripture,**

**Of the certainty of the Savior's return.**

In our last study we already looked at the one incentive, the Lord's Person.

We want to talk of the last three tonight as we finish up this study in Revelation.

### BECAUSE OF THE EXCLUSIVITY OF HEAVEN

*Revelation 22:14-15 (NASB77)*

<sup>14</sup> 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.

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

This section begins with the last of the seven beatitudes in Revelation (v7; 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6) Each which was introduced by the pronouncement **blessed**.

This blessing is pronounced upon those who **washed their robes**.  
That phrase graphically portrays the believer's participation in the death of Christ.

One of the twenty four elders said to John;

*Revelation 7:14 (NASB77)*

*<sup>14</sup> And I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

Through the blood of Christ sin is cleansed, they were washed clean by the blood.

Those who have experienced the washing from sin that marks salvation will forever **have the right to the tree of life**.

The **tree of life**, is located in the capital city of heaven, the New Jerusalem. And this will be the fulfillment of Jesus' promise,

*Revelation 2:7 (NASB77)*

*<sup>7</sup> ' He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.'*

Heaven is exclusively for those who have been cleansed from their sins by faith in the blood of Christ and whose names have been **"written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain"** (13:8)

In contrast, everyone else will remain forever **outside** the New Jerusalem in the lake of fire (20:15; 21:8)

*Revelation 21:27 (NASB77)*

*<sup>27</sup> and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

This is a representative list, not an exhaustive list of the type of sins that exclude people from heaven.

## BECAUSE OF THE TRUTHFULNESS OF SCRIPTURE

*Revelation 22:18-19 (NASB77)*

*<sup>18</sup> 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;*

*<sup>19</sup> 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.*

It is of great significance that the Bible closes with an affirmation of its truthfulness. Because the words of Scripture are **"faithful and true"** (22:6)

They must not be sealed up, but proclaimed (22:10)

Sinners are to be called to respond to the warnings in the Word of the living God or suffer the consequences.

All the prophecies of Revelation regarding the doom of sinners will come true.

That terrifying certainty should drive people to Jesus Christ to escape the wrath to come.

*1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 (NASB77)*

<sup>9</sup> *For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,*

<sup>10</sup> *and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.*

The speaker who testifies to the authority and finality of **the words of the prophecy of this book** is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ (v20)

The solemn warning here is that there is to be no tampering with or misrepresentation of the book of Revelation.

Now down through the centuries there have been others who have both attacked Revelation and seriously misinterpreted it.

But in light of the repeated warnings against altering God's Word, Christ's warning must be broadened to include all of Scripture.

Moses spoke to this in;

*Deuteronomy 4:2 (NASB77)*

<sup>2</sup> *" You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.*

He added;

*Deuteronomy 12:32 (NASB77)*

<sup>32</sup> *" Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it.*

*Proverbs 30:5-6 (NASB77)*

<sup>5</sup> *Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.*

<sup>6</sup> *Do not add to His words Lest He reprove you, and you be proved a liar.*

Thus the prohibition against altering the Apocalypse by implication extends to all of Scripture.

Because Revelation describes the entire sweep of history from the close of the apostolic age to the eternal state, any alteration of it would be an alteration of Scripture, as Robert L. Thomas notes:

*The predictive portions project from John's lifetime all the way into the eternal state. Any type of prophetic utterance would intrude into the domain of this coverage and constitute either an addition to or subtraction from Revelation's content. So the final book of the Bible is also the concluding product of NT Prophecy. It also marks the close of the NT canon since the prophetic gift was the divinely chosen means for communicating the inspired books of the canon. (Revelation 8-22:An exegetical Commentary [Chicago: Moody, 1995],517)*

The canon of Scripture was closed at the end of the first century when Revelation was finished.

Thus any false prophet, fraud, or charlatan who **adds** alleged new revelations to it (as the Montanists did in early church and Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Eddy, and other false prophets have done in recent times) will face divine vengeance.

*God will add to such people the plagues which are written in the book of Revelation.*

God's judgment will be equally severe on *anyone* who *take away from the words* of scripture (as the heretic Marcion did in the early church and liberal higher critics have done in modern times)- *God will take away their part from the tree of life from the holy city.*

Both warnings contain a play on words.

Those who add to Scripture will have plagues added to them;

Those who take away from Scripture will have the blessings of heaven taken away from them.

No true believer would ever deliberately tamper with Scripture.

Those who know and love God will treat His Word with the utmost respect.

That does not mean that believers will never make errors in judgment or mistakenly interpret Scripture incorrectly or inadequately.

The Lord's warning here is addressed to those who engage in deliberate falsification or misinterpretation of Scripture, like those whom Paul denounces as peddlers of the Word of God

**2 Corinthians 2:17 (NASB77)**

***<sup>17</sup> For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.***

At the conclusion of his commentary on Revelation, J.A. Seiss expressed the humble reverence for Scripture that marks true believers;

O, my friends, it is a fearful thing to suppress or stultify the word of God, and above all "*the words of the prophecy of this Book.*" To put forth for truth what is not the truth, denounce as error, condemn, repudiate, or emasculate what god himself has set his seal to as his mind and purpose, is one of those high crimes, not only against God, but against the souls of men, which cannot go unpunished.

With an honest and ever prayerful heart, and with these solemn and awful warnings ever before my eyes, I have endeavored to ascertain and indicate in these Lectures what our gracious Lord and Master has been so particular to make known and defend. If I have read into this Book anything which He has not put there, or read out of it anything which He has put there, with the profoundest sorrow would I recant and willingly burn up the books in which such mischievous wickedness is contained. If I have in anything gone beyond the limits of due subjection to what is written, or curtailed in any way the depth and measure of what Jesus by His angel has signified for the learning of the churches, I need not the condemnation of men to heap upon me the burden of censure which I deserve. If feebleness, or rashness, or overweening confidence in my own understanding has distorted anything, I can only deplore the fault, and pray God to send a man more competent to unfold to us the mighty truth which here stand written. According to the grace and light given me, have I spoken. If I error, God forgive me! If I am right, God bless my feeble testimony! In either case, God speed His everlasting truth! (*the Apocalypse*[reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1987],527)

Revelation and the rest of Scripture are true, and the redeemed will believe the Bible, guard the Bible, love the Bible, and obey the Bible.

That Scripture speaks truly when it describes the joys of heaven and the terrors of hell should motivate sinners to heed God's gracious call to salvation.

## BECAUSE OF THE CERTAINTY OF CHRIST'S RETURN

*Revelation 22:20-21 (NASB77)*

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

<sup>21</sup> *The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.*

The Book Of Revelation and the Bible close with one final reminder and benediction. In His last recorded words in Scripture the Lord Jesus Christ, *He who testifies to these things* affirms "*Yes, I am coming quickly.*"

His **coming** is imminent, just as Revelation (and the rest of the New Testament) teaches. John speaks for all true believers when he responds, **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus**, since Christians are those "*who have loved His appearing*" (2 Tim 4:8).

Scoffers may mockingly ask;

*2 Peter 3:4 (NASB77)*

<sup>4</sup> *and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."*

But things will not continue forever as they are. Jesus will return, just as Revelation predicts. If the certainty of Christ's return to judge sinners does not motivate people to repent, then nothing will.

For the glorious, comforting truth is that those who humble themselves and accept God's offer of salvation will find Him gracious.

Fittingly, the last words of the Bible, **the grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen**, are an expression of God's **grace** toward fallen humanity.

The Lord of glory, as He promised in Scripture, offers heaven, exclusively to those who, in light of His certain return, accept His gracious invitation and return to Him.