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REVELATION STUDY: OUR FUTURE: GOD'S HANDS
PART 42C: GOD'S FINAL INVITATION
HOW TO RESPOND TO GOD'S FINAL INVITATION

Good Morning precious CVCHURCH FAMILY. Welcome to all of you who are with us for our lasting teaching in this incredible book of Revelation and to all of you who have joined online. As the lead Pastor here at CVCHURCH this is a monumental day for me! We started our REVELATION STUDY: OUR FUTURE: GOD'S HANDS on January 24th, 2021. Today, 3 ½ years later we are reaching our destination!

When you take into account that I didn't speak on Revelation for 3 Sundays each December, 3 Vision Days, 3 Mother's Days, and 3 Father's Days, we completed Revelation in about 2 years and nine months.

Case in point, with Pastor Scott Alvarez extending our miniseries that I started on Father's day went two to three Sundays. How I lead is, I believe the Holy Spirit has led us in all of this.

I am very grateful to Jesus for what He has accomplished in our hearts, minds, and in our CVCHURCH family. For those of you who have been able to trust my leadership and my sense of what God has wanted for us all in all of the material we have covered, I am grateful and appreciative for you and your partnership! I'm grateful to you, not just in this series, but for all of you who have been involved in our CVCHURCH family for 32 years plus of ministry so far. Samuel Harrison, who has listened to what people have said about our study over the 3 years, has put it to a poem that I asked him if I could share it. He has given me permission to share it with you.

“There was a whole lot of anticipation, fascination and determination, inspiration and motivation to study the book of Revelation. But the length was no exaggeration. After nearly 42 months of education through Covid and the renovation, we studied the book of Revelation. So there may have been moments of desperation, and maybe some exasperation, where there may have been the small temptation to find a different congregation. Despite some possible frustration, for it lasting beyond all expectations. For the lack of any abbreviation and surprise midway intensification. Thanks for your participation and all your constant dedication. And for your needed cooperation in learning all this life-giving transformative information. We want to say congratulations. This day deserves commemoration. This is a day for celebration! We've scratched the surface and completed our study of Revelation!”

Today we will look at the last three of the seven invitations God calls us to in chapter 22. Please follow along as I read Revelation 22:12-21,

“¹²LOOK, I AM COMING SOON, BRINGING MY REWARD WITH ME TO REPAY ALL PEOPLE ACCORDING TO THEIR DEEDS. ¹³I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA, THE FIRST AND THE LAST, THE BEGINNING AND THE END. ¹⁴BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO WASH THEIR ROBES. THEY WILL BE PERMITTED TO ENTER THROUGH THE GATES OF THE CITY AND EAT THE FRUIT FROM THE TREE OF LIFE. ¹⁵OUTSIDE THE CITY ARE THE DOGS—THE SORCERERS, THE SEXUALLY IMMORAL, THE MURDERERS, THE IDOL WORSHIPERS, AND ALL WHO LOVE TO LIVE A LIE. ¹⁶I, JESUS, HAVE SENT MY ANGEL TO GIVE YOU THIS MESSAGE FOR THE CHURCHES. I AM BOTH THE SOURCE OF DAVID AND THE HEIR TO HIS THRONE. I AM THE BRIGHT MORNING STAR. ¹⁷THE SPIRIT AND THE

BRIDE SAY, 'COME.' LET ANYONE WHO HEARS THIS SAY, 'COME.' LET ANYONE WHO IS THIRSTY COME. LET ANYONE WHO DESIRES DRINK FREELY FROM THE WATER OF LIFE. ¹⁸AND I SOLEMNLY DECLARE TO EVERYONE WHO HEARS THE WORDS OF PROPHECY WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK: IF ANYONE ADDS ANYTHING TO WHAT IS WRITTEN HERE, GOD WILL ADD TO THAT PERSON THE PLAGUES DESCRIBED IN THIS BOOK. ¹⁹AND IF ANYONE REMOVES ANY OF THE WORDS FROM THIS BOOK OF PROPHECY, GOD WILL REMOVE THAT PERSON'S SHARE IN THE TREE OF LIFE AND IN THE HOLY CITY THAT ARE DESCRIBED IN THIS BOOK. ²⁰HE WHO IS THE FAITHFUL WITNESS TO ALL THESE THINGS SAYS, 'YES, I AM COMING SOON!' AMEN! COME, LORD JESUS! ²¹MAY THE GRACE OF THE LORD JESUS BE WITH GOD'S HOLY PEOPLE."

Let's look at **HOW TO RESPOND TO GOD'S FINAL INVITATION.**

5. RESPOND & RECEIVE God's invitation.

Revelation 22:16-17 **"¹⁶I, JESUS, HAVE SENT MY ANGEL TO GIVE YOU THIS MESSAGE FOR THE CHURCHES. I AM BOTH THE SOURCE OF DAVID AND THE HEIR TO HIS THRONE. I AM THE BRIGHT MORNING STAR. ¹⁷THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, "COME." LET ANYONE WHO HEARS THIS SAY, "COME." LET ANYONE WHO IS THIRSTY COME. LET ANYONE WHO DESIRES DRINK FREELY FROM THE WATER OF LIFE."**

Jesus, Himself, proves the authenticity of the message of Revelation in verse 16. He says it is He that has sent His angel to give this important message and invitation to His church.

Again, it is not just to the seven churches listed in chapters two and three but to the church throughout the church age, what I would call the present millennium. Jesus' self-identification in vs 16 as the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star emphasizes His messianic fulfillment of all of the O.T. prophecies, **"I AM THE ROOT AND THE OFFSPRING OF DAVID, THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR."**

(Revelation 22:16b) This is profound church.

Jesus is referring to Isaiah 11:1: **"OUT OF THE STUMP OF DAVID'S FAMILY WILL GROW A SHOOT—YES, A NEW BRANCH BEARING FRUIT FROM THE OLD ROOT."** Gerhard A. Krodel observes that in this self-disclosure Jesus reverses Isaiah's image. **"He, the risen Messiah, who is 'THE BEGINNING OF GOD'S CREATION' in 3:14, is the root from which David came and He is David's promised descendant. Therefore, He is the source of David's line, 'The root,' as well as David's 'offspring,' the promised Messiah, the lion of the tribe of Judah."**

Jesus' self-identification emphasizes Jesus' fulfillment of the O.T. prophecies and His central role in God's salvation and redemptive plan.

Jesus as the root and offspring of David, Jesus is both the source and fulfillment of the Davidic line, highlighting His divine nature and His role as the promised Messiah.

In vs. 17 there is a joint invitation by the Spirit of God and the Bride to those who are spiritually thirsty which places focus on the call to all people to come to Salvation in Jesus Christ. John MacArthur writes, **"That there 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."**

Loved ones, if you're here on site or gathered with us online, and you haven't tasted of the living water that only Jesus Christ can give you through the confession of your sin, and through repentance where you turn from living your life for yourself and you humble yourself and surrender your life to Jesus Christ, He will come and make His residence inside of you through the Holy Spirit.

I strongly encourage you to answer His invitation to receive His salvation and become a part of His forever family. 6 . **OBEY God's WARNING.**

22:18-19 **"¹⁸AND I SOLEMNLY DECLARE TO EVERYONE WHO HEARS THE WORDS OF PROPHECY WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK: IF ANYONE ADDS ANYTHING TO WHAT IS WRITTEN HERE, GOD WILL ADD TO THAT PERSON THE PLAGUES DESCRIBED IN THIS BOOK. ¹⁹AND IF ANYONE REMOVES ANY OF THE WORDS FROM THIS BOOK OF PROPHECY, GOD WILL REMOVE THAT PERSON'S SHARE IN THE TREE OF LIFE AND IN THE HOLY CITY THAT ARE DESCRIBED IN THIS BOOK."** Most scholars I have read agree that this formula of not adding anything to this prophecy or removing any words from this prophecy is based on Deuteronomy 4:2-3.

"¹AND NOW, ISRAEL, LISTEN CAREFULLY TO THESE DECREES AND REGULATIONS THAT I AM ABOUT TO TEACH YOU. OBEY THEM SO THAT YOU MAY LIVE, SO YOU MAY ENTER AND OCCUPY THE LAND THAT THE LORD, THE GOD OF YOUR ANCESTORS, IS GIVING YOU. ²DO NOT ADD TO OR SUBTRACT FROM THESE COMMANDS I AM GIVING YOU, JUST OBEY THE COMMANDS OF THE LORD YOUR GOD THAT I AM GIVING YOU." P.C. Craigie an O.T. Scholar, in his commentary on the book of Deuteronomy, writes: **"There, the formula indicated that the Torah (first five books of the O.T.) came directly from Yahweh and must not be supplemented or reduced."**

Grant Osborne writes, **" In other words, it must be accepted and obeyed in its entirety. This is the key to the meaning of adds/takes away. As in Deuteronomy, Christ is warning against false teachers who distort the meaning of the prophecies by adding their own teaching to it or removing the meaning that God intended.**

Beale points out, **"Deuteronomy 4:3 alludes to the Balaam incident (use of false teachers in Revelation 2:14.)"** It is a known fact, by any of us who been faithfully reading the book mark for at least 2-3 years, that Israel faced the temptation to engage in idolatry, which is the worship of others. According to Beale: **"Such false teaching amounts to 'adding to' God's law. Furthermore, it is tantamount to 'taking away from' God's law, since it violates the positive laws against idolatry, consequently nullifying their validity."**

Beale makes the excellent point that, **"... this is not general disobedience but false teaching about the God's Word and following such deceptive teaching. Belief in the abiding truth of God's Word is the presupposition for positive obedience to it."**

Beale also points to the fact that this interpretation fits well with the situation of the churches portrayed in chapters 2-3: **"... which depicts all the churches facing idolatry to one degree or another, and at least with five of the seven not doing well in their resistance. Strikingly, in the light of the, above, Deuteronomy background, some of the false teachers and their followers encouraging idolatry in the church of Pergamum are identified as those 'who hold to the teaching of**

Balaam, who, church, kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit acts of immorality in 2:14. This same deceptive teaching was also prevalent in the church of Thyatira in 2:20-23.

Church, such false prophets who distort the truth are either adding false theology or taking away from the revealed truth. We see this same kind of idolatrous sin that has crept into the church through adultery, fornication, homosexual and lesbian relationships, and the entire debacle of the transgender movement.

The church has caved into feeling like they're not acting compassionately by not only tolerating this sinful travesty, but many churches and denominations are supporting this entire movement!

It is truly disgraceful! We have been deceived into buying into these sinful behaviors since the beginning of time. From abortion to all of this sexual perversity it's all a mockery of the image of God!

The Bible says, very clearly, that we are intentionally created either male or female and it is this polarity that is part of revealing the image of God. It is time for each one of us at whatever level we have been involved in any of these activities, to repent, turn away from them in our hearts, renounce this form of idolatry, and return to the Lord. This is how we obey God's warning to not add or take away from God's Word by how we think, feel, and behave. Revival in the church begins by repentance and moving toward Jesus in a renewed sense of humility, brokenness and pursuit of His presence and by our obedience to His Word.

7. PRAY for God's Kingdom to COME.

Revelation 22:20-21 **"²⁰HE WHO IS THE FAITHFUL WITNESS TO ALL THESE THINGS SAYS, 'YES, I AM COMING SOON!' AMEN! COME, LORD JESUS! ²¹MAY THE GRACE OF THE LORD JESUS BE WITH GOD'S HOLY PEOPLE."**

As we come to the end of this magnificent study we have discovered that the main pastoral point of this book, as Beale states, **"... is that faithful endurance to the end will result in eternal blessing, the primary theological point of the book is that such faithful obedience leading to reward should have the ultimate result of glorifying God and Jesus Christ."**

I want to challenge us at this point CVCHURCH. Is this your purpose that has seized your soul, or do you just mindlessly live your life for your own glory, pleasure, advancement, and ego? How seriously has the self-centered, self-fulfillment focus of our culture affected your ability to see God's mission as a person and as a people who have been created primarily to glorify, honor, and exalt our God?

In verse 20 Jesus is seen as the fourth witness. **"HE WHO IS HE FAITHFUL WITNESS TO ALL THESE THINGS SAYS, 'YES, I AM COMING SOON!'"** With the angel, John, the Holy Spirit, and now Jesus, Beale argues **"... that the mounting up of these witnesses emphasizes the legal nature of the book, for which people who hear it read are accountable."**

The book of Revelation and the Bible are at their end. As Daniel Akin has written, **"One last time the Risen Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, speaks. His last words are brief but sure. Coming in the form of testimony, our God and King promises, 'Yes, I am coming quickly.' Certainly, without a doubt. His coming is imminent, when He does come He will come quickly. As James 5:9 says, 'DON'T GRUMBLE ABOUT**

EACH OTHER, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, OR YOU WILL BE JUDGED. FOR LOOK—THE JUDGE IS STANDING AT THE DOOR!”

Titus 2:13 calls us to wait and look for “... **OUR BLESSED HOPE, THE APPEARING OF THE GLORY OF OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST, ...**” from the ESV.

When you take the book of Revelation as a whole, Daniel Akin admonishes us to “... **see the end of Revelation as it calls us to a clear and simple posture: ‘watch, wait, and witness.’ Persecution, trials, and suffering may be a threefold companion, but do not grow weary in well doing. God sees and He knows.**”

As Jesus said to John in Revelation 2:1 Jesus is the one who walks among the churches. The Bible tells us He is in our midst, and He is here to empower us to be bold witnesses for the Gospel.

Church, Jesus Christ, the Alpha and the Omega, the one who was dead but is now alive promises to be with us and in each one of us empowered by the Holy Spirit who His working in and through us to advance His kingdom among the nations.

In 22:21 is our prayer and promise, “**21MAY THE GRACE OF THE LORD JESUS BE WITH GOD’S HOLY PEOPLE.**” And with John, we agree and say, **So be it. We agree. We believe and we will act in accordance. Jesus Christ, come quickly!**

P. Scott closes in prayer.