

**I AM COMING SOON**  
(Sermon 31 – Rev. 22:6-21)  
6.1.25

Please turn in your Bibles to Revelation, chapter 22.

*In the Maryland Museum of Military History in Baltimore, there is a letter on display. It is a letter written by a young, 23-year old soldier from Hagerstown, MD who found himself in the middle of the fighting in Germany during WW2.*

*It was dated March 1, 1945. PVC Earl Eichelberger wrote home to his wife and his young daughter Phyllis:*

*"It is the beginning of a new month Dear, and I hope and pray that it is the month of peace over here," "Dropping you a few more lines to let you know that I am still well," the letter begins.*

*"I am thinking of you and Phyllis day and night Dear, for I miss you both that much.... I certainly am happy that you are mine, and I have got you and Phyllis to come back home to. You are my one and only Darling. ... I am awfully homesick now, but **I believe I will be getting home soon.** With all my love, Earl."*

*As with so many others during war, the letter made it home, but the soldier did not. Just 13 days later, his wife received the telegram every military family dreads:*

*"The secretary of war desires me to express his deep regret that your husband PFC Earl Eichelberer was killed in action in Germany March 14, 1945... He bravely fought for our freedom."*

No matter the point in history, when you read letters from soldiers away at war, they all include an expressed hope and a longing to be home. No soldier could promise that to their families, for they were not ultimately in control of their circumstances. Without any guarantees, a desperate hope of returning home was all they could express.

But imagine how different it would be if a soldier writes, "My Dear Wife, the General himself told me I am coming home. Meet me at the airport on this date and time. I can't wait to see you then." That would no longer just be a hope – that would be a promise.

We started this series in Revelation in September of last year, going verse by verse through this amazing Book of the Bible. Now, 9 months and 30 sermons later, here we are at the last message in this series.

And our text today is a fitting end, reminding us that not only do we have hope of Christ's return – we have a promise.

Let's read Rev. 22:6-21, then we'll pray...

**Revelation 22:6-21**

***[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, 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.***

**(Let's Pray)**

Our text today is the epilogue – the ending summary – of Revelation. And since it's a summary of what has already been said, we won't dissect these verses into neat categories or different points in the sermon as I usually do.

Instead, I want you to take note of two interwoven themes we see in these ending verses - themes we are meant to celebrate, and to encourage one another with. And those two themes, I've put into one central thought for the message today:

***PROP: Because you can trust God's Word to be true, you can be sure Jesus is coming soon.***

With that in mind, look at v. 6 again. Verse 6 starts – “The words of this Book are trustworthy and true...” God's word is trustworthy because God is trustworthy. God's word reflects God's character. God is faithful and true, and because of that, His word is faithful and true. This has been made clear all through Revelation.

*-In Rev. 3:14, Jesus is called the “faithful and true witness”.*

*-In Rev. 19:11, Jesus, who is sitting on the white horse, is called “Faithful and True”.*

*-In Rev. 21:5, God Himself tells John to write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.*

And it's repeated 6 more times just in our text today. Over and over and over again, God is assuring us that His word can be trusted because God is trustworthy.

Now, this is specifically referring to the Book of Revelation. But it's true of the whole Bible. As the Apostle Paul reminded Timothy...

*“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”*

*(2 Timothy 3:16-17)*

All of God's Word – from Genesis to Revelation – is authored by God. It is trustworthy because God is trustworthy. God's word is faithful because God is faithful.

And maybe this is repeated so often in the Book of Revelation because the visions in this book can be difficult to understand, and sometimes, difficult to believe.

So here at the end of the letter, after all of these visions have been revealed – both horrible and wonderful - God is stressing that we *can* trust that these visions are not man's invention or imagination. They come from God Himself.

**[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.”**

What we see in the rest of v. 6 is confirmation of God's word being true by pointing to other witnesses.

### Witnesses

In the Hebrew culture, you needed at least 2 witnesses for something to be considered factual. Now, it's enough for God Himself to say it for us to trust that it is true. But in these final verses of Revelation, and of the Bible itself, God was gracious to include not 1, not 2, not 3, but 7 witnesses to this fact, 7 being the number of perfection.

Seven witnesses agree that God's word is true and can be trusted:

- the Father (v. 6)
- angel (v. 6, 9)
- prophets (v. 6, 9)
- Jesus (v. 7, 12, 16, 20)
- John (v. 8)
- The Spirit (v. 17)
- The Church (v. 17)

All of these witnesses stand in agreement – God is trustworthy and His word is true. Believe it. Bank on it. Live by it. Treasure it. Preach it. There's a saying, “God said it, I believe it, and that settles it!”

But even that should be changed: “God said it and that settles it” because if God said it, it's true whether I believe it or not!

And what does God's word say about Christ's return? Jesus says in v. 7...

**[7] “And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”**

This is the first of four times the Lord Jesus speaks directly to John in these verses. Three of those times Jesus says He is coming soon, followed by some type of encouragement or command.

There's a similar promise at the beginning of Revelation when Jesus said,

*"Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near" (Rev. 1:3).*

So, Revelation begins with a promise of blessing, and ends with a promise of blessing. Jesus says we are blessed if we "keep the words of this book."

But what does that mean? I think that refers to several things:

-To keep the words of this book means to **read them and believe them**. Revelation is not just a bunch of visions of the end times, but it is a cohesive revealing of the person of Jesus Christ, His rule, His reign, His power, His faithfulness, and an encouragement to His people. So keeping these words means to believe what He says to be true.

-Keeping these words also means **obeying them**. Just in our text today, there are 7 different imperatives, or commands, like the command to worship God, trust His word, don't add to or take away from His word as we will see in just a moment. By God's grace, we keep this prophecy by obeying these commands.

-And, I think keeping the words of this Book means to **treasure them**, to hold them dear in our hearts. To read them, to believe them, to obey them, and to treasure them. When we treasure Jesus, we will treasure His word and keep it.

And speaking of witnesses, John steps forward and reminds his audience that he is a credible witness as well...

**[8] I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things.**

Now, John could have ended there, reminding us that these visions are trustworthy because he saw and heard these things for himself. But John also added a rather embarrassing account about himself...

**[8b] 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.”**

John is so overwhelmed by all that he has seen, he falls on his face and worships the closest thing to him, which happened to be the angel showing him all these visions. And the angel rebuked him. “Get up! Don’t worship me! I’m a servant of God like you. Worship God alone!”

Now if this sounds familiar, John did this once before, back in Rev. 19. And the angel’s response was almost identical. So, whether this is the same event, or 2 different times, this shows us the humility of John, to include his moment of misplaced worship.

But also, I think it’s included to also remind us how easy it is to misplace or misdirect our own worship. By nature, we are easily impressed. We use the word “awe-some” for way too many things that should not evoke awe in us.

Our distractions become affections. Our schedules become sacred. Our desires become divine. Our wants become needs. And before we know it, our worship is redirected to money, to a job, to a spouse. We begin to worship our kids, our comforts, or even worship ourselves.

The remedy is not to go on an endless hunt for idols. The remedy is to gaze upon the genuine, to dwell on the beauty and joy and all-sufficiency of Christ, to the point that everything else pales in comparison to the Savior and His matchless worth.

Once the issue of John’s worship was cleared up, the angel continued...

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

Back in the OT, God told the prophet Daniel to do just the opposite. God told Daniel to “*shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end*” (Daniel 12:4).

Daniel was commanded to seal, to not disclose what God had shown him until the end. From Daniel’s perspective, that was far into the future. But here in verse 10, the angel tells John just the opposite. “John, DO NOT seal up these words”. Why? “Because the time is near, it’s time to tell

everyone.” Don’t hide this message any longer. Tell it far and wide. Shout it from the rooftops, “Jesus is coming soon!”

Now if the angel told John 2000 years ago that time is short, and he needs to spread this message far and wide, how much more urgent is that message today? How much more timely is it for us to announce far and wide, to shout from the rooftops now that, “Jesus is coming soon!”

Then the angel tells John in v. 11...

**[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.”**

The angel is telling John that some will be saved, and some will not. Some will listen to this message, and some will reject it. Don’t let anything hinder you from spreading the word. Tell everyone. Preach the gospel to everyone. Tell everyone Jesus is soon returning. And leave the results to God.

Now, Jesus speaks a second time...

**[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.”**

When Jesus says He will bring “recompense” with Him, that means a wage or a reward. For those who reject Christ, the wage for sin is death. But for those who trust in what Christ has done for us on the cross, our reward will be eternal life with Him.

And Jesus confirms that He is authorized to judge, because He is the Alpha and Omega, first and last, beginning and the end.

These are attributes given only to God. Jesus is saying, “I have authority to judge and to reward because I am God.” Jesus is not just a prophet. He’s not just a good man. He is the God man. Jesus is divine. He is God. Jesus is the great I AM and He says “I AM coming soon.”

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

That phrase “wash their robes” is not one and done. That word means a continuous washing. We are saved once. But we are constantly washing ourselves in the Word, washing ourselves in prayer and fellowship. Constantly being sanctified to look more and more like Jesus. That’s ongoing and life-long.

These are the ones who will be given access to the tree of life – that symbol of eternal life we looked at last Sunday. These are the ones who will enter the city “by the gates”, which means we won’t have to be ashamed, we won’t sneak into heaven by a back door, but we will be welcomed into God’s presence with open arms.

But that will not be the case for everyone...

**[15] Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.**

This reminds us of two things:

1) *This was us at one time.* We were lost and following our own desires. But in God’s grace, He saved us. That means we are welcomed into the heavenly city only by God’s grace, not by any work of our own.

2) *If we are saved, our lives should reflect it.* We cannot live lives that reflect the devil and claim to be followers of Christ. You cannot serve two masters.

Jesus speaks for a third time when He says in v. 16...

**[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.”**

Jesus is reminding the 7 churches John is writing to, as well as all Christians for all time, that He is Messiah. That’s what it means when he references the lineage of David – that Jesus is the Anointed One, sent from God.

He also calls Himself “the bright morning star” which reminds us that Jesus is the one that is bringing the dawn of a new day. For every Christian, He gave you a new day when He saved you. And He will usher in an eternal new day when He comes again and brings heaven to earth.

And how can we be sure that's true? Because God's word is trustworthy. And because God's word is trustworthy, we know that Jesus is coming soon.

As if we needed further confirmation, we hear from 2 more witnesses:

**[17] The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come."**

The Holy Spirit and the Church – both God's agents on earth – together in unity and in unison say, "Come, Lord Jesus." Our longing to see Jesus comes from the Holy Spirit. The Spirit does not aim the spotlight on Himself, but on the person of Jesus. That means a church full of the Spirit and being led by the Spirit will focus on Christ and long for His return.

The rest of v. 17...

**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.**

The only way you long for Jesus' second coming, is if you believe in His first coming. To know that Jesus came the first time to die for our sins on the cross and rise from the dead – when you believe that, and you trust in Christ alone for salvation, then you will long for Him to come again to receive you to Himself and live in His kingdom forever.

Hear the truth of the gospel today – trust on Christ today so that you will be ready when He returns. Respond today by repenting of your sins and trusting in Christ alone for salvation. And then you will join in the prayers of the saints, the prayer of those who are thirsting for the Lord, saying, "Come, Lord Jesus."

Now, going into the final paragraphs of this Book and of the Bible itself, we find a timely, sobering warning...

**[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.**

Again, the immediate reference is to this Book of Revelation. Don't add to these prophecies, and don't take away from them. But the warning applies to all of God's Word.

The Bible – Genesis to Revelation – is perfect and complete. Canon is complete. It's not missing anything. There are no hidden books of the Bible yet to be discovered. There are no more testaments of Jesus Christ.

The Bible is the final authority for all truth. God Himself ensured that it would be intact as He intended it to be.

That means, we are not allowed not add to it. We cannot insert what we wish it said, or what we want to be true of God or of salvation, or what we want to be true of ourselves. The opinions and observations of man are not equal with God's word, and never will be. And those who do try and add to Scripture are promised to have the plagues of this book added to them.

And, at the same time, we are commanded not to take away from this Book – meaning we must not remove from its pages what is there. Don't try and explain away what it says, to dance around or avoid or minimize what is there. Don't neglect or deny or ignore what is clearly written. If we take away from scripture, God says He will take from us access to heaven.

That's bad news for Jehovah's witnesses, who have changed Scripture to deny the deity of Christ. That's bad news for the Mormons who have added what they call "another" testament of Jesus Christ, which it is not. That's bad news for Roman Catholics who believe the traditions of the church are equal to the words of Scripture.

But it's also bad news for any of us Evangelical Christians, if we deny the authority, the inerrancy, the clarity, the necessity, and the sufficiency, of the Bible.

And let's make this even more personal. Since we are a Sovereign Grace Church, with the unique distinction of being reformed in our theology and charismatic in our expression, we need to be clear on this: When it comes to gifts of the Spirit like prophecy or impressions we receive from the Spirit, these things are not equal to scripture, but are subject to – and should come under the authority of Scripture.

Whether that's someone coming down to the participation mic on a Sunday, or someone comes up to you and shares a word of prophecy personally with you. Be open to that, but be discerning. God uses these gifts to encourage the church. But always be sure that any spoken word lines up with God's written word.

So, after the warning not to add to or take away from God's Holy Scripture, Jesus speaks for a fourth time. These are the final words of Jesus recorded in the Bible...

**[20] He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon."**

Jesus repeats what He has said all through this chapter, all through the Book of Revelation, and all through the NT – "I am coming soon." With one difference here... He says, "surely" I am coming soon. That means, without a doubt, iron-clad, it's going to happen, and nothing can stop it. Bank on it and believe it. "Surely" I am coming soon.

Could there be any more encouraging words to end the Bible with? Nothing fills us with hope, nothing fills us with joy and peace, like hearing our Lord say, "Surely, I am coming soon."

I don't know about you, but my heart needs that reminder often. Surely – without a doubt – Jesus is coming soon. It may be in our lifetime. It may not be. I'm going *to Him* when I die, or He's *coming to me* as I live. But either way, I am promised eternity with my Lord. And so is everyone who trusts in Him.

How does one respond to a promise like this? Here's how John responded...

**[22:20b] "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"**

So be it. Yes, Lord. Come.

And then John's final words, and the final words of the Bible...

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

Aren't you glad the Bible doesn't close with the words, "The End"? Because it's not the end! Jesus said "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away!" It's not "the end", but it's "until then".

- Until the Lord comes again, we know that His grace will be with us all.
- Until then, we can know that He will never leave us nor forsake us.
- Until then, we know that the Father loves us, Jesus is with us, and the Spirit lives in us.

And so, brothers and sisters, let us receive the grace of God today through His word. Jesus is coming soon. When don't know when, but we know it's true. Jesus doesn't say "I hope to see you soon". He says, "Surely, I'm coming soon." This is not merely a hope – this is a promise, made by the One who never breaks a promise, who always does what He says He will do.

Jesus is coming, and He's coming soon. Encourage one another with that promise, so that no matter what happens in this life, we know what awaits us in the next life.

And may the promise of Christ's return affect us so deeply today that we will be more determined than ever to live our lives for Him, to tell others about Him, and to long for His return, that we would join in as all of creation cries out with one voice, "Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!"

***(Let's pray)***