

## I Am Coming Soon Revelation 22:6-21

Richard Baxter, well known Puritan Pastor, is a hero of the faith.

- He disciplined the whole village where he pastored, house to house.
- We still use his book, *The Reformed Pastor*, printed in 1656.
- He published tons of pages of Bible study.
- Baxter accomplished all this while living with unrelenting personal sufferings.
- Someone once asked Baxter, “Given all your sufferings, how have you managed to be so productive and faithful all these years?” (he lived to 76)
- He responded, “I think about heaven for thirty minutes every day.” (Azurdia, in Whitney, “Think Much About Heaven”)

The book of Revelation gives us a glorious vision of heaven to mediate on. This vision of the future is meant to inspire God’s be to be faithful in the present.

NT scholar GK Beale says:

“[T]he main point of the whole book is that **faithful endurance** and **obedience** to the end will result in eternal blessing and reward, with the ultimate result of glorifying God and Christ.”

In light of the purpose of the book, it’s not surprising that **Revelation doesn’t end with spectacular pyrotechnics!** Instead, it touches on **some very basic ideas of the Xian life in light of Christ’s imminent coming.**

### Overview 22:6-21

The structure of it is not easy to outline. There are a series of loosely-connected reminders.

But one thing is clear, the overarching message:

**Jesus is coming soon, therefore be faithful!**

You see it 3 times: **Verses 7, 12, 20 - “I Am Coming Soon”**

The details of Revelation are unclear at times, and they are often debated.

- But the big picture is simple: **Jesus is coming, and Jesus wins, so be faithful!**
- This series of reminders are intended to inspire us to be faithful.

### Questions

Have you lost a sense of passion to persevere in faithfulness?

If you were to examine your spiritual life, as an end of the year exam, what words would you use to describe it?

- Passionate, sacrificial, devoted?
- Sluggish, inconsistent?
- Compromised, Mediocre, Indifferent?

## How do you re-ignite spiritual enthusiasm?

- How do you rekindle a passion for faithfulness?
- How do you overcome the allure of the world, the schemes of the evil one, and your fleshy cravings?
- **We find a needed motive here: The King is Coming!**

**The certainty and nearness of the Second Coming should ignite passion.**

**Eschatology shouldn't make us fanatical, but faithful.**

**The purpose isn't to arouse wild speculations,  
but to inspire personal sanctification.**

It should inspire holiness, godliness, faithfulness, preserving obedience....

You see this idea in a number of places. Just to mention a few:

### 2 Timothy 4

<sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have *loved his appearing*.

### Titus 2

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ...

### 2 Peter 3

<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

<sup>11</sup> Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of *holiness* and *godliness*, <sup>12</sup> waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God

The Second Coming should cause us to **examine our daily lives, our daily choices.**

- It needs to be included in our **"functional cannon,"** it's part of our regular Bible reading.

**John's audience included ordinary Christians just like us.**

- **They were weak, frail, and needed a rekindling of their passion to persevere in faithfulness.**

Let me give you **seven exhortations** for faithfulness in light of the immanent return of Christ:

**Since Jesus is Coming Soon....**

**#1: Be Faithful to the Word (22:6-7, 18-19)**

## 6-7: Trust these words and keep these words!

- John's revelation began on a Sunday (Rev 1:10)
  - He was told to "Write what **you** see in a book and send to the seven churches"
- John is then given a stream of spectacular visions that make up this book – **visions that unveil the pre-written story of the church from its beginning to its end (Azurdia).**
- **The storyline eventually ends at 22:5.**
  
- Then one of the Angels has one last word for John beginning in **22:6, the epilogue.**
- **John has seen some perplexing things, some amazing things.**
- Perhaps John thought, **"Was that real? Was I hallucinating?"**
- Then angel then appears and says, "these words are faithful and true..." (read 6-7)
- **"Faithful and true"**
  - Those adjectives are used to describe Jesus himself (19:11).
  - A statement of absolute integrity, worthy of trust
  
- The Revelation is trustworthy, and **by extension, the whole Bible is trustworthy.**
  - **That's the New CSB tagline**
  - **We believe in truth.**
  - "The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever" (160).
  - **"I am using the truth, Master Wayne. Maybe it's time we all stop trying to outsmart the truth and let it have its day" (Alfred)**

## 6b: These words are product of a divinely inspired chain of transmission.

- From God, through an Angel, to John, for God's people.
- It's God's angel. God is over the spirit of the prophets. He ensures its purity. (cf, 1:1)

7a: The first of three announcements of Christ's certain coming. (12, 20)

## 7b: "keeps the words of the prophecy of this book"

- **"keeps"** – present tense, that is, **Hear, love, obey.**
- It means **simple obedience** in one sense.
  - "Keep every exhortation of the book."
  - But there aren't a ton of them.
  - In another sense, **it has the idea of "cherish."** **"Keep it alive in your life."**
  - **You should never be the same after knowing the reality of his coming!**
  
- This person will be **"blessed."**
- The context of this **"blessing" is the full and final experience of salvation (v. 14)**
- **Those who continue to the end will be saved.**
  
- He is coming – keep trusting and obeying His Word.

**18-19: This theme arises again, as God issues a warning against anyone tampering with the message of this book, and by extension the whole Bible.**

- Don't add to it, and don't take away from it.
- **Jesus is coming – He's coming to Judge and reign, embrace it!**
- **“You don't tug on superman's cape, you don't spit into the wind, you don't pull the mask off that old Lone Ranger, and you don't mess around with the Bible”** (ht: DeYoung)
- **Don't tamper with any of the realities of the gospel – life, death, resurrection, ascension, return!**
- To mess with it is to **invite God's judgment!**
  - **“plagues” – severity, curse**
  - **“taking away a share of the tree of life” – removal of grace**
- People will continue to take shots at the Bible, but let us keep loving it, trusting it, and living it out.

### Trust His Word, Delight in His Word...

- **The Bible is not a book to merely read through – it's **not for skimming**, but serious communion with God. It's our life and nourishment.**
- **In this digital age, many are losing their literacy – their ability to think deeply, to read slowly, and that will have a deadly affect on your soul.**
- **Every day – stop scrolling, and start feasting on God's faithful and true Word.**
- **Piper: “I feel like I have to get saved every morning. I wake up and the devil is sitting on my face”**
- **Satan wants destroy our devotional lives, and one of his tactics is **distractions**.**
- **Give priority to your communion with God this year.**
- **“The Bible is God preaching” (J.I. Packer).**
- **Get the devil preached off you everyday!**

## #2: Be Faithful in Worship (22:8-9)

### 8-9: Keep Worshiping God Alone!

John was overwhelmed by it all – **understandably so.**

- *He bows before the angel...*
- *But the angel rebukes him! **Don't do that!***
- The angel is a fellow worshiper, not the one to be worshiped. **That's idolatry.**
- The proper object of worship: **“Worship **God!**”**

John had already received this same warning in **19:10.**

Note the **power of this temptation to idolatry.**

- John is an inspired apostle, and even he is tempted to bow down to an angel!
- **Don't think you are too mature to not give yourself to an idol.**
- We are prone to **idolatry constantly.**

Note also the **incomparable glory of God – if this angel is this majestic, consider the majesty of God.**

- The seraphs veil themselves repeating, “holy, holy, holy.”
- John is to **join the angels, not worship them.**
- Don’t worship **creatures**, but the **Creator**.

**Idolatry** is a major problem throughout the Bible, and an important theme in Revelation.

- The churches in Asia Minor were **surrounded by idolatry**, and so are we.
- Even good things must not be worshiped.
- **Worship God alone – throughout your life.**

### #3: Be Faithful Now! (10-11)

#### The Time is Near!

**10:** Daniel was to seal up his prophecy because the time was far off. (**Dan 12:4**)

But John is told to not seal up his book because **this book belongs to the present – the time is near.**

- What was far distant for Daniel has now dawned in the person of Jesus.
- **It is the last days – days in which John himself was already living.**
- We’re in the **last epoch**; waiting on that act of redemptive history.
- **Christ inaugurated by his first coming, and he will one day soon consummate it.**
- When he comes, he will finish what has already been started. ..

**11: This verse is both a warning and an encouragement, emphasizing the urgency of immediate and continual obedience.**

- A day is coming *when repentance will no longer be possible.*
- **Change** will no longer be possible.
- How we **respond to in this life will determine our destiny.**
- **The unrighteous** will still do evil and be filthy in eternity.
- **The righteous** will still do rightly and live in holiness.
- In other words, your character will be forever fixed in a **final condition.**
- **Those in hell will have no heart and passion for God.**
- **If they don’t love Jesus now, they won’t love Jesus then.**
- Those in heaven will delight in the Lord. They will love him.
- **If you’re going to repent, do so now!**
- **Believers, don’t flirt with sin. But pursue holiness now.**
- **This life is short, something massive is at stake, so don’t waste your life!**
- **Don’t wait until you’re 65, or you have kids, or you’ve had “your fill of sin” – obey now!**
- **It will one day be too late!**

Jesus reiterates it **three times**, “I am coming **soon.**” (12, 20)

## How important is this to you?

- Do you think about it? Do you sing about it?
- It should be a consistent thought in your Christian life.
- It should be a topic of conversation at the dinner table with your kids

The reason many have not focused on it is due in part to the fact that many have overreacted to the fact of the second coming in fanatical ways.

- Using the Newspaper, and crazy ideas to “predict” the time of the second coming
- Such craziness actually hurts God’s people!
- The 2nd Coming is not a cause for wild speculation but for our personal faithfulness now!

## #4: Be Faithful Before Jesus (22:12-16)

Now we come to an exalted picture of Jesus Christ.

**We learn about who He is, and we learn about the reality of the judgment to come.**

**12-13: Purpose: Jesus will commence and execute judgment of the human race.**

- The history of humanity will not go on forever.
- Injustice will not go on forever!
- The Just King will return and say, “Enough!”

**12b: How comprehensive will his judgment be?**

- It includes **you!** “Everyone”
  - Even Christians will be judged
  - Matt 25, Acts 17 – whole world
  - Each one of us

**12c: It corresponds to all the deeds of your life**

- This includes your **words!**
  - “Account for every careless word”
- This will include your **thoughts!**
- This will include your **motives!**
- This will include your **deeds!** (Rev 20:12)
- His judgment will be **impartial, inflexible, and righteousness**
- **There ultimately is no such thing as anonymity.**
- **You may delete your internet history, but you live before the eyes of the King.**

**You won’t be judged by the faithfulness of your family, but personally**

- **Lady who wanted to outlive three husbands, so she could marry 4: A Banker, Movie Star, Pastor, Funeral Director.... “One for the money, two for the show, three to get ready, and four to go.”**
- **Staying close to the right person won’t help you on the Day of Judgment!**

**Deeds?** What about **grace through faith?**

There's no problem with this idea. **Faith leads to deeds, or it's not true faith.** (James 2:14ff)

Every text that talks about judgment indicates we are judged on the basis of our **works.**

- **The saving provision of God in Christ is so powerful that a *faithful life results.***
- The judgment will expose the **reality of our faith, or the falsity of our faith.**
- **Saving Faith expresses itself in obedience.**

**Next verse,** we have **washed our robes – grace....** And that transformation leads to deeds.

**14-15: This judgment will be the event that will determine your eternal destiny (14-15)**

**V 14: The tree of life – symbol of immortality**

- **The city** – the full coming of the people of God
- “City” says **beauty, glory**

**V. 15** – Seven categories of sin suggesting all sinners...

- **Outside** – outer darkness

**Both groups do something:**

- **One “washes their robes”**
  - The robe is your life.
  - It's a manifestation of your life. It's filthy because of sin.
  - **God supplies a remedy – the cleansing blood of Jesus. Rev 7:14.**
  - “There is a fountain filled with blood”
  - We don't earn eternal life; we have it because of the cleansing power of Jesus.
- **The other practice sin**

**Application: Belief drives behavior.**

- **You believe this stuff?**
- **Do you believe Jesus is coming again to Judge?**
- **If so, it will alter the way you live now!**
- **I don't care how good a student a person is of the Second Coming, and how accurately they may interpret the events of this book, if the second coming doesn't transform the way you live now, you are wrong – regardless of who right you may be (Azurdia).**

**It will have an effect on the way you treat your spouse, do your job, spend money, use technology, etc.**

**13, 16: The Glorious Titles of Jesus**

**Who is this Coming Judge? Jesus.**

- Jesus is the Judge
- Many false or incomplete images of Jesus: “the teacher,” “the philosopher,” the passivist, the gentle Jesus.

### 13: Alpha/Omega, First/Last, Beginning/End

#### Jesus is the Lord of history

- These names have appeared throughout the book
- They've only been used to only speak of **God. No one else could claim them.**
- **The Lordship of Christ over human history makes him qualified to judge**

### 16: He Is the Lord of Glory

- Root and Descendant of David -- **Origination and derivation**

Then there's a beautiful name "**Bright, Morning Star**"

- You might call this "**Jesus' last name**" – **that is the last name he uses of himself!**
- **Names are obviously important.**
  - We take time to select names.
  - We pass down names.
  - We give nicknames.
- **Previously, others have called him:**
  - *the Christ, the Anointed One, the Word, the Holy One, the Lion of Judah, the suffering servant, the Prince of Peace,*
  - These and more – all are important. All packed full of meaning.
- **Previously he has called himself:**
  - *the Son of Man,* and
  - And here: the Alpha and the Omega, Root/Descendant
- **Now it's "the Morning Star."** The bright morning star.
  - A name used previously in Revelation and also by Peter (2 Peter 1:19)

#### This is the brightest star announcing the arrival of the day.

- Peter says the morning star has already dawned in our hearts (2 Pet. 1:19), someday we will have Him in His fullness.
- John is saying Jesus comes; He will be the brightest star.
- **He will shatter the night and herald the dawn of God's glorious day.**

#### The Morning Star....

- **A name for the dawning of a new day, and of a coming new age.**
- **It's a name filled with everlasting hope.**

**It's so glorious because we will experience many dark days on this earth.**

- We need the Morning Star.
- The darker the night, the brighter the morning star shines.
- The nights can get very dark.



## **What Is Promised in this Name?**

- It's simple: **It's the promise of dawn— a new day.**
- For believers in the risen Jesus, our journey is not into darkness, but into light.
- One day the **morning will come, and our *mourning* will be over.**

### **#5: Be Faithful to Invite (22:17)**

#### **This is Great Invitation (17)**

- It reminds us of many others in the Bible.
- Isaiah 55
- John 6:35; 7:47
- Matthew 11:28-29

1. The Spirit invites us to come
2. The Bride, the church of Jesus, invites us
3. All who hear are told to issue an invitation
4. The One who is thirsty is told to come

All who desire the water of eternal life are told to come and drink without price because Jesus has already paid the price.

This gracious invitation is given at the end of the Bible, and indeed is what the Bible is for: to make us wise for salvation through faith in Christ. It is meant to lead you to Jesus.

**A. What a gracious God to invite us to come and drink forever and be satisfied!**

Perhaps you've heard of P-Diddy's famous "White Parties" — these massive parties where everyone wears white. They've been called "the greatest parties of all time."

- Maybe he's been reading Revelation?!
- I've never received an invitation to P-Diddy's parties, have you?
- Don't be too disappointed. We've been invited to the greatest party ever.
- "Ain't no party like the Jesus party because the Jesus party don't stop."
- We will be dressed in white. Made pure by the blood of the Lamb.

**B. Now, what we are doing is inviting the world to come to the Savior.**

**"It seems best to understand the invitation as issued by the church and every member of the church to the outsider..." (Morris)**

- We are pleading with the world to come to Jesus.
- Only Jesus will satisfy!
- Come and drink — whatever you are drinking will not bring you satisfaction.
- You can't earn it; you can only receive it.

**2018: A new year goal: Let's invite unbelievers regularly this year — to events at IDC, to a coffee and conversations, ultimately to Jesus.**

## **#6: Be Faithful and Filled with Hope (20)**

**Jesus declares that he is coming quickly for the third time.**

Then there is the prayer — **“Come Lord Jesus!”**  
**“The earliest confession of the church” (Mounce)**

**It's written in a liturgical style as Jesus speaks first, then everyone says, “Amen! Come Lord Jesus.”**

- **There's probably a liturgical background to this prayer, as scholars have pointed out, used when the early church took the the Lord's Supper.**
- **I like that idea!**
- **In the midst of persecution and trials, the people of God have this great hope: the return of our King.**
- **The designation “Lord Jesus” is the only time it appears in the book of Revelation.**
- **It's fitting, the Lord Jesus will reign forever.**

**Akin:**

*New York Times* ran a story several years ago **“Mayberry Day”** — these popular festivals in Mount Airy, where thousands flock to celebrate “a place that never was, a place they choose to believe once existed.” (Ht: Akin)

Why the excitement over this make-believe town?

People come . . . less to escape than to search. . . . “All of this tells me that people are really looking for something,” says a 73-year-old barber by the name of Hiatt. “They want to know if there really was a place where people trusted each other, where there's peace and serenity.” (Sack, “Mt. Airy Journal”)

Longing for a place where everyone trusts each other, where there is peace.

**That place does exist, but it's not Mayberry (or Hogsmeade, Hobbiton, or any other idyllic fictional town that you'd like to move to), but Immanuel's Land, the place is ruled by the Lord Jesus.**

We long for it.

*The bride eyes not her garment, But her dear Bridegroom's face:  
I will not gaze at glory, But on my King of grace -  
Not at the crown He giveth, But on His pierced hand:  
The Lamb is all the glory Of Immanuel's land.*

**Maranatha!**

## #7: Be Faithful by Grace (21)

John concludes this book, like the conclusion of other letters in the NT. Revelation is not only apocalyptic and prophetic, it's also an epistle.

How many of you struggle with how to conclude a letter?

- The conclusion often expresses the real heart behind the letter.
- Does John sign off with “happy trails!” “May all your Christmases be white!” “Sincerely.”?
- He has a fitting ending.

This is how the whole Bible ends: “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all.”

John prays that by God's grace the readers will understand the message of his book, and would persevere in faithfulness.

We can persevere by God's grace.

- Between now and the time we see Christ, what we need is divine grace.
- It's God's grace that saves, strengthens, sanctifies, and will finally bring us safely home.
- By his grace, we can be overcomers; we can be faithful.
- James reminds us, “He gives more grace.” (4:6)

When we see him as he is, and we know ourselves as we will, then we will know what it truly means to be saved by grace!

**So to conclude**, the sure and soon return of Christ should inspire us to be faithful!

**William Miller** (ht: Azurdia)

In the 19th Century, a NY farmer named William Miller began a new religion (the Millerites).

- It's **primary feature was a fanatical act of predicting the exact date of Christ's return.**
- It was announced publicly (and the press had a field day)
- Jesus would return between March 21, 1842 and March 21, 1843.
- All people were to ready themselves.
- Well, Jesus didn't return.
- Disappointment swept through the followers.
- But Miller was undeterred. He refigured, and set another date.
- On August of 1844 he declared that Jesus would return between Oct 20-22 of that same year.
- They published their predictions, “Get Ready for the End of the Year.”
- Around that time, business owners shut down businesses, farmers stopped harvesting, and one group sold all their possessions.
- Eventually, everyone gathered together in one location, and they waited... and waited .. and waited.
- October 20-22 came and went.

- Reactions varied: some continued speculating, some began acting like they were children, using the verse “Whoever doesn’t enter the kingdom of God as a child will not enter it” (Mark 10:15), some formed new branches of Millerism, and some returned to their former denominations...
- About 5 years later, Miller died, and his tombstone reads, “**At the appropriate time, the end shall be.**”

That’s correct.

We believe in the second coming of Jesus, and that this could occur at any moment, but this belief shouldn’t provoke **crazy fanaticism** — it should inspire **consistent faithfulness**.

### **What a contrast between Miller and Baxter.**

Baxter said, “I think about heaven for 30 minutes everyday” — and it enabled him to endure through hardship and pain.

It made him deliberate, driven, and devoted to biblical Christianity.

Live in light of Christ’s second coming like Baxter, realizing that **every act of faithfulness and obedience matters because the King is coming**.

**And on that day, you will not regret having lived faithfully in this short life!**

“I am coming soon!”

Amen, come quickly, Lord Jesus.