



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

"No Dogs Go to Heaven"

22:10-15

I've referenced throughout our studies an attitude among Christians that the Revelation of Jesus Christ is a book that cannot really be understood. They say it is hard, if not impossible, to understand - that there are too many interpretations.

Well, anyone who says that has never read far enough into the book to get to verse ten:

Revelation 22:10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.

Don't "seal"; reveal! The title of the book means an unveiling of Jesus Christ. The book gives you its outline in chapter one then follows it perfectly.

Revelation 1:19 Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

“Write the things which you have seen.” What John had seen was the vision of the risen Lord walking in the midst of the seven candlesticks with seven stars in His right hand. Chapter one is the record of the things John had seen.

Chapters two and three contain the second division, “the things which are.” The seven churches, representing the entire church age, are the things which are.

Then from chapters four through the end of the book we read about “the things which will take place after this.” We saw the church resurrected and raptured into Heaven; the seven years of the Great Tribulation; the Battle of Armageddon; the second coming of Jesus; the one-thousand year reign of Jesus on the earth (called the Millennium); the final judgment of Satan, the fallen angels, and nonbelieving humanity; the destruction of this universe; the creation of a new universe; and we got a glimpse at our lives in eternity with God.

“The time is at hand” reminds us that the church lived in expectancy of the return of the Lord to resurrect and rapture them. The key passage on the rapture, in First Thessalonians four, deals with the concern of the believers in Thessalonica that their loved ones who had died would miss the imminent rapture.

Revelation 22:11 He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.”

If the prophecies of this book are not enough to convince you of the coming of Jesus and your need for a Savior, nothing else can be said. If you reject the prophecies of this book, you are rejecting Jesus - *because this book reveals Jesus!*

Those who have received Jesus, and who receive these prophecies, will press forward in their righteousness.

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Prophecy is the method God used to touch my heart with the Gospel. After I got saved I immersed myself in prophecy. My first bumper sticker read, "Ready or not, Jesus is coming!"

That was in 1979. The Lord hasn't resurrected and raptured His church. It's still imminent! Prophecy is a stronger method today because we are seeing so much more unfolding.

Are you "righteous?" Your position before God is that you've been declared righteous. In practice "be righteous still."

Are you "holy?" Yes because your position before God is that you are holy and set apart to Him and for Him. In practice "be holy still."

"Works" and "do[ing] His commandments" are the theme of these next verses. The teaching of Bible prophecy should always encourage love and good works.

Revelation 22:12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

When Jesus comes for the church He will rapture us to heaven where we will stand before Him and be rewarded. You will be rewarded on the basis of your works.

What is interesting here is that it mentions your "work" in the singular, not your works.

It reminds me of a couple of things:

- It first of all reminds me that the work God requires is simply to believe on His Son, Jesus Christ (John 6:28-29).
- It next of all reminds me that there is one great commandment we are to keep - "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." "And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the

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name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.”

Jon Courson had an interesting comment along these lines:

People make following the Lord so complicated. "You gotta do this," they say, "and keep away from that. Wear these clothes and don't eat those foods." But that's not what Scripture teaches. Nine simple words is all it took for a death-row thief to enter the kingdom: "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom" (see Luke 23:42-43). But it's even simpler than that. Peter expressed the same thing in only three words: "Lord, save me" (Matthew 14:30). But it's even simpler than that. Paul says only one word is necessary to assure an eternity in heaven: "Lord" (Romans 10:9).

Revelation 22:13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

“Alpha” and “Omega” represent words, being the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Jesus is everything God has to say to mankind.

“Beginning” and “End” encompass time and space, or we might say creation. Jesus is the Creator and is over His creation for its good.

“First” and “Last” remind us that Jesus was the firstborn of a new people - all those who would be saved and raised from the dead never to die again.

We were created to hear about Jesus in order to spend eternity with Him as new creatures.

The term Alpha and Omega is “Applied to God in 1:8, in 21:6; and here alone to Christ, crowning proof in this book of Christ’s deity.” (Robertson). The title the First and the Last is also irrefutable proof that Jesus is “Yahweh, the LORD: I, the LORD, am the first; and with the last I am He.” (Isaiah 41:4).

Revelation 22:14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

We're back in our own time now in these verses, making application of all we've seen and heard from John and his visions on Patmos. Believers in Jesus Christ are described as "those who do His commandments." Salvation is not based on your works but good works of necessity follow faith in Jesus Christ. Believers have all the joys of heaven and the heavenly city, New Jerusalem, to look forward to. We will indeed experience "the right to the tree of life," to its fruit, as we "enter through the gates into the city."

A heard a snippet of a comedy routine on the radio that fits what we're reading. The comic mentions the gates of Heaven then says, "Why does Heaven need gates? What kind of neighborhood is it in, anyway?"

As we saw earlier in the description of the city, the gates are each made of a single pearl. Perhaps it's reminiscent of Jesus giving everything for you and I - the pearl of great price.

Some translations have the phrase "wash their robes" instead of "do His commandments. In either case, it is referring to believers who depend upon the grace of God in their daily lives. It's like the foot washing example Jesus left us with. When He washed the disciple's feet, and Peter refused to let Him then insisted Jesus wash his entire body, Jesus explained we are already clean but we pick up defilement out in the world. In other words, we're saved - washed in His blood, as it were - but need to daily cleanse ourselves by the washing of the Word of God.

Revelation 22:15 But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

This doesn't mean they are "outside" trying to break in. They are forever outside of the new heaven and new earth, having been cast into and confined in the Lake of Fire.

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The lists of sins we encounter in God's Word are always interesting. I probably wouldn't list lies along with these others. It serves to remind me of my tendency to minimize sin in my own life rather than have God's attitude on all manner of sin.

The verse mentions "dogs." In the New Testament the apostle Paul calls the Judaizers "dogs" (Philippians 3:2). These were the men who, pardon the expression, 'dogged' Paul's travels. They came in after him and tried to tell the believers they were not saved until they practiced the Jewish ritual of circumcision and kept the Law of Moses.

"Sorcerers" has to do with drug abuse. "Sexual [immorality]" is anything sexual outside of God's loving boundaries in marriage.

"Murderers" - no argument from me!

"Idolaters" are more obvious in other countries where pagan temples and images are prevalent. Here in the West I'd have to put Roman Catholic icons into that category. I mean, when at a wedding the couple gives gifts to the statue of the Virgin Mary, that's idolatry.

Which brings us back to "whoever loves and practices a lie." In context this has reference to those who in the Great Tribulation believe the lie of the antichrist.

One thing that the Great Tribulation will do is make very obvious who is in and who is out regarding Heaven.

Prophecy is an incredibly important aspect of God's Word and His revelation of Himself. Maybe it doesn't float your boat, as the saying goes. That's OK. But let's not try to seal it up either.

Let's put the world into perspective by what we know is coming in the future. Let's get more people 'in.'

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