

Intro. We live in a world filled with providing instant gratification—we order fast food & get it a couple of minutes later, we take our vehicles for an oil change at Jiffy Lube, we shop at Quick-Mart; it’s not enough to get 2-day or next day delivery, we can even get some things ordered & delivered on the same day. I read about one woman who got on the phone with Amazon & complained because she had ordered a package 18 minutes earlier & hadn’t received it yet! Because of our culture of instant gratification, many find it hard to believe when we talk about the 2nd coming of Christ as something which can happen “soon,” because it’s been nearly 2,000 years since He left. But Jesus’ timetable is not our timetable & His postponement of His return is simply a demonstration of His patience & mercy for more to come to Him. In light of Jesus’ return, today we conclude our series on Revelation 20-22 on “The Dragon, the Lamb & Eternity” by focusing on the last chapter & “The Great Invitation to Eternity.”

Theme: Jesus’ return

Background: In the vein of C.S. Lewis, you might say long ago this world & everything in the universe was created by a mighty Lion’s roar. One of those created beings wanted to be equal to the Lion, but he was cast down to earth & became a Dragon, even a serpent, bent on deceiving the sons & daughters of Adam from serving their Creator, the Lion. And that Dragon led each one into sin & a life headed to an eternal hell, but that Lion did something no one expected—He became a Lamb & gave Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of His creation & then rose from the dead victoriously. After defeating the Dragon for the last time, the Lamb looks to Eternity & sends out His final invitation—“The Great Invitation to Eternity.”

- In light of this text, I want you to be prepared for Jesus’ 2nd coming:

1. Get ready, because Jesus is coming soon! (22:7, 12, 20)

a. Jesus Himself said so

- He said it when He walked this earth 2,000 years ago—“in My Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also” (John 14:2-3)
- He said it 3x in the final chapter of the Bible (22:7, 12, 20)—underline it or highlight it, because He isn’t joking

b. Others are praying for Jesus’ coming (22:17, 20)

- The Spirit & the Bride (the Church) say in unison to Christ, “Come!”
- Believers everyone—those who hear—say to Christ, “Come!”
- John, the beloved disciple & best friend of Jesus, cries out at the end of the book to Christ, “Come, Lord Jesus!”

c. God will one day answer our prayers & send Him again

- The fact that prayers for Jesus’ return is made by the Spirit & the Bride & believers & John means one day God will answer our prayer & we are closer to that prayer being answered now than we have ever been before

Illus: When I leave on a trip, I tell my family that I’ll see them in x number of days. Though we talk virtually every day, they can’t wait for my return & they arrive at the airport & try to outrun each other as fast as they can. They are not only happy to see me, but they know I brought them something—when Jesus comes again, He will bring His recompense—

compensation of reward & judgment for what we did—whether we lived for the Lord from faith or on our own merit

2. Announce the news to as many as possible that Jesus is coming soon (22:10, 13, 16)

- While there's a negative command not to seal the words of this prophecy, the positive command would be to publish them as a document & to proclaim them to all people (Kistemaker, 587)

Illus: Ancient heralds announced news with “Hear, ye! Hear, ye!”

- Don't just tell them “Jesus is coming soon” but tell them who He is—the end-times Judge, First & Last, Root & Descendant of David, the Bright Morning Star, the Lord who gives grace

- In a nut-shell, Jesus is both Savior & Lord, the Holy Messiah, God in the flesh, the Only Way to the Father & Only Hope for the World—He is the One to be worshiped

Illus: When someone asks you, “Who is Jesus? Why is He so special?” You say, well, let me tell you: He is the Author of all life, He is the Bridegroom of the church, He is the Creator of all things, He is the Deliverer from sin, He is the Eternal One, He is the Friend to the friendless, He is God in the flesh, He is Hope to the hopeless, He is Intelligent beyond compare, He is Just, He is Kind, He is Lord of all, He is the Master, He is Never-Failing, He is Omniscient, He is Powerful, He is Quick to help, He is Righteous, He is Savior, He is Trustworthy, He is Ubiquitous, He is Victorious, He is Wonderful, He is Xcellent, He is Youthful to the old & worn out, He is Zion's rightful King!—from the Alpha to the Omega, the beginning to the end, the first to the last, He is the A to the Z!

3. Heed the warnings & come to Jesus before He comes again (22:7, 10-15, 17-21)

- When Jesus comes again, there won't be time to make changes—that's why it says “let the evildoer still do evil...” (22:11)
- The unbeliever won't have any part in this New Jerusalem (22:15)—cf. 20:14-15; 21:8, 27; 22:3
- These last few verses lead up to the mighty crescendo of God's great work in Christ & His return—you must heed the warnings to come to Christ before He comes again!

Illus: In March 1942, General Douglas MacArthur had to escape the Philippines & barely evaded Japanese warships. When he arrived in Australia, he said, “I came through and I shall return.” 2 ½ years later in October 1944, MacArthur upheld that promise and said, “People of the Philippines: I have returned.”

Illus: If you are not a fan of history, but you like movies, then think of Arnold Schwarzenegger in 1984 as the Terminator when he said, “I'll be back” & again throughout subsequent movies, including 2015 in Terminator: Genisys—and every time, he came back

- If we believe MacArthur did it & if we are fans of Schwarzenegger, then why wouldn't we heed the message of being ready when Jesus comes back?

Conc. When we have special events, we send out invitations—birthday parties, graduation, weddings, etc. Some invitations are more special than others, but few would stand out as much as an invitation from the President of the United States to attend an event at the White House. You get an invitation like that & you are practically beside yourself. But you've received an invitation far greater from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He is coming again & before He does, He has sent you an invitation to respond to Him. Today is the day. It is the last page of the last book of the Bible. Don't give into the Dragon, for the Lamb defeated him at Calvary & will defeat him again in the end. Eternity is at stake. You may never get another invitation. Will you come to Jesus? Will you come to Jesus today?