

“Famous Last Words” (Revelation 22:6-21)

I’ve always been intrigued by famous last words. The following famous last words have either led to injury or death.¹

You wouldn’t hit a guy with glasses on, would you?	Bikers are wimps!
Nice doggy.	No, Guido, I don’t have your money.
I’m making a citizen’s arrest.	Trust me, I know what I’m doing.
That’s a cute tattoo.	Which wire was I supposed to cut?
I can pass this guy.	You look just like Charles Manson.
I double dog dare you!	Does this car go any faster?
This tribe is peaceful.	I don’t need to go to the hospital.
Don’t worry. We outnumber them.	Give me liberty or give me death.

The famous last words in Revelation 22:6-21 can also lead to death...eternal death. Yet, unlike the humorous last words that I just shared, these famous last words can also lead to life...eternal life. In these final verses, John concludes his book by giving us the bottom line. He states that we must trust Christ’s words and expect Christ’s return. These two themes run throughout these 16 verses.² Interestingly, the book of Revelation could have ended with 22:3-5. In these three verses, John explained that the curse is over and believers will reign forever. This seemed like the perfect conclusion to the Revelation. However, like any good preacher, John wanted to reiterate a few critical exhortations.

1. Trust Christ’s words (22:6-7, 8-9, 16, 18-19). In 22:6, one of the angels who had the seven bowls continues to speak to John (cf. 21:9, 15; 22:1). He says, “**These words are faithful and true.**” The phrase “**these words**” is referring to the entire book of Revelation. Revelation is “**faithful and true**” because Jesus Christ Himself is “faithful and true.”³ Since Jesus never goes back on His Word, we can believe the words of Revelation. God’s promises always depend on God’s character.

John goes on to record, “**and the Lord, the God of the spirits** (i.e., the “hearts” or “inner being”)⁴ **of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place.**” This statement reinforces a futuristic interpretation of Revelation. The book deals with events yet future. It also indicates that God intends the reader to understand this book. It is a revelation (i.e., an unveiling), not an incomprehensible mystery, even though much of the revelation is symbolic and difficult to understand. It is ironic that people have neglected and avoided this book even though it contains more promises of blessing than any other book in the Bible. All of us should continue to study it long after this sermon series is over.

[The second great exhortation is found in 22:7].

2. Expect Christ’s return (22:7, 10, 12, 20). In 22:7a, the speaker here is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself rather than the angel or John. Jesus states, “**And behold, I am coming quickly.**” This is the first of three times that Jesus declares, “**I am coming quickly.**” In 22:7 and 12, the promise is preceded by the word “**behold.**” “**Behold**” (*idou*) is a term intended to grab our attention. Jesus is saying, “Give this your undivided attention!” In 22:20, Jesus used the word “**yes**” (*nai*) to convey solemn assurance. The word translated “yes” serves as an exclamation point of assurance. By using the words “behold” and “yes,” Jesus intended to do two things: arouse the attention of Christians to the fact that His coming could happen at any moment; and give believers solemn assurance of the fulfillments of His promise of His imminent return.⁵

The word translated **“quickly”** (*tachu*) means “at once or suddenly” (cf. 2:16; 3:11; 11:14).⁶ The point is that our Lord is coming, and when He comes, He is coming suddenly, without warning, as a thief who comes without announcement.⁷ These words of our Lord are in the present tense—not the future tense. Jesus is saying, “I am coming now!” Not, “I will be coming later.” There must be a sense of urgency. That sense of urgency must urge us to rise above the crisis. If we believe that Jesus Christ is coming back today—quickly, imminently, shortly—it will decisively mark the way we live our lives.

How should these words mark our lives? They should motivate us to obey God’s Word. Jesus finished 22:7b by saying, **“Blessed⁸ is he who heeds the words⁹ of the prophecy of this book.”** If we read, study, and apply the book of Revelation to our lives, God assures us that He will bless us. The book closes as it opened, with a special blessing for those who pay attention to what it teaches (1:3; cf. 16:5).

The word **“heeds”** or **“keeps”** means to guard the words of Revelation by applying it to our lives.¹⁰ We can **“heed”** the word of Revelation by (a) Observing the warnings of chapters 2 and 3 to the church, warnings against dead, cold orthodoxy, apostasy, immorality, materialism, etc. (b) Living constantly in light of Christ’s presence and imminent return. (c) Carrying on a vital witness, having an open door to the unbelieving world in view of the coming tribulation and the lake of fire, that we might see men snatched from hell (Jude 23). (d) Living as sojourners who refuse to become bogged down with materialism and who live with a view to the Eternal City. (e) Enduring the trials of this life, during this age of darkness, seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, the glory that is to follow. (f) Remembering that God’s plan is being accomplished, that He is sovereign and still on the throne as we see this old world moving farther and farther away from the Lord and the absolutes of His Word.¹¹ As we heed the words of Revelation in this fashion, the Bible promises that we will be **“blessed.”**

In 22:8-9, John records: **“I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. But he said to me, ‘Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God.’”** John resumed addressing the reader, which he had not done since 1:1, 4, and 9.¹² John confessed that when he had heard and seen these things he reacted by worshipping the angel who revealed them to him (cf. 19:10). It was the revelation of the new creation that evidently moved John to respond this way a second time.¹³ Again, this angel rebuked John for worshipping him (cf. 19:10). He then redirects John’s worship toward God. Notice though, the angel does not say, “This is not the time for worship.” Nor does he say, “Worship is an inappropriate response to the visions of heaven.” Rather he says, “Keep on worshipping! Just worship God.” In other words, “This is an entirely proper activity—just redirect it toward God.” The word **“worship”** (*proskuneo*) means to kiss toward, to show affection to, to bow down before a superior and give him the respect, reverence, awe, and adoration due him.¹⁴ To worship God means to ascribe the greatness due His name from a heart of love that is humbled and bowed down before His throne (Ps 2:11-12).¹⁵ Yet, people should worship God, not His servants.

In 22:10, the angel said to John, **“Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.”** This is the opposite command given to Daniel in Daniel 8:26 and 12:4. The reason John was not to seal up the prophecy of this book was that the time is near. The return of Christ is imminent; therefore, the book of Revelation is to be proclaimed. This means that we can understand the book of Revelation. God wants the book of Revelation to be an open book for all to understand. Revelation is no abstruse, esoteric book that is beyond the ability of people to understand. There is nothing nebulous about it. Believers must live in the light of Jesus’ coming. They cannot do that if Revelation is confusing to them. As an artist covers his work when it is under construction, until it is complete, so God covered His picture of the future until He finished it.¹⁶

In 22:11, we come upon a very unusual verse. The angel says to John, **“Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy.”** This verse teaches that whatever a person’s nature, that person will be locked into it for all eternity.¹⁷ There is no moral improvement in hell because hell is not restorative punishment. It will be too late for that. Hell is retributive punishment. Along with the absence of God’s goodness, hell will be torment because sinners will have all of their same evil cravings with no capacity to satisfy them. Picture an alcoholic who can’t get a drink, an addict who can’t get a fix, a greedy person whose greed will never be satisfied, and you have a picture of the torment of hell. The angry person who could not control his anger on earth will be an eternally angry person in hell, and with a far greater degree of anger. A sexually immoral person will burn for sex, but there will be none. A jealous person will burn with jealousy, but there will be no way to fulfill those jealous longings. Sinners will be confined to their evil character and their lostness.¹⁸

You may wonder why it matters what people will be like in hell. It matters because the Bible is giving us the real deal so no one in his right mind would refuse Christ for eternity in hell. This is a strong warning not to put off becoming a believer in Jesus Christ. When Christ comes, people will not be able to change their destiny. What they are then, they will remain forever. People should not expect some second chance in the future but should make the decision about worshipping God now in the light of what they have read in this book.

Hurricane Charley has destroyed portions of Florida. It has also taken a number of lives. Hurricanes can be devastating. Many native Floridians have what’s called “hurricane parties.” They will stay inside, in the safest place possible, and wait for the hurricane to pass. As the hurricane blows through it will wreak deadly havoc...but then things will grow deathly quiet. You can even begin to hear birds chirp. It’s natural to think that the hurricane has passed. But in reality, you’re in the eye of the storm. The native Floridians will stay put because they know the hurricane is merely changing course and will be coming back the other way. But the tourist from Olympia, Washington may be foolish enough to go outside. If so, he may be struck by a flying garbage can or something far worse.

Almost 2,000 years ago, God’s entire wrath was poured out on the crucifixion. Right now we’re in the eye of the hurricane. You can take His name in vain. You can shake your fist at God. You can tear the Bible apart. You can persecute Christians. God’s judgment is not instantaneous. But one day the winds will be reversed. It will not be in kindness or patience. It will be in wrath. We’re in the eye of the hurricane. But don’t go wandering out into it.¹⁹

In 22:12, we move to one of the most motivating statements in all of Scripture. Jesus says, **“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.”** Jesus Christ repeated His promise to return soon (22:7, cf. 1:3; 22:20). However, instead of promising a blessing, as He did earlier (22:7; 16:5), this time He promised to judge.²⁰ He will reward both the good and the bad. This prospect strengthens the warning in 22:11. Jesus Christ will judge all people finally, on the basis of their works.²¹ Whereas salvation is of grace, rewards are according to works. God gives us His salvation, but He pays us for our good works. In view of Jesus Christ’s soon return, Christians should be diligent to lay up treasure in heaven, while we have the time (Matt 6:19-21).

Jesus Christ offered three titles for Himself that give assurance that He can and will fulfill His former promise to reward. He states, **“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”** Jesus describes Himself with three pairs of titles. All three of these titles are also used of God the Father in Revelation.²² Jesus Christ is **“the Alpha and Omega”** (cf. 1:8; 21:6). This title stresses His eternality and sovereignty. **“The first and the last”** is also a title for Christ (1:17; 2:8) and the Father (Isa 44:6; 48:12). It emphasizes that God is the cause and goal of history. **“The beginning and the end”** describes God in 21:6 and Christ in Hebrews 12:2. It means that He finishes what He starts. All three sets of titles affirm the same thing: that Jesus is eternal (1:4, 8, 17; 2:8; 21:6). The assertion of His eternity means that we can count on Him fulfilling His promise. He will deliver on what He promises. Jesus consummates and concludes all things. He is God Almighty. Jesus is God’s last word to us.

In 22:14, John writes, **“Blessed²³ are those who wash their robes,²⁴ so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.”** This final blessing in Revelation announces God’s favor on those who cleanse themselves by confessing their sins. The word **“wash”** is in the present tense and is referring to daily confession for the purpose of experiencing intimate fellowship with Christ (cf. John 13:1-10; 1 John 1:9). The robe one wears is a figure for one’s works, which others see (19:8). People who wash their robes will have access to the Tree of Life (i.e., they will live forever in the new creation). They will also enter the New Jerusalem by its gates (i.e., they will be able to enjoy intimate fellowship with God).

Is there any sin between you and the Lord? Are you keeping short accounts with God? When you sin in word, thought, or deed, do you immediately confess? (Confess: “To say the same thing as, to agree with God”). If you regularly confess your sins, you will experience rich fellowship with Christ on earth and you will be blessed with a rich kingdom entrance (2 Pet 1:10-11).

This blessing is contrasted with the curse of 22:15: **“Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying.”** Jesus described the people who will not enter the city by the works that mark their lives of unbelief. **“Dogs”²⁵** is a metaphor for the morally impure, as well as for those who distorted the Gospel.²⁶ The other types of individuals named here appear in other lists of wicked unbelievers (cf. 21:8). Their fate should warn believers not to fall into apostasy and its associated vices.

In 22:16, Jesus says, **“I, Jesus,²⁷ have sent My angel²⁸ to testify to you these things for the churches.”** Jesus Himself is giving witness, through His angel, of who He is. He is speaking these words to all the churches that will hear or read these words.²⁹ He says, **“I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”³⁰** Jesus was the ancestor of David as well as His descendant, the root as well as the offspring of David.³¹ Consequently, He fulfills all the prophecies concerning David’s family. Jesus also called Himself “the bright morning star” prophesied to come the second time (cf. 2:28).³² The bright morning star appears only when night is almost over. Jesus is saying the fulfillment is at hand! Jesus is the One that will burst upon the scene of human history at its darkest hour. Are you ready for His arrival?

In 22:17, **“The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’³³ And let the one who hears³⁴ say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.”³⁵** Three times the word **“come”** occurs in this verse (cf. Isa 55:1; John 7:37-39). The first two references from the Spirit and the bride are commands for Jesus to return. Again, there is a sense of urgency and longing. Now Jesus turns the invitation around. He invites the thirsty to come to Him and take the water of life freely.³⁶ Unbelievers obviously need to take their first drink of this living water, which represents Christ, but believers also need to keep their thirst quenched by coming to Him again and again.

The one who is thirsty is the person who senses his or her need (cf. Matt 5:6; John 4:10). “The one who wishes” is broad enough to include every single individual.³⁷ Notice that the Water of Life costs the one who comes for it nothing. It costs us nothing, but it cost Jesus Christ greatly to give Himself for us. Why do people “come” to Christ? It’s because they are thirsty. Something is lacking in their lives; they are parched because everything else seems so dry and empty. It’s not a coincidence that the Bible calls Christians the salt of the world.³⁸ [Ask for a volunteer and use peanuts and water to illustrate]. One simple word describes the heart of Jesus’ invitation: “Come.” In Matthew 11:28, Jesus says, “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Again in John 6:37, Jesus says, “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.” Every person that has ever lived or is living must come.

A certain preacher and an atheistic barber were walking through city slums. The barber said, “This is why I can’t believe in your God of love. If he was as kind as you say, he wouldn’t permit all this poverty, disease, and immorality. He wouldn’t allow these poor street people to get addicted. No, I cannot believe in a God who permits these things.” The minister was silent until they met a man who was especially unkempt. His hair was hanging down his neck, and he had a half-inch of stubble on his face. The preacher said to his friend: “You can’t be a good barber, or you wouldn’t permit a man like this to continue living here without a haircut and a shave.” Indignant, the barber answered: “Why blame me for that man’s condition? He has never come in my shop. If he had, I could’ve fixed him up and made him look like a gentleman!” The preacher said, “Then don’t blame God for allowing people to continue in their evil ways. He invites them to come and be saved.”³⁹

In 22:18-19, we have a warning that contrasts with the invitation that the Lord just extended.⁴⁰ John writes, **“I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.”** Adding material to, or deleting sections from, the prophecies contained in this book, will result in punishment from God.⁴¹ **“If anyone adds to”** the words of Revelation,⁴² God will visit the offender with the tribulation plagues written in this book (Rev 6-16). This does not imply that anyone who does this will lose his or her salvation. But he/she may lose his/her life. How important it is to understand and communicate God’s truth accurately, especially the truths God revealed in this book. **“If anyone takes away from”** the words of Revelation, God will **“take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city.”** Again, this does not mean he will lose his salvation. If the person who corrupts Revelation is an unbeliever, he or she will have no part (share) in the blessings of the new creation. If he or she is a believer, the part (share) lost must be some special privilege in the eternal state.⁴³ In other words, a believer who perverts the teaching of this book may lose part of his or her eternal reward.

So how does one add to the Bible or Revelation? One way is by claiming new revelation, that the Bible and the book of Revelation are not enough (as with the Book of Mormon or any other religious writing that claims to be from God). Another way is by claiming advanced knowledge in spiritual matters and that the Bible is not the answer or is simply wrong (2 John 9). Liberal humanists are grossly guilty of this. No one is to add to or take away from this book. The various world religions and cults will tell you that there is a need for another holy book. The Bible is a closed book. There will be no further revelation. God’s Word has “a divine copyright.”⁴⁴ Don’t tamper with it or God will tamper with you.

The book of Revelation closes with these words: **“He who testifies to these things [Jesus] says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen”** (22:20-21). Evidently, John now quoted Jesus’ promise to come soon.⁴⁵ The things in view are all of the words of Revelation (cf. 1:2). This is the third and final time in this passage that we read that Jesus Christ promised to come quickly (cf. 22:7, 12). How can we doubt His word (see Jas 5:8-9)? Jesus is coming! John testifies that Jesus is ready. He says, **“Amen. Come, Lord Jesus”**⁴⁶ (22:20b). John added his **“amen”** affirming his belief that Jesus would come soon, and he voiced his personal petition that He would do so, as He promised.

Jonathan Edwards, called American’s greatest theologian had a set of resolutions. One of them is this: “Resolved: Never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.” We should always live every moment of every day as if Christ were coming now! That’s the only way to live. Are you ready for Jesus’ return? Do you need to share your faith with someone? Do it now! Do you need to be reconciled to someone? Do it now! Do you need to serve the Lord and His people? Do it now! Do you need to be faithful in your financial stewardship? Do it now!

The last words of the Bible are soaked with grace. John exclaims, **“The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen”** (22:21). God wants to make absolutely sure that **“grace”** (*charis*) shall have the last word! Grace is God’s unconditional kindness offered to someone who doesn’t deserve it. God’s grace provides faith for the unbelieving reader and faithfulness for the believing reader (cf. 1:4). Grace...don’t live on earth without it. Grace...don’t leave earth without it.

Has God changed you as a result of our study through Revelation? Has He shown you His grace? Do you know Him more? Do you love Him more? I pray that this is so.⁴⁷

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Revelation Bookends (Revelation 1 and 22)

Origin of the prophecy: God & Jesus	1:1	22:6
Subject of the prophecy: coming events	1:1	22:6
Mediator of the prophecy: an angel	1:1	22:6, 8, 16
Writer of the prophecy:	John 1:1, 4, 9	22:8
Genuineness of the prophecy: true prophecy	1:3	22:6, 7, 9, 10, 18-19
Vehicle of the prophecy: a prophet	1:1, 9-11	22:8, 9, 10
Addressees of the prophecy: bond-servants	1:1	22:6
Destination of the prophecy: churches	1:3, 11	22:16, 18
Blessing of the prophecy: for obedience	1:3	22:7, 12, 14
Warning of the prophecy: for unfaithfulness	1:7	22:11, 12, 18-19
Center of the prophecy: Christ	1:2, 5, 9	22:16, 18, 20
God of the prophecy: Alpha & Omega	1:17	22:13
Chief character of the prophecy: God	1:5, 7	22:12, 13, 16
Hope of the prophecy: soon return	1:3, 7	22:7, 10, 12, 20

This chart is courtesy of Dr. Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Revelation*: 2003 Edition (<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/revelation.pdf>), 211.

Notes

¹ These ideas came from selections from the following web sites, however they have been revised:

<http://home.att.net/~quotations/famouslastwords.html> <http://www.jestsandjokes.com/catchall.php3?joke=120>

² Looking at the paragraph divisions indicated by the translators of the NASB, we find that there are eight different paragraphs. Bible scholars have all recognized the difficulty in identifying a neat logical order, which would best be conveyed by a verse-by-verse exposition of this text.

³ Previously in Revelation Christ is called “faithful” (1:5; 3:14) and “true” (3:7, 14; 19:11).

⁴ Kendell H. Easley, *Revelation*: HNTC (Nashville: Holman, 1998), 417.

⁵ See Renald Showers, *Maranatha Our Lord, Come* (Bellmawr, New Jersey: Friends of Israel, 1995), 141.

⁶ See also Rev 1:3; 3:3, 11; 16:15.

⁷ The second coming is the great climactic event in view through most of this prophecy, but applying this word about imminence to the rapture is certainly legitimate. See Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 8-22* (Chicago: Moody, 1995), 489 and Wayne A. Brindle, “Biblical Evidence for the Imminence of the Rapture,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 158:630 (April-June 2001), 150-51.

⁸ This is the sixth declaration of blessing in Revelation. The seventh and last blessing is in 22:14.

⁹ Keathley III writes, “‘Words’ is plural and it is the Greek term *logos* which, in the singular, is used of the Lord, the Word (John 1:1) and of the Scripture, the Word of God (Heb. 4:12). The use here of *logos* in the plural may suggest three things to us: (a) It stresses the importance and need of knowing the details of this book, as well as the rest of the Bible. The more we know and apply, the greater our capacity for real happiness. (b) The plural looks at the individual words, stressing the concept of inspiration down to the very words themselves. The understanding of concepts is based on the understanding of the words. (c) The plural of *logos* was however, also used of specific sayings, or teachings (doctrines), or parts of a whole work (cf. LXX, Exodus 34:28; Deut 10:4). In this we see the necessity and blessing which comes from knowing the various doctrines or specific teachings of Revelation.”

Hampton Keathley III, *Studies in Revelation* (www.bible.org: Biblical Studies Press, 1997), 387.

¹⁰ “To persist in obedience, keep, observe, fulfill, and pay attention to.” BDAG, Electronic Ed.

¹¹ Keathley III, *Studies in Revelation*, 387-88.

¹² John affirmed the angel’s words that the prophecy was genuine. He himself had heard and had seen the things that he had recorded (cf. Dan 8:15; 12:5). He was an eyewitness of these things (cf. John 1:14; 19:35; 21:14; 1 John 1:1-3; 4:14). John’s strong reaction further attests the genuineness of the revelations that he had received.

¹³ John’s strong reaction further attests the genuineness of the revelations that he had received.

¹⁴ “To express in attitude or gesture one’s complete dependence on or submission to a high authority figure, (fall down and) worship, do obeisance to, prostrate oneself before, do reverence to, welcome respectfully,” BDAG, Electronic Ed.

¹⁵ See also Steven J. Lawson, *Heaven Help Us!* (Colorado Spring: NavPress, 1995), 175-176.

¹⁶ See Thomas L. Constable, *Dr. Constable’s Notes on Revelation* (<http://www.sonlight.com/constable/notes/pdf/revelation.pdf>, 2003),

¹⁷ This verse does not teach that for some people repentance and conversion are impossible (cf. 22:17). It is a guarantee of personal responsibility for one’s decisions (cf. Ezek 3:27; Matt 11:15; Rev 2:7; 13:9).

¹⁸ Tony Evans, *The Best is Yet to Come* (Chicago: Moody, 2000), 239-240, 291. See also Lawson, *Heaven Help Us!*, 177.

¹⁹ I heard a similar illustration once from Tom Nelson, Pastor of Denton Bible Church in Denton, TX.

²⁰ The idea of being “judged according to your works” occurs often in Revelation (2:23; 11:18; 14:13; 20:12; 22:12).

²¹ Cf. 2 Chron 6:23; Job 34:11; Ps 28:4; 62:12; Prov 24:12; Isa 40:10; Jer 17:10; Ezek 18:20; Hos 12:2; Matt 16:27; Rom 2:6; 14:12; 1 Cor 3:12-15; 2 Cor 5:10; 11:15; 2 Tim 4:14; 1 Pet 1:17.

²² These three titles are also used in Isaiah to refer to God the Father (41:4; 44:6; 46:9-10; 48:12).

²³ The word “blessed” (*makiros*) occurs 50 times in the NT, seven of those occurrences in the book of Revelation. See Matt 5:3-11; 11:6; 13:16; 16:17; 24:46; Luke 1:45; 6:20, 21 [twice], 22; 7:23; 10:23; 11:27-28; 12:37-38, 43; 14:14-15; 23:29; John 13:17; 20:29; Acts 20:35; 26:2; Rom 4:7-8; 14:22; 1 Cor 7:40; 1 Tim 1:11; 6:15; Titus 2:13; Jas 1:12, 25; 1 Pet 3:14; 4:14; Rev 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14.

²⁴ “Some translations read ‘who do His commandments’ instead of ‘who wash their robes,’ but the older manuscripts have the reading of the NASB and NIV. This is also the most accurate theologically. The reference here is to those who qualify for entrance into the city where they have the right to the Tree of Life. Though obedience to the commandments of the Lord should be a characteristic of believers, and may even give evidence of one’s faith,

entrance into eternity is obtained by faith alone, in the person and work of Christ, not by obedience or works (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; John 3:16).” Keathley III, *Studies in Revelation*, 390.

²⁵ Dogs in the first century were not domestic animals as they are in our day. They were wild, aggressive scavengers. Generally, they were not man’s best friend, they were hated creatures. The people of this verse are bestial who live like dogs. They know little more than what they taste, feel, hear, see, and smell. They cannot see eternal things.

²⁶ Cf. Deut 23:18; 2 Kgs 8:13; Ps 22:16, 20; Isa 56:10; Matt 7:6; 15:26; Mark 7:27; Phil 3:2-3.

²⁷ The combination “I Jesus” occurs nowhere else in the NT. Here Jesus used it to stress His role in producing this book and so to strengthen its authority (cf. Rev 22:7, 12).

²⁸ “My angel” is the main angel who revealed this material to John (cf. 22:6). The angel gave the whole revelation to John, but it was ultimately for all the churches, not just the seven churches of Asia Minor (cf. 1:4; chs. 2-3).

²⁹ This is the first occurrence of the term “church” (*ekklesia*) since chapter 3. This implies that the church is not in the tribulation. The tribulation of Revelation 6-19 deals with Israel. It is the time of Jacob’s trouble and Daniel’s 70th week. For this reason the church is not present or mentioned. Note: Those that are not pre-tribulationists suggest that this is an argument from silence.

³⁰ The “root” is buried in the ground where no one can see it, but the “star” is in the heavens where everyone can see it. Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1989), 2:625.

³¹ David founded old Jerusalem, but David’s greatest son will establish the New Jerusalem.

³² The appearance of the morning star heralds the dawn of a new day. Similarly, the Lord’s second coming will herald the dawn of a new day in history. He is the brightest of all personal stars, as the morning star is the brightest physical star in the sky. He is the star that shall come forth from Jacob (Num 24:17).

³³ The verb translated “come” (*erchou*) is in the imperative mood, indicating that the Spirit and church were so eager for Christ to come that they commanded Him to fulfill His promise to come quickly. In addition, individual Christians, who through the public reading of Revelation heard Christ’s promise to come quickly, were commanded to demand Him to fulfill that promise. See Showers, *Maranatha Our Lord, Come*, 141.

³⁴ “The one who “hears” is everyone who hears this book read in the churches, as was common in John’s day. This includes modern readers of it, of course. These individuals, as well as the bride gathered corporately, should likewise pray for the Lord’s return (cf. Matt 6:10; Luke 11:2).

³⁵ The absolute freeness of God’s provision of eternal life, we see by the usage of the adverb graciously (*dorean*), which denotes what is freely given, without cost, without paying. See Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*, Electronic Ed.

³⁶ Cf. Rev 22:1; 7:16; 21:6; Isa 55:1; Matt 5:6; John 6:35; 7:37.

³⁷ “Whoever wishes to come to Christ must do so today. The invitation is extended to every soul that has ever lived. The offer is as wide as the world is wide. It is as broad as the human race is broad.” Lawson, *Heaven Help Us!*, 179.

³⁸ David Jeremiah with C.C. Carlson, *Escape the Coming Night* (Dallas: Word, 1997 [1990]), 254.

³⁹ Preaching Today Citation: Brett Kays, Brownstown, Michigan.

⁴⁰ Cf. Deut 4:2; 7:15; 12:32; 28:27, 60; Prov 30:5-6; Jer 26:2.

⁴¹ Jesus is not concerned about possible mechanical errors in transmission or mistakes of judgment in interpreting His message, but in deliberate distortions and perversions of it.

⁴² This warning surely applies to the whole of Scripture because the book of Revelation is the last book of the Bible. Jude tells believers to “contend earnestly for the faith once and for all received.” Jude was saying there was a completed body of truth; a body of truth, which became preserved, and a completed canon of Scripture. Revelation is the final book of the Bible. All the major themes of Scripture find their end and culmination in this book. No other is needed. It wraps up the revelation of God and brings man into the glorious eternal state. Thus, to tamper with Revelation is in essence to tamper with the whole.

⁴³ To say that a true child of God would never tamper with these Scriptures is simply naive. “Anyone” means anyone.

⁴⁴ I got this idea from my friend Bob Deffinbaugh.

⁴⁵ Christ’s promise to come soon was His response to the prayers of the Spirit, the bride, and the faithful hearers (22:17).

⁴⁶ This verse and the next are the only ones in Revelation that refer to Jesus Christ as the “Lord Jesus,” though this title is common in other NT books. It acknowledges Jesus’ deity and thus, His right to judge.

⁴⁷ This is an unusual way to end an apocalypse, but it was a common way to close a first-century Christian letter (cf. Rev 1:1).