

The Last Words of the Bible

Revelation 22:7-21

Last words are lasting words – important words. These last words of the unveiling shared with John announce God’s concluding invitation – the time is near.

1. The suddenness and certainty of Jesus’ return (20:7-11)

- “*Look, I am coming soon*” (*tachu*) = suddenly. Reinforced two other times (22:12, 20) Matthew 24:27 – “*So as the lightning comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.*” Light travels at 186,000 miles per second! 1 Corinthians 15:52 – “*in a moment, in the twinkling of the eye, at the last trumpet.*” The twinkling of an eye occurs in one-trillionth of a second! Jesus’ sudden coming is certain.

- “*Blessed is the one who keeps the prophecy of this book.*” The incredible value and benefit of Revelation. Two opposite reactions regarding Revelation: (1) infatuation so that the remainder of the Bible becomes a support system for eschatology or (2) neglect because of difficulty of interpretation. In between the two extremes – Revelation is meant to be a blessed hope and a message of encouragement to discouraged Christians.

- The emotion of John – “*I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel.*” Instead – “*Worship God!*”

- “*Don’t seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near*” (*engus*) = near at hand. Theologically = the imminent return of the Lord. The only portion of Revelation remaining sealed = the message of the seven thunders. The seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls have been revealed. Great mystery remains regarding the great tribulation, the millennium, and the future, but God’s words of prophecy are not to be sealed.

- “*Let the filthy still be filthy; let the righteous go on in righteousness; let the holy still be holy.*” The permanency of a lifestyle – *past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior.*

2. A Final Word of Encouragement. (20:12-17)

- The second “*coming soon*” announcement, followed by “*my reward is with me to repay each person according to his work.*” The last encouragement that our works do follow us and we are rewarded according to our works of service, ministry, and evangelism.

- “*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.*” Jesus = the one who started it all (Revelation 1:8) and the one who will finish it all.

- “*Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates.*” The seventh and last beatitude in Revelation. A believer is washed clean of sin by the blood of the Lamb. “*To him who loved us and has set us free from our sins by his blood.*” (Revelation 1:5) “*What can wash away my sin – Nothing but the blood of Jesus. What can make me whole again – Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Oh precious is the flow, that makes me white as snow. No other fount I know – Nothing but the blood of Jesus.*”

- The last hard reality of Revelation – “*Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murders, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.*”

- “*I, Jesus, have sent my angel to attest these things to you for the churches. I am the root and descendant of David, the bright morning star.*” Jesus’ testimony as the incarnation and the our only hope.

- “*Both the Spirit and the bride say ‘Come!’ Let anyone who hears, say, ‘Come!’ Let*

the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who desires take the water of life as a gift.” God is a God of second chances and gracious invitations. God created human beings with a choice, and His invitation leaves the choice up to each human being. Don’t be suckered into a debate about the elect and the doctrine of election. An elect person is *“one who desires.”*

3. A final warning (20:18-21)

- *“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 that are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share of the tree of life and the holy city, which are written about in this book.”* Revelation is to be believed and acted upon, not neglected and minimized.

- *“He who testifies about these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming soon.’”* The last affirmation of Jesus imminent return.

- John’s lasting response – *“Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!”*

- John’s final blessing to the reader – *“The grace of the Lord Jesus be with everyone. Amen.”*

Closing Thoughts:

1. The last book of the Bible should never be the most ignored book of the Bible.
2. Our future demands that we know what comes next.
3. A Christian’s greatest hope in difficult times is knowing the ending.