

St Martins C3 – October 8, 2023

Come, Lord Jesus

Sermon Notes:

This is the end. The end of this series, and a picture of the end of all things. Yet, at the same time, it is not the end. It is an invitation to a brand-new beginning. An opportunity to walk from all we have been to all we will be.

Read Revelation 22

As we read these words, we need to consider what feeling God is bringing inside of us.

God wants to plant a seed of hope in our life. He wants the greatness of His future to overtake our view of the current reality. He wants each of us to live in the light of that future and live to make it a reality now.

A weak vision of the age to come leads to a weak commitment to live for God.

A strong vision of the age to come leads to a strong commitment to God, His mission and His people.

If we could see what God is making in that place it would take our breath away. The clearer our vision of that future reality is the greater our ability to live for Him now.

God, wants to reveal something of His future to you and, in so doing, He wants you to live in the light of Heaven.

As we go through Revelation 22 we touch on some key frustrations and difficulties of our life and the way our knowledge of the future makes a difference to the way we live our lives today.

Satisfying Life

Our existence will be overflowing with the life of God.

Suffering

Our life can be difficult at times. We suffer in many ways and while we may struggle to find meaning in that suffering we know that we are not without hope. This truth changed the perspective of the churches to whom this letter was written and helps us persevere today. Spring is coming!

Faith and Obedience

The fact that we will live with Jesus in the Age to Come, does not mean that we neglect His plans for our world. On the contrary, the clear message of the last book of the Bible is that we start living with the values of Heaven here and now.

All Are Invited

The reality of the age to come is open to all people, regardless of nationality, background or moral history. We need to bring others in.

This series fills me with longing to join God in the Age to Come. Where faith remains because we will know God fully and be fully known. Where hope remains, because even though we have all we ever need there is always more. Where love remains because that has been the point all along.

Questions for Connect Groups:

Bible Study:

Read Revelation 22, look at what this tells us about the Age to Come and our response.

Questions:

What stood out to you from today's message?

What does this message tell you about God?

What does this message tell you about humans?

When you imagine eternity what do you picture? What ideas come to mind?

How does having a strong vision of the age to come lead to a strong commitment to God, His mission and His people?

How can we gain a clearer picture of the Age to Come?

Determine how a focus on the Age to Come can help face:

- Suffering*
- Death*
- Faith*
- Obedience*
- Evangelism*

What will you do as a result of this message?

Songs from Today:

Burning with Your Love; Holy, Holy, Holy; Christ in Me; Waymaker; The Stand; Yet Not I But Through Christ in Me

Monday's Devotion – Prepare

Read Revelation 20:1-10

This week as we conclude our look through the final chapters of the Bible we are going to review the series by reading in full Revelation 20-22.

In life, and our journey of faith, the clearer our vision is for the person we want to be in the future, the greater our motivation will be to make changes now to bring that future about. Therefore, if we don't intentionally ponder on the future God has for us, we lose motivation to passionately follow Christ in the present.

Revelation was written in the context of Christians suffering persecution who needed the encouragement to persevere because there would be a future deliverance. As Steven Curtis Chapman, sings [*Spring is Coming*](#).

The main theme then is an encouragement to stay true to Christ, so that we are preparing for a future where Jesus destroys Satan and ushers in a New Heaven and Earth.

Even if it gets very difficult to take a stand for Christ and say "no" to the world and its ways, stand your ground. Don't bow to the pressure around you. God will empower you and help you through your difficulties.

The overall point of this passage is to encourage us to stay true to Christ because He is calling us to reign with Him in the present and the future. Ask for God's help today to stay true to Him in every area of your life. The future starts now.

Tuesday's Devotion – The Judgment, Hell, and Right Now

Read Revelation 20:11-15

Petra is one of the great Christian rock groups of the 1980s. One of their songs was called [Godpleaser](#). Here's what it said:

*Don't wanna be a man-pleaser - I wanna be a God-pleaser
I just want to have the wisdom to discern the two apart
Don't wanna be a man-pleaser - I wanna be a God-pleaser
I just want to do the things that please the Father's heart*

There will be a day when all people will be called to give an account of their lives. On that day all people will stand before God and He will judge whether they lived to please Him or not.

Every person who has hurt and destroyed others will be judged. We should take great comfort in this. All evil will be removed from the world. It is only a belief in God that allows justice to triumph.

But it's not just others who will be judged. We will be too. The book of our life will be opened and everything we have done will be laid out, our good and bad, our actions and motives. For those who trust in Jesus, there will be another book opened. The Lamb's Book of Life. We have confidence that if we have placed our trust in Him, we will be saved on that day.

For those who don't trust God, there is an eternal destiny waiting. A destiny of separation from God in Hell. Whatever your view of the nature of Hell, it is a miserable consequence.

We need to live as though the judgment and Hell are real. We live not to please people, but we give our all to please God.

Wednesday's Devotion – The Beginning and the End

Read Genesis 1-3; Revelation 21:1-5

When we compare the first pages of the Bible to the last pages we see a God who can turn our world of ruin into something good once more. What Genesis began Revelation completes.

God will renew all creation. God cares about His world and He will remove from it broken and corrupted things and recreate our world into a verdant vibrant place of flourishing. When the New Heavens and Earth are created all suffering will be removed from the world. The good things of the original creation will be renewed, they are the same but better.

The message of Revelation for the people of the time was clear - if there are beastly figures or antichrists or plagues or persecution don't freak out. God will take care of them all.

Because we trust God to rule over the beginning and end of history, we can trust Him to come through for us today. As Andrew Peterson says in his song [*After the Last Tears Fall*](#), what will remain is love. Inasmuch as you live out the creation purposes and live for love your life matters.

Today, bring to God all of your frustrations with the world. Consider the things that are not the way they should be and ask Him to give you patient trust in Him to work those things out. Ask Him for the ability to love others and commit to things that will remain in His good future.

Thursday's Devotion – Heaven

Read Revelation 21:6-27

The surprising revelation about this description of Heaven is that it is not just a description of a future location, but it is a revelation of the Christian community, producing goodness for all eternity.

The city that comes down to the New Heavens and New Earth is not a replica of the city of Jerusalem. Rather that is used as an image of the Church where God's presence is forever at home.

This may be hard to get our heads around, but it is easy for us to gravitate to the idea that what we read is like video camera footage of the age to come. Yet, that is not what we have seen in the rest of Revelation. Hell is not a literal lake of fire. There won't be a literal beast coming out of the water. Jesus does not have a sword coming out of his mouth. In the same way, Jesus will not marry a city, He will call a people together and they will be His bride.

These are symbolic visions of profound truth. As we reflect on them, we see the preciousness with which God views His people. The eternal future of the church is to gloriously reign with Christ forever.

If that is the case, then we must embrace that reality now. In the words of the Switchfoot song [*Afterlife*](#), "*Why would I wait 'till I die to come alive.*" Pray, and ask God how you can live in light of the age to come in all that you do in your life and for His Church today.

Friday Devotion – Come, Lord Jesus

Read Revelation 22

You have just read the final verses of the Bible. What do you feel as you read these words? For me, I am filled with a mixture of hope, joy and longing. Brooke Fraser says it beautifully in her [C.S. Lewis Song](#):

*If I find in myself desires nothing in this world can satisfy,
I can only conclude that I was not made for here
If the flesh that I fight is at best only light and momentary,
Then of course I'll feel nude when to where I'm destined I'm
compared*

*Speak to me in the light of the dawn
Mercy comes with the morning
I will sigh and with all creation groan
As I wait for hope to come for me*

*Is this a soul that stirs in me, is it breaking free, wanting to come
alive?
Cos my comfort would prefer for me to be numb
Than avoid the impending birth of who I was born to become*

*For we, we are not long here
Our time is but a breath, so we better breathe it
I was made to live, I was made to love, I was made to know you*

*Hope is coming for me
Hope, he's coming*

Let's continue to live for Him as in hope we cry, "Come, Lord Jesus."