

Jesus is Coming!

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[0 : 00] Revelation chapter 22 and verse 7.

And behold, I am coming soon.

Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. And then again in verse 20, he who testifies to these things says, surely I am coming soon.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. I decided this evening that we would bring this study of Revelation to a close.

I want us to simply look at this passage from verse 6 to verse 21 as it brings to a close not only the book of Revelation. They are the closing words of the whole Bible.

[1 : 11] I don't think it's any coincidence that the Bible ends with the prospect of the coming of Jesus Christ the second time. Leaving us on that note, watching and waiting for his return.

Return. That is what he asks us and commands us to do himself. And I want us just to look at this whole passage because I'm going to be away next week.

I don't want to divide it into two. And I do think that we've been looking at this book for long enough now just to bring things to a conclusion. It has to be the most ambitious project I have ever undertaken in my whole ministry.

If I was to do it again, and I guess I probably won't be able to do it again, but I would do it very differently to the way I did it the first time. We began looking at Revelation on the 26th of November 2006.

And I gave up on the 22nd of June 2008. And apart from a very brief attempt in 2009, I returned to it at the beginning of this year.

[2 : 22] You will remember, of course, how difficult the book is to understand, how complicated and how mysterious it is. I'm sure there have been times when we have been thoroughly mystified and probably confused by lots of its teaching.

And if you do feel confused, you're not alone. Christians for 2,000 years have been confused and mystified by the whole of the book of Revelation.

And yet it has caught the imagination and the fascination of Christians. And it has filled our minds with the images that God has chosen.

We must remember that though we have not been able to understand the whole of Revelation, these are the images that God has chosen to tell us, to use, to tell us of how the church and the world is going to behave in the period between the first coming of Jesus and the second coming of Jesus.

The images that God has chosen, and I'm referring, of course, to what we've been talking about over the last two and a half months, the images by which God chooses to describe heaven itself.

[3 : 33] And they are the very best. God could not describe his kingdom, his new heaven and his new earth any better than, I mean, I'm sure that we in our own simple minds, we come and we say, I wish it had been more simple.

But it's not simpler because God chooses it not to be simple. And God chooses it to be fascinating. And it fills our minds with these pictures.

And the pictures, of course, go all the way back into the book. You remember, of course, how we began chapter 4 and 5, where there's a description of heaven itself. And the lamb that is in the middle of the throne opening the seals that were given, the roll, the scroll that was given to him.

And as a consequence of the seals being opened, there is conflict and there is God's judgment on the earth. And the chapters that follow describe just this, the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven bowls, all of these describing God's perfect judgment on this world, reminding us that the world in which you and I belong to is a fallen world that is under the perfect judgment of God.

We are accountable to God for the way in which we collectively have lived and individually have lived. And God will hold us responsible. Both in this, it's a judgment that takes place both here in this world and at the end of time.

[5 : 02] And so it would do us all good right now to just stop and to remember that this world is under the perfect wrath and the anger of God. Romans chapter 1 and verse 18, for the anger of God is revealed.

Against all ungodliness and unrighteousness. That is the way, the character of this world. We have chosen to go our own way. So you can't blame God. You can't say that God is somehow unfair or unloving because he doesn't accept the way in which we choose to live our lives.

Of course he doesn't because the way we choose to live our lives is entirely the opposite from the way he wants us to live our lives. So you can't expect God just to let us off with it. God is the perfectly just God and will hold us accountable in this world.

And yet the gospel goes on to say that he so loved the world that he sent his son so that those who believe in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

And all these visions that describe the conflict between a fallen world and the God of perfect justice. They're interspersed by visions that focus also on the conflict between the world outside and God's people in this world.

[6 : 13] In which they are persecuted and pursued relentlessly by a world that hates them. Remember that Jesus said to his disciples if the world hated me it will hate you also.

So although we live in a tolerant society at the moment I am not sure how long that will last. The character of a fallen world is at enmity with the gospel.

And that was through right back from when Jesus left this world when the disciples were all martyred for their faith all the way through. And there have been times and certain periods of time in history when there's been a quietness and a rest and a peace.

And when Christians have been allowed to live and to prosper and to live in obedience to Jesus without being harmed. And yet even today there are places in the world where Christians are suffering the most horrendous persecution.

And we don't know about it. There's places like North Korea and Iran and places in Africa today where Christians are being persecuted mercilessly for the gospel.

[7 : 28] And when I hear of instances and examples of children being taken from their parents and killed in front of their parents. You know I wonder how I would respond in that kind of situation.

It's all very well in the West for us to say oh well this is what I would do or this is what I would. We don't know. How would we react if something utterly horrendous happened to us just because we were Christians?

If we had to go through agony in terms of torture and pain because we were Christians? I don't know. None of us know. None of us I guess I hope that we'll never have to go through that.

And yet we must be mindful of those who are being persecuted for their faith. That is the character of this world. If the world hated me it will hate you also. And whilst there are periods of time when there is a kind of an unsettled peace between the world and the church.

Very often that only lasts for a defined period of time. And that of course was exactly what was happening in John's day. That's why he was in the island of Patmos where this vision was given to him.

[8 : 45] And yet throughout all of this it reaches a climax. In chapter 18 to 22 God finally brings the world into judgment by eradicating the world as we know it.

A fallen world that has been in rebellion against him. And he introduces his own perfect kingdom. The new heavens and the new earth in which he describes. The new Jerusalem the city with the pearls and the precious stones and the gold and the transparency and the brightness and the glory of God.

And the perfect people who fill this world this new heavens and the new earth. And that's of course where we ended last week.

You might think that that would be a more suitable place to end than to go on in verse 6 and verse 21. You might think that these words are something of an anticlimax to the book.

But they're there because God wants them there. Because this is the word of God. And it is important for us to know how to live. How does God want us to respond to all that we have just been reading and studying together.

[9 : 56] We've just been seen probably what could be described as the greatest vision ever. And remember that although John saw this with his eyes. The vision is no less to read about.

In fact sometimes when it's put down in writing it can be more vivid to our hearts and to our minds. We've seen we've just been taken to the highest level in the universe.

We've heard the promise of God and we have been allowed to taste something of heaven itself. And you might of course have expected the book to finish there.

But it doesn't. It finishes with the closing verses that we've just read. Why is that? Because it hasn't happened yet. Because we're still in this world.

And we will be in this world. Who knows how long. We have no idea how long this world will last. And that's something that comes across very clearly in these closing words.

[10 : 54] Now I just want to mention one or two things that strike me between verses 6 and verse 21. As we bring our study to a close. The first thing is what God is saying to us in these verses.

Which can be put like this. That this book is my truth he says. Believe in me. In verse 6 he says these words are trustworthy and true.

And the Lord the God of the spirits of the prophets has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place. He also goes on to say in those words that he is the Alpha and the Omega.

The Root and the Descendant of David. The Bright and the Morning Star. Now what he's saying in these these are words that could only describe God himself.

In other words this these are the words I know that John has written them for our benefit. They are a record a description of what he saw on the island of Patmos. But we also believe tonight that this is God speaking to us in the 21st century.

[12 : 02] And never was there a more appropriate and a more necessary message than the reminder that this world is coming to an end.

We might think that in a modern world where we have so much control over everything. And where so many exciting things are happening by way of transportation. And if we could get the economy right then how much life would be better.

And how much more comfortable we would be and prosperous we would be. And how much more of the world we would see and enjoy. These are the things that we want out of life.

How many times do you hear people asking what do you want out of life? And of course what they mean by that and we're all part of this great quest for happiness is how can I get most happiness out of this world?

And there's much in the world to be happy about. There are many exciting things going on. New developments in science and technology and medicine and new discoveries are being made. And you very often think well I'm getting old now and I can't really I feel as if I'm going to miss out on so much that's going to happen.

[13 : 14] It's just we're on the brink of so many new discoveries in this world. There's so many exciting things that are happening. And this book reminds us that this world is not our home.

That we are living here for only a few short years. Even if you live to the age of 80 or even 90. The Bible gives us 70. Well it doesn't give us 70.

It just allows for the possibility of 70 or 80. But I suppose in a world where so much has been done in medicine. That the life expectancy whatever that is.

Whether that's accurate or not. I don't think it's very dangerous to talk about life expectancy. Because no one can expect even a single more day.

We're not promised another day. And we're to be reminded in this book that God is preparing his own everlasting kingdom. Which will be in perfection.

[14 : 14] And he says trust me. He says. And that's what faith is. Really the question boils down to this tonight. Do you believe that this is God's work and God's word and God's plan.

And if you do. Then are you prepared to take that step of faith and follow Jesus. The kingdom is open.

The door is open. Jesus said to Levi. Follow me. He said to his disciples. Follow me. He said to Peter. And I will make you fishers of men.

And the gospel is an invitation to all of us tonight. To follow him. And he promises that when we do. That we will have a place in this kingdom.

Because our sin will be. The only thing that keeps you out of this kingdom. Is your sin. And when we come to faith in Jesus. The first thing he does is.

[15 : 13] He abolishes our sin. He eradicates it. He wipes the slate clean. And he gives us a place in his family. In his enormous family.

And he gives us a place as his son. And his daughter. So he says to us tonight. Faith is believing. That this message. This promise. Is the truth.

And that's the first step we have to take. To believe. That this. These words are trustworthy. And true. Believe in them. And then he tells us in the very same passage.

He says. In verse 10. He says. Don't keep quiet about it. These words are trustworthy and true. So don't keep quiet about it. If you've discovered this.

Personally. For yourself. And have become a Christian. Do not seal up the words of the prophecy. Of this book. For the time is near. Do you realize what this command is?

[16 : 12] Yes. I often hear. People debating. Or I've heard people debating. About the command in verse 18. About not adding to the.

To the words of the prophecy of this book. Or not taking away from the words. We'll come on to that in a few moments time. But I don't ever hear people. Arguing about this one. Do not seal up the words of the prophecy.

Of this book. Now. Again. If you want to take them in the scriptural context. You have to go back to Daniel. Who was told in the last chapter. To do exactly that. To seal up the words of the prophecy.

Of this book. That's because Jesus hadn't come yet. But now that he has. The book's been opened. And God has fully revealed to us. As much as he can.

As much as is necessary for our salvation. He has told us everything. And if you've got this for yourself. Whatever you do. Don't keep it to yourself. Because there are people out there.

[17 : 09] Who are heading for a lost eternity. Who don't know. What the words of the prophecy of this book. They know nothing about the gospel. And I'm not talking about people in darkest Africa. Or people in the jungles of this world.

I'm talking about people. Who perhaps are living next door to you. Or people who you work with. Or people who are in our world today. Our society today. And the great challenge today.

It's summed up in these words. Do not seal up the prophecy of. And if you fail to live your life as a Christian. An openly witnessing life.

And if you fail to make Jesus known. In your life as a Christian. Then you are sealing up God's word. You are keeping it from other people. And God will hold us responsible.

If we fail to live as God has commanded us to. Now that doesn't mean to say that we all have to go out and be missionaries. Anyone who is a child of God is already a missionary.

[18 : 06] You are already a living letter. You are an epistle known and read of men. We are to let our light so shine before men. That they may see our good works.

And give praise and glory to our Father in heaven. But we are to make Christ known. Make Christ known. Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book.

And that's why it is so important. That the church. It should establish all kinds of evangelistic programs. As I hope that we are slowly beginning to do.

With the Cabaret Fay for example. On a Tuesday night. And events that are taking place. At other times. In campaigners. In our Sunday schools. In events.

In which we are able to share Jesus. To people. To the coming generation. And to people who don't know him. It is enormously important. That we do not seal up the prophecy.

[19 : 07] The words of the prophecy of this week. Now we ask the Lord. Day after day. To give us opportunity. And don't ever write anyone off. Don't ever say to you. It's no waste of time talking to that guy.

Because he's never ever going to become a Christian. He's so hard to the gospel. He's so resistant. To that he won't even. He won't even listen. To any kind of word I say. About what you pray for that person.

If God has put you with someone. As a colleague. As a friend. Or you stay friends with that person. And you don't withdraw your friendship from someone. Just because they're hard to the gospel.

This whole world is hard to the gospel. But God can change that. And as you pray for that person. Day after day. You might never see him converted. Or have converted. But you continue to pray for that person.

Because God has put you next to that person. And pray for the opportunity. To say something. To say just something. Of the gospel. And to show the love and the kindness.

[20 : 05] That ought to accompany the gospel. There's no point in preaching to someone. If you are not going to live the kind of life. That's going to win people. And win their affection. And their respect from the gospel.

If you're a selfish person. For example. If you're a stubborn person. If you're an angry person. If you've got a bad temper.

There's no point in losing your temper one minute. And then trying to witness to him the next. We have to be consistent. Consistent to God's word.

We have to not seal up the words. Of the prophecy of this book. And I wonder sometimes. How throughout the ages. We've been so. How we've failed so much.

And I do believe. That over the past 50. 100 years. That the church has failed. In this respect. When you go to other countries. And see how open they are. About their faith. And how unapologetic they are.

[21 : 03] About their faith. And we're also private. We're also reserved. We're to keep it to ourselves. Is that shyness?

Or is it cowardice? God says. Do not seal up. The prophecy. Of this book. And he also says. Don't do not add. Don't add what you want.

Or take away. What you don't like. To this book. Verse 18. He tells us that. I warn everyone who hears the words. If anyone adds to them. God will add to him. The plagues described in this book.

And if anyone takes away. From the words of the book. Of this prophecy. God will take away his share. In the tree of life. And in the holy city. Now that's a very important statement. And it's a very.

It's very relevant. To the kind of world. In which you and I live. Where we live. In a do-it-yourself world. Where everything is geared. Towards what I want.

[22 : 02] And my requirements. And why demands. You go and buy a new car. Not that I've done it. You go buy a new car online. You're asked. What color do you want? What style do you want? What size of engine do you want?

Do you want a sunroof? It's all built. Made to measure. Made to order. Everything is the same. The same with your house. If you're building a house. You sit down. You design it. It's your choice. It's you that's going to live there.

You're the customer. You're the client. You get to choose. You get to order things. As you want it. How many times are we told? In the world. The most important person is you.

You're the one who's buying. You're the one who's going to have to. Is going to have to live with this. So you get to choose. But God says to us. It's not like that with the gospel. Because my word is perfect.

It is complete. You cannot add to it. And you cannot take away from it. And that doesn't sit well. In a world where everything revolves around me.

[22 : 59] And my feelings. The world in which you and I live in tonight. When we come to talk about God. Everybody says this.

I like to think of God as this. The kind of God that I believe in. Is this. That's the way it begins.

And it's not the kind of God. Who comes to us in the Bible. In the pages of the Bible. It's the kind of God that we want. That we choose. To create. Made to measure.

That agrees with us. And our standards. And our morality. And surprise. Surprise. The kind of God that we want. Is the kind of God that lets us off with anything.

And people come to the Bible. And they choose. And they pick and choose what they want. They take away the bits they don't want. And that don't sit well in a modern world. Have you not heard. In the current. Debate on same-sex marriage.

[24 : 02] But we've moved on. We now live in a world. Where we know so much more. Than our forefathers. And where the Bible is no longer.

The same kind of relevance. As it was. In days gone by. That's exactly what. The prophet is warning. That's exactly what God is warning about. Where people have taken the bits.

That they don't want. And they add. What they want. The bits that they like. Or that they would prefer.

The Christian faith to say. No says God. God has done everything. Everything. That is possible. To secure.

Our salvation. And our place. In his kingdom. So. First of all.

[24 : 56] God says. This book is my truth. Believe in me. And strangely enough. In verse 11. Is one of the most perplexing.

Verses. In the chapter. In which. We're told. To keep on sinning. Let's read it again. If you don't believe me. Let the evil doer.

Still do evil. And the filthy. Still be filthy. And the righteous. Still do right. And the holy.

Still. Be holy. That's what it says. Isn't it? At the beginning of the verse. Let the evil doer. Still do evil. And the filthy. Still be filthy.

It goes on to say. And the righteous. Well. We don't have a problem. With the last part of the verse. Of course. We would expect him to say that. Let the righteous. Still do right. And the holy. Still be holy. That's what's expected. But we certainly. Don't expect the first part.

[25 : 53] Of the verse. We would expect. God to say something like. If you are a sinner. Then turn. And believe. And God does say that. But sometimes he doesn't.

Sometimes he doesn't. What does this mean? Well. There are various opinions. About what it means. I'll tell you what I think it means. I believe that God is saying.

That if this book. That you have just read. And indeed. The whole of the rest of the Bible. With. That this book ends.

If it has made no difference. To you. If all that you know. About the Christian faith. Including. And above all else. Me. Sending my son.

Into the world. To become. A human being. And dying. On the cross. Willingly. And lovingly. And rising again. On the third day.

[26 : 52] In order for you. To be cleansed. And for all. In order to be. To. For you to be. Transformed. Into a new person. And to come into my kingdom. And to enjoy. The greatest promise.

That I could possibly. Ever give. To a sinful world. If after every expression. That I've made. Every promise. That I've made. Every miracle.

That Jesus did. To prove. And to show. Not only who he was. But why he came into the world. After the proof. Of the resurrection. The power of the gospel. The vision.

That I have shown. My servant. John. Of the reality. Of heaven. As the greatest gift. That anyone could give you. And I am offering you. That gift.

I've made it. Absolutely clear. To you. A thousand times. In the pages. Of the Bible. That although. You are accountable. To me. I have. Sent my son.

[27 : 45] Into the world. I've done it. As an act. Of the most. Extraordinary. Love. And unexpected. Love. And grace. If.

After. All of that. You've. Gone through. The whole thing. And you still. Say. No. Then. So be it. It's.

Your call. Isn't that what it means? Let the evil. Do her. Still do evil. That's what your decision is.

So your choices. And remember that an evil doer. According to God. Is not just the person. Who kills someone else. Or who cheats on his wife.

The evil doer. Is the person. Who fails to worship God. And to love him. With his whole heart. And mind. And soul. And strength. That's what evil is. If he chooses.

[28 : 47] After all. That I have shown him. To continue in his life. And that applies. To anyone here. This evening. So be it. It's really.

Really. Troublesome. Isn't it? The filthy. Still be filthy. But the righteous. And the righteous. Is not a person. Who is better. Than someone else.

You remember. The Bible teaches. That the person. Who's righteous. Is there's only one way. To be righteous. And that's to. Come to faith. In Jesus Christ. And God promises. That if we do so. Jesus righteousness.

Becomes ours. And God views us. And he sees us. As righteous people. Not in our own righteousness. But in Jesus righteousness. And so that means tonight. That by faith in Jesus.

God regards us. With his righteousness. If that's you tonight. Then you carry on. Whatever you do. Don't give up. Don't. Don't stop. You carry on looking to Jesus.

[29 : 49] All the more. Because you know. The more you read. The more you discover. The more you read. My word. And my promises. And the more you think about. The glories of heaven.

Then it should be. And more and more. And greater and greater. Encouragement to us. To live for God. To be obedient.

To live every day. Even although. Even although the world that we live in. Is such a difficult world. And we're fighting with temptation. From day to day. And there are so many discouragements. So many voices.

So many obstacles. That spoil the quality. Of our Christian lives. And yet. What are we going to do? We're going to give up? No. What else is there?

Peter said. Lord to whom else shall we go? You have the words. Of everlasting life. We can't give up. We've got to keep battling on.

[30 : 50] We've got to think. Of the road ahead. Don't look back. Think ahead. Fix your eyes. Upon the promise. Of that God has made.

To his people. Come back. To the. To the. Great visions. That we've been looking at. Where the. Where there's a river. Of water. Of life.

Bright as crystal. Flowing from the throne. Of God. And of the Lamb. Through the middle. Of the street. Of the city. And either side. Of the river. The tree of life. With its twelve. Kinds of fruit.

And where night. Will be no more. And they will need. No light of lamp. Or sun. For the Lord God. Will be their light. And they will reign. Forever. And ever.

The third thing. That Jesus tells us. Is this. That he is coming soon. I am coming soon. And this passage. Is repeated three times. Verse seven.

[31 : 43] Verse 17. Verse 12. And verse 20. Behold. He says. Look. Pay attention. I am coming soon. Bringing my recompense. With me. To repay everyone.

For what he has done. When Jesus ascended. Into heaven. You know. Of course. What the angel said. To the disciples. That he said to them. He promised. That he would come again.

As he had left them. In glory. Not like the first time. The first time. Jesus was born. In secrecy. In obscurity. In poverty. In danger. Behind closed doors.

Nobody knew. Except those few shepherds. And those wise men. That came to visit him. Nobody knew. That the son of God. Had been born. Into the world. But when he comes again. This time.

He will come. In manifest. And visible glory. With his angels. With him. First Thessalonians. Tells us this. For the Lord himself. Will descend from heaven. With a cry of command.

[32 : 37] And with the voice. Of an archangel. And with the sound. Of the trumpet of God. And the dead. In Christ. Will rise. Then we who are alive. Who are left. Will be caught together. With them in the clouds. To meet the Lord.

In the air. And so we will always be. With the Lord. The promise is that the angels. Will accompany him. There will be a trumpet sound. And the dead in Christ.

Shall rise. He will come in glory. He will come soon. Soon. This is written. Two thousand years ago.

Soon. Soon. Soon. It's interesting. Isn't it? What does soon mean?

Nobody knew. Nobody knows. What soon. Meant. The church. God's people. In every age. Are to live.

[33 : 36] Believing. That Jesus. Is coming soon. That's what we are told. That's what John was told. It's what the disciples were told. It's what the church in the first century were told.

And it's what the church in the 21st century. We are to live. Believing that Jesus is coming soon. What do we know about Jesus coming? Well the time has gone. Let's just think very quickly about it.

First of all. We know. That he will come in glory. We've already said that. Secondly. We don't know. The day or the hour. When he will come. We just read in Matthew 24.

No one knows. The angels in heaven don't know. Even the son. Even Jesus himself. At that time. Did not know. Now that's a different question. As to how he didn't know.

But that's what he tells us. He says. Even the son didn't know. Only the father in heaven. So it's not for us to second guess. When Jesus might come. However. Jesus did.

[34 : 32] And the New Testament does indicate to us. That certain events must take place. Before he comes. For example. He tells us that the gospel will be preached to all nations.

Now it hadn't been preached to all nations in the first century. At the time of the disciples. And yet they were still to live. Believing that Jesus was going to come soon. They were to live every day.

As if it were their last. As if today. Jesus was going to appear. Here in the heavens. Because one day he will. And we are to live. As if it's going to be today. We do not know.

The day or the hour. And that's said for us. Not for us to work out when it will be. But for us to be ready. That's the message of the gospel. And that's what he means us to.

By when he says. I am coming soon. So be ready. Because if the master of the house. Knew what time the thief was going to come.

[35 : 30] He would have stayed awake. Wait. How much of our lives tonight. Is spent. Thinking about.

The imminence. Of Jesus. Second coming. Let me guess. Not very much. If you're anything like me. I confess. Because we're all taken up.

With our distractions. And our lives. And our routines. And everything we have to do. From morning till evening. Somebody said once. That we can be too heavenly minded.

To be. Of any. Earthly. Use. Can I tell you something. No danger. There is no danger. Of.

Us being too heavenly minded. To be of any. Earthly. Use. Us. In actual fact. That's a very dangerous thing. To say. Because I would say. That the more heavenly minded.

[36 : 28] We are. Then the more. Earthly. Use. We will be. The more. We think. About what we've just been studying. Here in Revelation. The more it fills.

Our souls. Then the more. Active. And vibrant. And Christ. Like. We will be. Because. For one thing. We will want. As many of our friends. And our acquaintances.

To come. To come with us. You remember. What Levi did. We were thinking. About this. In the Gaelic. This morning. What Levi did. On Matthew. As he's more. Popularly known. When Jesus. Called him. To follow him.

First thing. He did. Was he called. All his mates. His colleagues. To come into his house. And have a meal. So they could hear. Jesus. And if you're. Heavenly minded. Tonight. You will want.

More than anything else. The whole world. To know. That Jesus. Came into the world. To die for sinners. You'll pray for that. That's what it means. To be. Heavenly minded.

[37 : 21] He says. I am coming soon. Are we watching? Are we ready? Do we live. Each day. Friends. As if.

This. Was. Our last. Are we obedient? If he was to come today. Would we be ashamed. Of his coming. That's a very.

Very. Very solemn. Question. Next time. We're tempted. To do something. You know. Is wrong. Ask yourself. If Jesus.

Came right now. How would I feel? It's a very interesting. Question. Lastly. The time has gone. Just bear with me.

One more minute. Fourth thing. Jesus. Says. My promise. And listen to. I'm going to end with this. Because I believe this is. I believe that this encapsulates.

[38 : 14] All that we have been. Thinking about. You might think it's a. It's a self-centered perspective. It's not. My promise. Says Jesus.

Is your. Happiness. My promise. Is your happiness. Twice.

In this. In this passage. The word. Blessed. Is used. Do you know what that word. Blessed means. It means. Happy. But not the kind of happiness. The trivial.

Happiness. That we can get from this world. That's here today. And gone tomorrow. And it depends on what we're doing. And it depends on how we're feeling. On any one given occasion. When God says to us. Blessed.

He means. That kind of happiness. That only he can fill us with. And he says. He says it. Twice.

[39 : 12] He says. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. What that means is. That you listen to them. And that you act upon them.

And you respond in faith. To the invitation that Christ gives us tonight. Second thing he asks. He says this. Blessed are those who wash their robes.

Now that's a repetition of something he said in the seventh chapter. That those who are in heaven tonight. Are those who washed their robes in the blood of Jesus.

What does it mean to wash your robes? Well your robe was a symbol of your life. Your self. What you wear. Your character. And what God is saying to us tonight is this.

That by nature our robes are soiled. They're filthy. They need to be washed. And there's only one place in which they can be made clean. And that is by coming to the cross where Jesus died for us.

[40 : 11] And when you come to faith in Jesus Christ. When you begin to follow him. It's like you're allowing him to purge you from top to toe. Inside and outside.

He cleans you completely. And God says blessed are those. Who wash their robes. And have been washed in the only place.

They have a right to eat the tree of life. Remember the tree of life in the Bible was. When you ate that tree of life. You would live forever. And that they may enter the city.

By the gates. Now I mean this. Absolutely sincerely tonight. I suppose there are some of you who might think.

Well you know. This is all very imaginative. This is fascinating stuff. And I've enjoyed having my mind.

[41 : 14] Taken away. Into another realm altogether. Can I plead with you tonight. That this is reality.

It's God's word. It's God's message. To you. And to me. And it's God's message. Because God. Has opened the door of life.

For you to come in. Are you going to take that step of faith. And enter into God's kingdom.

By faith. Because he invites you to. It's the greatest invitation. That anyone is ever going to give to you.

In this world. Are you going to come. Or are you going to stay away. Because this whole book.

[42 : 18] Is designed. To ask that simple question. Will you believe. Let's pray. Father in heaven.

We pray that you will. Bless now. Your word. To each one of us. We thank you for it. We pray that we will act upon it. We pray that everyone here. Will be.

Aware of. Nothing else. But. That God is speaking to them. Through the Bible. We ask Lord. That you will. Ignite within our hearts.

The flame of faith. The flame of repentance. That will never ever be extinguished. Pray that you will open up our hearts. Pray that you will.

Draw us. Irresistibly. To your grace. We pray that you will. Make yourself known to us. As never ever before. And bring to our hearts.

[43 : 17] The issues. That perhaps we've never. Given our attention to before. We've never even thought about before. We pray Lord. We. That the issues of life and death. Will become.

So important to us. That we will not rest. Before Christ. Is our savior. In Jesus name. Amen.