

God's Last Word To Mankind

Introduction. Many have a fascination with last words. In fact, there are websites devoted to the last words spoken by famous persons. Usually, there is a fascination with last words because they are often important and serious. In Revelation 22, the last chapter of the Bible, we have an inspired record of God's last words to humanity. There are many important lessons that can be learned from God's last words to mankind so let us notice a few of them.

I. *God's Last Word About His Word*

- A. The Holy Spirit informs us that God's word is "faithful and true" (Revelation 22:6). This statement had been made before (Revelation 19:9; 21:5). Because His word is true, God's last word about His word is that we must not add anything to His word and we must not take anything away from it (Revelation 22:18-19).
- B. This has always been God's word about His word (Deuteronomy 4:2). In Deuteronomy, notice that the reason we are commanded to neither add to nor take away from God's word is in order that we may "keep the commandments of the Lord your God."
- C. Anytime you add or subtract something to or from God's word, it ceases to be God's word (Deuteronomy 12:32; Proverbs 30:5-6). We must never deliberately tamper with scripture. Those who know and love God will treat His word with the utmost respect.
- D. It seems that the greatest problem in the religious world today is that many have never learned to treat God's word with the respect it deserves. Too many people prefer to add to and take away from God's word. Men want to add to God's word when it comes to salvation, worship and so many other subjects.

II. *God's Last Warning To Sinners*

- A. Revelation 22:11 seems to be an awkward and fatalistic warning. God here divides man into two groups: the unjust and filthy, and the righteous and holy. Each individual chooses the class in which he is identified. One either grows in grace and stature as a Christian or sinks deeper into hardness and indifference as a sinner; there is no standing still (2 Timothy 3:13; 2 Corinthians 7:1).
- B. God does not want any man to fall into the unrighteous group, but there will be no second chance for one to change his condition after death. Repentance is always an option while a person is alive, but after death there remains only judgment (Hebrews 9:27).
- C. If you wish to stand just and righteous before God in the day of judgment, you must take advantage of the opportunity you have now to

obey the gospel of Christ and have your sins forgiven. Those who reject the truth and continue to do evil remain defiled by sin.

- D. Your response to God's word in this life will determine your eternal destiny. When you die or when the Lord returns, your everlasting future will be forever fixed. God's last warning to the sinner is that you had better obtain forgiveness and turn your life around now before it is too late (Ecclesiastes 11:3).

III. ***God's Last Promise To Mankind***

- A. Jesus promised to come quickly in Revelation 22:12. The same promise is stated in vs. 7 and vs. 20. Though there be scoffers and mockers, Christ will come again (2 Peter 3:4). All things will not continue forever as they are now.
- B. The return of the Lord will be accompanied by the judgment of one's deeds (Jeremiah 17:10; Romans 2:6; 1 Peter 1:17). We should not embrace the false concept of grace which displaces works, lest any of us be found wanting when He comes.
- C. Jesus will return. Of course, we need not speculate about when He will return because the Lord said we will not know (Mark 13:32-37). Because we do not know when the Lord will return, we must always be ready. The next sound heard from heaven will be at the second coming of Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

IV. ***God's Last Beatitude To Mankind***

- A. Those who do God's commandments are "blessed" (Revelation 22:14). Where man is concerned, the term means "happy" or "favored" (Psalm 1:1; Matthew 5:3). To be truly happy or favored by God, we must do His commandments (Luke 6:46; Hebrews 5:8-9).
- B. Other translations more accurately read, "Blessed are those who wash their robes ..." In Revelation 7:14, one of the twenty-four elders said to John that those who have come out of the tribulation have washed their robes. Soiled clothes are utilized metaphorically in Isaiah 64:6 and in Zechariah 3:3 to represent sinfulness.
- C. Other scriptures speak of the cleansing of sin that accompanies salvation (Isaiah 1:18; Titus 3:5; Acts 22:16). The agency through which this cleansing comes is the blood of Christ (Matthew 26:28; Acts 20:28; Romans 3:24-25; Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 1:7).
- D. That blood, which was shed on the cross of Calvary, is contacted in baptism (Romans 6:3-4; Acts 22:16). Those who are baptized into Christ for the remission of their sins have experienced the washing from sin. As a result, they have right to the tree of life.

V. ***God's Last Invitation To Sinners***

- A. In Revelation 22:17, there are two distinct invitations. The first part of the verse is a yearning of the Holy Spirit and the "bride" (the church) for the return of Christ. In vs. 20, Jesus answers, "Surely, I come quickly."
- B. Robertson wrote, "The Holy Spirit, speaking through the prophets, joins with the bride, the people of God, in a response to the voice of Jesus just heard. After the picture of heaven in Revelation 22:1-5 there is intense longing and common plea of God's people for the consummation of the marriage of the Lamb and the bride."
- C. Throughout the centuries the faithful of God have always waited for, prayed for, hoped for and watched for Christ's return. Weary of the battle against sin, they long to see Jesus. They desire His return for them, to take them to heaven to live with Him forever.
- D. The second part of this verse, however, is an invitation addressed to sinners everywhere (Isaiah 55:1; Matthew 11:28-30). Jesus wants all men to be saved so He invites all men to come to Him (John 7:37).

Conclusion. Will you heed that invitation? The final call is now being made, the water is being offered freely for the taking. The invitation is warm and cordial, but each must come willingly. He who comes and drinks of this water shall not thirst again (John 6:35).