



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Revelation 22: 6-21

"His Coming and Our Coming"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Now, today we are reaching our last message in the book of Revelation, and we are reading verse 6 through verse 21, of chapter 22, for our Scripture reading.

"And he said to me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord the God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel to show to his bond servants the things which must shortly take place. And behold, I am come quickly: blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book. And I John am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and saw I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. And he said to me, Do not do that: I am Thy fellowservant, of yours and of your brethren of the prophets, and of those who heed the words of this book: worship God. And he said to me, Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book: for the time is near. Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong and let the one who is filthy, still be filthy: and the who is righteous, still practice righteousness: and let the one who is holy, still keep himself holy. Behold, I coming quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Blessed are those wash

their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city."

Now, some of you who may have the Authorized Version before you, you will have, "For blessed are those who wash their robes. Blessed are those who do his commands or commandments." The reason for that is that there are variant readings at this point. Some of them have *hoi plunontes tas stolas*, and others have *hoi poiuntes tas entolas*. You can tell just by my reading it to you, that those are very similar and very similar in the original language, and when you remember that in the original language the letters are written, one right after the other with out space between them.

It's easy to see how errors of the eye or errors of the mind may take place, and in this case, that evidently has taken place, and so in some of the manuscripts including the ones that are represented by our King James version, they have, "Blessed are those who do his commandments," but probably the correct reading is the one that I have just read from the New American Standard Bible, "Blessed are those who wash their robes." Some have suggested that a legalistic scribe didn't particularly like the idea of being blessed by having our robes washed by the blood of the lamb, and so he inserted "doing his commandments." We don't whether that's true or not, but probably it's an accidental error in an earlier copyist, so now we continue with verse 15,

"Outside are the dogs, and sorcerers, and immoral persons, and murderers, and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying. I Jesus have sent my angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."

That probably should be rendered some thing like, "I am the root and the stock of David," so he is one from whom David comes, but he also is essentially the stock of the Davidic line to which David belongs. Offspring makes good sense, but it's probably not the correct rendering of the Greek word. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let

him that hears say, Come. And let the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost." Now that is an acceptable rendering, but many of us remember the rendering of the Authorized Version, "And whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely," and that expresses, I think, the essence of the point.

"Whosoever" and there is a place for the exercise of one's will. It's always negative unless the spirit moves us positively toward God and freely. The salvation we possess is free of charge. Verse 8,

"I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, If anyone adds to them, God shall 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 shall take away his part from the tree of life, and from the holy city, which are written in this book. He who testifies to these things says, Yes I am coming quickly." (Authorized Version renders that, "Surely, I am coming quickly") "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

May the Lord bless this reading of his word, and let's bow together in a moment of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee for the word of God, and for the great promises that are contained within it, and for this magnificent word from the mediating angel coming from our Lord himself, "surely I come quickly." We thank Thee for the hope Lord. We pray that we may remember this constantly, from morning until night. We look forward with anticipation for the day when Thou doest return, and we truly enter Thy presence forever more.

We thank Thee for the marvelous grace manifested to us in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we thank Thee for the fact that our robes have been washed and made white in the blood of the lamb. We thank Thee too, Lord, for all of the other blessings that are ours through Jesus Christ our Lord. We pray for this company of people in this auditorium and others who may listen ultimately over the radio or through the tapes to the ministry to the

word of God. May the Holy Spirit, Lord, bring home to us and to them, the truth of Thy word.

We pray for the sick, particularly. For those who are suffering, we especially remember them. Give comfort and give assurance and give encouragement. We thank Thee for the great promises that soon, if our Lord does not come all of us, in this room shall enter Thy presence through death. We thank Thee for the promises that sustain us, and help us, Lord, by Thy grace to lean upon them, and also through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to the attention of our family and friends these great blessings, which are available to all.

We pray for our elders and for our deacons. We ask for wisdom and guidance to them. We pray for our country, for our President, for others associated with him, and for our state and local governments. We ask, Lord, for the whole church of Jesus Christ today, minister to each of and draw us closer to our Lord and to one another. May Thy hand be upon us in this hour.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] Now, we are turning to Revelation chapter 22, verse 6 through verse 21, and our topic today is "His Coming and Our Coming." This, I believe, is the forty-eighth message on the book of revelation, and it surely is one of the great passages on the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In verse 7, our Lord says, "Behold, I'm coming quickly." In verse 12, he says, "Behold, I'm coming quickly." And then in verse 20, "Surely," or "Yes, I am coming quickly." In fact, the term "come" is found, I think, about seven times in this section. I heard once about a Puritan, who once preached on Jobe for twenty years, and at the end of twenty years, someone said that he had seven in his congregation left, and the words added faint, but pursuing, [laughter] so you who have been with me for forty-eight messages, as I look out upon you, you are faint, but I know that you have been pursuing evidentially, and I am glad you have.

The Second Advent is one of the great topics of the Bible and James M. Gray who was the president of the Moody Bible Institute, once had some words concerning the Second Advent, which I copied down, and he listed about eight things that were significant about the importance of the Second Advent. He said, "It is the preeminent doctrine of the New Testament, referred to no fewer than three hundred times. Secondly, it is used by the Holy Spirit as the incentive to practically every Christian, virtue or grace named in the New Testament.

"It is the key to the understanding of the whole Bible, especially the prophets and the psalms," he said thirdly. "It illuminates, as nothing else is able to do the dark and perilous times in which we are living, fourthly, and fifth it feeds and satisfies as does no other doctrine. The love of the regenerate heart for the person of our Lord and Savior, whom we desire to look upon when we shall be like him. And sixth, it is associated with the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection and the glorification of our bodies, and our entrance upon those rewards of grace, which he hath promised to them that love him. And seventhly, it is not only the hope of the church, but is the only relief to the world from the dominance of sin because it will establish the Kingdom of God on the earth and bring in everlasting righteousness. It is the time of Christ's manifestation to all men, eighthly. The overthrow of his enemies and the final triumph of his holy cause."

He wrote a few more words, and then he also added that this particular doctrine was also important for two reasons, that the unsaved may not put off the question of their salvation, and secondly that Christians may be kept on the tiptoe of expectation. What a marvelous attitude it would be if we were kept on the tiptoe of anticipation remembering that our Lord's coming draws nigh.

I went into the home of a woman eighty-six years of age in Kingston in Jamaica, whose husband had been a great evangelist on that island and had established many churches, and I had ministered the Word with him a couple of times, once in Canada, once in Massachusetts, some years ago, about twenty years ago. So we went to see her.

He's with the Lord. I walked into their living room, and on the wall was just a tiny little plaque that said, "perhaps today," and you can see some of the things by which he lived, and if you went into those churches you would see how many had been brought to the Lord and their families now enjoying a Christian background by virtue of the preaching of Mr. Harold Wildish.

Mrs. Wildish is a collector of shells, and since he traveled all over the world preaching, in his later years, she has a collection of shells that is extremely valuable. We went into one of the botanical gardens of the island, perhaps the best, and in the museum were five or six cases of her shells that had been given as a gift to them, and they were announced to us by the guide. We, of course, knew that they were there, but she didn't know we knew. She told us about them. Then when we went by to see her a few days later, we found out she's got about as many at home still, as are in the museum, so it's just great to see how God blesses, and how through the ministry of a Christian man, a whole island, and in fact others as well have been blessed.

This hope of the Second Advent of which that little plaque speaks is no pie in the sky. It's a solid hope. It further assurance to believers that the best is yet to be. We will, as we often say, "We'll sing with rapture and surprise, his loving kindness in the skies." This is the epilogue to the book that we are looking at, and occasionally you will wonder who is really speaking, whether it's our Lord speaking or whether it's the mediating angel. Most of it we are taking as the mediating angels words, but you can clearly see that the words that are give to him are words that come from our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, and he passes them on to us.

Another thing that this is particularly useful for is it's helpful to show that many of the theories of unbelieving men do not measure up to the teaching of the New Testament. Some tell us that there is not real second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. That happened at the resurrection, or that happened at Pentecost, or the destruction of Jerusalem is the second coming of Jesus Christ. Well, it's clear all of those events have long passed, and

the apostle still speaks of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus as a hope that lies in the future.

Now, there are three testimonies here, and we want to lay a little stress upon them. The first is given in verse 6 through verse 15, "And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true:" (And we read that testimony, and we'll talk about a few things that are contained in it, and then verse 16.) "I Jesus have sent my angel to testify to you these things for the churches." (So we have the testimony of the angel, and then we have the testimony of the Lord Jesus from 16 through 19, and finally, in the last two verses, the testimony of the apostle himself.) "He who testifies to these things says, Yes, I'm coming quickly. Amen. Come Lord Jesus." So let's look at the testimony of the mediating angel first, the one's who been bring this message to the apostle. He has, right in the beginning of his book said, "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him to show to his bond servants, the things which must shortly take place, and he sent and communicated it by his angel to his bond servant John." The angel is still speaking. John is still listening, and now he has written it down so you and I may listen too.

The first of the testimonies of the angels regards the book's reliability. "He said to me, These words are faithful and true, and the Lord the God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angels to show to his bond servants the things which must shortly take place. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book."

Now, it's clear from this that he is laying great stress upon the reliability of the things that are being said. You know if we, in our day, we hear so many things about the book of Revelation that are so far astray from what the book really is that one wonders that if an individual had ever read the book and could possibly say the things about it that they say.

Dr. South, in a famous statement, in one of his sermons affirms that, "None but a madman will meddle with the Revelation, or if he has wits at the beginning before he's done, they will be cracked." A bombastic Welch man once said, that a very well known

and learned preacher, who had spend two years on the prophecy, he said that the individual who did that was an individual who was weird and crazy, had the impudence to spend that much time on a book like this, but I would imagine that if we read this book as it is read in, or as it is found before us, and realizes that God promises certain blessings to those who read this book, you can see how far astray an individual is.

Many of the scornors of this book and those who deny its usefulness will one day have to stand before the great white throne judgment and to hear the Lord God say to them, "Sir, I gave you the complete chart of my promised apocalypse. I caused it to be made as plain as words and visions can make of anything of that sort. I told you over and over of the momentous importance of studying and treasuring of making them known to the churches, but you have not responded to it." I surely would hate to stand before the Lord, and to have said the things that are said about this great Revelation that are said by some who stand in our pulpits, past scornors at the great white throne judgment. I do not want to stand in their steps.

The apostle also tells us that the testimony of the angel touches true worship, in verses 8 and 9, "And I John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw I fell down to worship," (Well, it would have been nice if we had a period right there, but he says,) "I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. And he said to me, Do not do it: I am a fellowservant, of yours and of your brethren of the prophets, and of those who heed the words of this book: worship God." So again, we lay stress upon something that we laid stress upon when we were in chapter 5, that the angels tell the apostle not to worship them, but to worship God, but when we turn back to chapter 5, we read that the angels worship the lamb. So here are the angels who tell us not worship God, but in chapter 5, they worship the Lamb of God.

Now, what does that say concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and their opinion of him? It says just as plainly as it could be said, that they regarded the lamb as the eternal God, the Lord Jesus, the eternal God, the second person of the trinity. So

worship God. We can spell that out. Worship God. Worship God the Father. Worship God the Son. Worship God the spirit, but not an angelic being.

Thirdly, regarding the speedy consummation, we read in verse 10, "And he said to me, Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book: for the time is near." Those of you who have read the book of Daniel, know that Daniel was told to seal up the things that he had written because there were things that should intervene. An age that should intervene, but no age is to intervene now, and so consequently John is told not to seal up the things of this book. They are to be circulated. They are to be read. They are to be spread abroad. In verses 11 and 12, he says, "Let the one who does wrong still do wrong, and let the one who is filthy, still be filthy: and the who is righteous, still practice righteousness: and let the one who is holy, still keep himself holy."

It's a very interesting statement. It has two possible meanings. One is that would take a little time to go into the details of to justify it, but one is that he is giving that which Daniel has prophesied it's fulfilled statement. In other words, Daniel has said things that will take place then, and so now as time draws to its end, Daniel's prophecy is being fulfilled in these words. The other more common interpretation is that when we read here that the "unjust be unjust still" he means simply, that present choices that men are making, let them become permanent representations of the character of the individual who is making them because the end is at hand.

And finally, or next in verse 12 we read, "Behold, I coming quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to what he has done." It's interesting that in the New Testament that we have a number of rewards promised for various reasons. For example, there is the crown of joy. The soul winner's crown, it has been called. Paul mentions it 1 Thessalonians chapter 2. There is the crown of righteousness, for those who love his appearing. Paul also mentions that crown. There is the crown of glory, the Sheppard's reward. The elder's reward, Peter mentions that in the 5th chapter of his first letter. There is the incorruptible crown, the athlete's reward, the

one who strives in his Christian life to truly please the Lord in all that he does, and finally the crown of life, the martyr's reward, and here in Revelation chapter 2:10, we have reference to that. These crowns are set forth as rewards.

Now, you look at that, and you might tend to think that this kind of thing savors of quid pro quo morality. That is, we do something and then God does something in response to it, but that is not the sense of these words. The Christian life is not a mercenary affair. C.S. Lewis once said, "There are rewards and rewards." For example, there is the reward which has no natural connection with the things you do it earn it, and it's quite foreign to the desires that ought to accompany these things. Money is not the natural reward of love. That's why we call men mercenary if he marries a woman for the sake of her money, and I understand that's been done the other way around as well, but at any rate, that kind of love is not an admiral kind of thing, it's a mercenary kind of thing, but it's not mercenary for an individual to love and then to obtain marriage as a result of love. Marriage is the proper reward for a real true genuine lover, and he's not mercenary for desiring marriage. A general, who fights well in order to get a lordship or a peerage, as the British say, is a mercenary general. He may be a great general, but he's a mercenary general. That is he's fighting primarily to win a reward, but the general who fights in order to win the battle, that's a proper reward of a general who does his work well. So the proper rewards are not simply tacked on to activity for which they are given, but they are the activity itself in its consummation.

So rewards in the New Testament are not something that we gain by our deeds. They are the results of the kinds of activity that please the Lord, and the power of the Lord, and they are the natural consummation of them so that when we think of the crown of joy, the soul winner's reward, the soul winner does not do his work in order to mercenarily have this reward, but he's a soul winner and, the natural result of his activity is the joy of being the instrumentality of bringing someone to the Lord, and the same pertains to all of these other rewards.

And when the Lord Jesus says that, "He's coming quickly, and his reward is with me to render to every man according to what he's done," he has in mind that for Christians, but of course he also is the who into his hands all judgment has been given, and therefore the judgment that is spoken of here is the judgment that includes the judgment of the lost for their failure to respond to the gospel of Christ.

In the 13th verse, he continues by saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." When I was in Jamaica, I gave several lectures of the Christology of the Apocalypse, a series that I had given in Toronto this year. It's amazing the things that I didn't say, that I could have said. This book is filled with an acknowledgement of the greatness of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you remember in the first chapter of this book, the Father, it seems evident is in view, the Father is referred to as "the alpha and the omega," and in that context, when I expounded it, I also expounded it in that fashion, but now here at the end of that book, the Lord speaks, the Lord Jesus, and he says, "I am the alpha and the omega." He said he was the first and the last in chapter 1. He repeats it here. "The first and the last, the beginning and the end." In other words, he applies to himself now that which was applied to the Father in chapter 1. It's he who judges.

Now, when he says he's "the alpha and the omega," he includes within this, the ideas of completeness, eternity and authority. Now, if you want me to explain all of this, I want you to know, I'd have to be caught up to the third heaven in order to explain it, and you'd have to be caught up there too in order to understand it, but when he says, "alpha and omega," the simplest thing that comes to my mind first of all, is that the alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet, and the omega is the last letter of the Greek alphabet, and if I were to go in the library of congress in Washington and go over to the card catalogue, that great library with such a mass of information in it, and begin at A and go all the way through Z, what a mass of knowledge is contained in that library.

Well, even more significantly Jesus says, he's the A to Z. Everything in between belongs properly to him, if it's worthy of his name. Talk about a great Christology, "the alpha and the omega." The idea of completeness, the idea of eternity, the idea of authority all bound up in this. Incidentally, the Greeks said that Zeus was the beginning the middle and the end. The rabbis like that idea so much, that they took it over, and they gave their own interpretation to it. They said that since God was the beginning, he received no power from anyone, and since he was the middle, he shares his power with no one, and since he's the end, he never hands over his power to anyone. So he's the first and the last. He's the beginning and the end. He's the "alpha and the omega," and Jesus applies all of these terms to himself. He's the eternal God.

We Christians, we worship one God, one being, but three persons. The three persons share in the one being of God, so we worship one God who subsists in three persons, and each one of these persons may be called, Yahweh, Lord, but the personal distinctions still pertain, and the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the spirit, and the spirit is not the Father. They're distinct in their persons, but they share the same being, so he's "the alpha and the omega." I know someone might say at this point, "Can't you give us something simpler?" I don't know why anyone would want something simpler, but if you want something simpler, that's so simple, and I get such a joy out of it. I like to get down on my knees by the side of my bed, and speak to my Father in heaven, and talk about my Lord Jesus Christ as being "the alpha and the omega," and marveling at the eternal triune God who is the Savior of my soul.

I can't think of anything more significant than that, but if you want something simpler, we have it right here in the text in verse 16, "I Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things," so if you like that name, that's fine. That's a great name. Our Lord uses it of himself. I just remind you it means simply that Yahweh is salvation. So we cannot get away from these great terms which mean so much, and when things get tough

in this life, nothing is greater than to know that you have standing with you, someone who is the eternal God. How marvelous that is.

He continues, in verse 14 by saying, "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter the gates of the city." Well, you cannot find anything greater than that. We've washed our robes, and as chapter 7 puts it, we've "made them white in the blood of the lamb." If there was a legalistic scribe who changed the text there and spoke about doing commandments, there's nothing wrong with doing his commandments incidentally, but we don't do his commandments in order to be saved. We do his commandments when we have been saved, for otherwise we have no authority and power to do them, but so far as becoming his, "Blessed are those who wash their robes in the blood of the lamb." Salvation never forget, is of the Lord. Jonah gave us a great text, and as Mr. Spurgeon used to say, "It came from a strange college inside the midst of the whale." I think it's so interesting, even the whale couldn't even swallow a doctrine like that, and so he vomited Jonah out on dry land. Salvation is of the Lord.

Yesterday, I got a book, which I had ordered when I was in the Netherlands. I went up to a little town, I think I told you Fronica, where some very fine theologians of the 17th and 18th century ministered the Word in the university that there in those days, and I went up to see the town, and then there is also contained there one of the great book stores of Western Europe, and I went in the store. It was astonishing. It was the kind of store that just makes you say, "I wish I could come here and had a week to look at the books." The books there were like a warehouse. Two or three stories, or three or four stories, I didn't go everywhere in the building, but it so overpowered you that you knew you'd never be able to look at the books in this unless you did stay there for a week, but my eyes happened to hit upon one volume that I'd never seen before, and I bought that.

It came yesterday. It was the life of Alexander White, who was the preacher at the Church of Scotland's St. George's West in Edinburgh. A church that I've been in, and he was a great preacher. His books, we have some books in the library, I believe, Bunyan's Characters. He has a series of them. He was a great man in the earlier part of this century in Scotland, and I was just thumbing through it and happened to notice a little saying, and Mr. White said this, "Luther teaches us to say me, to say, I applied to thyself, he tells us. Say, he died for my sins, for my sins, and this one syllable," He means my. "This one syllable will swallow up all thy sins. What a magnificent statement. He died for my sins, and swallowed up by that little word, my, is all of the vast amount of sin that adheres to me." Lewis Johnson. He goes on to say, "All the popes bull's in the marketplace could never have reformed Germany if needed preaching like that, that which took captive the hearts of the people and sat them on fire. So "Blessed are they who washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the lamb. They have right to the tree of life."

Why do we need a tree of life? Well, we need a tree of life to remind us of what we are, and so throughout eternity evidentially, and the new heavens and the new earth, and the new Jerusalem there is a tree of life. John tells us it's for the healing of the nations, but it's a reminder, my Christian friend, of the fact that you are a creature.

Now, I look out on the audience here, and most of you can stand some improvement. [Laughter] You look at me, and I know you are thinking the same thing about me, and if you're not thinking it, I'm thinking it. We are creatures. We are always creatures. You think you are going to meet the Lord in the air and you're going to be given a new body like unto his own glorious body, and that is marvelous. I won't have to do with this one anymore, but you are still a creature. You are still a creature throughout the ages of eternity. A million years from now, you'll still be a creature. Therefore, you are dependent upon the eternal God forever. How marvelous that is. How would you like to be on your own? How wonderful it is to be a dependent creature, and know it,

and have the inner man to live it out, sin gone. So you're a creature, and so you'll be coming to the tree of life, and you will be constantly at the tree of life because that's the ordinance of eternity to remind us of our creatureliness, something like that. Don't ask me to be more specific than that. I haven't in my travels been there yet.

He says also in verse 14, that "through the washing of our robes, they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city." Not expulsion, as Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden, but now we enter the garden, the paradise of God. The testimony of our Lord follows regarding his titles in verse 16.

"I Jesus have sent my angel to testify to use these things for the churches. I am the root and the stock of David. David has his blessing by virtue of the fact that I'm his root. The covenantal promises given to him are given to him because he is ideally to be in me, and I'm the stock, and David has become in the mind and purpose of God, part of me, so I'm the root of David. I'm the stock of David."

That offspring is true also. He was the offspring of the historic David, so far as his human nature was concerned. So he's the root and the stock of David and he's the bright and morning star. Venus, Venus is the star that is so close to Jupiter, and it's very difficult to see it, except at certain times in the morning and certain times in the evening. Venus was regarded as the star of sovereignty, and so he's the root and offspring of David, the great Davidic king and kingdom, and he's the bright and morning star.

Then he says in verse 17, "And the spirit and the bride say come, and let the one who hears say, come and let the one who is thirsty, come, let the one who wishes to take the water of life without cost, let the one who wishes, let whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." We know the text that way, as appearing in the Authorized Version. The first "come" of verse 16, or 17, "and the spirit and the bride say, come" suggests the response to him, not the invitation to accept him in this instance, but the response to him.

In other words, let him come and let him complete his beneficent work for the world. You'll notice it's not the spirit and the church, but "The spirit and the bride" because the church is looked at here in this more personal relationship. The bride, as the bride longs for the bridegroom, so the church and the spirit long for his coming.

This was the favorite text, of the great missionaries of the 19th century, James Chalmers. Chalmers was born in a little village in Scotland out to the west in Ardrishaig. He spent a lot of his time at Inverary, where there is a well-known castle that many of you have perhaps have been there. I've been there a number of times by the grace of God, and he was there as a young man, a very young boy, and there were two Irish evangelists that came to Inverary and began to hold meetings. Chalmers and a bunch of young people, because he later came to be known as one of the boldest of all of the missionaries that Britain ever sat forth, determined to that they were going to upset the meetings, and so they intended to do that.

But he had a friend who persuaded him that he ought to at least attend the meetings once before they did that, and incidentally handed him a Bible, and so he attended the meeting. It was a rainy night. He heard the crowd singing joyfully and solemnly, "All people that on earth do dwell" to the tune of Old Hundred. The young evangelist preached on chapter 22, in verse 17, "And the spirit and the bride say, come and let the one who hears, say, come and let the come and let the one is thirsty, come, let the one who wishes to take the water of life without cost," He said, "He spoke directly to me. I felt it so much. At the close I hurried away back to town. I returned the Bible to the friend, who having persuaded me to go, had lent it to me, but I was too upset to speak much to him."

The following Sunday night, he attended, and he said he "was pierced through and through and felt lost and beyond all hope of salvation," and then Gilbert Michael, who was the pastor of the Scottish reform church there, spoke to him, assured him that the blood of Jesus Christ would cleanse him of all sin. He said, "Then I believed unto

salvation." He said he felt the voices to which he was listening were in reality the voice of God. Forty years later, after Chalmers, incidentally as a child, he had wanted to be a missionary, but he was not a Christian then. He had planned to be, as a child, but the years of his puberty had vanished that thought from his mind. Forty years later after he had become a missionary, the world was horrified to learn, that Chalmers the most picturesque and romantic figure in the religious life in Britain of his time had been killed and eaten by the Fly River cannibals in New Guinea. He came to know Robert Louis Stevenson, and Robert Louis Stevenson, as you know, spent a lot of time out in the Pacific. He said, "It was desperate venture, but he was quite a Livingstone card. He's a rowdy, but he's a hero. You can't worry me of that fellow. He's as big as a house and far bigger than any church. He took me fairly by storm for the most attractive, simple, brave and interesting man in the whole Pacific. I wonder," Stevenson wrote to Mrs. Chalmers, "I wonder if even you know what it means to a man like me, a man fairly critical, a man of the world to meet one who represents the essential, and who is so free from the formal, from the grimace."

He and a band of missionaries, one of two or three Scottish friends and some others, went up the Fly River. They met some of the natives there that they knew where headhunters, but he went over and anchored near them. They came on his boat, and didn't want to leave. He said, "All right, I'll come in the morning." He finally got them to leave the boat. They went back to the island. They sent out word to all the villages round about, and the next day when Chalmers and his men came on the land, they said we have a great feast for you, and so they went over to one of the buildings, a large native house, and as Chalmers went in the house someone clubbed him from behind, knocked him to the ground. The first thing they did before anything had happened, was they cut off his head, and then the same thing happened to the others, and then they had a great banquet all right, but the meat was roasted James Chalmers, and his other friends. The world in Britain was shocked because he had been known as one of the real heroes

of the 19th century. One of the truly great missionaries of the world, and of all respects a noble and kingly character. It was whispered from lip to lip that James Chalmers the Great Heart of New Guinea, as they called him, was dead.

John Oxenham, who wrote some very interesting pieces of poetry, denied it. This is what he wrote. "Great Heart is dead they say. Great Heart is dead they say. Nor dead, nor sleeping, he lives on. His name shall kindle many a heart to equal flame. The fire he kindled shall burn on and on till all the darkness of the lands be gone, and all the kingdoms of the earth be one, and one. A soul so firey sweet can never die, but lives and loves and works through all eternity." That was his text. "The spirit and the bride say, come. Let the one who hears, say come, and let the one who is thirsty come, and let the one who wishes to take the water of life without cost." What a magnificent text, incidentally. "Whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." That's the way I know it.

Mr. Spurgeon said, "These were three vast doors for the hugest center ever to make earth shake by the weight of his guilt to enter," three great words, "Whosoever will freely." "Whosoever" the gospel goes to all, "whosoever," and "whosoever will" "whosoever wishes," as our text here has. Any who has the desire to come to him will find acceptance. We know theologically that comes from the Lord God.

Oh, you don't like that do you, so you won't come. You get what you want, but if by God's grace you desire to come, the door's open. You can receive the everlasting life. That means that one day, you and Great Heart will be together, as well as all the other saints in heaven. Freely without cost. You don't come with your repentance and faith. You come to get repentance and faith, when you come to our Lord. They too are gifts. If there is any individual who has repented of his sins, it's because it was given by God to him. If there is anyone who believes, it is because God has given him the faith. Read the New Testament. It's plain and clear. Faith, repentance they are gifts. Salvation's a gift.

That's why Jonah said, "Salvation's of the Lord." So "The spirit and the bride say come. Let the one who hears say, come, and let the one who is thirsty, come."

Finally, John says, well, verses 18 and 19, he warns individuals that we cannot add or subtract from this book. He's talking about the Revelation, but the principle applies to the whole of the Bible, of course. And then in verse 20, the Lord gives his own testimony. "He who testifies to these things says, Yes, I am coming quickly. Amen. Come Lord Jesus." I love that remarkable little sermon preached by poor Weaver in Scotland, so I am told. He has three points. The first point, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. He said, "That's my sin away." My second point is, "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God. Ye are of more value than many sparrows," He said, "That's my cares away." And then, "We shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, that's my self away." So you could not have anything more to the point than that. "My sin away. My cares away, and I'm away too to meet the Lord in the air."

The time is up, but I want to say just one thing to you. When I was in Massachusetts, incidentally we had a visitor this morning from Massachusetts with whom I had stayed some years ago, but I stayed with a man in Newton, Massachusetts. He'd been brought up among the Christian brethren. I was preaching in a baptist church there. He said his parents so often emphasized the second coming. I think I made reference to this before, that it became so real to him that he often woke up as a child so concerned that he tiptoed downstairs and felt his mother's body to make sure that she was breathing because he knew that if she was still breathing and still there, the rapture had not yet taken place. I told that to a friend of mine in Massachusetts shortly thereafter, and this person told me, "That's what I used to do." Don Parker told me that he used to hear his parents breathing, used to come hear them for the very same reason. They had made plain to their children there was such a thing as the Second Advent, and that the Lord Jesus was coming again someday.

If we don't have that as part of our Christian faith, we've missed one of the great blessings of life. The hope of the soon return of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord emphasizes it. Look, there are two "beholds" and one "surely" and one "yes." "Behold, I'm coming quickly. Behold, I'm coming quickly." "Surely," or "Yes, I'm coming quickly." What more do we need? We look for him, and by God's grace, hope to live our lives in the light of that fact. Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father we are so grateful to Thee for men like James Chalmers and others who believed the Scriptures, gave themselves to Thee, and served Thee even to death. Oh, God give us something of the spirit of the great men of the church of Jesus Christ. What a magnificent bride, but a more magnificent bridegroom we have. And so Lord, may the word of God touch our hearts. May we leave to serve Thee more effectively and more truly.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.