

The Final Call

Revelation 22:17

In revelation chapter 22, we have the last chapter in the last book of the New Testament, and John closes out. God's inspired word, God's inspired record with what I call a final call, a final plea. And that plea is to come to the Lord. Listen to John in Revelation chapter 22, in about verse 17, John said, and the spirit and the bride say, come, let him who hears say, come, let him who thirst come.

And whoever desires, let him take of the water of life freely. Isn't it amazing that God, in his goodness, mercy, and love would plead would make a final appeal, a final call for those who have yet to come to Jesus? Again, John said, The Spirit and the bride say, come, let him who hears say, come. I can't help but think about the Lord Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry.

You remember in Matthew chapter 11, Jesus would say, come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, the promised being, I will give you rest. Many of us have traveled by way of air, and many times we've been in an airport and heard someone come on the intercom on behalf of the airport, on behalf of a particular airline and say, this is the final boarding call for flight.

Such and such. Well, in revelation chapter 22, we have the final call, the last call being issued to the human family. So let's just talk for a moment or two about the final call. And we might say this, that when it comes to the final call, we want to answer the call. Now, I mentioned a moment ago the Lord Jesus Christ and the great invitation that he gave.

I want you to think about something for a minute. The problem that we have as members of the human family is called sin. Now, I know there are a lot of people in the world today. They have this idea that we have been born as, quote unquote sinners, that we bear the sin of Adam. Well, the Bible doesn't teach that.

No, the Bible does teach that sense of problem, that it's a reality in the world. We live in. You know, Paul said, there's none righteous. No. Not one. All have sinned. All have come short of the glory of God. And we know, Isaiah said that sin separates us from God. The penalty or the verdict for those who live a life of sin is spiritual death.

Paul said in Romans chapter six, verse 23, the wages of sin is death. The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus. So what does the Lord want from me? Well, the Lord wants me to be saved. The Lord is interested in me enjoying the blessings and favors of the blood of Jesus. Now listen to Paul in first Timothy chapter two.

Paul said in the long ago that God would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Now listen to me. He said, there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all. Now tie that back to First Peter, chapter one in verse 18, when Peter tells us that we have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

We haven't been redeemed by silver and gold, not by earthly possessions. No, we've been redeemed by the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus. So when Jesus came to earth, he appeal to the human family on behalf of the father. Peter said this much. Peter said, God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Now I want you to think about something for a minute. If you die in your sins, it will not be because God in heaven wants you to die in your sins. No, the Bible says that God would have all men to be saved. Come to the knowledge of the truth. Now there's a correlation between salvation and Scripture. You can't know how to become a Christian.

You can't know how to avail yourself of the blessings and favors of God. Separate and apart from revelation. That's why we have the Bible. You remember in Second Timothy chapter three when Paul said, All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God. In other words, it's God breathed. He said it is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped unto every good work.

When we talk about redemption, salvation, and the blessings afforded us in Christ Jesus to understand that God the Father, that he is the originating cause of our salvation. In other words, he was a divine architect. God, still one, devised a plan to redeem the world. Because Paul said he chose us in him before the foundation of the world.

We should be holy and without blame before him in love, that he is predestined us to adoption by Jesus Christ to himself. Now don't mistake that and have the idea that God has already arbitrarily decided who's going to be saved and who's going to be lost now. What God decreed was that all who were in Christ. What Paul is saying is that God has already decreed that all who are in Christ Jesus, they'll be numbered among the same.

But again, God wants all men to be saved. His desire is that not perish. That all come to repentance. So, number one, God is the originating calls of our salvation. Jesus, however, was the sacrificial calls. In other words, he was the agent by which God's plan was put in a motion. You remember, for example, while Jesus was on earth.

In John chapter six he said, I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. In John 17, in the shadow of the cross, Jesus would acknowledge that the hour had come. His desire, his prayer, was that the father would be glorified. That he too would be glorified. In verse three he said, this is eternal life, that they might know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you've sent.

In verse four he would say, I've glorified you on earth. I've finished the work which you've given me to do while on the cross. Did Jesus not say it is finished? The Lord Jesus was willing to come to earth and bring to fruition God's eternal redemptive plan. And I say, Eternal God had this plan in place before he ever created man.

John speaks of the lamb slain before the foundation of the world. That's the idea that God had this great plan in place. So you have God the Father, the originating calls of our salvation or redemption. The Lord Jesus Christ. He was the sacrificial cause. He was the agent that brought it to pass. But then the Holy Spirit, you see, the Holy Spirit also had a role in the redemption of the human family.

He was the revealing cause of our salvation. Think about it like this. When you go back and you look at the early church in the first century, God had already decreed that he was going to establish a divine institution known as the church. Prophets of old spoke of that. Matter of fact, if you go back to Genesis chapter three, verse 15, you have the gospel and nugget form.

And so in Genesis 3:15, God begins to unfold his redemptive plan. That plan involved the coming of the second. Remember the Godhead, Jesus, King Jesus. But it also involved the establishment of a divine institution, a spiritual institution that would be known as the

church or the Kingdom of God. The prophets of old foretold affairs. They're pointing in the direction of the coming of the Lord and the Lord's Church, the establishment of that church.

So when the church was established on Pentecost day, Jesus had already been telling the apostles prior to his death, burial, resurrection and ascension that they would be the recipients of the comforter of the Holy Spirit. And he said that the Holy Spirit, the comforter, would teach them all things, bring all things to remember. It's that he had said to them that's found in John 14, in verse 26, in John 16, Jesus said, I have many things to say to you, but you're not able to bear them.

He said, Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth, has come, he said, he'll guide you into all truth. So in John chapter 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17, the Lord Jesus is engaged in a very private discussion with the apostles. He's promising them that they would be the recipients of the Holy Spirit. They would be the earthen vessels and of which the Word of God would be deposited.

So in the first century, what did you have? Well, you had inspired me in preaching and inspired message. So in Luke 24, Jesus, prior to a man ascending to heaven, said to the apostles, I want you to tarry in Jerusalem until you're endued with power from on high. So you come to acts chapter one. The Lord is about to ascend to heaven.

And the Bible tells us that Jesus then said to the apostles, he said, you shall receive power. When the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, to the end of the earth. What was that promise fulfilled? Well then, acts chapter two. In verse four, the Bible tells us that the apostles, they receive that baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit.

And Luke said in verse four, they began to speak in other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance. Well, what's so significant about that? Well, back in Matthew chapter 16, at verse 19, Jesus had said to the apostle Peter, after having confirmed that he would build established the church. The church would be built upon that bedrock statement made by Peter that he was the Christ, the Son of God.

And so in verse 19, Jesus said, I'm going to give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Well, keys signified authority. Now chapter 18, verse 18 of the book of Matthew, all the apostles receive those keys. So on Pentecost day, you had inspired me in preaching and inspired message. That is, the Holy Spirit was superintending or guiding them in the presentation of divine truth.

Because, as Jesus said, the Holy Spirit's going to guide you into all truth. So they took the keys of the kingdom, unlocked the doors into the kingdom, so that men and women could enter the Church of God. The Church of Christ or the Kingdom of God? Well, what were the terms? Well, you remember in verse 37, after having been convicted of sin, they wanted to know men and brethren, what should we do?

And Peter said, repent, be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ. And that goes back to by his authority. And the Lord Jesus had already said prior to ascending to heaven, all authority, all power has been given to me in heaven and on earth. God the father had already voice from heaven. This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.

Hear him. So these men are God's divine ambassadors, and they are making a presentation of the gospel in all of its fullness for the very first time. Now in verse 38, Peter said, you need to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Now look at verse 41. In verse 41, Luke said that those who gladly received his word were

baptized that day, about 3000 souls added to them.

Now look at verse 42. In verse 42, Luke said, and they, that is, those who obey the gospel, they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayers. When those people obeyed the gospel on Pentecost day, when they returned to their homeland prior to returning to their homeland. You have to understand, the apostles weren't standing at the gates in Jerusalem and handing out New Testaments to all the converts.

Why? Because the New Testament wasn't, at that point in time, completed. And so you had ongoing revelation to equip and edify the church until you had the unity of the faith. That is, until you had in completed form the Word of God. So the Holy Spirit was involved in revelation and confirmation. Wherever you had revelation, there was always it was always accompanied by confirmation.

In Mark chapter 16, when Jesus issued the Great Commission to go into all the world, preach the gospel. You remember I talked about these signs shall follow them that believe. Well done in verses 19 and 20 he tells us that as they went out, they began preaching the word everywhere, and the Lord confirming the word by the accompanying signs.

So the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit, was involved in revelation and confirmation in the redemptive plan. So now we come to revelation chapter 22, and we look at verse 17, and here's John saying, The spirit and the bride say, come, did you know that we have appeal after appeal after appeal in Scripture? That is the revelation of God for us to come to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Did you know that the Godhead is vitally interested, keenly interested in your spiritual well-being? And over and over again there are overtures. I mean, you think about think for a minute about what John is saying here. The spirit is saying, come. That is the Holy Spirit through the Holy Scriptures is appealing to the human spirit. That's your human spirit.

Now, the word doesn't operate outside. Or rather, the Holy Spirit doesn't operate outside this book, but rather this book through the Holy Spirit has convicting power. When you pick up this book, what do you learn about you learn about Jesus. You learn about God. You learn about the problem of sin. You learn that it is only through Jesus that we can have fellowship with God.

Because Jesus said, I'm the way, the truth, the life. No man comes unto the father but by me. Well, how do I learn that? I learned through this book, through revelation to listen to Paul. In Ephesians chapter three, Paul said that he received revelation from God. He took that revelation and he said, I wrote it down in human words.

Why, Paul, why did you take what you received by way of revelation and write it down? He said so that when you read it, you might understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ. Now wait a minute. Are you saying then, that I can understand the scriptures on my own? I know there are some today that will tell you that you have to have someone who is a special individual, a clergyman.

You've got to have somebody interpret scripture for you. Well, the Bible doesn't say that. No. Here's what Jesus said. Jesus said, you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Paul said he received revelation from God. He took that revelation, wrote it down in a few words he said, whereby when you read you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ.

We're going to patience. Five possibly not unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. So I can pick up this book, and I can read over and over again about the great love of God. I pick up passages like John 3:16 where Jesus said, For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

To understand that there's a God in heaven who created me. Housed within me an eternal soul, and that I'm going to live forever, and that this eternal God has lavished his love upon me. And not just his love, but his mercy and grace. You remember in Ephesians two when Paul wrote to the saints in Ephesus and he said in the long ago, But God, who is rich in mercy for the great love for which he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, made us alive together with Christ.

Now let me just pause here for a minute. God loves you whether you're a sinner or a saint. He loves everybody. God will always love you. Now, he may not necessarily love your lifestyle. He may not approve of how you live, but he still loves you. I know a lady that. And I knew a lady one time that told me her sister had the idea that the Lord would love her if she lived in compliance with this world.

But if she didn't, well, he wouldn't love her. Look, that's a perversion of truth. God loves you no matter what. Now he. He loves you, and he wants you to be saved. That's why we have the Golden invitation. As John said, the spirit says. Come. Let him who hears say, come, let him who thirst come. Whoever desires, let him take of the water of life freely.

You remember in John four when Jesus talked to the woman from Samaria, and during the course of their conversation, he offered her living water. Well, she thought, he's talking about water from the well. She said, sir, give me this water that I have. Come back here. Draw again. She missed the point. Now what Jesus was offering was life eternal.

In John six, when Jesus talks about being the bread of life and eating his flesh and drinking his blood. He's just talking about trying to. He's talking about imbibing his teaching, receiving him as the divine Son of God, and putting into practice his teaching, his precepts. Now John is closing out the book of inspiration. It's as if there is one last ditch effort to plead with the human family.

The spirit says, come. Let him who hears say, come again. What was it? Jesus said, come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden. What was the promise? I'll give you rest from what the Lord will give you rest from a life of sin, from the burden and the bondage of sin. Sin is a terrible taskmaster.

When the children of Israel were in Egypt, you remember they spent about four centuries in Egyptian bondage in a way that was a type of people living in sin. And yet God redeemed them, brought them out. Matter of fact, in Exodus chapter 19, he said he bore them on eagle's wings and brought them to himself. They enjoyed deliverance.

Well, Jesus can deliver you from the bondage and the scourge of sin. Now, John said, the spirit says, come. But he also said, the bride, the spirit, and the bride say, come, who's the bride? The bride, the church. That means those of us who've obeyed the gospel, we're identified by Paul in first Corinthians chapter one at verse two as being sanctified in Christ Jesus.

Now listen to a call to be saints. You ever heard somebody say, well, I'm no saint? Well, if you've obeyed the gospel, you're a saint. You don't have to be voted on to be a saint. No. Does it consist of some type of meritorious work that you've engaged in over a period of

time? And all of a sudden, we're going to nominate you, and we're going to make your sign.

No, it doesn't work that way. Every Christian is sanctified, set apart. Every Christian is a saint of the Most High God. Now, that being the case, as members of the church, we're saints. So we might say the spirit and the saints say, come. As Christians, our goal is to reach out to a lost and dying world. Every member of the body of Christ worth his or her salt, has a strong desire to see people in this world saved.

Saved from the wretchedness of sin, saved from the condemnation of sin. Save from the penalty of sin which is eternal separation from God. That's what Jesus said in the Great Commission. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, the son, the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I've commanded you.

And Jesus said, lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. We have a responsibility. Our job, our goal as Christians, is to make disciples. That's what the Lord said. Matthew 28. In a parallel passage in Mark 16:15, Jesus said, go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. The Lord is interested in every human being.

My understanding is there are about 8 billion souls on planet Earth as we speak. 8 billion. I can't fathom that. I've seen football stadiums where you've got 100,000 or so present for one game in one place. But I can't begin to fathom 8 billion souls. But did you know that the Lord loves every single soul? Red, yellow, black or white?

They're all precious in his sight. Did you know that? That means you're precious in his sight. And here's John. John's about to lay aside the pen of inspiration. And John said, the spirit and the bride say, come, let him who thirst say, come. Now, let me just pause there for a minute. What about you? Are you weary, tired, burdened?

Ridden with guilt? Is your life a mess? You look at where you are today and you think you know I never. I never envisioned myself where I am today. Never began to think as a young person that my life would be filled with such chaos that my life would be in shambles. Let me tell you, Jesus has the power to put your life back together.

He can make you whole. Jesus said, I come. I've come that you might have life and have it more abundantly. Look. Life is tough. And I tell you this, it's a lot tougher without the Lord. I don't know how people make it without the Lord. And yet to know that in Christ we can have an abundant life. Not just here, but listen.

We live and hope of life eternal, which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began. Would you think about something for a minute? Whether you like it, whether I like it really doesn't matter. The fact of the matter is, we're all terminal. We're all going to face the sting of death. Now might be the Lord comes first. But if the Lord delays his coming, we will leave this world by death.

Hebrew writer said it's appointed a no man wants to die. After this comes the judgment. So death is a reality. So we know that. But wouldn't it? Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing to make preparation, to honor the great invitation extended by John, by the spirit, by the saints of God, by the saints who are pleading, come, and you have the opportunity to hear the gospel.

You can believe it. What would you need to do to become a Christian? What do you need to hear that you need to understand? Jesus is the Son of God, and then you need to repent of your sins. As the Apostle Paul said in acts chapter 17, verse 30, and then to confess with

your mouth what you believe that he is the Son of God.

Be immersed in water. And when you do that, you're well on your way to one day spending eternity with God in heaven. But you have to answer the call. That's why Paul said, I'm not ashamed of the gospel, for it's the power of God and salvation. I want you, I want to encourage you to respond to the gospel.

Don't leave this world without Christ in your life. God bless.

Don't.