

Real Reactions to Revelation

Revelation 22:6-11

(preached Pine Grove 12/9/17; Sunday AM)

Introduction

In 1687, Isaac Newton published a scientific book entitled, Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy...

It was a groundbreaking work in undemanding the laws of science that occur around us everyday...

The book is probably most well known for explaining the concept of gravity, but it also contained Newton's 3 laws of motion...

Though most of us have forgotten them since school, Newton said that..

#1 - An object at rest stays at rest and an object in motions stays in motion until either one is acted on by an outside force...

#2 - The greater the weight of an object, the more force it will take to move the object.

#3 - For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

Now I understand that these laws apply to physics and motion, but for this morning, I want us to apply the 3rd law to our own lives in terms of what we have seen so far in the book of Revelation...

In other words, or most of you, the book of Revelation has been presented to you from start to finish...

It has in a sense “acted” upon your mind and life, so what is your reaction to it?

For some people, the book of Revelation only becomes a book to be debated and discussed...

For others, the book of Revelation only becomes a book to be ignored because of its apparent difficulty to understand..

For others, the book of Revelation only becomes a science fiction novel to be made into a source of mystery and intrigue..

For others, the book of Revelation only becomes a book of symbols to be interpreted anyway they desire...

However, I assure you that God is not pleased with those reactions to the book of Revelation..

The word of God, particularly the final words of God, was not given to us without a purpose...

God is not pleased with wrong reactions to the book of Revelation...

Therefore, he ends this final book of the Bible by telling us how we should react to it...

And surprisingly, God doesn't tell us to debate the book or spiritualize the book or ignore the book....

Instead he tells us in the closing verses of the book of Revelation how we should react to it...

And this morning we are going to look at four reactions to the book of Revelation that should occur in your life after the words of Revelation have acted upon you...

So, let's begin with reaction #1 in verse 6 of Revelation 22...

I. Look for the Literal Fulfillment of Revelation (6)

Verse 6..

6 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 soon take place.

As we come to verse 6, we know that John is continuing to write about what he has been seeing ever since Jesus told him to write it down way back in Revelation 1...

So John writes, “and he said to me..”

Well, the me is certainly a reference to John, but who is the “he” that is saying this to John...

Well, back in verse 9 of chapter 21, and angel comes to John to show him the new heaven and the new earth and its capital city, -the New Jerusalem...

And this angel has remained with John all the way through verse 6 of chapter 22...

So in verse 6, he speaks to John...

And his words are simple...

First, what John has seen in the book of Revelation and is seeing in the book of Revelation is “faithful and true.”

Now, this is obvious because we know that every word of God is true and faithful, right church?

Sure it is but that doesn’t stop the angel from affirming that here...

Jesus even said, “Truly, Truly, I say to you..”

We know that Jesus never lied, but at times when he wanted to get the attention of his listeners, he would simply say something like, “I am telling you the truth..”

And the reason was to add weight to what he was about to say...

I am sure that John is overwhelmed by what he has seen...

7 years of seal, trumpet and bowl judgments...

The rise and fall of the Antichrist...

The second coming of Jesus...

The 1000 year reign of Christ upon the earth....

Followed by the beauty of the new heaven and new earth...

I am sure he is tempted to think he is dreaming, yet the angel assures him that all he has seen is coming true...

And not just true in a general true but true in a literal sense...

Because he said that God is going to bring the prophecy of Revelation to pass exactly as he brought the prophecies of OT prophets to pass...

And how did God fulfill their predictions?

Well, he fulfilled them literally...

When the Bible predicted that Jesus would be from Nazareth but would be born in Bethlehem, what happened?

Jesus' parents were from Nazareth but they gave to Jesus in Bethlehem..

When the prophets predicted that Jesus' side would be pierced, what happened?

Jesus' side was pierced..

When the prophets predicted that Jesus would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, what happened?

Jesus was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver..

In all there were around 300 predictions by the prophets about the first coming of Christ and all of them were fulfilled literally...

And what the angel is telling John is this..

The spirit of God that inspired the prophecies of the OT and then fulfilled them literally is the same spirit of God that inspired the prophecies in the book of Revelation and John and us should expect the same literal fulfillment of them...

Now, why is this an important reaction for us today?

Well if you are a lifelong Bible-Believing Baptist, you may not know this but plenty of denominations and even some within the Baptist church don't look for the literal fulfillment of the the book of Revelation...

Some see the events of Revelation as simply a symbolic picture of what has already happened in the past..

Some say that the book of Revelation is just a story that symbolizes the battle between good and evil in the world..

Other say that Jesus is retuning a second time but that the 7 year tribulation isn't literal...

Some say that the 1000 year reign of Christ in Revelation 20 is happening now and we shouldn't look to its literal fulfillment...

Other take certain parts of Revelation literal while seeing most of the book as symbolic...

Without spending the rest of our time explaining why, let me just say this...

The majority of the book has yet to be fulfilled.

Chapter 1-3 were about past events in the life of John and letters to Jesus to present day churches in 90 AD, but the rest from chapters 4-22 is a futuristic and literal look of what is to come...

And we as people should look for the literal fulfillment of the events described in it...

A second reaction to the book of Revelation is found in verse 7....

Not only are we to look for Revelation's literal fulfillment, we are to....

II. Live by the Lasting Message of Revelation (7)

Let's read verse 7...

7 “And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who [e]heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.”

In verse 7, the angel stops speaking and Jesus starts speaking...

And we know this because the one who is coming quickly is not an angel, but the Son of God...

So, his reminder to John and to the church is simple...

I am coming quickly.

Now, you may say...

Well, it has been almost 2000 years since Jesus ascended to heaven, and we are still waiting for his return...

So, how is he coming quickly....

Well, the Greek word for quickly is tacho....

And the meaning is this....

In a swift fashion...

Quickly says more in terms of how Jesus arrives than when he arrives...

If I tell you that I will be at your house in a minute, that gives you a sense of when I am coming..

If I tell you that I will arriving at your house “on two wheels,” that gives you a sense of how I will be coming...

Jesus simply wants John and us to know that he will return suddenly when he returns...

The sense we need to understand is this...

Jesus will return without warning...

When the Father sends the Son back, he will arrive quickly...

You won't see Jesus coming, he will come quickly..

When Jesus comes, he comes immediately...

Therefore, we read this..

“Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book..”

What does it mean to heed something?

It means to guard or pay careful attention to something..

You heed a stop sign...

You heed a tornado warning...

In other words, since Jesus will come without warning, make sure you heed the words of the book of Revelation..

So observe, pay careful attention to, obey the words of the book of Revelation..

Now, you may wonder, what are the commands of the book of Revelation...

And the answer is that they aren't many commands in the book of Revelation...

But there is a message of the book, and it is simply this..

Since you know what is coming to this world, you better live in obedience to God...

You better be saved and walking in way that is pleasing to God...

Listen to how Peter describes the end of the world..

Take your Bible and turn to 2 Peter 3:3...

3 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." 5 For [a]when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, 6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. 7 But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. 8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. 9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and [b]its works will be [c]burned up. 11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! 13 But according to His promise we are

looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

Peter says this...

Since you know the world is going to be judged and remade, you ought to live holy and godly lives..

As parents, we understand what Peter is saying...

What do we tell our kids...

If you don't obey me, you are going to get a spanking...

In other words, we give the picture of the future to cause them to live right in the present...

That is the point of the book of Revelation...

Live right now because you know what is coming to those who don't live right...

So Jesus repeats that warning here in verse 7 by simply saying that a proper reaction to the words of Revelation is to obey the word of God at all times since he could come at any moment...

Now, this is not to say that someone who is obeying at Jesus' return will be spared even if they have never repented and trusted in Him...

And this is not saying that someone disobeying in the moment of Christ's return will be doomed even if they had repented and believed...

This is simply motivation to obey for all of us who have believed the gospel...

Heed the words because we want to be found obedient at the return of Christ...

So, the book of Revelation should cause us to look for its literal fulfillment...

And the book of Revelation should motivate us to live rightly...

And now a third reaction to the book of Revelation is found in verses 8-9...

The book of Revelation should cause us to...

III. Love the Compassionate God of Revelation (8-9)

In verses 8-9, we see John repeat a mistake that he had made earlier...

8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. 9 But he *said to me, "Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who [f]heed the words of this book. Worship God."

Like many of us, John is so overcome by all he had seen and even just heard from the angel and even from Christ, so he bows down and tries to worship the angel..

John had made the same error in Revelation 19 at the through of the marriage supper of the Lamb...

And the angel in Revelation 19 had the same response that we see here...

He tells him to get up and stop his attempt at worship...

Instead, John is told to worship God....

Now, here you a very misunderstood term in the word "worship."

What does it mean to worship God?

Well, we are going to look at it tonight in terms of how biblical churches must have God-centered worship.

So, what is worship?

Well without ruining tonight's message, let me give you a quick look at worship...

First of all, worship is not just singing to God...

So many people see worshipping God as singing to God..

Not that can be worship, but that is not the only way to worship God..

Worship is simply a heart filled with love toward God...

It doesn't just happen at church on Sundays and Wednesdays...

It doesn't just happen when we sing...

It happens anytime our hearts are filled with love directed toward God...

Worship happens when you write your check and put it in the offering plate...

Worship happens when you heard the word of God taught and you are filled with love for God due to what you are learning and understanding...

Worship happens as you pray to God and express your gratitude and love to Him...

Worship happens as you fellowship with God's people and hear testimonies of how God is working in their lives.

Worship can happen in church buildings, in your house, outside or really anywhere your heart is filled with love and adoration of God...

And if anything should fill you with love and adoration of God, it is the truth of what God is doing and will do according to the book of Revelation...

When you see God's rescue of his people in the rapture of the church, you should worship the compassion and mercy of God...

When you see God judge the world in the 7 year tribulation period, you should worship the justice of God that does not leave the guilty unpunished...

When you see the Second Coming of Christ, you should worship the faithfulness of God to keep his Word and rule this world as He said He would..

When you see the new heavens and new earth, you should worship the goodness of God to reward His people with a perfect world forever and ever...

The book of Revelation is not meant to cause us to fill us with fear and anxiety but with love and worship of God...

John saw it all and heard it all and felt it all, and his overwhelming response was to worship God...

Look, we should look for the literal fulfillment of the book of Revelation...

We should live by the message of Revelation...

But above all, we must let the book of Revelation fill us with love for God who is bringing the world to an end so that he can reward his people forever and ever...

A final reaction to the book of Revelation occurs in verses 10-11...

I call this reaction a call to..

IV. Let Loose the Active Words of Revelation (10-11)

The Bible says that the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two edged sword and that it cuts to the heart of who people are...

In other words, the word of God is active in the world...

I preach the Word 3 times a week here and it goes into the ears and lives of those who attend...

And it does one of two things every time it enters a person's life...

It either softens and shapes the heart toward God or it hardens and distances the heart away from God...

The book of Revelation is the word of God...

And so every time, the words in this book go out, they have an effect...

Let's read verses 10-11 to see that effect..

10 And he *said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. 11 Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy."

A final reaction to the book of Revelation is a call to action on the part of those who read this book...

And the action is to tell others about what is written here...

The angel tells John in verse 10 to “not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book...”

In other words, John is told to write about what he has witnessed and hear and then send those writings all over the world...

Don't seal them up, John.

Let them loose...

And the reason is this..

The time is near..

In other words, with each passing day, we are closer to the end of time...

Jesus said in Matthew 5:15 that no one takes a lamp and puts it under a basket..

Instead you light the lamp and put it on a lamp stand so that the light spreads in all directions...

In the same way, John wasn't to write about what he saw and then shut and seal the book so no one could read it..

Instead, John was to write the book of Revelation and keep it open so that the words of it are preached and taught and obeyed and God is worshipped...

I think this gets back to the promise of Revelation 1 which states that God blesses all who read the book of Revelation...

Now certainly, God blesses the reading of all of his words, but there is a special blessing tied to reading the book Revelation..

And you can't read it if it is shut and sealed...

That is why pastors must preach this book, and Christians must read this book...

There is nothing scary here, unless you are lost...

Then it is the most frightening book in the world...

Look, tell your neighbors, your co-workers about the book of Revelation...

Tell them to read it and bring you some questions about it...

Look, yall know more about this book that 90% of Christians....

Very few pastors even preach 1 sermon from it much less go through every verse...

If you have been here, you have learned so much about what is coming to the world both for the believer and the unbeliever....

So use that knowledge to start conversations and the coming antichrist or the rise of a global government or about the coming false world religion...

Don't shut the book of Revelation and seal it up so that only you are blessed..

Unseal it and use it to lead others to worship the true God of the world...

Now look as you do that, don't grow discouraged if people dont respond...

Verse 11 reminds us that the word of God is active in both a good and bad way....

For the ones who reject the words of God, they will only grow in their disobedience to God...

For the one who care nothing for the word of God, their guilt and filth will only grow and grow....

Yet, for those accept the word of God, they will grow in holiness...

For those who see the word and trust the word of God, they will only get closer and closer to God...

You see, the words fo the prophecy of the book of Revelation are just as powerful as the words of the any of the other 65 books of the Bible...

And as John turns them loose in the world and keeps them unsealed, they work to harden hearts and soften hearts..

In fact, as I preach now, some hearts in here are growing in their worship of God while others hearts are growing in their rejection of God...

Cause the same sun that melts the wax also works to harden the clay...

I pray that heart is getting softer to God this morning and your heart is filling with love for him...

Because the only other option is a heart getting harder and harder and filling with more hatred of God...

Conclusion

Do not let that be you this morning...

As the word is sent out today, soften your heart to God...

You have not too much sin for Him to forgive...

You have not moved past a point of no return...

God saves the greatest of sinners and the people who are the farthest from Him...

The book of Revelation is book of truth...

And one of the truths of this book is that all who reject Christ will have their part in a lake of fire..

While all who repent of their sin and put their trust in Christ will have their part in a city of life...

I will simply remind you of Jesus' own words as we leave today....

“I am coming suddenly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.”

I pray that you are heeding them this morning and a result you are looking forward the return of Christ or you are you are bowing your life to him as I speak...

Every day is a day where Jesus come quickly..

If that day were today, are you ready to face Him?

May God give you the strength to answer that question honestly....

Let us pray..