

Come! – Revelation 22:17

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *Who Wants It?*

1. Who wants this? Come and get it.
2. My message today is about God's invitation and gracious gift through Jesus Christ

II. TEXT

A. V. 17

And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

1. This passage begins in v. 12 with the words of Jesus – **"Behold, I am coming quickly."**
2. He says that *3 times* in this last chapter of the Bible, and v. 17 is John's response.
3. The *Spirit* is the *Holy Spirit* & the *Bride* is the *Church*.
 - a. the Holy Spirit indwells *all* of those who're born-again and comprise the Church.
 - b. He yearns within us for the return of Christ, moving us to cry out – "Come Lord!"
 - c. Jesus says, "I am coming quickly!" and we respond, "Come quicker!"
4. John then encourages all those who *read* this to join in with the Spirit and the Bride as we invite Jesus to return.

B. *Thirsty?*

1. But it's the last half of the verse that I want to focus on this morning.

And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

2. In the first part of the verse the invitation is *from* believers / *to* Jesus to come again.
3. In this last half, it's the invitation *from* believers / *to* unbelievers to

come to Christ.

Let him who thirsts come.

4. To be human means to have *desires*.
 - a. our most basic desires are the *needs of the body* –
 - 1) there's the need for air, food, drink, & shelter
 - 2) unless these needs are met, we can't survive.
 - 3) so God has set these desires within us as *drives* that must be fulfilled.
 - b. our *soul* also has desires as well –
 - 1) there's the need for companionship & understanding
 - 2) for significance and love
 - 3) what makes the world so interesting and sometimes so troubling a place is the *way* people seek to see these needs met.
 - c. finally, because we're spiritual creatures created in the image of God, our *spirit* has desire – that desire is met in only one thing, intimate fellowship with God.
5. The problem is, sin has blocked the fellowship between God and man.
6. People go through their whole lives meeting the needs of their body and soul, and still, they feel unsatisfied simply because the desire of their spirit for God is unmet.
7. Augustine said – “God has made us for Himself and our souls are restless until they find their rest in Him.”
8. Pascal put it this way – “There is a God-shaped void in every heart that only God Himself can fill.”
9. The world is filled with people trying to satisfy the longing of their spirit by adding *more* to the desires of their *body*.
 - a. they confuse their hunger for God with a hunger for food – *more & better* food -
 - 1) normal everyday food is no longer enough – they need *gourmet & deli*.
 - 2) food becomes an *obsession* for them as they embark on a never ending crusade for some new taste sensation.
 - 3) or they make *cooking* a hobby that demands the remodelling their kitchen and acquiring all the latest in cooking technology.

- 4) and of course, there are those who use food as a kind of *medication*, turning to it for comfort and a relief from the aching desire of their spirit for God.
 - b. they confuse their thirst for God with a thirst for *drink*.
 - 1) they carry themselves to the local watering hole every weeknight for *Happy Hour*, where people are anything but *happy*.
 - 2) and they drown the cry of their spirit with alcoholic spirits.
 - c. and then there are those who confuse the comfort they need from God with the temporary comfort & satisfaction of *sex*.
 - 1) those who seek solace there will find *only trouble* –
 - 2) in frustration, disease, and unplanned pregnancies.
 - d. still others confuse their longing for eternity with a desire for material possessions that will provide some sense of *pleasure*.
 - 1) so they make frequent trips to the furniture and electronics store to buy the latest and greatest of the new technologies that promise *more pleasure* at the expense of less effort.
 - 2) they just know if they can have enough gadgets then surely that nagging sense of dis-ease they feel will finally go away.
 - 3) and if it doesn't, then anytime it *resurfaces*, they can just turn up the volume on their Dolby Pro-Logic 7.1 Surround Sound Boston Acoustics stereo system as they watch their new 16:9 flat panel plasma monitor while sitting in their heat & vibration recliner with the universal remote in one hand and a cold one in the other.
10. Others seek satisfaction for the craving of their spirit by pursuing the desires of the *soul*.
- a. they confuse their longing for a relationship with God with having a relationship with another man or woman.
 - 1) they think that if they could just find the right person, *then* they would be happy.
 - 2) and they go from one romantic relationship to another looking for that elusive thing called “happiness.”
 - b. they confuse their longing for the eternal significance of knowing God with worldly popularity and set about to grab their 15 minutes of fame.
 - c. or they confuse their heart-need for the love of God with the promise of the love of another person – and end up selling

- themselves cheap to the nearest bidder.
11. John says, **“Let him who thirsts - come.”**
 - a. no matter how much or long a man or woman submerges the desire of the spirit for God under the desires of their body and the soul – it never goes away.
 - b. though your stomach may be full and your physical thirst sated with drink,
 - c. though you may be sitting there in your recliner with the sound shaking the walls
 - d. though you may live in a mansion, with thousands of admiring fans and a small circle of close friends and a deeply devoted lover –
 - e. the thirst for God will never go away – and you’ll find that none of these things scratch the itch within.
 12. God *has* made us for Himself and our souls will be restless until they find their rest in Him.
 13. One day Jesus and the disciples were traveling from southern to northern Israel.
 - a. between these two areas lay a region that was populated by a group of people known as the *Samaritans*.
 - b. the Jews despised the Samaritans and so made it a point to avoid their region altogether.
 - c. this meant the normal route between north and south took a detour all the way out to and along the Jordan River – thus bypassing Samaria.
 - d. but on this trip, Jesus took the disciples *through* Samaria – much to their discomfort.
 - e. the reason why Jesus took this route was because He had an appointment with a thirsty woman in one of the Samaritan villages.
 - f. as they arrived at the village well that was some distance outside the city walls, the disciples took off to gather supplies while Jesus waited by the well.
 - g. not long after they were gone, a lone woman came out to draw water.
 - h. much to her surprise, Jesus asked her for a drink.
 - i. when she expressed her *surprise* that a Jew would lower himself to ask a favor of a Samaritan and that He as a man was

- further breaking convention by addressing a woman,
j. Jesus replied by saying,

“If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.”

- k. then an interesting theological discussion ensued as she queried Him on just who He was to make such an offer.
l. Jesus then told her –

“Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”

- m. when she said, “I’ll take some,” Jesus said, “Go get your husband and return.”
n. she replied that she had no husband, and that’s when Jesus *lowered the boom* on her.
o. He told her He knew all about her – she’d had had *5 husbands* and was just living with a guy now.
p. when she asked if He was the long awaited Messiah, He said He was.
q. then we read she *left her waterpot* by the well and returned to the city to tell all the people who she’d found.
14. That abandoned waterpot says it all!
a. she had come to draw *physical* water that would satisfy her for a few hours.
b. but she met Jesus who offered her spiritual water that would satisfy her for eternity.
c. the water of the well of her village was a symbol of the satisfaction she had sought in romantic relationships with men.
1) she’d gone through 5 guys and was on her 6th looking for something that would satisfy but she never found it – and never would
2) Because as Jesus pointed out for her that day – what she was *really* thirsty for could only be found in what He had to offer – Himself!

3) her abandoned waterpot was a symbol of her finding her thirst satisfied in Christ, the fountain of living water.

C. Come!

1. **“Let him who thirsts - come.”**
 - a. it’s a *simple invitation* –
 - b. if you recognize a thirst for something that the things of this world just do not satisfy – then come!
 - c. if you’ve pursued all kinds of things trying to find rest from that inner nagging that there’s more to life than you’ve been able to discover – then come!
 - d. Christ is the answer and the satisfaction you’re looking for.
 - e. so – COME!
2. Note that – it’s just “Come!”
 - a. it’s not “Strive – Labor – Exert Yourself – Do Your Best.”
 - b. it’s not “Buy – Purchase – Make a Deal.”
 - c. the invitation isn’t – “Let him who thirsts, conduct hydrology studies, secure a construction permit, file an environmental impact report and then dig a well.”
 - d. it’s **“Let him who thirsts - COME.”**
 - e. just come!
 - f. as Jesus said to the Samaritan woman – just ask, and He will give you living water that will become in you a **“fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”**
4. The invitation goes on –

Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

- a. who can come? Who is this invitation to?
- b. whoever is thirsty. Whoever desires.
- c. the only prerequisite we find to coming to Christ is an honest admission of need.
- d. God must do a work in us to stir us up to the awareness of our need for Him.
- e. but since 2 Peter 2:9 tells us God is not willing that *any* should perish, we can have great confidence that He *will* work on *every* heart to point out that need.
- f. in fact, He doing that right now.
 - 1) there are people here this morning who *right now* are

realizing what they've been trying to find satisfaction for in the things of the world is a spiritual thirst for God that only He can satisfy.

- 2) God is making your real need known to you right now
 - 3) and while He will highlight that need and point out it's solution –
 - 4) He will not force you; force is contrary to love – and love is what He wants you to know!
 - 5) so having worked in your heart to point out your truest need, He then leaves the decision to you.
- g. the invitation's been given; now the response is up to you.
5. God puts it this way in Isaiah 55
- 1 Everyone who thirsts, stop and listen: Come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.**
 - 2 Why do you spend money for *what is not bread*, and your wages for *what does not satisfy*? Listen carefully to Me, and eat *what is good*, and let your soul delight itself in abundance.**
 - 3 Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you . . .**
6. As I said, the only prerequisite is an honest admission of need
- a. John says – **“Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.”**
 - b. it isn't, “Whoever *understands* the complexities of the atonement.”
 - c. it isn't, “Whoever *does* 500 hours of penance as a demonstration of true repentance.”
 - d. it isn't, “Whoever is *able* to live the Christian life without mistakes and failures.”
 - e. it isn't, “Whoever is *worthy* of the love of God.”
 - f. it's simply, “Whoever *desires*.” Whoever recognizes his/her *need*
 - h. whoever realizes they're a sinner who needs a Savior to rescue

- them.
- i. WHOEVER!
 - j. Charles Spurgeon wrote -
“What a big word that is! Whoever! There is no standard height here. It is of any height and any size. Little sinners, big sinners, black sinners, fair sinners, sinners double-dyed, old sinners, aggravated sinners, sinners who have committed every crime in the whole catalogue, - whoever.”

III. CONCLUSION

A. Take!

Let him who thirsts - come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

1. I hope you catch the *deep yearning* in these words “Come – Take!”
2. I hope you can also perceive the great difference there is in them and the other religions of the world.
3. All of this world’s religion can be summed up in the idea that you must *bring* something to *give* to the gods. [\[1\]](#)
4. The essence of Christianity is summed up in the idea that God invites us to *come & take* the water of life freely.
5. We can’t bring anything to save or commend ourselves before God, but we can *take* the salvation He offers.
6. Harvey Penick was a golf pro whose material success in life came late.
 - a. he was 90 years old when two little books on golf he’d written sold more than 2 million copies.
 - b. but he never intended to write any books.
 - c. in the 1920s Penick bought a red spiral notebook and began jotting down observations about golf.
 - d. he never showed the book to anyone until 1991,
 - e. then he shared it with a local writer and asked if he thought it was worth publishing.
 - f. the man read it and told him yes.
 - g. the next evening he left word with Penick's wife that Simon & Schuster had agreed to an advance of \$90,000.
 - h. but Penick balked – he said that with all his bills there was no

- way he could advance Simon & Schuster that much money.
- i. the writer had to explain that Penick would be the one to receive the money.
7. People often have Penick's reaction to the fabulous gift of salvation offered in Jesus Christ.
 8. We ask, "What must I do?" God answers, Come! Take!"

B. The Barrier

1. Earlier I said that sin has placed a huge *obstacle* between God and man so that fellowship with Him is blocked.
2. Jesus's work on the cross has removed that barrier.
3. There *is no* barrier between God and man today because of Christ.
4. The only barrier that exists is between us and Jesus because of our stubborn will.
5. He says "Come!" and we say "No!"
6. It's time for you to say, "Yes!"
 - a. it's time for you to come.
 - b. for you see, not only is there *deep yearning* in these words –
 - c. there is also a sense of *urgency*.
 - d. don't forget, Jesus said, "Behold, I am coming quickly."
7. This invitation is both an opportunity & a *responsibility*.
8. If we decline an invitation, we have only ourselves to blame.
9. [Story of Switchfoot Concert – Couple Summers ago]

[1] Guzik, David *On-Line Commentary*