

Thirsty? Come! – Revelation 22:17

Read vs. 6-10; 16-17

1. This is our last Sunday in Rev. // This Wed. will be our last study as we cover chs 21-22.
 2. So this week completes are 4th time thru the entire Bible here at CCO since we started in Sept. '82.
 3. I can't think of a better way to verse to end with than v17 & a good old fashion Invitation to Faith in Christ.
 4. Let's read v17 again
- 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. There's an **urgency** to this invitation.
 - a. Look at the 1st words of v7.

Jesus says, "**Behold, [carefully consider this] I am coming quickly.**"
 - b. V12 **Again** Jesus says, "**& behold, [in case you missed it the 1st time] I am coming quickly.**"
 - c. V20 The 3rd time **seals** it: "**Surely I am coming quickly.**"
 2. Jesus didn't mean He was coming **soon** after John had these visions.
 - a. He meant His return would be **rapid**; something that happens **in a moment**.
 - b. The Return of Christ isn't going to be the slow infiltration of His ways into the life of the world as the Church gradually takes over the affairs of Earth.
 - c. His return isn't spread over years, months, weeks or even days.
 - d. When Christ comes again, as the Bible says, it will be **in an instant** & every eye will see Him.
 - e. His coming is like lightning that pierces the sky.
 3. History is God's Story. And that story is now, **in our time**, drawing to a close.
 - a. God wants us to be aware of how the story unfolds. So He's given us His Word.
 - b. In the pages of the Bible we read about **what has been**.
 - 1) We read about creation, the making of man, then his **un-making** in the Fall when we chose to rebel against God.
 - 2) We learn about God's plan to rescue us from sin & death, & restore us to the original plan.
 - c. But God doesn't just tell us what's been, He also tells us **what's to come** so we might have hope, & realize when these things come to pass that He is indeed the Master of History.
 4. So the Bible has much to say about what conditions will be like when Jesus comes again.
 - a. The World today sees all those conditions in place.
 - b. We have good reason to believe these are the End Times, the Last Days, & Jesus is about to Return.
 5. So the **urgency & earnestness** that marks the invitation of v17 is **even greater here today** as we **READ** these words than when John **WROTE** them.

COME!

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. A couples yrs ago I got an email from someone who'd just started attending CCO.
 - a. They said how much they enjoyed the service & message & planned to keep coming.
 - b. They said what they appreciated was that I didn't spend a lot of time parsing the fine points of Greek vocabulary & grammar.
 - c. That may have been a reflection of where they came from.
2. This morning; I want to take some time to unpack this word "Come!"
3. Note there IS an exclamation mark after it. It belongs there.
4. We'll see WHO says it in a minute. But first, you need to know what this word MEANS.
 - a. El-thay means to come from one place to another.
 - 1) But the emphasis is on the **arriving, not the leaving**.
 - 2) It means to **appear** in a place, & there's the idea that the appearance is **public**; it's not hidden or secret.
 - 3) The whole idea is to arrive & be counted as present, seen, known, recognized.
 - b. It's a **command** that calls for action right now. // & it's **2nd person singular**.
5. This isn't a half-hearted, general invitation to whoever might happen to hear it.

6. This is a clear-eyed, zeroed-in, personal, urgent, eager, intense, compelling, plea that YOU would leave where ever you are now, it doesn't matter what you've done or are into – and that you'd COME to Faith in Jesus, right now, here today among all of us that that' you'd take your stand among us in a new identity as a son or daughter of the living God.
7. You can do that right now, right where you are.
8. This invitation is given by the Spirit & The Bride.
 - a. As we saw last Sunday, the Bride is the Church, all those who've been born again by the Spirit of God.
 - b. The goal of the Holy Spirit is to bring people to faith in Jesus.
 - c. So **any** Spirit-filled church is going to be engaged in proclaiming the Gospel & eager to see people born again.
9. This is why we LOVE the Harvest Crusade & encourage people to go & take someone who needs the Lord.
10. It's why we regularly invite people to surrender to Christ.
11. Christian, look at those next words
And let him who hears say, "Come!"
 - a. Those who've heard the Spirit say, "Come!" & **do** come to Faith in Christ,
 - b. Are to take up the cause calling others.
 - c. Christians should be **contagious**; spreading the remedy to sin & death.

Thirsty?

1. Then John says,
And let him who thirsts come.
2. Have you ever been **thirsty**?
 - a. Not a little parched; your throat dry.
 - b. I mean, have you ever **craved** a drink of water?
 - c. Have you ever been **so thirsty**, you started to get a little worried what might happen if you **couldn't** get to some water?
3. Years ago when my oldest son Luke was 12, we went on our first backpacking trip in the Sierras.
 - a. I planned the trip by looking at topo maps, picking a trail that said it had several streams.
 - b. But it had been a season like we're having now & those streams were all dry.
 - c. We set out on the first day with only a pint of water each & quickly blew thru it.
 - d. The trail was all uphill for 11 miles. No water; not a drop.
 - e. Late in the afternoon, I began to get scared because the effects of severe dehydration were setting in for both of us.
 - f. When we finally got to where we'd planned to camp the first night, there was a lake w/water.
 - g. Let me tell you: NOTHING has ever tasted as good as that cold mountain water.
4. When John speaks of **thirst** here; he doesn't mean a desire for water.
 - a. He means the **deeper** longing of our inner person.
 - b. You see, you & I were created FOR God.
 - c. We don't exist as autonomous beings who answer to ourselves.
 - d. We're here FOR A REASON – and that reason is an eternal love relationship with God.
5. You & I are the echo to God's voice. // He spoke and we were.
6. But Mankind turned from God & made up its own reasons for being.
7. All of history is the sad tale of humanity's attempt to find meaning & purpose apart from God.
 - a. Some look for it in **pleasure**.
 - b. Others by **amassing wealth & power**.
 - c. Some think it's found in **fame**.
 - d. Then there are those who realize the need is **deeper**; that it's a **spiritual** need.
 - 1) But instead of turning to the God Who's There, they make up a new one.
 - 2) They fashion a god after THEIR image & invent a new religion to appease their idol.
8. But none of this brings real satisfaction. Just ask Mick Jagger; he can't get no.
9. It's all just a pointless distraction.
10. It was the brilliant Church Father Augustine who widely said;
"God has made us for Himself & our souls are restless until they find their rest in Him."

11. The philosopher Pascal put it this way; “There’s a God-shaped void in every heart that only God can fill.”
12. There’s a book of the Bible that’s devoted to this very thing: It’s called ***Ecclesiastes***.
- a. Written by King Solomon of Israel, it’s a treatise by the world’s wisest, richest & most powerful man on the futility of trying to find satisfaction apart from God.
 - b. Solomon was a genius & thought he’d find his ***purpose in science***. He didn’t.
 - c. He sought ***peace in philosophy*** but couldn’t.
 - d. He sought ***satisfaction*** in food, clothes, possessions. And though he had the very best of everything, as much as he wanted, it eluded him.
 - d. Thinking his soul’s itch would be scratched by the ***pleasure of sex***; he amassed a harem of a thousand of the prettiest women around.
 - 1) It was never enough.
 - 2) Listen, if a thousand women aren’t enough, 10K won’t be either.
 - e. Let’s see; what’s left? Oh yeah = ***FAME!***
 - 1) Solomon was so famous in his day, heads of state of surrounding kingdoms travelled just to see if what was said about him was true.
 - 2) Travel in that time was ***difficult***; It was downright ***dangerous***.
 - 3) Yet they came by the dozens. And none left disappointed.
 - 4) What they encountered in Solomon’s Jerusalem went way beyond their expectations.
 - f. But Solomon’s conclusion to the pursuit of all this was this;
 - 1) He drew a line under it all, & here’s the sum, the result, the total
 - 2) It’s all vanity; emptiness, a chasing after the wind.
 - 3) The ***ONLY*** thing that brings any satisfaction, any peace & sense of purpose is a relationship God.
14. Are you thirsty?
15. Do you long for something & your life has been a long tale of trying one thing after another looking for it?
16. What you’re looking for is Jesus. ***COME!***
17. This is so simple; so clear. So why doesn’t ***everyone*** come?
18. In Jer. 2:13 God says –

“My people have committed 2 evils: [1st] They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and [2nd-they’ve] hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.”

- a. People don’t come to Christ because they’ve ***made themselves content*** w/inferior water.
 - b. These are all specialty waters. Each claims to be unique; to offer something the others don’t.
 - 1) But did you know while a few are indeed from mountain springs, or artesian wells in exotic locales
 - 2) MOST of them are just ***filtered tap water?***
 - a) Aquafina is. Dasani & Nestle Pure Life are.
 - b) You can guess where Sam’s Club & Costco’s water comes from.
 - 3) They take tap water that’s 2/10^{ths} of a cent, run it thru a filtering process, put it into a plastic bottle made of petrochemicals, slap a fancy label on it and charge you anywhere from 50 cents to \$2.
 - 4) Most people assume it’s healthier because it’s bottled.
 - a) But the federal regulations for tap water are in fact ***higher*** than for bottled water.
 - b) And the FDA has ***1 person*** who only works ***part-time*** overseeing the sale of all bottled water in the US.
19. I say all that to make the point These are ***not*** all they’re put up to be.
- a. Nor are the offerings of the world to satisfy our thirsty ***souls***.
 - b. And the world exacts a heavy toll. It doesn’t sell its wares for cheap.
20. But here in v17, God says,
Whoever desires, let him take the water of life ***freely***.
21. In Isa 55, God says ...

¹ Everyone who thirsts, stop & listen: Come to the waters; & you who have no money, come, buy & eat. Yes, come, buy wine & milk without money & without price. ² Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread, & your wages for *what* does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, & eat *what is* good, & let your soul delight itself in abundance. ³ Incline your ear, & come to Me. Hear, & your soul shall live; & I will make an everlasting covenant

w/you.

22. WHO is this invitation to?
 - a. In Isa. 55, it's to "everyone."
 - b. Here in v17 it's "whoever's thirsty."
 - c. The only prerequisite is an **honest admission of need**.
23. 2 Pet 2:9 says God is not willing that **any** would perish.
 - a. John 3:16 says God loves people so much He gave His only Son that they need NOT perish, but could have eternal life.
 - b. **Because** God loves all, & wants each of them to be saved, we can be confident His Spirit has drawn them; & not lightly.
 - c. Even the hardened skeptic & that nasty scoffer that's mocked & ridiculed you for believing in Jesus –
 - d. They've been wooed, convicted, & drawn toward Jesus by the HS.
 - e. God loves them no less than you.
14. He's doing that right now.
 - a. There are people here God's drawing.
 - b. The Spirit, and now we Jesus' Bride say, "COME!"
 - c. Are you thirsty, longing for purpose & peace; aching for something that will satisfy your soul?
 - d. Take of the water of life, freely!
15. The invitation's been given; now the response is up to you.
 - a. The only prerequisite is an honest admission of your need.
 - b. God says, "Whoever **desires**, let him take the water of life freely."
 - c. It isn't, "Whoever **understands** the complexities of the atonement."
 - c. It isn't, "Whoever **does** 500 hrs of penance as a demonstration of true repentance."
 - d. Nor is it, "Whoever is **able** to live a perfect life."
 - e. It's simply, "Whoever **desires**." Whoever recognizes & admits their **need**.
 - f. WHOEVER!
Big sinners & Littler sinners.
White, black, brown, yellow, red, & camo sinners.
Punks, Goths, Disco, Jazz, Rock, Country & Classical sinners.
Vegetarian, Vegan, & Grass-fed Rib-eye eatin' sinners.
Large, Small, & Medium sinners.
Those who Recycle & those who Don't.
Those who roll the toothpaste up from the end & those who squeeze in the middle.
 - g. WHOEVER! >> We're ALL sinners in need of a Savior.
 - h. The ONLY ONE Who **CAN** save, is Jesus.

CONCLUSION

1. As we end, please take careful note that v17 is the **LAST invitation** to come to God in the Bible.
2. There have been many hundreds of invitations in Scripture before this; but this is the last.
3. I need to say something now that some might call a scare tactic.
4. It's not. I say it with all sincerity and because an obligation is placed on me as a servant of God & a steward of the Gospel.
5. Everyone who's ever been born will at some point have a last opportunity to turn to God & be saved. Everyone.
6. This **last invitation** in the Bible to "Come" points up a serious & sobering challenge.
 - a. That invitation is last either because you say Yes & **DO** come.
 - b. Or it's last because you decline and are eternally lost.
7. The Spirit & the Bride say. "Come!"