

2017 National Ministries Conference  
*Calling for Revival*  
“The Commission of the King”  
Revelation 22:6–17  
Rev. Joseph Franks  
October 23, 2017 • Monday Evening Sermon

This is the Word of God. Revelation 22:6–17 says [6] *And he said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place.”*

[7] *“And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”*

[8] *I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, [9] but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”*

[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 evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy.”*

[12] *“Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. [13] I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”*

[14] *Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. [15] Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.*

[16] *“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”*

[17] *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 desires take the water of life without price.*

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, we want to learn from the conclusion of Your revelation. Would You please impress upon us that which You want us to know and do. We know You have called Your church to make much of Jesus as we go into all the world and preach the Gospel. It is Your desire Lord to bring in the masses that Your heavenly choir may grow and grow and grow. You have used us in the past, You are using us in the present and may the work that we do in the future even outshine that which You have done in the past, in Jesus’ Name, we pray, Amen.

There is only one truth, one inspired body of literature, as ‘*Sola Scriptura*’ is our cry for the Scripture alone is that which is infallible, that which can bind men’s consciences, is transcultural from age to age and is our only rule of faith and practice. The Scripture is true because it comes from God who never lies. The Son is the Amen, the Truth, the Logos. The Holy Spirit is known as the Spirit of Truth. The Father, Son and the Spirit have given us Old Testament Prophets that were kept from error as they inscribed the Scripture for us. The Scripture will not be broken. Then that same God in three Persons inspired Apostles to write

without error and their scribes. So we have this completed body of literature that ends with the book of Revelation.

Jesus Christ looks at His church and says 'It's true, it's true truth, it's trustworthy' and that's why you place a high premium on fallible men who stand behind the pulpit that try to give you the Word of God several times a week and not the dribble that comes from so many other sources. John has heard truth. The King is alive and the Kingdom is at hand. The evil ones are many and their damage is great but I heard the 'amen' that the King is coming and when He comes victory is in His hands. This is true, trustworthy and should be exciting. It should make you want to hear it, see it, fall on your face and worship which is exactly what John did, wrongly. John heard, saw, and fell at the feet of the angels to worship. Very quickly the angels said 'No, we don't worship men, angels or saints for we only worship God.' I think John had to repent again and then quickly turned to worship God.

Jesus Christ is wrapping this revelation up and He and His angels that are with Him have something to say. The One who is Truth would have you know that there are only two groups which are there in the text. There are sheep and goats, wheat and tares, cursed and blessed.

Let's start with the accursed, the goats. According to the true and trustworthy One the cursed are filthy characters. Filthy characters do evil. I like to use Dr. Reeder's know-be-do theology. When you know it changes who you are which has a manifestation in what you do. Because they are filthy they do evil. What kind of evil do they do? They seek to take the power of God and use it in an occult fashion so that they can control their own circumstances like sorcerers. They use their body, mind and technology in evil ways. They are sexually immoral. They are murderers who value not the sanctity of life. They are idolaters who have many gods to whom they bow down and give their service. They are liars who do not do the truth or speak the truth. They are deceptive.

In all these things that these accursed people are, they don't hate them but love these things. It's what they want to do and be. They are called by the true and trustworthy One, dogs. In the end this group will be treated very fairly. Justice will be shown. They will get what they deserve. What do they deserve? The true and trustworthy One says it is the lake of fire reserved for the devil and his followers. That is one of the two groups.

Then there are the blessed ones, the sheep. Here are the characteristics of these. They are filthy characters and they are evil. They are sorcerers, murderers, sexually immoral, liars, idolaters and they love their iniquity. And they are dogs, who have received grace. Jesus Christ has come into the world and died for all of those transgressions. All of those sins were placed on the back of Jesus Christ for His elect. He fully paid the price of all the sins of those blessed people. He gave them the gift of faith and repentance because they were so dull, dead and never would have come to those conclusions on their own. Then they expressed their faith, repented, and were justified. They were declared righteous, even though by nature they weren't.

Do you see the difference between the characteristics of the accursed and the blessed ones? By nature there are no differences for they were not better sheep than the goats. It is only by the grace of Jesus Christ that you have any difference. Because Jesus Christ justified you it changes who you are. It is not what you are now but the way you were when you were a goat. You were those things but now He calls you righteous, holy, blameless and now you walk in such a way.

So now what are some more of the characteristics you have or the consequences you get? You keep washing your robes because you still have some of these fleshly tendencies to commit some of these sins but you are not ones who love them anymore so you keep repenting and

claiming the blood of Jesus. You keep having that Gospel wash you. You are the ones who keep the words of the Book, see the tree of life, get the water of life and are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. When you finally arrive at the gates of glory there you find your name written in the Book of Life and the gates swing wide open because that is home for you. This is what is true and trustworthy.

The true and trustworthy One who knows best says that there are only two groups. All too often we think of that middle third that doesn't exist. There are those really bad people, us really good people and then those who are kind of in the middle, trying to figure out where they are. Every single person you come across is in one of these two groups. This is what comes from the One who is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last for this is true and trustworthy. There is only One who is true.

Jesus Christ seems to end with what ought to be three invitations. The Root of Jesse, the Morning Star, the Beautiful Light, the King of Kings from the line of David steps forth and this is what He says. The Spirit filled bride says 'Come Lord Jesus.' What does that mean? One possible meaning is the idea of Maranatha. This was a communion tradition from the first century saints as they gathered to break bread and honor the Lord from the fruit of the vine. They would look forward to heaven when that Supper from heaven was going to come and end that communion saying 'Maranatha, Maranatha, come Lord Jesus.' They were saints who were suffering tribulation and they invite Jesus to come back. Come on Lord, my body hurts, I'm sick of sin, I want to see You, I want my place in that heavenly choir, it's painful to see what is going on, Lord we invite You so please come!

This is the cry of His people who want Him to come back to earth because they are hurting, tired and want to see Him. They want His Kingdom consummated.

The second invitation is when the Spirit filled bride says 'Come *to* the Lord Jesus.' The Spirit filled bride realizes what the heavenly Father is like. When Adam and Eve sinned they didn't run towards God they hid from God and what did God do? He came looking for them. He called out for them, pursued them and sacrificed for them because that is what our God is like. A little while later we see a man named Jonah who has been called to go preach to the Ninevites. This preacher doesn't even want these people to come to know salvation but that's not God's heart. God has a greater love for the Ninevites and He wanted to see the masses come to Him. God so loved the world that He sent His Son (John 3:16).

Your heavenly Father is out there screaming 'Come to the Son' and that's why I love the passage in Psalm 2. Psalm 2:12 says *[12] Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.* Stop your foolish rebellion and kiss the Son. The Son is the One who came to seek and to save the lost. He is the One who makes us like Him, to be disciple makers and fishers of men. The Spirit is the One sent by the Father and the Son to do Their bidding and bring people in. The Father, Son and the Spirit are evangelistic and the church is to be so as well.

The church is to be thankful that people are in the family of God but that is not enough. The church says 'Are you thirsty? Come on! Can you hear? Come on! What do you desire? Come on! You who are thirsty come to the Water of Life. You who are dead in your sins come to the Life! Why would you head that way? Come on!' This is what the Spirit filled church does as the church and the bride say 'Come!' This is the cry of His church to Him telling Him to come on now.

The third invitation is the troubled soul who sees where they sit. They see the benefits of the blessed and they are thirsty, desirous and for some reason they can now hear. They say

‘come into my heart Lord Jesus.’ I don’t think for a moment that everyone reading this are my brothers and sisters in Christ. If Jesus had one of twelve that was a fraud, a traitor then there is maybe one of you who are not His. On behalf of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit I ask you, I command you not from my authority but from the authority of Jesus Christ, bow the knee, call upon Jesus Christ right now and be saved. Get all the benefits that the sheep have. We would love to rejoice with you if you this day give Christ your life. Come to Jesus right now.

I want to end with this question which is rooted from Revelation 2:19. By the end of 2018 which is 14 months from now, can Jesus say the following to you, to us? Revelation 2:19 says [19] *I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first.* Let’s rejoice in what God has done in the past, in what God is doing in the present but wouldn’t it be grand if we heard Jesus Christ saying at the end of 2018, ‘2018 was the best year yet!’

Part of how I serve here at Briarwood is through para church partnerships. We partner with preschool, high schools, colleges, med schools, internationals, businesses, ballet programs, soccer programs and I could keep going on and on and on. Why? It is because we want to make disciples. We partner with ministries in Birmingham to make disciples. We spend lots of money planting churches and we want to spend more because evangelism is just the beginning part of the discipleship process and we know that people need what you are experiencing all across the land.

We have a ministry called Embers to a Flame, which is fanning the flame because we think churches are important and that we need more of them and not less of them and we want them to repent, remember and recover so we want to revitalize churches as well. I am calling you to get involved in personal evangelism. I met ‘Stan the man’ this week who rides his motorcycle across country with his Bible talking with people about Jesus and you don’t have to be Stan the man and Stan the man doesn’t want to be you. That’s ok that we evangelize in different ways and to all walks of life but we are all to be engaged in personal evangelism.

I come to the conclusion that perhaps one of the best ways to evangelize is through small groups. You take someone who is a bold extrovert, someone who has the gift of hospitality, someone with the gift of apologetics and someone with the gift of mercy and put them all together, working together and holding one another accountable and what a powerful team that is. So take what you are involved with and ask the Lord ‘how can we make disciples?’

I would ask you to partner with me in doxological evangelism. The Word of God is faithfully presented here at Briarwood week after week and maybe you can’t share with eloquence or are able to answer all the questions but perhaps you can invite someone to come with you to church and then take them to lunch. Let’s ask the Lord to use the preaching of the Word because that is how all the great revivals start. It is where the Word of God is preached. Let’s pack the pews and get involved in doxological evangelism.

Two more applications and then I will be finished. Why do we enjoy giving? It is because it funds ministries that make disciples and together we are able to see the lost come to know Christ. Finally I know that there are lots of good ministry opportunities for you and not all of you belong on one of my teams but I have work to do. Church revitalization, church planting, para church partnerships and urban ministry are the ministries I oversee. If you don’t know where your giftedness lies or how you can plug in but you have some passion to use your prayer skills, your administrative skills, hospitality skills or whatever it may be, please call us here at Briarwood at (205) 776-5200 because we have something for you to do.

Part of the reason to have a national ministries conference is that Christ has gifted each of you and He is calling you to serve Him. He wants you to be fishers of men using the gifts, personality, history, relationships and all that you have to serve Him. I want Jesus Christ to look at us and say ‘I know your works, your love, your faith, your service and your patient endurance and that your latter works exceed the first.’ Let’s pray.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, right now please call another lost sinner home. Break their heart, give them hope in Christ and may we have that experience today. Father, allow us to invite all the time, everywhere we go and for people to know our Christ because we love You so much. Lord, Jesus Christ, we are getting weary for it gets tough. We know You are going to come soon but we don’t know when but we’re so ready to be done with the devil and his friends. We are so ready for our devilish flesh to be removed. We are ready for the new heavens and the new earth. We are ready to sing with You and see You on Your throne. Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus, come, in Your Name we pray, Amen.

Power Point

One Truth

Two Groups

Two Conclusions

Two Supplications

Final Question—By the end of 2018, can Jesus say the following to us?

“I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first.” ~ Rev. 2:19