

Let Him Who Thirsts Come!

Scripture Reading: Revelation 22
Text: Revelation 22:17

The chapter before us is full of beautiful pictures of the New Jerusalem. It is a passage dear to many believers. I believe our text contains an important invitation for all. Before we look at it, you need to know that there is a challenge in understanding these words. There are two ways to understand this verse. Some would say those who are saying "Come" in this verse, are addressing Christ. The other view says that the Church, the Spirit are addressing sinners, saying, Come to Christ. This is the way we shall consider it. Its an invitation to all to drink of Jesus Christ. Its an offer of the gospel to any and to all, to you and to me.

Rev. 22:17 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.

I. The Source of the Offer

1. Church's History:

a. **New Testament Age:** The book of Revelation is like a series of sweeps across history. Each time, an *angel comes down from Heaven* to John and another vision of the Church's time on earth, is presented by the angel. With each new panorama描述, the focus comes closer to the end of earthly history. The last sweep, beginning in chapter 20 moves briefly over the New Testament Church Age: Satan is bound, the gospel goes forth bringing with a spiritual resurrection.

b. **The Final Events:** Christ returns and great events occur. Satan is released for a short time, then he gathers his armies together and battles Christ. Christ overtakes them and judges them at His throne, and throws them into the Lake of Fire. All Satan's followers are then judged and punished, death is then destroyed. The new Heavens and earth come.

2. The Urgency of Her offer: The time for this Christ's coming is *at hand*. Christ says, *I come quickly, and My reward is with Me*. The blessing of those who obey Him, He shall give to them, and punish those who disobey. With this glorious vision before her, the *Spirit and the Bride respond and say, Come!* We are now in the last days before Christ comes again. He is the *Bright and the Morning star*. He shines in the night sky now--the day is fast approaching.

3. The One who Prompts, Sends and Enables the Church to do the call. The Spirit summons 召集 and assembles the Bride by this gospel call, "Come!" The Holy Spirit whom Christ has sent to His Church, promising that this Helper would *convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment*, He says to all, *Come!* He works in the Church, so that she responds to the glories that are before her, and she too says to sinners everywhere, *Come!*

4. The Incomplete State of the Church in this World: She is called the Bride in this passage, not yet a wife, indicating that she is not yet full. God has yet more, she is the betrothed but not all is ready. Christ is coming, the glories of the New World are around the corner--but around us is a world that lives in ignorance, and undoubtedly many who are Christ's sheep yet outside of the fold.

5. This gospel call is the means God's uses to work change in a sinner's heart. God uses this

means and He places this duty upon the Church to carry out the ministry of the Word. In this verse, there is an echo of the message. The world shall become *full of the knowledge of the Lord* as this gospel call resounds and echoes throughout its lands.

II. The Need of this Offer

1. Physical Thirst: In Genesis 21, there is a story of Hagar and her boy Ishmael. In the Wilderness of Beersheba, they ran out of water. Ishmael was thirsty and could not go on anymore. Hagar put him under a bush but couldn't watch him--he was going to die. But the Lord came to her and gave her a promise and opened her eyes--He showed her a well where there was water. Without water he would die, as would we.

2. Spiritual Thirst: This is a thirst of the heart. Ps. 63: *My soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.* Ps. 42: *My soul thirsts for God just like a deer pants 喘气 for (渴望) water.* The Holy Spirit awakens us to see this great need. Then we see how sin has dried us up, how it brings death and wrings out 绞出来 the life within us. There is misery, sadness, broken-hearts, and the horrors and nightmares of what God shall do to us because of our sin.

3. The Quenching of this Thirst: Where the Spirit has brought people to their senses so that they know they are thirsty, He also sends the one from the Church, to say, "Come!" Let Him who is thirsty, let him come to Christ! If you dear friend are thirsty, Come! For Christ says, *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.*"

4. The Source of the Water: This water comes from Jesus Christ. Rev 22:1 *And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.*

5. The Effect of this water: It is life-giving. Rev. 22:1 *In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.* John 7:38 *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."* Come, and know through Christ the refreshing coolness of the forgiveness of sins that He gives by His death.

III. The Recipient of the Offer

1. The Free Offer of the Gospel: *And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely,* summarizes the gospel message of the Church and the Spirit. The gospel is free, without price. There is nothing the sinner is called to bring, but he is only called to take. If there was cost, if there was a cost, the price of one good work, one good decision, one good thought of God--who would be able to merit 博得 it? God comes according to our state. He knows we can do nothing and out of rich grace, He asks for nothing. Rom. 3 *We are justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* Eph. 2 *It is the gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast.*

2. The Universal Offer of the Gospel: It is for anyone, *whosoever will.* *Look unto Me all the ends of the world and be saved.* Every people, nation, family is to be called. There are no distinctions: no political, ethnic 种族的, gender, class differences. Consequently it is for you.

3. The Blessing of Receiving: All who hear and take, know life to the fullest. They are part of the Church, the Bride who shall marry and be united to Christ. *No one can take away her joy*, no one can steal her life. The bride of Christ shall have a marriage ceremony where there will be no objections 拒绝 nor accusations 指控--Christ is her refuge, He has saved her to the fullest. She will forever drink of Him and know Him and live with Him in the splendours forever.

4. The Warning of Not Receiving: This gospel invitation is here, at the end of the age, in these last days before judgment, offered to all, offered to you. But if you will not drink, the message is clear: you will be left on the outside forever. (15) *Outside the gates of the city are dogs, and sorcerers, and sexually immoral, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loves and practices a lie.* Therefore, *whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

*O Christ, He is the fountain, the deep, sweet well of love!
The streams of earth I've tasted more deep I'll drink above:
There to an ocean fullness His mercy doth expand,
And glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.* (Anne Ross Cousin)

Amen.