

Come Quickly, Lord Jesus!

“Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

“Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.”

The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

... He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.”

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

“Keep your eyes on the road.” This is a useful piece of advice. It makes so much sense. If we don’t keep our eyes on the road while driving, we could get into all sorts of trouble. We could drive off the road into someone’s bushes. We could ditch the car. We could get into a serious accident. That is why the State of Minnesota passed a law that effective in August that you can’t be holding or using your cell phone while you drive. Keep your eyes on the road is the message. Yet, we sometimes let our eyes wander. We stare at that person mowing his lawn and when we glance ahead we must slam on the brakes because we didn’t see that the car ahead of us. It is simple command but we need to be reminded once in a while to keep our eyes on the road.

Today we are reminded to keep our eyes on the road. Which road? The road to heaven. To forget this is like driving a car without keeping our eyes on the road. So, let’s hear God’s reminder to keep our eyes on the road ahead. He does this by teaching us a simple prayer, ***“Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”*** With this prayer we ask that Jesus come as soon as possible. With this prayer we ask Him to give us the courage to use the time we have to the best of our ability.

I. We pray Jesus comes soon.

As our text stated, Jesus is coming back soon. There is no stopping it. And it will mean the end of the world as we know. All of this will be gone.

Sounds pretty final and it is. If Christ comes back tonight, it means giving up the family vacation you planned in June. It means I will not walk my daughter down the aisle on her wedding day in July. It means you juniors in high school will not graduate next year. I have to admit it. A part of me wishes Jesus would not come back for a while. I want to give my daughter away in marriage. I want to see my sons graduate from college. It would be nice if some day I can bounce grandkids on my knee. Admit it. You would be fine if Christ waited a while longer. You may think it would be good if came after your lifetime so you can enjoy as much of this world as you can. Be careful. The Bible has a word for this kind of thinking. It is called idolatry. It means you love the world and all it offers so much you don’t want to be with God.

That is why we have texts in the Bible like Revelation chapter 22, to slap us on the side of the head and to “keep our eyes on our road.” Jesus is coming at any time. We can’t stop it. And yes, it means all of this will be gone. So what do we pray for? What do we want knowing all that? That he come, not after our lifetime, not ten years from now, but that he come quickly. That he comes today. Why?

Listen to what we would get. ***“Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.”*** We can see how someone will not want Christ to return anytime soon. If he comes to reward us according to what we have done, what do we deserve? This makes us think of those words in Romans 6:23, ***“The wages of sin is death.”*** For the sinner, knowing that God will reward him for his actions is a fearful and painful feeling of dread. Adam and Eve hid from God for they knew what they did was wrong. We know what we have done. We know what we deserve.

But for the believer these are beautiful words. My father-in-law used to fly radio control airplanes. He did something very wise. On each of airplane he wrote his address and phone number and these words, “Reward to whoever finds this.” If he somehow lost his airplane and it crashed into someone’s yard, they can return it for a Twenty Dollar reward. If they don’t return it, the airplane is worthless to them. But if they return it, they get a free \$20 dollars. That reward is free.

That is how Christ will reward us. Again in Romans Paul states, ***“Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts in God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.”*** To drive this point home, Jesus continues in our text, ***“Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.”***

What’s the difference between those who enter the gates of heaven and those who are left outside? It is not a matter of who sinned and who didn’t, for we all have sinned and fall short of God’s glory. Those who enter believe and have washed their

robes clean in the blood of the lamb. They receive the reward not as an obligation but as a free gift. It is based on the death and resurrection of Christ. When the crowd around Peter asked him what they should do, he said simply to believe and be baptized. When the jailer at Philippi asked Paul what to do, he said to just believe. Those who remain outside do so because they love and practice their rebellion. They reject Christ as their Savior.

Graduates, I am a little envious of you. Think of the education you will get, the jobs you will find, maybe the families you get to raise. There is so much. But what is your prayer? You pray, ***“Come quickly, Lord Jesus.”*** This sounds like the prayer of an elderly person who can’t wait to leave his aches and pains behind. But this is the prayer of a young person as well. We know it is better for us if Christ came back tonight instead of fifty years from now. Yes, it means not doing the things you could do here on earth, but what are they compared to the treasure stored up in heaven for you? With these words he assures us that we will not be left outside. We will be rescued. Jesus is coming soon to give us the reward for which he sacrificed his own life. So pray, ***“Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”***

II. We pray that he comes to others.

What if Christ waits a tad bit longer? What then?

“The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.” The Spirit is the Holy Spirit. The bride is the bride of Christ, the members of his one, Invisible Church. In unison they cry out to the world, “Come.” But this isn’t a prayer that Christ comes back tonight. It is an invitation to the world. We sent out invitations to our son’s graduation party, and many came. When the Church says, “Come,” it is an invitation to the world to come to Christ.

“Whoever is thirsty, let him come.” This mirrors the words of Isaiah, ***“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come . . . buy . . . without money and without cost.”*** When the Church says, “Come,” when the Holy Spirit through baptism and through the Words of the Bible invites and moves heart to believe, then anyone who wishes may take the free gift of the water of life. No one is excluded from the marriage feast in heaven. Those who are left outside exclude themselves by refusing to hear and believe.

So dear friends, though we know it would be better for Christ to return now, we are OK if he waits a little longer. It would mean we can use whatever time he gives us to invite all to come. Look forward to spending time with your children and grandchildren and family, not only to play games but to also invite them to Christ and heaven.. Look forward to the time we can spend with friend and stranger alike, but not just to go bowling, but to invite them to come and be saved. View each minute, every second, as a chance to quench the thirsty with the message of a Savior, Jesus Christ. This means your thirst, too, as you continue in the Word.

Graduates. Who knows where you will be in four or six or ten years from now. Who knows whom you will meet and marry, where you will work or the friends you will make. You will touch many, many lives. Remember the words of this text. You are the ones who have more opportunities than you can count to say to all those people you meet, “Come, you who are thirsty. Drink from the free water of eternal life.” So I suppose you can say that we not only honor your graduation from high school, we are also commissioning you before you go in different directions to invite as many as you can to the wedding of the Lamb.

So that is the interesting dilemma we Christians face. We know it is better if Christ returned now so we can be rid of a sin sick world and receive our reward in heaven. Yet, it would be fine if Christ waited a little while longer because so many do not believe. So what do we do? We pray in all earnestness that he comes quickly. And if we open our eyes and see he isn’t here yet, then we use our time wisely to glorify him and invite others to come. Amen.