

# **Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion**

**Date** : 30 May 2021

**Sermon Title** : What We Do

**Speaker** : Rev John Foo

**Text** : Revelation 22

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Book of Revelation tells about the coming of the end, a revelation of the end times. Yet, the world and life have been going on for a long time and the end does not seem to be anywhere in sight. Hence, it is going to be a challenge to hear that we have to prepare for the end when we do not hear or smell anything of the end.

We read about the apocalyptic signs of the end times in the earlier chapters of Revelation. The end that it is referring to is the end of the present age that we are in. Revelation 21-22 talks about the beginning of a new age, about going back to a relationship with God that was originally supposed to be when God first created humanity and the world.

Therefore, let us approach this not with a sense that everything is going to be over, but instead, with an anticipation of what will begin.

## **The Holy City**

The concluding vision that John saw in Chapter 22 gives us the sense that all the earlier visions shown to John are fulfilled. The affairs of the old world have been settled, the wicked are cut off, the faithful preserved, the earth is purified and renewed and the universe is reset once again. In the closing of this book, we see the much anticipated holy city of God, the new Jerusalem, being described as the perfect eternal dwelling place. Revelation 21:1-2 describes the new heaven and new earth replacing the first heaven and first earth. Down from heaven will come the new Jerusalem, the holy city of God, for the redeemed people of God to live in. The remaining of Revelation 21 (from verse 9 onwards) describes the Holy City. Revelation 22:1-5 describes the things that are inside the holy city that will matter to those who are making their eternal dwelling there.

God is going to put the holy city, Jerusalem, in place of the Garden of Eden. Instead of going back to a garden, God is bringing us to a city, where the redeemed of the Lord will stay forever.

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*For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7*

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In the holy city, there is a river flowing from the throne of God providing living water. There is also the tree of life, and God himself will be the light. The holy city will be better than a utopian city because everything will be perfect, everything will be provided for by God. There will even be no sickness, no illness, no pain nor suffering, no fears, no tears, nothing that will corrupt any mind and heart. Everything will live perfectly together in peace and harmony, forever.

This holy city may seem too far-fetched and idealistic but the real issue is not with the holy city but us:

## **1. We need to do a reality check on ourselves rather than on the holy city of God.**

Many Christians are very interested in the apocalyptic signs and visions of the end times, but may not be fully convinced about the reality of the glorious magnificence of this holy city. For them, it may just be another new city to live in, and besides, it may not happen in their lifetime. But the last chapter of Revelation is not trying to convince us to believe in this new holy city. It merely informs us what God is going to bring about in the end; that God is definitely going to put this city on the new earth. More importantly, God is telling us there is something more critical that we should be concerned with, and that is: ourselves.

The closing words of Revelation do not talk much about the people who are going to inhabit the city; those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. But it talks a lot about those who do not get in:

1. Revelation 22:15 – the dogs, sorcerers, the sexually immoral, murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood
2. Revelation 21:8 – the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars
3. Revelation 21:27 – nothing unclean and anyone who does what is detestable or false

Three times in the closing words of Revelation these types of people are mentioned as those who will not enter into the holy city.

### **Those who will never make it into the holy city (Revelation 21:8)**

- **Cowardly** – Those who cannot stand firm in their faith especially under the pressure of coercion or persecution
- **Faithless** – Those who decide the gospel is not true, at least not true enough to die for

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- **Detestable/Polluted** – Believers who try to have it both ways in the social customs and in the church; compromisers and collaborators; secularised in their spiritual lives
- **Sorcerers** – Those who dabble in fortune telling and divination, seeking special knowledge from stars and practising all kinds of magic
- **Sexually immoral** – Those who engage in blatant sexual immorality and promiscuity
- **Murderers** – Not just those who take the life of another, but also support and condone the murderous acts of others
- **Idolaters** – Those who practise pagan idolatry. Worshipping other so-called gods and idols
- **Liars** – Those whose words and teachings are not only false, but whose lives are steeped in deceptions and lies.

As Christians, we may have gained the ticket of salvation, yet if anybody is found to be practising all these things (mentioned above), he is not going to make it into the holy city. For those who will not make it into the holy city, God is giving an implicit warning here.

## **2. We need to repent and return to the ways and rule of God now before it is too late.**

- Time is near especially when we do not know when Christ is returning. We need to be prepared.
- It will be too late when death comes or when Christ returns. (Revelation 22:11) - too late to learn the scriptures, too late for any kind of deep faith, too late to develop any spirituality or holiness in our lives, too late to be faithful. We will be what we have been in our lives during our time here on earth.
- When judgment time comes for us to give an account, we have better be prepared because John saw that the dead will be judged according to what they had done. (Rev 20:11-12)

## **CONCLUSION**

The Book of Revelation serves as a constant reminder of what will certainly come. Someday, satan and evil will be destroyed, death will die, pain, suffering and weeping will cease. But until that day we are to strive to live fully in the present; to be faithful, holding on to the promises of God's words and also in His promise of a new heaven and earth with the holy city. May we be found faithful to God, always seeking to live truly in faith. As we live in the present, let us always worship God; exalt and praise Him in our hearts, believing that all that He had said will come to pass. May we be able to say, as John had said, "Come, Lord Jesus." (Rev 22:20)

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As a group, spend some time to share your success and struggle in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do at the previous meeting.

### A. Review Sermon Content

**Purpose: Reflect on one key takeaway.**

Appoint someone to read Revelation 22 twice, slowly.

1. At the end of the reading, the reader will say, ‘This is the Word of the Lord.’

All to respond, “Thanks be to God.” Our response reminds us that this is the Word of the Lord. Just as God had spoken to His people in the past, He is still speaking to us even today, right now.”

- a. As God's word was read, which verse speaks to you the most?

- b.
  - (i) What is the key takeaway for you from the sermon “What We Do”?
  - (ii) How will you align the way you live to your key takeaway?

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## **B. Relate Sermon Content**

***Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.***

- 2a. (i) What strikes you about the holy city of God?  
(ii) Would you like to live there? Why?
  
- 2b. (i) Who are those who will not make it to the holy city?  
(ii) How does that impact your understanding of salvation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3a. How ready are you for Christ's judgment?
  
- 3b. What changes do you need to make to be able to give a good account of what you have done in your life?
  
- 3c. How can your group members encourage or help you achieve 3b above, so you may be prepared to enter the holy city of God?

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## **C. Testimonies and Prayer**

***Purpose: Give glory to God and seek Him.***

4. Share your testimony on how the Holy Spirit has helped you overcome any of the things listed in Revelation 21:8 that would prevent you from entering the holy city.

OR

Give thanks to God for the promise of a magnificent glorious holy city that you can look forward to dwell in as His faithful disciple.

5. As a group, pray and discuss how your group can help each other prepare for Christ's return as well as overcome concerns in 3a, 3b and 3c.

Seek the Holy Spirit's empowerment to remain faithful to God, always seeking to live truly, worshipping God in your hearts and believing that all that He had said will come to pass, so you may be able to say, as John had said, "Come, Lord Jesus."

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