

Sermon For May 25, 2025 – Easter 6*

Revelation 22:12-21 (EHV)

Theme: **You are invited!**

- 1) To become a citizen of heaven.
- 2) To find life in God's Word.

¹²Look, I am coming soon and my reward is with me, to repay each one according to what he has done. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. ¹⁴Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the Tree of Life and so that they may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵Outside are the dogs, that is, the sorcerers, the adulterers, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. ¹⁶I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright Morning Star. ¹⁷The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears this say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who wants the water of life take it as a gift. ¹⁸I give this warning to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. ¹⁹And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the Tree of Life and in the Holy City, which are written in this book. ²⁰The one who testifies about these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! ²¹The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints. Amen.

Have you ever been invited to attend a wedding banquet? If so, consider it an honour. Because of how expensive receptions can be, brides and grooms are usually very selective with whom they choose to celebrate their special day.

The reason I mention weddings is that you are all invited to a very special wedding: the marriage between Christ and His bride, the Church. This union will take place when He visibly returns on the Last Day to raise the dead. What a joyous day this will be! Believers will begin their new life together with Christ in the everlasting joys of heavenly paradise.

The fact that both the groom and the bride invite you to this wedding demonstrates their immense love for you. Where is their invitation? You find it beautifully written on the pages of Scripture in the crimson ink of Jesus' blood, shed for the forgiveness of your sins. Jesus and His bride, the Church, want you to partake of the everlasting, festival joys of heaven. Listen to their invitation under the theme: **You are invited:** 1) To become citizens of heaven. 2) To find life in God's Word.

Part One: To become citizens of heaven

Shortly before our sermon text, God describes the Last Day as a wedding. When Christ comes, He will be united with His bride, the Church, who is all decked out to meet Him. What is she wearing?

The richly wrought robe of righteousness that Jesus won for her through His life, death, and resurrection. The LORD has set the date and wants you to be a part of this festive occasion.

He says: ¹²*Look, I am coming soon and my reward is with me, to repay each one according to what he has done.* ¹³*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.*

Jesus is coming soon: what a simultaneously scary and beautiful thought! How so? Because He is our holy God, whom we've sinned against, and yet He is also our Saviour, who offered up His life in payment for all our sins, reconciling us to Himself.

Are you prepared to meet Jesus? Every day that passes brings us closer to his arrival. And He is bringing his reward with him: the right to live with Him in the peace and joy of paradise forever.

But what does Jesus mean by saying he will *repay each one according to what he has done*? God demands perfection, and we are sinful. If Jesus rewarded us according to what we have done, how would we ever be able to enter heaven? Hell would be our fate!

Thanks be to God: Christ's righteousness covers us! Jesus lived a life of perfect obedience to all of God's commands for us, and freely offers everyone this righteousness to cover the sins of all who turn to him in repentance and faith, as the next verse of our text indicates:

¹⁴*Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the Tree of Life and so that they may enter through the gates into the city.*

The robes mentioned in our text symbolize our righteousness before God in thought, word, and deed. Sadly, we are so dirty before God that the prophet Isaiah once wrote: *All of us have become like something unclean, and all our righteous acts are like a filthy cloth.*ⁱ

Thankfully, there is something that cleans our filthy robes: the blood of Jesus, *the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*ⁱⁱⁱ

Earlier in Revelation, the apostle John recorded a vision of a countless multitude of believers in heaven, who *have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*ⁱⁱⁱ Yes, regarding us believers, the apostle Paul wrote: *You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Indeed, as many of you as were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ.*^{iv}

When you were baptized, God stripped away the filthy rags of sinfulness and clothed you with His Son's perfect righteousness. Because Christ's righteousness becomes yours through repentance, Jesus invites you to partake of the wonderful fruit of the Tree of Life from which Adam and Eve were forbidden access after they fell into sin. Through faith in Jesus, God grants you citizenship in the heavenly Jerusalem and adopts you as a royal member of His family.

¹⁵*Outside are the dogs, that is, the sorcerers, the adulterers, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.*

Those whose lives reflect the unbelief of their hearts are neither invited to the LORD's everlasting wedding feast nor will they be allowed entrance into the Holy City of His Church. Why? Because they loved their sin more than Jesus and refused to wash their wickedness away in the blood of the Lamb. Such people will have to remain apart from God in hell, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.^v

¹⁶I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright Morning Star.

Since Jesus the Messiah has declared these things, they are as good as done! Therefore, do not be complacent with what you have heard Jesus say. Receive His promises in faith and act on His invitation to be cleansed of all sin. Repent and trust in Jesus alone for salvation. For not only is your LORD inviting you to become a citizen of heaven, His bride (the Church) also invites you to find life in His Word.

Part Two: To find life in God's Word

¹⁷The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears this say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who wants the water of life take it as a gift.

The Holy Spirit calls out through the Church's Gospel preaching. "Come," they indiscriminately call out to all who will hear and heed their invitation. Whoever's guilt-ridden soul thirsts for salvation is invited to drink the free water of life. And this water satisfies, as Jesus once said: *"Whoever drinks the water I will give him will never be thirsty ever again. Rather, the water I will give him will become in him a spring of water, bubbling up to eternal life."*^{vi}

The water Jesus offers through his Church is the Gospel: the good news of how He has forgiven all our sins and reconciled us to God. It declares us free from all guilt and condemnation, offering us peace and everlasting life with the LORD. That is why the Spirit and Church invite us to come to God's Word and drink Jesus' promises, for it is only there that we find God's lifesaving water for our souls.

Did you know that the human body is composed of approximately 76% water? A person might live without food for a few months, but a person will die within 3-4 days without water. Therefore, when the LORD describes His Gospel as water for the soul, He wants you to know that you need to be drinking it constantly lest your soul becomes dehydrated with guilt and your faith withers away.

Thankfully, when God called you to faith, He put a little spring inside of you: a new man that reminds you of Christ's work and urges you to meditate on the Gospel. But if you let your sinful nature suppress the desire to listen to God's Word and partake of His Sacraments, then that little spring will dry up. Therefore, heed the Spirit's invitation and study His Word with fellow believers at church.

But that invites another question: what kind of church does Jesus want you to attend?

Let me answer that question with an illustration: imagine you are very thirsty and there are three glasses of water in front of you: 1) pure Rocky Mountain Spring water; 2) 100% distilled water; and 3) water that has a hint of blue toilet bowl cleaner chemical added to it in an attempt to make it more attractive. Which would you choose?

I'd pick the pure Rocky Mountain Spring water. Why not the distilled water? Because distillation removes from the water all the good electrolytes your body needs, and can make you sick. What about the water with a hint of toilet bowl cleaner added to it to make it bluer? While the colour of such water may look appealing, the chemicals added to the water are harmful.

The Holy Spirit invites you to His Church to drink the pure, living water of salvation. Unfortunately, there are many false churches that either omit or add elements to the pure water of God's Word to make it more appealing. By doing so, they transform God's soul-saving Word into something that can make your soul even sicker than before!

For that reason, Jesus says: ¹⁸*I give this warning to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book.*

Sadly, many church bodies add man-made rules to the Bible. They speak of unwritten traditions of the church that you must follow to be a proper Christian. They misinterpret Scripture to make it say something it does not. Just as you would not want to drink water with dangerous chemicals added to it, so you do not want to spiritually drink these teachings that the false churches add.

Jesus also says: ¹⁹*And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the Tree of Life and in the Holy City, which are written in this book.*

Just as there are churches that add to Scripture, there also are churches that remove or redefine things from God's Word in an attempt to make the Bible less offensive to the modern mind. God warns people who do such things that they are in danger of losing their place in heaven.

No one has any right to stand in judgment over God's Word, adding or subtracting from its teachings. That is why the Spirit encourages you to join a church that teaches God's Word in truth and purity, always pointing to Jesus!

But how can you tell whether your church is such a church? Only by prayerfully studying the Bible in humility and faith, looking for Jesus on every page. Then the Spirit will lead you to the truth, enabling you to tell whether your church adds, subtracts, or changes God's Word in any way.

²⁰*The one who testifies about these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon."*

The wedding date has been set, and the invitations have been sent out. Jesus is coming soon! At the Spirit's prompting, heed Christ's call and RSVP to His invitation by praying: *Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!*

²¹*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints. Amen.*

ⁱ Isaiah 64:6 EHV

ⁱⁱ John 1:29 EHV

ⁱⁱⁱ Revelation 7:14 EHV

^{iv} Galatians 3:26-27 EHV

^v Cf. Matthew 22:13

^{vi} John 4:14 EHV