

(Intro Slide)

Mark 4:21-23

And (Jesus) said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand?
²²For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light. ²³If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: Do we have ears to hear?

Jesus in Matthew 13:16

But blessed are your eyes,
for they see,
and your ears,
for they hear.

ESV

Jesus also said . . . READ SLIDE

TR: Do we have eyes to see?



**We all, in our arrogance, imagine we can see and hear.
-- We think that certainly we observe things as they really are .
. . we have the facts.
-- But, many of us can attest to the fact that God pulled back
the curtain through an “aha moment” . . . we just couldn’t see
what we couldn’t see.**

**TR: That can be the way we experience the Book of Revelation .
. . we think we see, we imagine we hear . . . but perhaps we
really don’t.**

“Come: See, Hear, Respond”

Come, SEE what is “SOON”

Come, HEAR Jesus

*Come, RESPOND with those
who see and hear*

So, we come to the final chapter, the last words, and we are given an invitation to COME.

-- To COME and SEE

-- To COME and HEAR Jesus Himself

-- To COME and RESPOND as those who have really seen and heard.

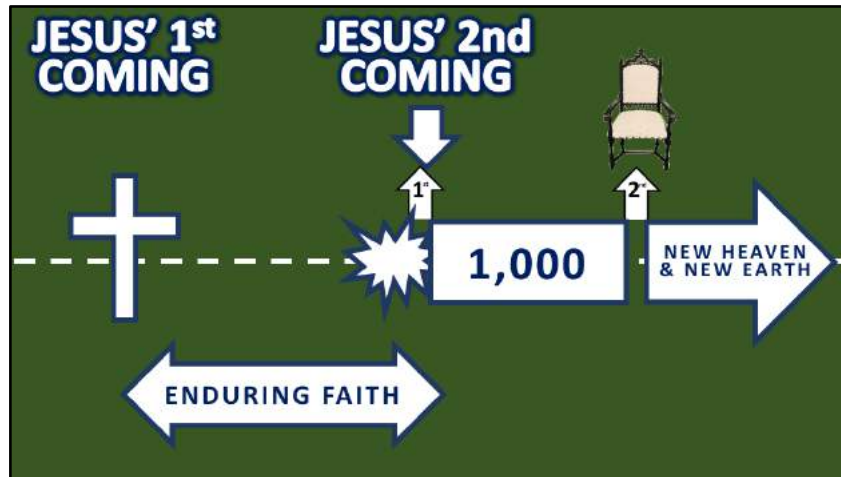
TR: Revelation 22 invites us to . . .

Come, SEE what is "SOON"

6

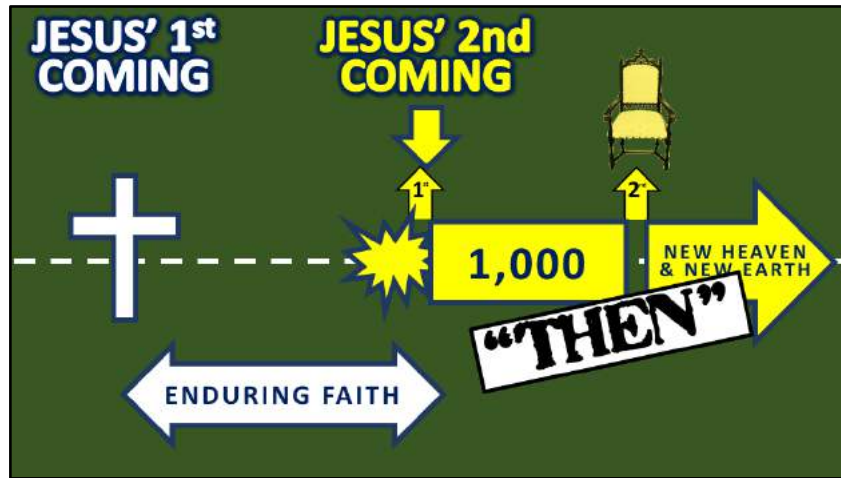
. . . READ SLIDE

TR: In broad strokes overview, the Revelation of Jesus through John to us has taught us . . .



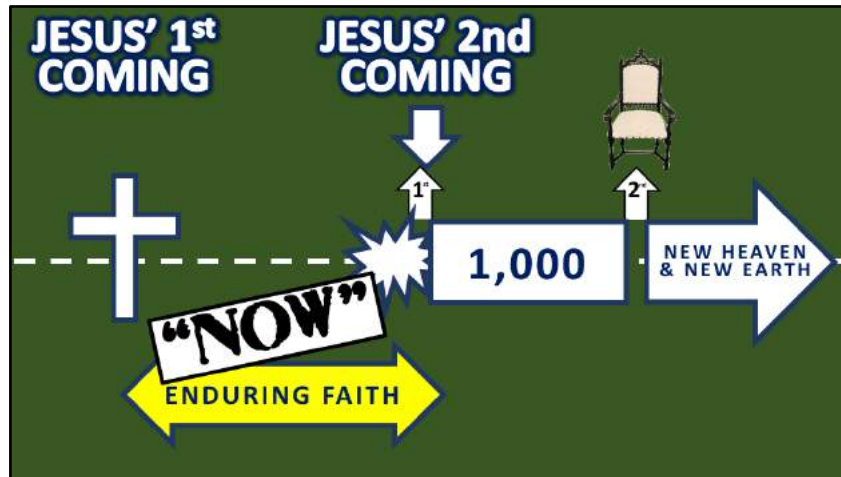
REVIEW SLIDE

TR: We are being invited to **COME, SEE WHAT IS SOON,** speaking of . . .



... the THEN of the events surrounding the return of Jesus and the final judgment at the Great White Throne.

TR: Even though these events have not yet happened in these past 2,000 years, the SOON coming of Jesus has a ...



. . . major impact on our NOW.

-- When we SEE what is SOON, we can have the hope that leads to ENDURING FAITH NOW.

TR: In Revelation 21 we saw some much of the NEW and AWESOME, but there is more than just the NEW HEAVEN and NEW EARTH or the NEW JERUSALEM . . .

Then the angel showed me the river of **the water of life**, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city;

ESV

Read with me beginning in verse 1 . . . READ SLIDE

TR: Verse 2 continues . . .

also, on either side of the river, **the tree of life** with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

ESV

READ SLIDE

- The tree of life was in the Garden of Eden.
- It was the tree that was guarded after the Fall into sin . . . so that humankind would not need to be locked into that sinful state forever.
- The river of life is foreseen in Ezekiel, where the waters of blessing are ever deeper.

TR: Verse 3

No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will **worship him**. ⁴They will **see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads**.

ESV

READ SLIDE

- The promise of God's dwelling with us will become a reality in its full.
- We will worship Him with our very existence.
- We will see His face, even though no one has seen God before . . . "unfiltered"
- We will be identified as His, even as the High Priest in the OT had a turban who gold band said "Holy to Yahweh" (Exodus 28:36), we will have the covenant-faithful Lord's name on our foreheads, whether literally or figuratively marking us as His.

TR: And, as in chapter 21, there are things missing . . .

And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will **be their light**, and they will **reign** forever and ever.

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: These verses could have been taken with chapter 21, for in addition to all else that is NEW . . . we are invited to . . .

Come, SEE what is "SOON"

- The NEW Eden

14

READ SLIDE

-- Like bookends, God starts His story out with Eden and ends with the fulfillment of His plan with the NEW EDEN.

TR: Then we read in verse 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.**"

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- For whom are these words trustworthy and true?
-- For God's servants, slaves, who need to see what is **SOON** in the **THEN** to live **WELL** in the **NOW**.

TR: The entirety of Revelation is made up of . . .

Come, SEE what is "SOON"

- *The NEW Eden*
- *The trustworthy & true words of the book*

READ SLIDE

-- And, as the end of verse 6 says, they are given to **SHOW US WHAT MUST SOON TAKE PLACE.**

TR: In our notes we find a second box, much larger, in which we hear the fourfold invitation to . . .

Come, *HEAR* Jesus

- 1** ➔ *Behold, I am coming soon (7)*
- 2** ➔ *Behold, I am coming soon (12)*
- 3** ➔ *I, Jesus, testify . . . (16)*
- 4** ➔ *Surely, I am coming soon (20)*

READ SLIDE (quick overview of all)

TR: In verse 7 we read . . .

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

I, John, am the one who heard and
saw these things. And when I heard
and saw them . . .

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- The words of Jesus in verse 7 are, in a sense, interrupted by the words of John in verses 8-9.

TR: John adds his words because he understands the temptation to SEE and HEAR and still get it wrong. In others words, to still not have eyes to see and ears to hear.

Revelation 22:8b-9 page 1144

. . . I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, ⁹but 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.**"

ESV

John's response was READ SLIDE

TR: Jesus invites us to COME AND HEAR HIM say . . .

1 ➔ *Behold, I am coming soon (7)*

❖ *We will be blessed, if we keep
the words and worship God.*

**... READ SLIDE and we will be blessed, John says, if we keep
the words and worship only God.**

TR: The angel gave John further instructions in verse 10

And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, **for the time is near.** ¹¹Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

ESV

READ SLIDE (verse 10 only)

-- The prophecy of the book of Revelation was not just for John but for his hearers and readers.

TR: They, and we, need this foretelling and forth-telling, which is what prophecy is . . .

1 **Behold, I am coming soon (7)**

- ❖ *We will be blessed, if we keep the words and worship God.*
- ❖ *Words we need, for the time is near.*

. . . FOR THE TIME IS NEAR.

TR: Verse 11 is a bit difficult to understand . . .

And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. ¹¹Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

ESV

READ SLIDE (Verse 11 only)

-- This verse could be misunderstood as saying, "Whatever will be . . . will be."

TR: But, I think it is a poetic way of saying that we need the words of this prophecy, for the time is near . . .

1 **▶ Behold, I am coming soon (7)**

- ❖ *We will be blessed, if we keep the words and worship God.*
- ❖ *Words we need, for the time is near.*
 - *When there will be no turning back*

... READ SLIDE

-- We often hear words of hope that reverberate with "It never to late" ...

TR: ... but, in truth ...



READ SLIDE

TR: The second of the fourfold invitation, COME, SEE WHAT IS SOON, repeats the first . . .

2

Behold, I am coming soon (12)

26

... now in verse 12 ... READ SLIDE

TR: Jesus says ...

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

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: Jesus is coming soon . . .

2 ➔ *Behold, I am coming soon (12)*

❖ *For a time of just judgment*

. . . READ SLIDE

-- for a time of “recompense” when we will be compensated for our works.

-- That ought to scare us since all of our righteousness is like filthy rags . . . even the good things we do are for our own glory and not God’s.

TR: Jesus is coming soon as the judge but we don’t need to be afraid, for . . .

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.

ESV

READ SLIDE

- The imagery of having clean clothes, white wedding garments, dressed in the righteousness of Jesus Who has taken away all our sin . . .
- . . . is combined with the picture of eating from the tree of life, and . . .
- . . . entering the New Jerusalem, the 1,500 mile cubed image of the Holy of Holies in which we will dwell with God forever.

TR: Behold, Jesus is coming soon, and we will be blessed . . .

2 *Behold, I am coming soon (12)*

- ❖ *For a time of just judgment*
- ❖ *We will be blessed, if we wash our robes*

READ SLIDE

TR: If we have not washed our robes in the blood of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, then we will be **OUTSIDERS.**

Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

ESV

Verse 15 . . . READ SLIDE

-- Using some of the harshest words for describing those who do not know nor follow God . . .

-- . . . we are warned that if we see and hear we need to respond today, before it is too late.

TR: We will be blessed if we wash, but, if we do not, we will be . . .

2 *Behold, I am coming soon (12)*

- ❖ *For a time of just judgment*
- ❖ *We will be blessed, if we wash our robes*
 - *And not be “outsiders” to the tree of life and New Jerusalem*

. . . outsiders.

-- Don't be confused by thinking that the gates to the New Jerusalem are always open and therefore these “outsiders” could get in.

-- The gates are open for the outsiders are not in the New Heaven and New Earth . . . they are truly and fully outside . . . cast into the darkness and gnashing of teeth place called the second death, the lake of fire and sulfur, eternal hell.

TR: Even those moments that we all have from time to time, when we feel like . . .



- . . . outsiders looking in,**
- . . . should help us open our eyes and ears to Jesus.**
- It is still not too late, but there will be a time when it is.**
- Jesus invites you IN today, to wash your robes.**

TR: The third of the fourfold invitation, COME, SEE WHAT IS SOON, starts in verse 16

3

I, Jesus, testify . . . (16)

34

READ SLIDE

TR: We read . . .

“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.”

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: What does Jesus testify to?

3 → *I, Jesus, testify . . . (16)*

❖ *An invitation to be blessed*

I believe it is to the invitation to be blessed . . . and no longer be an outsider.

TR: Verse 17 gives us a triple invitation to such a blessing . . .

Revelation 22:17 page 1144

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.

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: Three times we hear COME . . .

3 → *I, Jesus, testify . . . (16)*

❖ *An invitation to be blessed*

- *The bride and the Spirit want Jesus to come again.*
- *Those who hear want Jesus to come again.*
- *Won't you come and ask for a drink of living water . . . and then cry, "Come!"*

. . . we hear COME from . . .

-- The bride and Spirit,

-- . . . and from those who have ears to hear,

-- . . . and then from those who are spiritually thirsty and drink the water of life that is given to us without price . . .

-- . . . because Jesus paid the full price on the cross.

-- This is the same water of life mentioned in verse 1 in the imagery of the New Eden.

TR: I think of the words of Charles Spurgeon in the 1800's . . .



**And let the one
who is thirsty
come; let the one
who desires take
the water of life
without price.**

I don't know if they we like the antique water fountain they put out in Big Rapids' downtown each year.

-- But, Spurgeon pondered that they only thirsty people on the streets of London were probably the folks in their fancy carriages. Folks who wouldn't think of lowering themselves to get a drink the way the street urchins did.

-- The water is here . . . without price . . . won't you partake?

TR: Jesus testifies to this invitation to be blessed, but He also testifies to the . . .

3 *I, Jesus, testify . . . (16)*

- ❖ *An invitation to be blessed*
- ❖ *A warning to “keep” the words*

. . . READ SLIDE

TR: For those who play fast and loose with the book of Revelation, who won't seek to live under its message . . .

Revelation 22:18-19 page 1144

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: **if anyone adds to them**, God will add to him the plagues described 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 described in this book.

ESV

. . . verses 18-19 are quite the rebuke . . . READ SLIDE

-- This doesn't mean that we will agree on exactly what every symbol in the prophecy means . . .

-- . . . but, that we won't miss the essential and repeated applications of belief in the soon coming of Jesus.

-- Patient endurance, enduring faithfulness, complete loyalty, resistance to worldly temptation . . . these are the responses of those with eyes to see and ears to hear.

TR: The fourth of the fourfold invitation, COME, SEE WHAT IS SOON, is introduced in verse 20

3 → *I, Jesus, testify . . . (16)*

❖ *An invitation to be blessed*

❖ *A warning to “keep” the words*

4 → *Surely, I am coming soon (20)*

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

ESV

READ SLIDE . . . YES, I am coming soon.

TR: For those of us who live almost 2,000 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus, we have to ask the obvious question . . .



- . . . what does Jesus mean when He says He is coming soon?**
- I think of my impatience as a child . . . “Are we there yet?”**
 - Dutch song of almost being there, but not quite yet.**
 - The question of “soon” is a matter of “compared to what?”**
 - When we think of eternity, what is a couple of thousand years?**
 - How far is here to Florida . . . cf. to from here to the furthest star we know about?**

TR: The soon coming of Jesus tells us that His coming again is . . .

.



... IMMINENT, that is, at any time.

-- And, it speaks to us of living life with a certain URGENCY, because the NOW is the day of salvation, not THEN.

TR: Do we SEE and HEAR?

“Come: See, Hear, Respond”

Come, SEE what is “SOON”

Come, HEAR Jesus

***Come, RESPOND with those
who see and hear***

If we have eyes to see and ears to hear, we will be those who RESPOND.

TR: In verse 20 Jesus says, “Surely I am coming soon.” and the response of those who have washed their robes, who have asked for a drink of living water, who have kept the words of this prophecy . . . are . . .

. . . Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

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

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- Verse 21 reminds us that this book is also a letter addressed to the real churches of Asia Minor in the first century.

TR: With those actual believers, we are being invited to . . .

*Come, RESPOND
with those who see and hear
“AMEN.
COME, LORD JESUS!”*

READ SLIDE

-- We are being invited by the Lord Jesus Himself, who ends this revelation to John not through an angel but directly by Himself.

TR: We are invited by the One who said of Himself . . .

**I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the first and the last,
the beginning and the end.**

**I am the root
and the descendant of David,
the bright morning star.**

ESV

READ SLIDE

- He is the One Who holds the story in His hands.
- He is the One promised in the line of David the OT King
- He is the bright and morning star, foretold of the One who would come from the tribe of Judah

TR: It is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Lamb Who was slain, who invites us to respond. Will you respond by saying .

..

“AMEN.”

SO BE IT . . . YOUR WILL BE DONE!

I'll trust You, even if it costs my life.

**I'll trust what You've said
about what is right and wrong.**

**I'll trust only You
for my sufficiency and security.**

READ and REVIEW SLIDE

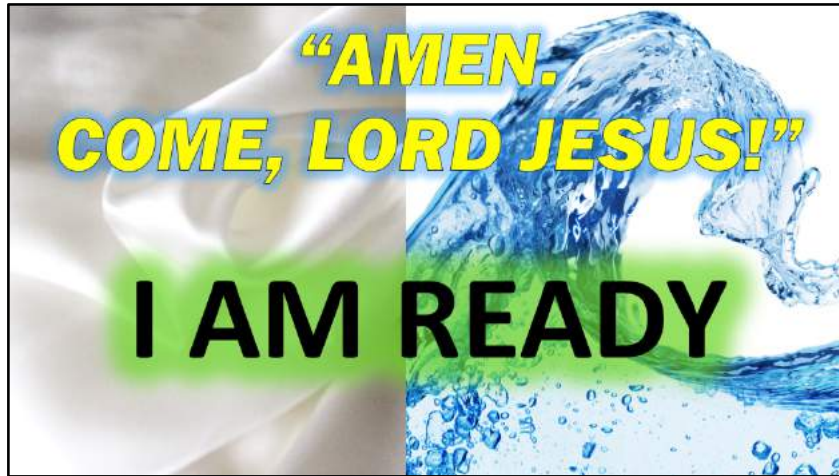
**TR: Will you respond and say AMEN? Will you respond in
worship and say . . .**

“COME, LORD JESUS!”**Fulfill all Your Promises!****Destroy Evil!****Glorify Yourself!****Dwell with Your People!****Judge the Fruit of My Life.****READ SLIDE (header only)**

-- . . . when we say that with the saints of old, using the Aramaic “Maranatha”, we are saying, “O Lord, come!”

-- We are saying . . . **READ SLIDE (subpoints)**

TR: Those who have ears to hear and eyes to see can cry out AMEN. COME LORD JESUS . . . because . . .



. . . I AM READY.

-- I have washed my robes and have been cleansed from all unrighteousness.

-- I have taken the drink of living water and been born again.

-- Are you ready?