

December 31

Revelation 19-22

# WE MADE IT!!!!!! 366 videos later, project 4:4 is completed and we land at the new heavens and new earth of Revelation 19-22. Party!

Well Revelation 19 starts with a wedding. It is the wedding of the Lamb to his Bride the church. The final days of the church is a huge theme in this book, beginning with the letters to the seven churches and ending with a wedding to the Lamb. What God has in mind for you is beautiful! You are deeply loved by him and will be united with him forever!

The next notable piece is the “Second Coming of Jesus.” This time, he is not coming as the prince of peace, but as the leader of an army with a sword. This is the picture of Jesus as mighty and conquering. He is tattooed and dripping with blood. This is not the Jesus with a lamb on his shoulders that we remember from Sunday School.

Notice that the final battle is not a battle at all. The kings of the earth draw up the battle lines and Jesus just smokes them all. He captures the beast and the false prophet. No great battle. Jesus just shows up and wins!

It brings up an important question. Which side will you be on that day? I want to be on Jesus’ side. Because, in the end, Jesus wins.

At this point, Satan is bound in the Abyss for a thousand years. This period of time is known as the Millennium. Christians disagree on the nature of this time. Some teach that Jesus will come after the millennium. Not many, because it is hard to justify Biblically. Others teach that the millennium is symbolic – not really a 1000 year period. They are known as amillennial. The idea is that Jesus’ defeat of Satan was the cross and his reign over all creation is right now. He is sitting at the right hand of God reigning in power now. They contend we are in the millennial kingdom and that Satan is bound. Lots of Christians hold this view.

The view that we hold at Christ Community is the Premillennial view. It argues that the order of events is just like Revelation 19. Jesus comes, and then there is 1000 years. The 1000 years are spoken of five times in this passage and so, are taken literally. We look forward to this reign of Christ in the future. Many Old Testament passages speak of a day that there will be great prosperity and peace on earth in the future. When will that be? The millennial kingdom is a sensible possibility.

At the end of this time, Revelation 20 teaches that Satan will be released; there will be another gathering for battle and another smack down from heaven with fire falling on the bad guys and no battle.

Notice that Satan is not set up to rule in hell, but to suffer in the lake of burning sulfur. This is a stark contrast to the picture we see in the culture of today.

At this point, the vision turns to the Judgment Day known as “The Great White Throne Judgment.” The book of life comes out, the world is judged, including the dead, and anybody not in the book gets thrown into the lake of fire with death and Hades and Satan.

It is a wonderful and horrible day where justice is served and people are evaluated based on their deeds and their connection to Christ. It is a day where you want to be on Jesus’ side!

From this point on, it is all about the New Heavens and New Earth. This is the final destiny of believers. It is not like a cartoon image of heaven with halos, clouds and harps – how boring!

It is a city. The Bible starts in a garden with God in charge and ends in a city with God in charge.

In describing heaven, God consciously draws on images that recall for us the description of the Garden of Eden in the Book of Genesis. A direct relationship with God. No mourning, crying or pain. A tree of life. A river. Plenty of fruit. Safety and security. The big difference between the garden and the city is people. God has been spending world history populating the city with his people.

And get this, you and I will reign with God forever and ever. Isn’t that cool? Your job will not be harp-strumming, but reigning with God. I like that job! And it will last forever!

The dominant thought, repeated in several different ways in that last half of Revelation 22 is this: Jesus is coming soon! He Himself says it: “Behold I am coming soon” - “The time is near” - then again “Behold I am coming soon” - “Yes, I am coming soon”. It ends with a prayer: “Come Lord Jesus”.

We have had many occasions to focus on the fact that all of history is driving toward the day when Jesus Christ will return. There is really only one thing that matters and that is to be certain that we, and all of those whom we can influence, are ready for that day!!

Friends, I have had a ball teaching through the Bible this year in project 4:4. I hope you have loved it too. Keep on reading the Bible next year. Maybe the

whole thing in a year, and maybe focusing on one aspect and studying deeply.  
But hold God's word close to your heart.

AND THAT IS A WRAP ON PROJECT 4:4!

