

# REVELATION—UNVEILING THE END, ACT 3 THE FINAL CURTAIN

## STUDY FOURTEEN

### Compelling Words for a Confused Culture

*Revelation 22:6–16*

*Testimonies from the angel, from John, and from Jesus encourage us to stand alone when standing alone is neither popular nor easy.*

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

**P**USHED along by shifting moral currents, the rudderless ship of culture has drifted into dangerous waters. These days, the concept of truth no longer exists. Anything goes! People follow whichever voice appeals to them most.

Paul warned about a coming day when “people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching,” and instead, “they will reject the truth and chase after myths” (2 Timothy 4:3–4). That day is now.

With no clear truth, people grope for something to hold onto. They long for a reliable road map to guide them through life’s tough terrain. They strain to see some light in the darkness to give them hope. They wonder, *Is there purpose in life . . . a reason to live? Are there any values worth defending . . . any ethical guardrails?* Most of all, what their hearts really yearn for is a lasting, secure relationship with their Creator.

In this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we’ll find answers for our confused culture in the compelling words of an angel, of John, and of Jesus Himself—words about hope, faith, and truth. Living according to their words will take courage. We’ll be sailing against the current of our culture, which is a certain sign that we’re going the right direction.



#### PREPARE YOUR HEART

Enter into a prayerful mind-set as you open the Scriptures.

*Father, I need wisdom from Your Word if I am to live confidently in today’s world. Attacks against You and Your truth and Your people are launched daily and from all places. Fill me with Your peace, and give me Christ’s love for Your enemies. Help me respond with insight and grace. In Jesus’ name, amen.*



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## TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

The first message in our passage came from an angel who was identified in Revelation 21:9 as “one of the seven angels who held the seven bowls containing the seven last plagues.” He initially appeared in [15:1](#) when the bowl judgments were introduced. He was also the angel who showed John the “great prostitute” (17:1)—which represented Babylon, the “great city that rules over the kings of the world” (17:18).

This same angel who led John on a tour through *sin city*, Babylon, returned in [21:9–22:5](#) to escort him through the *celestial city*—the new Jerusalem, the pure “bride, the wife of the Lamb,” (21:9). As he finished showing John the marvels of God’s holy city, he turned to John to deliver a special, concluding word of encouragement.



## Observation: Messages from the Angel, John, and Jesus

Use your tools of *observation* to examine what each verse is saying, who is speaking, key words and phrases, and recurring themes.<sup>1</sup> Notice that we’ve entered the epilogue, the final section of Revelation that summarizes important concepts and offers lasting words to live by.

### The Message from the Angel—Revelation 22:6–7

What was the first part of the angel’s message in [Revelation 22:6a](#)? How is this declaration foundational to the message of the entire book? Read similar phrases in [3:14](#); [19:11](#); and [21:5](#).

Who sent this angel, and what message was he to deliver, according to [Revelation 22:6b](#)?

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To confirm his message, the angel quoted Jesus in [Revelation 22:7](#). Jesus' words amounted to His stamp of approval on the book, authorizing all that John recorded. Those who believe Jesus' promise must do what?

*Revelation is designed to spur holy living. Knowing that Christ could come at any moment, we honor Him in the way we conduct our affairs. Something wonderful happens in our lives when we have a submissive spirit to obey God.*  
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

### **The Message from John—Revelation 22:8–11**

John spoke for himself next, which he hadn't done since the beginning of the book in [Revelation 1:9](#). What did John want us to respect in [22:8](#)? What emotions flowed spontaneously from John's soul?

Although John's heart was in the right place, the angel rebuked John in [22:9](#). How did the angel's words sum up a central theme in Revelation, which John's life exemplified?

What are we to remember, according to [22:10–11](#)?

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*John's message was this: respect the Word of God, worship God alone, don't fail to teach the truths of Revelation, and repent while there is still time.*

—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

## The Message of Jesus—Revelation 22:12–16

The angel and John moved aside, and into the spotlight stepped the Author of the vision. What did Jesus declare and what will He do, according to [Revelation 22:12](#)?

What did He affirm about His identity in [22:13](#)? This affirmation bookends the beginning of the vision and the end, [1:8](#) and [21:6](#). What point was Jesus making about Himself?

What hopeful blessing and sobering warning did Jesus give in [22:14–15](#)?

What did Jesus say about His authority in [22:16](#)?

*Does Jesus know what is going on in the world? Yes! He is aware. He cares and He is working out His plan because He is the Alpha and Omega.*

—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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## Interpretation and Correlation: A Source That Is Trustworthy

John's original readers probably struggled to interpret the symbols in the book, just as we do. They may have wondered, *How seriously should we take these prophecies?*

How did the words of the angel answer that question in [Revelation 22:6](#)? Why should we take seriously the prophecies in Revelation?

Information is only as reliable as its source, and the source of Revelation is Jesus Himself. Look closer at Jesus' "I am" statements in our passage. In the following chart, write down the meaning of Jesus' statements. Use the correlation column to enhance your interpretation.

Jesus' "I am" Statement	Interpretation	Correlation
"I am the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End" (22:12–13).		<i>Revelation 1:8</i>
"I am the root and the descendant of David" (22:16 NASB).		<i>Isaiah 11:1–10</i>
"I am the bright morning star" (22:16).		<i>Numbers 24:17; 2 Peter 1:19</i>

The angel assured us, "Everything you have heard and seen is trustworthy and true" (22:6). The prophecies are pure gold. The source is Jesus Himself, God Almighty. David built the earthly Jerusalem, and his root and descendant, Jesus, will build the new Jerusalem. Jesus' coming is certain, and, like the rising sun, His coming will herald the dawn of a new creation.

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Into the fog of our relativistic world, Revelation’s prophecies shine like a lighthouse, beaming the hope of history—*Jesus is coming soon!* We can navigate our lives by that hope. Jesus may come at any moment, and because that is true, how should we live?



## **Application: Living in Light of Jesus’ Coming**

Don’t “seal up the prophetic words in this book,” the angel warned (Revelation 22:10). Don’t let them collect dust on a bookshelf. Instead, we should paste them on our mirror so we see them every morning and post them on our refrigerator so we can’t miss them throughout the day. Why take them so seriously? Because “the time is near” (22:10).

How does the truth of Christ’s return give direction to the following issues in your life?

*Your Purpose for Living*

*The Values You Would Die to Defend*

*The Moral Standards You Live By*

What difference does it make in the way you go about your day that the prophecies in Revelation are “trustworthy and true” (Revelation 22:6)?

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Remember the words of our Lord:

*“Look, I am coming soon, bringing my reward with me to repay all people according to their deeds. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.” (22:12)*

What courage do the words of Jesus give you to stand alone against culture’s tide?

As followers of Christ, we are anchored to truth itself, the coming Savior. Don’t let culture’s shifting currents pull you away from your confidence in Him. Hold fast! Stand firm!



## A FINAL PRAYER

*Father, the prophecies of Revelation are more than curiosities to be scrutinized. They are truths to be cherished. At their center is Your glory and the glory of Your Son—the “bright morning star” who will usher in a new day when He comes. May I bask in His light and live for His praise. In His wonderful name, amen.*

## ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the article, “[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)”

For the 2024 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll’s messages. Copyright © 2004, 2024 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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