

Rev. 22:17. Come, O Savior! Come, O Sinner!

by Horatius Bonar

The sermon emphasizes the importance of Christ's coming and the invitation to sinners to come and receive the free gift of God, the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Isaiah 55:1, Matthew 11:28, John 3:16, John 4:10, John 7:37, Romans 10:13, Ephesians 2:8, Revelation 22:17

Topics: "Invitation to Salvation", "Hope in Christ's Return"

Description

Horatius Bonar emphasizes the dual invitation in Revelation 22:17, where the Spirit and the bride call for Christ's return while simultaneously inviting sinners to come and receive the water of life freely. He explains that the Spirit longs for Christ's glorification and the Church eagerly awaits the union with the Bridegroom. Bonar highlights that the invitation is open to all, especially the thirsty souls seeking true satisfaction, and underscores the urgency of this call as the world grows weary and thirsty. The message is clear: Christ invites everyone, regardless of their past, to partake in the life-giving water He offers. This sermon serves as a reminder of the hope and joy found in Christ's return and the free gift of salvation extended to all who will accept it.

Transcript

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say,

Come! And let him who is athirst come! And whoever will, let him take the water of life freely!"--Revelation 22:17.

The speaker here is Jesus Himself, as the context shows. But who is the one spoken to? Is it one person or more than one? Is it the sinner that is addressed (as most think)? or is it first Christ and then the sinner? The last is the truth. The verse is twofold. In the first part, Christ is addressed; in the second, the sinner--though the word 'come' runs through the whole. 'The Spirit and the bride say, Come! and let him who hears say, Come!' are words addressed to Christ, pleading for His advent. 'Let him who is athirst come! and whoever will, let him take the water of life freely!' are the words of invitation from Jesus to the sinner.

I. The cry for Christ's coming. It is this advent that is the great theme of the Apocalypse, and the central object of its scenes. It opens with, 'Behold, He comes;' it goes on with, 'Behold I come as a thief;' and it ends with, 'Behold, I come quickly.' All the predictions throughout the book bear upon this event, and carry forward the Church's hopes to this great goal. But there are three parties here represented as uttering this

prayer--

(1.) The Spirit. He cries, 'Come.' He who has been speaking to the Churches; who has inspired all the predictions relating to the event--He Himself is brought in personally as breathing the desires which He has dictated. He has sympathized with them all; and those longings which He had put into the lips of others, now come forth from His own. 'The Spirit says, Come.' What so interests the Spirit in the advent?

(a.) Christ will then be fully glorified, and it is the Spirit's office to glorify Christ. He has not yet got His glory on earth at all, nor even His full glory in heaven.

(b.) Then the whole earth will be converted, and the Spirit will get full scope to all His longings and yearnings over men. He shall no longer strive, but prevail. He shall no longer be vexed, and grieved, and quenched. No wonder that He cries, 'Come!'

(2.) The Bride. The Lamb's wife, the whole Church as a body, as a virgin betrothed, looking for the marriage day. In one sense an injured widow, in another the bride. She expects the marriage; the union, the fellowship, the blessedness, the glory; the ending of loneliness and weariness, of sorrow and shame. No wonder, then, that she sighs for the Bridegroom's arrival, 'Come!'

(3.) He who hears. 'Blessed is he who hears.' Not as if the hearer was not part of the bride; but the word thus singles out each one on whose ears the message is falling. The moment you hear it, you should cry, "Come! Come, Lord Jesus! For then our sins and sorrows are ended; then our victory is won; then this vile body is changed; then we meet and unite forever with the loved and lost; then shall the ransomed of the Lord return, and come to Zion with songs." Let this, then, be the theme of our morning and evening cry, Come! as we read of wars, and blood, and human passion, cry louder and louder, Come!

II. The invitation to the sinner. In this latter part it is clearly the sinner that is spoken to--'Let him who is athirst come; and whoever will.'

(1.) The inviter--Christ Himself; the same who said, 'Come unto me.' He invited once on earth; He now invites from heaven with the same urgency and love. He speaks to us with His own lips; He would have us know that He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever; that He still receives sinners; that there is still joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.

(2.) The persons invited--They are first described as the 'thirsty'; but lest this should be supposed to narrow the message or to exclude any class of men, it is added, 'whoever will.'

1. The thirsty--Those who would gladly be happy, but know not how; who are seeking rest, but finding none; who are asking for good, 'any good,' anywhere; who are hewing out broken cisterns; who are betaking themselves to dried-up wells; who are drinking of the Dead Sea's bitter water. 'Ho, every one who thirsts! (Isaiah 55:1; John 4:10, 7:37).

2. Whoever will--This is a wide enough description. It shuts out none; it names every one. Are you in quest of water for your soul? It is here. Do you want to be happy? Joy is here for you--whoever and whatever you are.

(3.) The blessings invited to--The water of life. 'Water,' that which will thoroughly refresh you and quench your thirst; 'water of life,' living and life giving; a quickening well; a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. Not a shower, nor a stream, but a well--a fountain (ch. 21:6). This water is the Holy Spirit

Himself, who comes to us as the bringer of God's free love, with all the joy which that love introduces into the soul. His wrath withers up the soul, His free love revives it, like rain upon the mown grass. His condemnation carries death, and gloom, and bondage; but His forgiveness reverses all this. What is there that this free love of God does not contain?

(4.) The price--Freely! without money; so that the poorest can have all they need. The free gift of God! Free as the rain and dew; free as the sunbeam; free as the reviving air around. Absolutely, unconditionally free! Free to each one as he is--though the chief of sinners, the emptiest, wickedest, thirstiest of sons of men.

(5.) The time--The invitation comes forth at the close of that book which sums up all revelation. It contains Christ's last words, meant specially for the last days of a weary, thirsty world; when men, having tried every pleasure, vanity, lust, folly, and found nothing, having exhausted every cup and broken every cistern, will be found more thoroughly weary and thirsty than before. The last generation of earth, as it will be the wickedest, so will it be the thirstiest of all. Just when human thirst is at its height, when the gates are about to close, when the last trumpet is about to sound, the message of free love to the sinner comes forth, in greatest largeness, in undiminished fullness. It is no feeble, no fettered gospel--no dried-up well!

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