

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Revelation: God's Revelation To His Servants Today On Events About To Occur Part V: Epilogue: God's Call To Heed His Pure, Canonical Scripture For Reward (Revelation 22:6-21)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

A party recently loaned me the book, Jesus Calling authored by Sarah Young that I might review it, but due to difficulties, I read only a few pages before reporting back, "It's too experience-based for me," but I did not censure it.

However, from what I have since then learned, I can **NOT now** recommended it: Young "makes . . . [an] audacious claim" that "Jesus [is] speaking through her" and she "teaches that though the Bible is inerrant and infallible, it is insufficient" today! (citing challis.com/bookreview/jesus-calling, and worldview.com, "Jesus Calling?? Or Is He? A Review of Sarah Young's Devotional *Jesus Calling: Enjoying Peace in His Presence*" makes the same points) Young is thus into "contemplative spirituality," seeking experience-based communication from God. (Ibid., worldview.com) The introduction tells of acts that are typically occultic -- (1) "visualization," creating by imagining, (2) "automatic writing," relying on a spirit guide to write messages and (3) "channeling," being a vehicle for a spirit guide. (steakandbible.com, "Is Deception Calling! A Review of 'Jesus Calling' by Sarah Young," July 4, 2012)

The history behind it all reveals multiple layers of deception: Young held she got her idea about "listening to God with pen in hand [and] writing down whatever I believed He was saying" from the book God Calling (Ibid., worldviewweekend.com) by two anonymous women who claimed "Jesus told them multiple times to 'Be channels,'" an occultic practice (Ibid., steakandbible.com; Ibid., worldviewweekend.com). God Calling was not stocked by many Christian bookshops when a rumor circulated that its authors practiced "automatic writing" of the "occult" and "may have been witches"! (Ibid., worldviewweekend.com) This rumor bothered the publisher of Young's book, so in later editions of Jesus Calling like the one I was loaned, all initial references to God Calling are gone! Yet, God Calling is now being sold in a new, women's edition advertised as the forerunner of Young's "blockbuster" (CBD Bargains catalogue, Winter 2015, p. 6), but I read an online review of it by a fan of the first edition who was upset that whole sentences and paragraphs had been deleted in the new edition, so the effort is underway to sell a "purged" God Calling book to unsuspecting women! Then, one author of God Calling testified their idea about automatic writing came from A. J. Russell in his work, For Sinners Only, and Russell's practice was then being performed by The Oxford Group/Moral Rearmament that was committed to founding a "new world order for Christ the King" in the 1930s, which group was condemned as a "form of religion . . . full of errors" by the Vatican and also by Protestants in the 1950s. (womenofgrace.com, "Why the book 'God Calling' is considered occultic." Women of Grace is a group of Catholic women) Even so, publishers are now trying to edit so as to "purge" these books enough for lucrative sales!

This matter points to a big question in evangelical circles today, and Revelation 22:6-21 addresses it:

Need: *We thus ask, "Is the written canon of Scripture sufficient, or do we need more communication from God?!"*

- I. **Nearing the end of the book of Revelation, in Revelation 22:6-17, John recorded Christ's comments on the VALUE of the ENTIRE CANON of the WRITTEN WORD along WITH the book of REVELATION:**
- A. Following the Revelation 1:9-22:5 presentation of future events, God's messenger told John that its words were "faithful and true" (Rev. 22:6a), a description used elsewhere in Scripture (Rev. 3:14; 19:11; Jer. 42:5) of God as Judge to indicate the **security** and **eternality** of His **verdicts**. Thus, the recorded words of the book of Revelation are **absolutely true** and **eternally binding** under **divine authority** for us **Christians TODAY!**
 - B. As such, *Revelation* is a **message from the God of the spirits of the deceased prophets of the entire written canon** Who sent a messenger to show His servants what will soon occur so they could be blessed in heeding it, 22:6b-7! Thus, *Jesus here claimed the book of Revelation was canonical along with the rest of Scripture!*
 - C. Overcome by what he had just heard and seen, John fell down to worship at the feet of the messenger from God who had spoken to him, but the messenger objected to this: he explained that he was merely one of the deceased prophets who was now in heaven, that John should worship God instead, Revelation 22:8-9.
 - D. Indicating **again** that the Revelation was **God's Word like the Old Testament canon**, the messenger told John not to seal up its words for the distant future as in the case of Old Testament prophet Daniel in Daniel 12:9, for the time of their fulfillment was near, Rev. 22:10. The messenger added that the time of Christ's coming was also near, that no major changes in man's conduct was to be expected, Rev. 22:11; **B. K. C., N. T.**, p. 989.
 - E. Yet, regardless of the lack of major changes in man's conduct, every believer was to heed Scripture anyway, for Christ would reward him for his works of obedience at His return, Rev. 22:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10-11; Ibid.

- F. Christ was Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, alluding to Isaiah 46:9-10 that referred to the only true God, so the reader was to know he would **truly** be greatly blessed according to **God's Word** if he washed his robes (the better reading than the KJV "do his commandments"; Ryrie St. Bib., KJV, 1978, fn. to Rev. 22:14), being saved by faith in Christ (Rev. 7:14), for right to the tree of life and the holy city, Rev. 22:14.
 - G. Failure to believe in Christ, i. e., failure to wash one's robes in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7:14; 22:14), would leave one outside the holy city of the New Jerusalem, along with all workers of iniquity, Rev. 22:15.
 - H. Jesus testified that He sent His messenger to testify these truths to believers in Church History (Rev. chs. 2-3), noting He was the root (God) and offspring (man) of David (king), or God Incarnate and Messiah (John 1:14, 49), the Bright and Morning Star of the coming new, glorious era of the long-sought Kingdom, Rev. 22:16.
 - I. Throughout Church History, then, the Holy Spirit and the bride, the Church, would call the lost to "Come," to trust in Christ, and believers reading Revelation were to evangelize, say "come," to the lost, Revelation 22:17.
 - J. Thus, whoever was thirsty for salvation in Church History was to "come" and take of the water of life freely, a reference to trusting in Christ in the figurative language of God's call to salvation by grace back in Isaiah 55:1.
- II. John then recorded Christ's WARNING about anyone ADDING TO or DETRACTING FROM His WRITTEN, CANONICAL WORD'S GOSPEL of SALVATION in the REVELATION, Rev. 22:18-19:**
- A. After His extensive clarification in Revelation 22:6-17 of the validity of the truths of God and His salvation offered in the book of Revelation that was now a part of the Scripture canon, Christ gave a strong warning:
 - 1. Christ through His messenger testified that every man who heard the words of the Revelation prophecy was accountable to Him not to add to its words lest God add to him the plagues of this book, Rev. 22:18. In the immediate context, this warns against adding works to the salvation Gospel (Rev. 22:14, 17), so one who in unbelief teaches a false salvation Gospel will miss the rapture and face the Tribulation plagues.
 - 2. Similarly, Christ testified that if anyone took away from the words of the book of this prophecy in the context of detracting from its Gospel of salvation by faith through Christ, God would take away his share from the tree of life (the better manuscript reading than "book of life," Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to Rev. 22:19) and the holy city (cf. Rev. 22:14 for the contrast), and from the blessings found in the Revelation for believers.
 - B. So, **all unbelievers** were to *believe* the **Gospel of salvation in Revelation** (Revelation 22:14, 17), **not to alter it in unbelief** either by adding to it or detracting from it, lest they face terrible judgment from the Lord!
- III. This WARNING from CHRIST by APPLICATION fits God's 2 Timothy 3:15-4:2 and Isaiah 8:20 words to BELIEVERS on the SUFFICIENCY of God's ENTIRE, COMPLETE CANON of SCRIPTURE:**
- A. 2 Timothy 3:15-4:2 reveals that all written, canonical Scripture, as emphasized in Revelation 22:6-17, is God inspired and equips every believer for every good work until Christ's return, so no more revelation is needed!
 - B. Also, Isaiah 8:19-20 claims that if men do not say, "To the written Scriptures" for spiritual insight, but instead seek it from other sources, they walk in spiritual darkness! (Isaiah 8:20-22; Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to Isaiah 8:20)
- IV. Jesus then gave His last word to believers this side of heaven in Rev. 22:20a, reminding them of their accountability to heed His canonical Word in view of His return, and John exemplified the believer's appropriate response of "Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus" in Rev. 22:20b before closing in Rev. 20:21.**

Lesson: *Revelation is canonical Scripture according to Christ, and like the rest of canonical Scripture, it is to be heeded without human additions or subtractions, for God will hold every man accountable to heed it "as written."*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for salvation from sin as directed by canonical Scripture, which includes the book of Revelation. (2) May we then obey the 66-book canon of Scripture as God's sufficient revelation to us, not altering it by adding to it or detracting from it, that we might be blessed and rewarded by the Lord in the end.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

The verse "contemplatives" claim is God's call to listen for what He says in addition to written Scripture is Psalm 46:10 KJV: "Be still and know that I am God." (Ibid., worldviewweekend.com) Indeed, in her own words in Jesus Calling, 2004, p. xi-xii, Sarah Young wrote: "Psalm 46:10 became a life-changing verse. Alternate readings for 'Be still' are 'Relax,' 'Let go,' and 'Cease striving' (NASB). This is an enticing invitation from God to lay down our cares and seek His presence," and by "seeking His presence," contemplatives like Sarah Young mean "'Practicing the Presence,'" or gaining alleged experiential communication from God. (Ibid., worldviewweekend.com)

Yet, the **context** shows this verse has nothing to do with contemplative exercise, but with God's call for Israel to "relax" in trusting Him re: her Gentile foes, Psa. 46:6-11. Heeding the **context** guards against contemplative error!

May we heed God's canonical Word as our sole source of His words to us, and expound it contextually!