

Rev 26-08-12a

Greetings fellow members of Grace and Truth Bible Church. This is the 12th of August 2026. We resume and conclude our study in this wonderful book of Revelation tonight in chapter 22.

Let's ask God's blessing on our time of fellowship and investigation of his word and we will begin. Father, what a privilege it is to set aside the requirements and the pressures and the opportunities of the day to refresh ourselves at the oasis of living water that we find in your word. We thank you for the reflection in it that we see of the Lord Jesus, our Savior, his wonderful love expressed for us in his first coming, in his living ministry, in his death on the cross, his resurrection and ascension.

We know that even as we speak, he is seated at your right hand representing us, interceding for us and awaiting the command to return to this earth, to receive us in the air, and to bring us resurrected forevermore into the eternal realms. We know that the purpose of this book is to help prepare us for that day and the times that will follow and we pray that as we conclude our study in the Revelation tonight that your Holy Spirit will help us to not only understand what we see, but to remember it and to find its application in the time that remains to us in this life. We ask it in Jesus name.

Amen. We see in chapter 22 the picture continuing of the new Jerusalem. We reviewed this in detail last Sunday via our study from 20 years ago and the blessing on the one who pays attention to this book is made clear in verse 9. The messenger angel that John initially bows before says in verse 9, see that you don't do that.

I am your fellow servant and of your brethren the prophets and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God. This is an exhortation that reflects what we saw in chapter 1 verse 3 The Lord Jesus, the content we have in verse 7 of our chapter says, behold, I am coming quickly.

Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. The angel says that he is a servant of those who keep the words. There is a threefold identification here.

He says, I am a sundoulos. Paul uses this word at the beginning of some of his epistles to indicate that he is a servant, one of many of God, the father of the Lord Jesus Christ. The angel is a servant, one of many of God, and he is a servant as an angel, the way we can be a servant as individual believers.

And he says, I am a fellow servant of your brethren, the prophets and of those who keep the words of this book. God has made angels ministering spirits to those who are faithful. I am not convinced that there is a guardian angel for every single believer.

I do think that faithful believers, those who are taking their opportunities seriously, we who endeavor to tread the narrow road and head for the straight gate that leads to life, have servant

angels who superintend, who are assigned and who serve, who coordinate circumstances in our lives. As we have seen throughout this book, there are both oppressive opposing angels and there are servant ministering angels. We are not to worship them.

We are not to become unduly occupied with them any more than if you get a fine meal at a restaurant, you get all obsessed with the waiter, the waiter brings the food. It's the food that counts. It is the service that God provides in and through these individuals that is at issue, whether it is a human or an angel, they are messengers.

And the same word, Angelos, is used for them both. It's important to remember we do not want to be inadvertently distracted. But as we saw back in Revelation 1.3, blessed is he who reads those who hear and keep the things written in this prophecy, in this book.

It was stated at the beginning, the third verse, and it is repeated here in Revelation 22.7. I am emphasizing this for a reason. It is emphasized here. Those who keep the words of this book have angelic assistance, we find out in verse nine.

And in verse 10, do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. Is this the time of the tribulation, the time of the judgments, the time of the seals and the trumpets and the thunders and the bowls and the woes and the other things that come upon the earth, the appearance of the beast, first and second, and so on? The time of application. Ever since John finished this book and sent copies to the original recipient churches, this book has been designed and intended for application by church-age believers.

The time is now. So, here's your pop quiz question, the first of the night. What does it mean to keep the words of this prophecy? If you were going to take a stab, how would you answer that question? It's very emphatic.

We are to keep the words of this book. Well, how do you do that? What does that mean? I would suggest that it centers on what the book tells us to do. There are imperatives.

There are principles to be kept. So, what are these imperatives? What are these commands? And where are they? I'm going to review the exhortations that we have seen throughout the 22 chapters of this book. It's our closing session.

We are emphatically told to keep the words of the book. It would be helpful to know what the words are that we're supposed to keep. This is what a practical turn of mind would suggest, wouldn't it? So, let's take a look.

Where are the imperatives, and what are those imperatives? What exactly can we review when we think back on our Revelation study? What is it that it encouraged us to do? Well, it began in the aforementioned verse 3 of chapter 1. We are to keep the words of this book. There is a promise of blessing if we do so, if we hear it, if we understand it, and if we respond. You can hear

good advice.

You can hear all kinds of advice, good, bad, and otherwise. What do we do with that advice? That is the question. Verse 3 of chapter 1 says, keep the words of this book.

That's a good starting place. We should remember this study in the days and the weeks, the months, and whatever time remains to us in this life, because the time is at hand to apply it. So, this is our launching point.

Chapter 1, verse 3, keep the words. Go back and review. What was the thrust? What was the purpose? What was the emphasis? What was the idea that God had in mind when he gave us this book? So, that's the first one.

Number one would be chapter 1, verse 3. To keep the words, we have to know what they are. So, that's our enterprise at the moment. The next I would suggest, and this is not an exhaustive list, it is a representative list.

I think it is a helpful and useful list, is in chapter 2, verse 5. Of course, as soon as I say chapter 2, you know that we are in the letters to the seven churches, and in the fifth verse, we're likely to be in the first church, which is the church at Ephesus. And what did the Lord Jesus say in verse 5? You've done a lot of things, but I have this against you. You left your first love.

Remember, therefore, from where you have fallen. Remember where you are supposed to be in terms of spiritual progress, spiritual position, spiritual success. Remember where you're supposed to be.

We often say to ourselves, remember who you are. Remember why you're here. Who am I? Why am I here? Remember the Ephesians had drifted away from that, had fallen, had descended from that optimum height of attainment.

We're pressing on the upward way. New heights we're gaining every day. If we start to tumble back down the hill, we've got to remember where we were and get back there.

So the second imperative is remember. This book is designed to help us identify what is good and what is bad in terms of spiritual health, spiritual practice, spiritual status, spiritual attainment, spiritual function. Remember what we're supposed to do.

So let's give ourselves our second pop quiz question of the night. What is it we're supposed to remember? Think of some things. Suppose we fail.

Our temper gets away from us. We say something untoward. We commit a sin of the tongue.

We deceive. We prevaricate. We dissemble.

We somehow shade or hide the truth. We are not people of truth. We are not people of light.

We're not walking in the light anymore. We commit a sin. Remember.

What do we remember? This is one of our basic skills. 1 John 1.7 and 1.9. And don't forget 1.8. If we say we have no sin, we're just lying to ourselves. We need to be walking in the light as he is in the light and maintaining close personal fellowship with our Father in heaven through Christ.

And if we let sin interfere with that, we need to acknowledge that sin. It's a basic life skill. We have a sin detector in our soul.

What is it? It is the presence of the Holy Spirit. Long years ago, I was under instruction and was told that, well, if you sin, the Holy Spirit goes away. Well, that's not very helpful because He is what aids our conscience and tells us that we're in sin and that we're not in the light.

I need the Holy Spirit. This is God's voice speaking to me and telling me, you're out of line. Whom the Lord loves, He chastens.

He scourges every son whom He receives, and He does this through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God, brings it to our mind to correct, to instruct, to rebuke, to enable us to walk in righteousness. The Word of God is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction, and we can't do any of those things without the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit doesn't leave when we sin. He changes modes from encouraging us with positive divine guidance and enablement of our spiritual gift, insight, power to live a supernatural life. When we are in sin, He's got to go into correction mode, rebuke mode, discipline mode, but He's always there.

We are sealed with the Holy Spirit. We are indwelt with the Holy Spirit. We are gifted by the Holy Spirit.

He is always present. Don't lose the Holy Spirit when you sin. If anything, His presence can become more manifest because we will soon be miserable if we have any sensitivity to the things of God at all.

So remember, this is part of what we remember. Remember your spiritual skills. Just like eating physical food, I need spiritual food.

I need regular exposure to the Word of God. I can do this in a manifold number of ways. It is most beneficial when the Word of God is manifest in a group of fellow believers, and there is someone there to communicate it.

You can do this in all kinds of different ways. We do it here at Grace and Truth in our Bible classes and our fellowship. We cultivate that fellowship in iron sharpening iron, and reminding one another, and encouraging one another.

As Scripture tells us, forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the habit of some is. When you come together, let each one have a song, a hymn, a spiritual song. Sing, make melody in your hearts to the Lord.

Encourage one another to love and good works. Be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another. You go through the one another's.

All of this needs to be taking place not just inside a quote-unquote sanctuary of brick and mortar that has an address somewhere. This is whenever two or three are gathered in the Lord's name. He is in the midst.

Let our moderation be known to all. The Lord is at hand. These are things to remember.

So when you say, all right, the first thing I've got to do is know the words of the book. Second thing is, I've got to remember what they mean and how they apply. I've got a whole collection of spiritual skills.

This book tells me, and by extension, as with so many things we've seen throughout this study, this book is representative of all the books, of the entire book, capital B, the Bible. All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable. And to keep all of the words of this large collection, this wonderful, blessed collection of Scripture, is an obligation.

So that's number two. Remember what you're supposed to be doing, who you are, why you're here. This is what we are enjoined to do.

Number three is from the same verse, chapter two, verse five. Remember, therefore, if you've fallen, remember where you used to be. God the Holy Spirit will enable us to do this, to recognize it.

And what is the next imperative? The first imperative in verse five is remember. The second one is repent and do. We've got three imperatives here in a change our mind and get back to doing what we're supposed to.

The Christian life is not just being, it is doing. The Lord Jesus says, change your mind. If you're drifting away from your purpose, if you've forgotten who you are and why you're here, remember.

Remember the words of the book. Keep them and perform, apply, put into practice, improve conversation, improve mental attitude, improve opportunity recognition to do, to be a blessing to fellow believers, to take the opportunities that God the Holy Spirit equips us to exploit. Be spiritually sensitive.

Look at circumstance and look at situations with spiritual eyes. What might God be doing here? I may be in view by someone who is searching, who is looking for answers. I don't live my life to try to be some sort of example in and of itself, but I can be aware that my failures have effects on

others.

And my consistency in spiritual life can have a beneficial effect on others. I do it first and foremost to please our Heavenly Father, recognizing that He is at work in us to will and to do for His good pleasure, which includes blessing those in our periphery. So that's our first four imperatives.

Keep the words of the book. That's the theme. And then remember, repent and do from chapter two, verse five.

Well, number five is two verses later, still in chapter two, verse seven. He who has an ear, let him hear. Listen to what the Spirit says.

The Spirit is speaking to the churches. The Spirit is speaking to us because we are church. We are God's dwelling place.

We need to listen. And within these first five, you have the words of the book. At number one, you have the Spirit that activates, that gives us spiritual discernment, understanding, comprehension, and the ability to fulfill what the words ask us to do.

This is what the Spirit is there for. He will lead us into all truth. He will not speak for Himself, Jesus said.

He will lead us to be like the Lord Jesus. So listen to what the Spirit says. That is in verse seven.

Then we move to the second church, still in chapter two, the church in Smyrna. When hardship and difficulty faces us, we know that Smyrna, this is the myrrh, the suffering church. Verse 10, do not fear.

This is a negative command. Don't let fear of the future, fear of pain, fear of hardship, fear of rejection, fear of what others may think or do. Do not fear specifically any of the things which you are about to suffer.

The devil is behind it. He's in it. His strategy, his minions, his efforts.

But we know, once again, remembering our promises, greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Sometimes it seems that Satan himself is present in a situation or circumstance. Other times it is a representation of everything he's trying to accomplish and the extent to which he is opposing us and seeking whom he may devour among us.

Resist him steadfast in the faith. We have been given spiritual armor and we can quench every dart that the wicked one launches. Look at your spiritual armor passage in Ephesians, put on the full armor of God, shield of faith, quench the fiery darts of the wicked one.

Don't fear. Then in verse 10, again, be faithful. Not a few faithful achievements as long as we are alive.

Be faithful until you die. We say be faithful to death. We sound like, oh, we're going to be tortured and oppressed and imprisoned and massacred and we just got to be faithful as we're marched out to be lion food in the Colosseum.

Be faithful as long as we're alive. Just because we're getting closer to the end than we were to the beginning doesn't mean it's time to coast or time to rest on our laurels or spend our time thinking about past achievements or past situations where we were overcomers. Continue to be faithful.

As long as we are alive, there are opportunities for faith. We need to watch for them, recognize them, and exploit them. Lay hold of righteousness by faith.

It's another one of our basic Christian skills. So we have two of them here in verse 10. Do not fear.

Be courageous even if something involves suffering. And secondly, be faithful as long as we're alive. So what are we up to here? One, two, three, four, five, six.

That is seven. Number eight we find in verse 16. Now when we find some of these repeating, what does that tell us? Was it an accident? Is it a redundancy? Of course not.

If God repeats himself, it is emphasis. And so when we come to chapter 2, verse 16, what do we have? Repent, or else I will come to you suddenly, quickly, and I will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. The sword of his mouth is the word of God.

The word of God can vindicate us or it can convict us. That's why it's important to know it and keep it. So once again, slightly different circumstance, change of mind.

That is in chapter 2, verse 16. Slip down to chapter 2, verse 25. All of these are things that we should keep.

Keep the words of this book. There is a blessing declared at the beginning. There is a blessing declared at the end.

I don't know anybody that doesn't want to be richly blessed. I think it's a pretty safe assumption. You want to be blessed.

I want to be blessed. God says if you want to be blessed, keep the words of this book. What are they? Well, you get down to chapter 2, verse 25.

Talking to these in Thyatira, hold fast to what you have till I come. And he's talking specifically about doctrine. Look at verse 24.

I say to you and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not

known the depths of Satan, who haven't been waylaid, haven't been deceived, haven't been led astray, hold fast to what you have. You have managed to avoid being co-opted, being recruited into the enemy camp. Hold on to that.

Hold on to what you have. Don't change it. Don't abandon it.

Don't deconstruct it and reconstruct it. Hold fast to what you have. That is an imperative.

From verse 25. Then you get to chapter 3, verse 2. Church in Sardis. Be watchful.

Strengthen the things which remain. Kind of goes back to hold fast to what you have, right? In 225, he said, hold on to it. In chapter 3, verse 2, he says, strengthen what you have.

Hold on to it and reinforce it. Be watchful. Be wakeful.

This literally has the idea of waking up. Be awake. You know how you're at the end of a day and you're watching the news or you're some piece of entertainment or whatever.

Next thing you know, your eyes fly open and you realize that you have drifted off and missed whatever was going on. Think of the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night that the Lord Jesus was arrested. Be watchful.

The Lord Jesus rebukes them. Could you not stay awake? Could you not watch with me one hour? The hour of our lives is passing as we speak. Be watchful.

Watch and pray. We did a study on that one time, if you remember. Be watchful and strengthen what you have.

If you're getting sleepy, if it's hard to stay awake and hard to stay alert, do something. Stand up. Keep your consciousness while you have it.

Do what it takes to stay awake. That's chapter 3, verse 2. The very next verse, we have another, remember. Remember what you have received and heard.

Remember. That's going back to chapter 2, verse 5. Remember from where you have fallen. Remember what you have received and heard.

Keep it in verse 3. And change your mind in verse 3. So you've got another three imperatives there. Remember, retain, and repent. So that brings us down to chapter 3, verse 11.

Look, behold, I'm coming quickly. Hold fast what you have. Perseverance.

Keep on keeping on. It's easy to quit. It's easy to give up.

It's easy to be led astray, to be lulled to sleep, to be persuaded in a different direction. Hold fast to

what you have. Verse 18 of this chapter.

If we have deceived ourselves, Jeremiah 17, 9, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. We have a hard time knowing that we're deceiving ourselves. That's why we need the Holy Spirit to convict us, to expose the lies that we tell ourselves.

I'm basically good. I'm basically okay. I'm doing pretty well.

I look around and I see a lot of people worse than me. It's deceptive. Be not deceived.

God is not mocked. We are sowing, and whatever we sow, we are going to reap. If we sow to our flesh, we will of the flesh reap corruption.

If we sow to the Spirit, we will of the Spirit reap the life that is depicted in this 22nd chapter of Revelation. Life everlasting. It is a crop that can grow based on what we do right now.

So, if you deceive and say, I'm rich, I'm wealthy, I have need of nothing, and you do not know that you're wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, how can we not know this? If we are wretched and miserable, poor, blind, and naked, how could we not know that? Self-deception. Only God has the power to crack our self-deception. He does it through His Word and through His Spirit.

Is not my word like a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the rocks in pieces? And that's what we need. We need to be pulverized. We need to be awakened.

We need to be made aware of what our true status is. This is the objectivity of the Word of God. So, the Lord Jesus says in verse 18, and this is our next imperative, buy from me gold refined in the fire.

Buy from me white garments. Buy from me eyesalve that you may see. The Lord Jesus is the source of what is genuine, what is lasting, and true.

Go to the Lord Jesus as the source. So, we find in verse 19, as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. This is repeated elsewhere in the New Testament.

Whom the Lord loves, He chastens, He disciplines. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent.

This is the third time now that we've seen repent. If you track down these repent commands, they're each in a slightly different context. It is change of mind that is looking at a different area, a different part of our responsibility that needs a change.

So, repent in verse 19. Now, from this point, when we start in chapter four, we get through the heavenly scenes. We start in chapter six with the seals and the trumpets and the bowls.

We have a large gap. The next place that we have a significant imperative is in chapter 13, verse 9. Revelation chapter 13, verse 9. So, flip a few pages over, and we find in that context the command to listen carefully. I have intentionally skipped the implicit command at the end of each of the seven letters.

He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear. This one is so familiar that I don't need to detail it all seven times in chapter two and three, but it is repeated here in chapter 13, verse 9. When the representative that is enabled and empowered, when the beast appears that is Satan's unholy antichrist, if you will, those who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If anyone has an ear to hear, let him hear.

If you have an ear, pay attention. Listen. There has been a lot of material between chapter 3 and chapter 13 in the middle.

Pay attention. And you see an anticipation of what we have seen in chapter 22. If anyone is unclean, let him be unclean still, and so on.

Look at verse 10. He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity. He who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword.

Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Verse 10, verse 9 and verse 10. Pay attention for the purpose of maintaining patience and faith.

Maintain patience and faith. This is what the word of God should do for us. If we don't find ourselves having endurance, having patience, bearing up under whatever the load is today, if we're not operating in faith, if we're not living in faith, walking in faith, laying hold of righteousness by faith, we are not hearing the word.

Hear the words of the prophecy of this book and keep it. That's where the blessing is. So you have a reminder right here in the middle.

If you've got an ear, pay attention. This is where endurance and faith come from. For those who are sanctified, for those who are going to be overcomers.

Then that brings us to chapter 14, verse 12. Again, here is the patience of the sanctified ones. Here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

This is a virtual restatement of what we just saw in 13, 9 and 10 in 14, 12. This is how you do it. It doesn't get any clearer than this.

How do you have faith? How do you have patient endurance? This is it. You got an ear. Listen, this entire book has been delivered to us and we've gone through it in great detail.

There is no reason for us to fail. There is no reason we cannot succeed, that we cannot be overcomers, that we cannot inherit these wonderful blessings, opportunities, and the existence in the new Jerusalem and the eternal kingdom of the father that is spoken of. In this book, well, we're about halfway through our list of imperatives.

We're going to pause here and take our break. When we come back, we will finish it. And then we will look at some of the symmetries that we've observed in this book and what it means to us by way of remembering the words of the book and putting them into application.

Let's pause here and take our break.