



Dean Gage – May 5, 2019

Verses Covered

Revelation 22:10 – 11

Isaiah 5:20

Psalms 11:3

Daniel 12:4

2 Timothy 3:10 – 11

Proverbs 22:6

1 Timothy 5:8

As I left my seat this morning to come up here, Kathy said, “Remember.” Well, being a flaming type-A male and hyper-focused on what I feel God wants me to share with you this morning, I said, “Remember what?” She said, “Three tenets of a good message. Number one: be sincere. Number two: be brief. And number three: be seated.” Over the past several weeks and maybe months, Chris has clearly shown us in the book of Ephesians our position based on what Jesus did on that cross and our condition in Christ. And these foundations form a prelude to our text that we’re going to look at this morning. Our text this morning, if you’ll turn there, and I never thought I’d preach on Revelation, but Revelation 22, verse 10 and 11. As we look at this final message to mankind, and particularly to those of us who are in the right position with Jesus Christ. And as we are going to look at this text this morning, we’re going to look at not only our position, the Godly in Christ, and our condition. But we’re going to look at the position and condition which those that do not know Jesus Christ and who are ungodly also have a position and a condition. And we’re going to look at that as it applies to our culture today. And reading from the text, the angel told this to John.

¹⁰And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. ¹¹He said, let the evil doers, or the unjust, still do evil, or be unjust; and let the filthy still be filthy;

There’s the position and there’s the condition that’s unchangeable at the time that a person meets their end. And then he contrasts it and he says:

and let the righteous still do right; and the holy still be holy.

I want to ask you a question this morning. What is the greatest issue, or threat, to your walk with Jesus and to your family? That question was asked to thousands of people across America a few years ago by Lifeway. What is the greatest threat, issue, that you face? I want to show those to you right here, the top 10. There were 20 listed, but the top 10. Number 1: an anti-Christian culture. And look at number 2. It's divorce. And look at number 3, and we're going to mention it one more time this morning: busyness. Are you as busy today as you were when you first began life? No. None of us. And then look. A lack of a father figure. A lack of discipline. And then look at the next six. Financial pressure, lack of communication, negative media influence, balance of work and family materialism. And as you look at the rest of those, number 11 I think today would probably be in the top 10, pornography. 13 is drugs and alcohol. Number 15 is abortion. We're only going to look at the first one this morning. And we're not going to look at it from a negative aspect. Although it's easy for us to get into that kind of attitude toward it. But we're going to look at it from the reality of the life and the culture in which we live today. And why is that listed number one? An anti-Christian culture. There's been an anti-God culture for years. And as we look at our culture today, every one of us would agree that we have removed God from almost every segment of our culture beginning in schools. You can no longer pray in the school. You can no longer have the 10 Commandments. We know longer have an Easter time or a Christmas party. And we look at our family today where we've deviated from Biblical marriage, Biblical manhood, and Biblical womanhood. And then secondly, I read a report two weeks ago in which Atheism is now the number one religion in America at 23% of our population outdistancing Catholics and Protestants. In fact, Protestants, mainline Protestant churches are only 10.9%. And these are the kinds of things that we deal with. We've lost civility personally among people, among individuals, and in our homes and families with domestic violence. And I tell you what, the biggest battleground of the loss of civility is in Washington D. C. It is the battleground where name calling and rock throwing continue to be the method of the day. And we've lost those things. And you know what the number one cause of death is in worldwide now? It's not cancer. It's not heart disease. Heart disease is second. Only a little less than 10 million a year. The number one cause of death worldwide is abortion: 42 million. Proliferation of public profanity and the use of God's name in vain; almost without flinching today. And the persecution of Christians, the persecution of Christians even with a bombing on Easter Sunday in Sri Lanka. And maybe we've come to a point in our culture where we need to ask ourselves this question. Has technology gone too far and removed caring and meaningful human relationships? Go to a restaurant today and look at how many couples, how many families, they're not talking, they're not interacting. What are they doing? They're looking at a cell phone. That computer that we carry around in our pocket. And I couldn't live without one today. But don't let that be something that detracts from your family's time of meals. Let that be a sacred time. Albert Einstein some 75 years ago made this statement. He said, "I fear the day when technology will surpass our human interactions. In that day, the world will have a generation of idiots." Now he didn't know what we're dealing with today. Was that prophetic? Well we live with these issues and many more every single day. And we cannot avoid facing reality. We can't run to the beautiful mountains of Colorado. We have to take a stand. And we have to live in this culture in a positive way. And we're going to look this morning at how we stand and live in the culture today.

We're going to live with confidence and victory because, you see, we have the only answer and the only hope. And that is in Jesus Christ Himself. These issues, though, and don't let anyone fool you, they're not new. They've been around since Adam and Eve in the garden and the battle

has raged since that time of the conflict between good and evil. And our text today tells us very clearly how it will end. How it will end. And it's still the war between good and evil. I want you to look at Isaiah 50 in verse 20. Isaiah in verse 20. And it says this:

²⁰Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;

What does woe mean here? Woe means in this passage, God's judgement will be upon those who call evil good and good evil. And then if you really want to see a beautiful illustration in the life of David of how we are to live today, look at Psalm 11. And in verse 3 we find these words.

³If the foundations are destroyed, we look at our nation in that light, what can the righteous do?

Well David answered it. In fact, he answered it even in verse 1 where he said, in the Lord I take refuge. In the Lord I place my trust. And all of the people around him giving him counsel told him to flee like a bird to the mountains and run away from it. In verse 2 we find that that culture of King Saul's was depreciated. And that culture was throwing arrows at David. But David said, "I'm not going to run away. I'm not going to flee." And look then at what he said in verse 3 and 4.

³What can the righteous do? The Lord is where? ⁴In His holy temple; and the Lord's throne is in heaven; and His eyes see.

That's where we are. And what a beautiful example of how David handled it; to trust God. You see, God's not surprised at what He sees in our culture. He's not surprised at what you and I face today. Because, you see, He has a plan for the ages that He is not going to change. And when we think things are spiraling out of control, we need to stop and remember that He's still in control. And when I think of control, I think of my father. Some of you who knew him or have known me to talk about him, you know what I'm talking about. My father was a wonderful Christian man. He knew this book better than most seminary professors. And at 92 years of age, he actually wrote a book and published it on the rapture. I didn't agree with all of his positions, but my dad was one who always had to be in control. He was post-depression. He was a part of that great generation. A World War 2 veteran. But he loved Jesus Christ with all of his heart. At the auction ring he bought some cattle one day and they weren't loading them fast enough so he climbs in there to help them. When he's in his 80's. A cow ran over him and tore his shoulder up. I took him to Scott & White in Temple to see an orthopedic specialist. We met with him right before lunch. He showed us the x-rays. He said, "Mr. Gage you're not going to recover unless you have surgery." Well we go to lunch that day and seated across from me, he looked me right in the eye and he said, "I'm not having that surgery." I said, "Why not?" He said, "If I had that surgery, I would be under anesthesia and not in control." That was his mentality toward things. Let me tell you something. In our lives today, there are two things over which we have no control. One are the parents we have been given. And the second one is the generation and the culture into which we have been born and live. We don't have any control over that. My dad didn't have control over that. But contrast that to a question that we do have control over. What will you do with Jesus Christ? Position. And how will you live for Him? Condition. That's our decision. That is what is before us. Well, that's a long introduction to Revelation 10, 22:10 & 11. And look at verse 10. Turn

back there. But before you do, I want to read you something from Daniel. And in the book of Daniel near the time of the end, Daniel 12:4 says this.

⁴But you, Daniel, shut up the words, seal the book until the time of the end;

And then he made this statement.

many will run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.

Why did he seal it up? Because it could not be comprehended or understood until Jesus Christ had come. And the book of Revelation explains so much of Daniel because, you see, that's in a latter time of it. And it's interesting that last little phrase here where he said in the end time many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall increase. You remember the number 3 issue facing our families today was what? Busyness. Running to and fro in a life where we get so busy we busy God right out of it. And look at technology and information and knowledge today. It's estimated that there are between 6 and 7 thousand scientific articles written each and every day. And that our information base doubles every 20 months. In 1896 the director of the US patent office said, "Everything that can be invented has been invented." Well I will tell you that that's been put to bed many years ago with computers, with cell phones, with GPS, with driverless cars, which I'll never own. Google. I mean we sit in the den and we say, "Well I don't know. But I'll Google it." Google knows everything. No. Google doesn't know everything. Our God knows everything. And we must never forget that. And here in verse 10 the angel gave the instruction to John to not seal up this message and these words. For, you see, they are to be understood. They are to be proclaimed. And they are to be lived out in our lives each and every day. Why? He said, "For the end is near." Whenever that might be. And the difference in these two prophecies; one word. Timing. For, you see, Daniel's prophecy was given before the cross. And John's was given after the cross. And you and I today as we see here, we live after the cross. So our time is now. I don't know when time will end. Jesus said He didn't know, but only the Father did. But I will tell you one thing. And don't forget this. We live in our generation and our culture, one generation closer. One generation closer.

And then look at verse 11 here in our text today. Because this is the contrast between those who know Jesus Christ and those who do not know him. It's the contrast with the eternal fate of the godly and the ungodly. And what he's saying here is not an invitation for the ungodly, the evil, to continue. It is a matter of fact of their permanent position at the time that they leave this world. Their position and their filthy condition. Those are the words of scripture, not mind. And then we see our position of righteousness and our condition of holiness. And we will continue that through all of eternity. And as you look at this, there's something else that's very, very important. And that is that men choose to sin because they want to. Not because they don't know better. But that position and condition that they place themselves in is permanent and will never be changed beyond the grave. You see, it's too late then. And the choice of the godly and ungodly, has to be made in advance. I've made. Have you? That's what we need to think about.

So what does all this mean to us in this culture in which we live today? Well I think Paul described it beautifully in 2 Timothy. And I would like for you to turn there to 2 Timothy 3. And in verses 10 and 11 we find here, because Paul had become a mentor. He had become the father figure in

young Timothy's life and was guiding him in what it meant to have the position and the condition in Jesus Christ. And in 10 and 11 he said, you, he said, Timothy, he was complementing him. He said, you followed my teaching, my conduct, my example of life following Christ. And then he talked about all of the persecutions of being in prison, of beating, and all of those things that Paul endured. And that culture, which was really not a lot different than ours is today. And look at the ending statement in verse 10. He said,

¹⁰and yet from all of those persecutions, the Lord rescued me.

That's where we stand today. And that is the positive. Indeed, he says here in verse 12,

¹²All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be, what, persecuted.

So why are we surprised about persecution in today's world? And then he goes on to say,

¹³While evil people and imposters will go on from, what, bad to worse deceiving and being deceived,

Is that not what we see? And what does that mean? Deceiving and being deceived. Deceive means to defraud. It means to lead astray. And those around us today that are trying to lead us astray have already themselves been led astray. Don't forget that. Don't follow them. Because here, he told Timothy to look at those that are following Christ. Those are the ones that you follow. And it's amazing here. Then goes on to say what we're to do. But he says that as for you, continue in what you have learned, that means from God's word, and firmly believe. And then he says that statement there next. Knowing from whom you learned it. And if you look at all of Timothy, Timothy learned God's word from grandmother Eunice, his mother Lois, and from Paul. There's nothing said about his father. I don't know what that is. But Paul became his father. Now you think about that for just a moment. Because that's important to every one of us in this room. You have that responsibility. By example and by sharing this book.

Now listen to me one more time because none of us have a choice of who our parents are or were. But we do have a choice of what kind of a parent or grandparent we will be to our children and our grandchildren. That's a responsibility, a huge one, that's in our hands. Proverbs 22:6 says, what? You know this verse.

⁶Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he's old he will not depart from it.

I think of Timothy there. Because, you see, his grandmother and his mother shared this book and God's word with him. Same as we should. And then I do want you to turn to 1 Timothy 5:8 because this is pretty clear. In 1 Timothy 5:8:

⁸But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

That's strong, but that's important. Because, you see, every one of us in this room, we have to take care of our children and grandchildren. How do we do that? Materially? Yes. Work hard.

Provide for them. Let them know that work is a calling of God and a provision. Secondly, emotionally. To be stable in our homes and our families. But third and most importantly, is spiritually. Provide for them spiritually. That's how to survive and win in the culture in which we live. Because, you see, we're not going to change our culture. We are not going to change it. But we have a responsibility to make the right choices in our lives. We have the right responsibility to live above the imposters, the deceivers, the evil, and the unjust. Because when we live above that and above our culture, you see, they will see Jesus in us. That is their only hope. We're not going to change it all and it may go to 28% this coming year. I don't know what. But those who don't believe in God and in Jesus Christ, there are only two kinds of people in the end. The godly and the ungodly. And those who know Jesus and those who don't, the only two. Now I want to tell you something that I want you to never forget because our culture today tries as best it can to water down, to deviate, to twist, to change, this book. But let me tell you something. God is not going to rewrite the Bible for our culture or any other culture. And the word of God is eternal and is the same forever and always. In Isaiah 40, verse 8, we find these words.

[the grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God will be the same forever and will stand forever.](#)

It's unchanging. And the prophecies that we see are unchanging. They will not change. So we return to one issue right now. And that issue is this. What will you do with Jesus Christ? That's the position. And secondly, how will you live for Him? That's the condition. There's no middle position. There's either the godly. Let me make that on the right hand, not the left. There's the godly and the ungodly. And there's no position in between. None. You either are or you're not. And Jesus said you're either with Me or against Me. I kind of like to buy a new car every once in a while. And I play the game with them. I love to play that game. You go in there and you have a position. This is the price that I will not exceed. And that salesman has this position over here. The position that he believes he's going to get you to come to. And how many times during that kind of negotiation have you heard him come back from the manager for the fifth time when you've told him up front you don't want any of that. And he'll make this statement, "Meet me halfway. Meet me in the middle." Well in the final analysis of these two, the godly and the ungodly, there's no negotiation. There's no meet me in the middle. There's no halfway. So we return to the two questions this morning. For every one of us in this room, are you right? Do you have the right position based upon what Jesus Christ did on that cross? Is your position with Him correct today? And secondly, is your condition one of living a righteous position in Him and holy life set apart for Jesus Christ?

Father, we thank You that Your word is so clear. We thank You, Father, that You've given us the answer to everything in life. And Lord I pray that we will never look at our culture with defeat, with dismay, with depression, with whatever else that would keep us from showing the world our position in You and to live out in our condition in You a life that would exemplify what it means to be God with skin on. Because we know that in Your word, You tell us that we are to preach the word at all times and if necessary, use words. Our life is to be our testament of You. Lord I pray this morning that if someone here does not have the right position with You, that they would make it right. And Lord if there are some who have allowed their condition to deviate away from living for Your, that they would get that right. Whatever it is that Your Spirit teaches what we should do. In Your precious Son's name we pray. Amen.