

God's Final Exam

In his book *Love Wins*, Rob Bell takes great pains to insist that all people have multitudes of opportunities after death to turn to God. Rob states that the love of God ultimately wins, even after death.

Revelation 21 and 22 describe a different scene. These chapters explain the consummation of all things. They warn and motivate men and women everywhere of a different outcome to life than Rob Bell depicts in *Love Wins*.

They caution unbelievers, those who fail to trust Christ as their redeemer, of their future. These verses describe the certainty of judgment for sinners and its finality (Revelation 21.8). Their portion excludes them from the new city, the place of God's presence (Revelation 21.8, 27; 22.3, 12, 15).

In addition, these sections call unbelievers to faith in Jesus Christ. Sinners can come and drink of the water of life freely (Revelation 21.6-7). The final call urges unbelievers to come and take of the water of life (Revelation 22.17). All who come will receive life and enter into the new city (Revelation 21.6-7; 22.17). All who reject the offer remain outside the walls (Revelation 21.8; 22.15).

Sadly, in *Love Wins*, Rob Bell repeatedly rejects and denies these truths. With only speculation for a foundation, he asserts that God will continue to woo them after their death. No place in Scripture provides any suggestion let alone proof that such an offer exists. In fact, the Scriptures gravely warn unbelievers that " ...it is appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment.'

(Hebrews 9.27)

To cling stubbornly to a false hope will bring certain and final judgment to those fooled by it.

These passages instead comfort the believer. They confirm the return of Christ to receive his bride (Revelation 21.6; 22.7) and those with their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Revelation 21.7).

Since these Scriptures speak clearly to our lives today, therefore, what does God now require of sinners like you and me? For unbelievers, the caution comes loudly and clearly. Jesus still calls to sinners to come to him in faith and trust.

I include these reminders because Rob Bell in *Love Wins* mocks them. Instead, he offers mere emulation of Jesus, which will not suffice and copying Christ's lifestyle will not meet God's requirements.

Jesus could not have made it any simpler. He stated, "Repent and believe the gospel." (Mark 1.15). Jesus declared that his father had sent him as the savior of sinners, dying in place of sinners like you and me. All who trust upon him will receive eternal life (John 3.16). In these last passages in Revelation, Jesus passionately calls sinners to come and drink of the water of life freely.

For those of us who have placed our confidence and trust upon Jesus Christ, we can rejoice in the certainty of our future with him in the new city. These reminders encourage us to continue to trust and obey his word.

I pray that the Holy Spirit will use these truths in your life to either bring you to drink of the water of life offered by Jesus and gain eternal life or to continue to trust the promises of God to you, a Christ-follower.