



REVELATION

Understanding the Apocalypse

Radical Word Bible Study

Episode 39

August 20, 2026



Rick Lancaster

REVELATION: Understanding the Apocalypse

Revelation 2026

Opening Comments

- **Check Hard Drive capacity.**
- **Switch to PowerPoint (slide 2) once timer reaches zero.**
- Welcome to episode 39 of the Radical Word Bible Study.
- I am Rick Lancaster, and we are coming to you live from our temporary podcasting studio in Amarillo, Texas.
- The movers came with our stuff today.
- Unfortunately, a few things were missing, including my microphone and the camera I use for this live stream.
- It might be a little rough tonight, but we will get it done.
- We are streaming this Bible Study live on Rumble, Facebook, and YouTube.
- The podcast version of this Bible Study can be found anywhere you go for podcasts.
- It is listed under Radical Word Bible Study with Rick Lancaster wherever you get your podcasts.
- Radical Word Bible Ministries is an outreach ministry of Calvary Chapel French Valley.
- If you are interested in staying up to date with what is happening at The Radical Word, click the link in the description for this video.
- Also, I publish a daily devotional that I send out by email.
- I will include a link to that as well.
- Today is Thursday, August 22, 2026.
- Let's open with a word of prayer.

● **RECORD**

- -
- -

- Turn to **Revelation 22** as we conclude the series: **REVELATION: Understanding the Apocalypse.**

Teaching

- **REVELATION: Understanding the Apocalypse**
 - As we have been going through this study of Revelation, have been saying Christ Jesus is coming back soon.
 - One of the measures of our faith is how confident we are that Jesus is coming soon.
 - Our confidence in that truth will determine how we respond to it.
 - I can remember growing up in Southern California.
 - Every time there was an earthquake, someone would say that California would eventually fall off into the ocean.
 - Often, the people saying it seemed very confident in what they were saying, but they weren't leaving Southern California.
 - They sounded confident but they didn't really believe what they were saying.
 - Our faith determines our actions.
 - You can tell me something and sound very convincing, but if what you say isn't influencing how you act, then I don't think you believe what you are saying.
 - Every person must look at their life and evaluate what it says about the truth that Jesus is coming soon, maybe very soon.
 - There are extremes that we need to be watchful of.
 - For example, someone believing Jesus is coming soon might stop working, sell everything, and sit around and wait for Jesus.
 - People have been expecting Jesus to come quickly for two thousand years.
 - We don't know the exact date when Jesus is coming back; no one does. **Matthew 24:36**
- ³⁶ **But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.**
- God has set a date for Christ to come back and get us, and so, every day we wake up, we are one day closer to be called up to meet Jesus in the air.
 - It could happen before the end of this study.
 - I'm okay with that; I'm ready.
 - And even though we believe Jesus could come back at any moment, we recognize that He might not come back in our lifetime.

- That being true, we live in the tension of always being ready but not knowing when He might get here.
- While in the Navy I was stationed aboard a Ballistic Missile Submarine.
- Our mission was to be prepared to launch intercontinental ballistic missiles should nuclear war break out.
- It had never happened before.
- We trained as if it could happen at any moment.
- I was a young man and didn't realize the greater significance of what we were doing.
- On board that submarine, we had enough missiles to kill millions of people.
- As Christ-followers, we are surrounded by people who are already dead spiritually. **Colossians 2:13-14**

¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

- And the consequence of being spiritually dead is bad. **John 3:18-19**

¹⁸ He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

- On that submarine, we waited for the order to come to launch our missiles.
- Thankfully, it never came.
- As Christ-followers, we are waiting for Jesus to come get us, but we have our orders. **Matthew 28:18-20**

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

- We have orders to offer a lifeline to the lost, the spiritually dead, for as long as we are here.
- And to do that, we need to be prepared through the process of the Holy Spirit sanctifying us to be more like Jesus.

- Three times in this last chapter, Jesus will say, “I am coming quickly!”
- It is almost as if He is trying to tell us something, right?
- The book of Revelation was given to the church to get it ready for Jesus to come back and get it.
- Sadly, as I look around, I see that much of the church is not ready.
- That is one of the purposes of Radical Word Bible Ministries; getting the church ready for Jesus.
- A more challenging question is, ‘Are you ready for Jesus to come back, right now?’
- At the end of this book the apostle John boldly proclaims his desire for Jesus to come back right now.
- And I believe that is what we all ought to be aspiring to – a growing desire for Him to come back right now.
- Last time, we got a glimpse into heaven as we looked at the eternal city, New Jerusalem.
- Today’s text begins with a continuation of that part of the vision.
- **Revelation 22:1-2**
- Turn in your Bible to **Ezekiel 47**.
- This prophecy by Ezekiel bears a lot of similarity to our text, but it may not be about the same things.
- **Ezekiel 47:1-6**
- One of the interpretations of this prophecy that I think fits it well is it points to the gospel going out.
- As the Holy Spirit moved, the gospel was small and not very influential.
- As time went on, the gospel has spread and become a great river.
- **Ezekiel 47:7-9**
- Another function of the gospel is its healing properties.
- Wherever the gospel is preached, sin is confronted and sin-sick souls are healed.
- Not only that but wherever the Spirit of God is moving, the power of God flows and brings healing to the physical ailments caused by sin.
- Turn back to **Revelation 22**.
- The water of life flows from the throne of God.
- It also refers to the Lamb as one of the sources of the living water.

- It doesn't say specifically that the Lamb is seated on a throne, but that can be inferred.
- We know that Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

Hebrews 8:1

¹ Now *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens...

- It is not a stretch to see this as a throne; there are other thrones in heaven. **Revelation 4:4**

⁴ Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

- That may not be that important; if Jesus is sitting on something, it is a throne.
- The tree of life was introduced to us in Genesis chapter 2 in the Garden of Eden.
- After the fall, God kicked Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden because the tree of life was there.

- If they had eaten of it – they would have lived forever. **Genesis 3:22-23**

²² Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—²³ therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.

- Kicking them out of Eden was a punishment but it was also an act of grace and mercy.
- If they had eaten of the tree of life they would have lived in a fallen state forever, out of fellowship with God.
- God created us to be in an intimate communion fellowship with Him.
- God shortened human lifespans so that we would not have to suffer forever.
- You might not think of this, but we should thank God that our lives only last 80 to 90 years in a fallen state.
- And if we receive Christ, we experience a taste of the intimate communion fellowship we were created for.
- And we have the hope of deliverance from this body of death, and we have the promise of eternal life in the glory of heaven.

- The fact that the tree of life is seen again is evidence that God's plan to restore this world is complete.
- While the purpose of the tree of life is not clear – it appears to enhance our experience of eternity.
- When Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, they were able to partake of the Tree of Life as much as they desired.
- We know that one of the benefits of eating from the fruit of the Tree of Life was eternal life, but we don't know how.
- There are many mysteries that will be revealed to us in heaven; this is just one of them.
- Another evidence that God's plan is complete comes in the next verse
- **Revelation 22:3a**
- Turn to **Genesis 3**.
- In Genesis 3, Satan disguised as a serpent deceived Eve.
- She ate the forbidden fruit and gave to her husband and Adam ate also.
- Because of Adam and Eve's fall into sin – God cursed the serpent/Satan, the woman, the man, and the ground/earth.
- **Genesis 3:14-19**
- The curse saturated all of creation. **Romans 8:22-23**
²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.
- Turn back to **Revelation 22**.
- 'no more curse' = no more sin – no hate, no violence, no war, no abuse, no neglect, no prejudice, no persecution, no racism.
- Everything that is wrong with this world will be taken away.
- The curse will be replaced.
- **Revelation 22:3b**
- Because all sin has been dealt with, people in heaven will experience the unrestricted presence of God.
- Right now, our sin-sick bodies cannot exist in the presence of God.
- But in heaven, with glorified bodies, we can be in His presence and experience His glory without fear.
- Who are the "servants who will serve Him"?

- This might be a specific group like those in white robes in **Revelation 7:14-15**

¹⁴ And I said to him, “Sir, you know.” So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵ Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.

- Or it could refer to everyone in heaven.
- All of creation should serve God – in heaven, I believe it will.
- But what does it mean to serve God in heaven?
- I have no idea!
- Today, I love serving God.
- Even in my imperfect state I love serving God.
- Every breath I take, and every beat of my heart is an opportunity to serve God, in small ways and great.
- If serving God is good here on earth, what must it be like in heaven.
- **Revelation 22:4**
- ‘they shall see His face’ – granted an audience with the king.
- What would that be like, to look into the face of God?
- There is a thought that some have that we cannot see the face of God the Father.
- John, the human writer of Revelation said twice, once in the gospel that bears his name and his first epistle. **John 1:18a; 1 John 4:12a**

¹⁸ **No one has seen God at any time...**

- Nowhere does the Bible say we will never see God.
- In fact, many believed they would see God. **Psalm 17:15**

¹⁵ **As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.**

- That verse is talking about Yahweh, but Jesus settles this debate for me. **Matthew 5:8**

⁸ **Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**

- It seems obvious to me that Jesus is referring to His Father.
- I am also looking forward to seeing Jesus face to face.
- Imagine that, to look into the eyes of Him who loved us so much that He would bear our sins on the cross.
- It humbles me to think about that.

- I know all my sins have been forgiven, and when I stand before Christ I will see nothing but love in His eyes, but I wish I had lived a better life for Him.
- It won't matter then, but it motivates me today to try to be more like Christ.
- 'His name of their foreheads' – whose name?
- Maybe the Lamb's but probably the Father's.
- It doesn't matter which; you belong to God.
- That speaks of ownership and responsibility.
- **Revelation 22:5a**
- It is the glory of God that illuminates this amazing city.
- I have so many questions about how things are going to work in heaven.
- Sadly, I need to wait to get answers to most of those questions.
- **Revelation 22:5b**
- They are the servants of God from verse three.
- Again, these could be the Tribulation saints, those who resisted the Antichrist and were killed for their faith in Christ.
- Or it could be all of God's people because all should serve Him.
- It says they shall reign forever and ever.
- The word for reign there is defined as ruling as a king.
- Who will they be reigning over?
- What does it even mean to reign over people who are in their glorified state and have been freed from the sin nature?
- This is the eternal state, and it is an even greater mystery than heaven is, though heaven is outside of time, space, and matter, so the eternal state may be now, and we just haven't got there to experience it.
- What I do know, this is where we will spend eternity with Jesus living in the light of His glory.
- Whether we are reigning over being reigned over makes no difference to me.
- We will be in heaven with Him who loved us so much that He shed every drop of His precious blood to make sure we got there.
- I could spend the first thousand years in heaven telling Him how thankful I am and how much I love but it wouldn't be enough.

- The focus shifts for the rest of the chapter.
 - **Revelation 22:6**
 - This is the angel from Revelation 21:9 speaking to John.
 - These words are faithful and true.
 - WE covered that last week from the last chapter.
 - Faithful means these words can be trusted.
 - They are true and therefore should be believed and obeyed.
 - Take them seriously because there will be a test.
 - It is a lifelong test with three simple questions.
 - Did you know what God said?
 - Did you believe that what God said was true?
 - Did you obey the things God told you Son. **John 3:16**
- ¹⁶ **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**
- You know it because you just heard me say, but do you believe and obey Him as your Lord and Savior?
 - If you are watching or listening to this, then the answer is probably yes.
 - But what about the rest of God's Word; know it, believe it, and obey it!
 - God, who Lord of the holy prophets sent an angel to communicate these things with His servants.
 - The same God who inspired the prophets of the Old Testament to write commanded an angel to us His servants in the future what was coming.
 - This takes us back to the very first verse of this book. **Revelation 1:1-2**
- ¹ **The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant John, ² who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.**
- And if you remember what I said then...
 - Wait, you do remember, right, it was only eleven months ago?
 - This is addressed to the church.
 - Not everyone in the church is committed to serving God.
 - Many are quite content being served by others.

- Some are serving for other reasons, but typically it is a relatively small percentage of the church that could be called servants.
- God wants His servants to know the things which must shortly take place.
- We have talked about this a lot in this study so I will just touch on this.
- The word “shortly” can be interpreted as “soon” like the NASB and ESV translate it.
- It uses a Greek word that we use in words like tachometer, a device of measuring speed.
- When the events described in Revelation begin, it will be suddenly and unannounced. **1 Thessalonians 5:2-3**

² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³ For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

- This time is also described using the times of Noah as an illustration.
- Right before God judged the world with a flood, everyone except Noah and his family were just going as long as if there was no danger at all.
- God wants His servants to be ready and to be busy helping others get ready for the soon coming of Christ.
- Jesus says it in His own words.
- **Revelation 22:7a**
- This is Jesus speaking – first of three times – I am coming quickly.
- What does it mean if Jesus tells us something three times.
- It means He wants us to take it seriously.
- Ultimately, He would prefer if we would take it seriously the first time we hear it, believe it, and obey it.
- **Revelation 22:7b**
- This is the sixth of seven beatitudes of Revelation.
- ‘Blessed’ = happy – want to be happy – keep the words of the prophecy of this book.
- The word “keeps” has a number of meanings and I believe they all apply here.
- It means to guard or watch over.

- It also means to obey or observe.
- These words are not just to fascinate us or stimulate of imagination.
- They are meant to be obeyed and shared with others.
- We teach the book of Revelation because it promises a blessing for doing so.
- Also, because it is the Word of God, and mostly because it reveals Jesus Christ to us in ways we can't see Him so clearly in other parts of the Bible.
- There may be parts that are not easy to understand.
- That should not stand in the way of loving, learning, and teaching this book to others.
- I learn a little more each time I study and teach it.
- Don't let your fear of what you don't know keep you from sharing what you do know.
- Remember, it is the role of the Holy Spirit to bring to remembrance the things Jesus said.
- Trust Him and share what you know.
- John is, again, overwhelmed by what he sees and hears, and makes a mistake he has already made.
- **Revelation 22:8-9**
- This is the second time John has made this mistake and is rebuked by an angel.
- That encourages me – his mistake didn't disqualify him from this great task – he was corrected and moved on.
- We should also cut him some slack.
- Since we have never been given a vision of heaven and end-time things, we should probably not judge John.
- The angel does say something that is interesting.
- He refers to himself as a fellow servant of John and the prophets.
- And not just them but those who keep the words of this book – that would be us.
- It seems we will interact with angels in some way in heaven.
- Right now, everything angels do without us being aware of it.
- That is probably more interesting than meaningful to us today.
- The angel finishes this verse with a simple command: Worship God.

- Only God is worthy of worship.
 - The angel continues speaking to John.
 - **Revelation 22:10**
 - ‘do not seal up...’ Do not hide the words of the prophecy of this book.
 - These words are meant for everyone alive from the time John received them on the island of Patmos on that Sunday afternoon.
 - Daniel was given a vision of the future, told to seal it up – was for future generations.
 - Not so with this prophecy – for the generation alive at the time John wrote it and every generation that comes until Christ returns.
 - The time is at hand or near.
 - This is an exhortation to live within the duality of two truths; Jesus could come back at any moment, and He might not come back in my lifetime.
 - It is very soon and maybe not now.
 - Verse 11 is a little odd.
 - **Revelation 22:11**
 - Unjust and filthy are exact opposites of righteous and holy.
 - Might be communicating that there is no neutral ground with God.
 - You are either righteous and holy or you are unjust and filthy.
 - Jesus speaks again.
 - **Revelation 22:12-13**
 - 2nd time – I am coming quickly.
 - ‘My reward is with Me’ – what we do in this life matters to God.
 - A day is coming when everything we have done will be judged by God. **John Walvoord**
- “All final judgments relate to works, whether of Christians being rewarded or the unsaved being punished.”**
- Someday, each of us will stand before Christ. **2 Corinthians 5:9-10**
- ⁹ Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**
- As far as we can tell from what the Bible says, we only have this life to earn those rewards.
 - We were created to do good works. **Ephesians 2:10**

¹⁰ **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**

- Discovering the good works God appointed for you to do is one of the exciting parts of walking with Jesus.
- If you are not certain what to do, just do good.
- The closer you walk with Jesus, the easier it is to see what God wants you to do.
- We don't do the good works for the reward, but it is nice to know that there is a reward for serving God.
- Many of those rewards will not be experienced until we get to heaven.
- But then we get to enjoy those rewards for eternity.
- Next is the seventh and final beatitude of Revelation. .

- **Revelation 22:14**

- 'tree of life' = eternal life in heaven.
- Obedience to God and His Word is expected of those who will go to heaven.
- Next, we see who is not allowed into heaven.

- **Revelation 22:15**

- Not going to heaven – dogs – always thought that should be cats.
- Not literal dogs – people of low character.
- These are people who live how they want without regard to God or His Word.
- The main question regarding entrance to heaven is, "Did you receive Christ?"
- Jesus speaks again.

- **Revelation 22:16**

- Here is another reason we teach the book of Revelation.
- Jesus gave the revelation to an angel to give to John so that he would testify these things in the churches.
- We are to proclaim in the church the soon coming of Jesus until He comes and gets us.
- Jesus is the source of the revelation of Himself.
- Jesus is the Root and Offspring of David.
- The root is where David came from; Jesus created David.
- He is also the offspring of David.

- Mary was a descendant of King David, and so was Joseph, Mary's husband who raised Jesus.
- He is also the Bright and Morning Star.
- This points to a Messianic verse in **Numbers 24:17**
¹⁷ I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and batter the brow of Moab, and destroy all the sons of tumult.
- The whole Old Testament points to Jesus and this moment.
- **Revelation 22:17**
- The Holy Spirit and the bride (the church) are called to make an invitation to come to Jesus – the water of life – for eternal life.
- If you have heard the invitation to come and you have heard the words of prophecy in this book, you are invited to invite others to come.
- As we draw near the end, we are given a warning about what we do with this book.
- **Revelation 22:18-19**
- Verse 18 is a warning against pride and arrogance as you teach through Revelation.
- Don't say this says something that it doesn't – don't try to make it fit your doctrine.
- Verse 19 is a warning against fear and cowardice.
- Some won't teach Revelation because they are afraid it will bother people.
- I more afraid that God would be bothered because I didn't teach it than I am that you might not like what you hear.
- As we come to the last verses of the last book of the Bible, we have Christ's last words to the world.
- **Revelation 22:20a**
- The very last thing that Jesus said to the churches and to the world is "Surely I am coming quickly."
- That is what we ought to be waiting for.
- It is what we are to be expecting to happen.
- Every breath we take ought to be with the expectation that it might be our last breath on this earth because Jesus is coming to get us.
- That is exciting to me.
- John closes the letter with how he feels about that

- **Revelation 22:20b**
- John says, good idea – Jesus, come back right now.
- That’s easy to understand – John is in his nineties in exile on the island of Patmos – of course he wants Jesus to come right now.
- I’m not convinced that John’s circumstances determined his attitude.
- **Revelation 22:21**
- Do you want Jesus to come back right now?
- I am guessing most of you would say, yes, of course. Really?
- I wonder how many of us are secretly hoping He comes back after...you fill in the blank.
- Or maybe you want Jesus to wait until you have done something, or maybe stopped doing something.
- Maybe someone wants Jesus to wait until a loved one gets saved.
- Turn to **2 Peter 3**
- It would be a good exercise to examine your heart, do you really want Jesus to come back for His church, right now?
- If not, why not? What does it say about your faith?
- Peter understood that a day was coming when everything we see was going to be destroyed.
- **2 Peter 3:10-13**
- Jesus is coming back to get His church, maybe very soon.
- Because we don’t know the day or hour, we need to live every day as if it is our last one on earth.
- There are at least three things we should take from the study of Revelation.
- First – **The Character of our life.**
- Peter says we should live lives marked by holy conduct and godliness.
- Don’t leave things undone – repent of your sins – seek the forgiveness of those you have offended in this life.
- Be a godly husband or wife, son/daughter, mother/father, employer, employee.
- Jesus is coming back to get His church, but it might not be soon.
- Therefore, we have to also live as if we are going to be here for a long time.
- Second – **The Conduct of our life**

- Pour into the next generation about the things of God.
- Be busy about the work of the church – the bride of Christ.
- Get involved – help us to get her ready for her groom Christ Jesus to come get her – volunteer to serve – get into a Bible Study – give to the work of the ministry.
- Third, and last – **The Compassion of our life.**
- Jesus is coming back, maybe very soon – that’s good news for us as Christians
- It is not good news to those who are not – do you care that they may be headed to a fate far worse than simply dying?
- The more convinced I am that Jesus is coming back, the more compelled I am to tell people about the hope I have in Him and to warn them of the danger ahead.
- Jesus is coming back to get His church – maybe soon.
- And my attitude is, ‘Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!’
- Let’s pray and ask God to help us look forward to the coming of His Son, Christ Jesus.
- That brings us to the end of our study through Revelation.
- I hope that it has been a blessing to you.
- My plan was to jump into Genesis next.
- Things have been a little hectic preparing for our new season.
- I am praying about going to a short book in the New Testament, maybe Philippians.
- Let me know what you think or let me know if you would like to do something else.
- -
- -
- **Switch to last PowerPoint slide.**
- **Closing Comments**
- If you have any questions, please connect with me.
- You can email me at rick@radicalword.com.
- You can also connect with me on social media.
- If you are listening to the podcast and would like to tune in to the live stream, you can go to radicalword.com and click on one of the links at the top of the page every Thursday at 7:00pm CST.

- Let's close with a word of prayer.
- God bless you all. Until next time, go be radical with Jesus.
- -
- **Stop recording.**
- For those of you watching the live stream, thank you for your participation.
- I will stay online for a few minutes if you have any questions or comments.
- Have a radical week with Jesus.
- **Switch to Post Stream scene.**
-