

“Life in the 4th quarter”

(Rev. 22:6-12)

Dr. Richard S. Koole
Chapel Pointe
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I. Introduction

A. Brett Favre

1. His recent retirement
 - a. His records
2. How did he get into my Palm Sunday sermon???
3. Later

B. When we get caught off guard—

1. Parents return home unexpectedly
 - “Room cleaned before I get home”
 - Wait until last minute
 - Then work like wild men
2. Your boss stops in
 - Don’t want to get caught napping
 - Papers flying – the Warehouse
 - On the internet
3. Taxes!
 - The importance of April 15th
 - Many get started April 14th
4. Term papers or finals or special project

- No time to waste

C. Palm Sunday and the first arrival of Jesus

1. Hosanna!
 - a. “Save us now”
 - b. That’s why he was there
2. Yet they crucified him five days later

D. We are waiting for his return

1. If you thought it would be before next Sunday...Easter
2. Some would cancel everything else and get to work
 - Clean up your life
 - Tell others
3. Nothing else would matter

D. Well—He might be coming in 7 days

1. Or in seven hours
2. His final words in the N.T.
 - Rev. 22:20 – “I am coming soon”
3. But 2,000 years have come and gone since Rev. 22 was written
 - a. Since they sang “Hosanna!”
4. How soon is soon?

II. Review

A. Revelation....a look at our future

1. John was shown all of the coming major events
 - a. Rapture

- b. Tribulation
- c. Millenium
- 2. The New Jerusalem
 - a. Described its majesty last week

B. Now some final thoughts

- 1. Why so important
 - a. My last words to kids before I left for Brazil
 - 1. Important
 - c. “My Last Will and Testament”
- 2. Final words of Revelation...and the entire Bible
 - a. Contain a warning in v. 18
 - b. *“Don’t let anybody add anything to them”*
- 2. Our marching orders until He returns

III. Text...Rev. 22

A. Introduction (v. 6)

The angel said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place.”

- 1. *“These words are trustworthy and true”*
 - a. All the prophecies of the Book of Revelation
 - 1. Has just laid out God’s game plan
 - b. All of His past prophecies have come true
 - 1. And so will these
- 2. Jesus...and not John...is the author of Revelation

b. Rev. 1:1

“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...”

3. *“the things that must soon take place” (v.6)*

a. “soon”

1. “ev taxei”

2. “suddenly”

a. Without warning

3. “quickly”

a. “Swiftly”

4. Same as next verse -- “Behold I am coming soon”

b. It did begin to be fulfilled quickly

1. The seven churches

a. Already in the age of the 2nd church

b. Smyrna...the persecuted church

2. Was being fulfilled as John wrote

c. Also refers to the speed with which prophecies are fulfilled once it begins

1. Rapid fire

d. And—He is returning for us quickly

1. “suddenly”

2. All of the players are in place

3. Nothing stands in the way of the rapture

4. Our hope in the imminent return of Christ

- a. Don't get caught unprepared
 - 1. Be ready
- b. But how?
 - 1. Closes the Bible by telling you how to stay prepared
 - 2. His introduction
 - a. Be ready
 - b. I'm coming at any time
 - 3. Now His instructions on how to be ready

5. We are living in the "fourth quarter"

- a. Has never been a time like this
 - 1. Israel....The fig tree
 - a. Matt. 24:32-
 - b. 1948
 - 2. The alignment of the nations
- b. All the signs point to the soon return of Christ
 - 1. "This generation will not pass away until these things are fulfilled"

6. Time for a "two minute drill"

- a. **Brett Favre** during the final two minutes
 - 1. Every second counts
 - 2. No time to waste
- b. Our sense of urgency
 - 1. The value of every day and minute

7. How should we live in the 4th quarter?

- a. To ensure that we are ready to meet God

B. Living in the Fourth Quarter (Rev. 22:7-12)

1. Watch for the return of Jesus (v. 7)

(7) Behold, I (Jesus) am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book

- a. Be watching because He's coming "soon"
- c. Blessed (happy) are those who keep the words of the prophecy
 - 1. "keeps"
 - a. "te reo"
 - 2. "obeys the words of the prophecy..."
- d. The purpose of the Book of Revelation
 - 1. Not entertainment
 - a. Prophecy junkies
 - 2. Rather—motivation
 - a. To watch for His return
 - b. Don't be caught disobeying

2. Worship God alone (v. 8-9)

(8) I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me.

- a. John is overwhelmed
 - 1. "***And I John, heard and saw these things***"
- b. Collapsed in front of the angel
- c. Mistook the messenger for the one who sent the message
 - 1. Our glorified bodies...like the angels

- d. Two mistakes regarding messengers
 - 1. “Don’t shoot the messenger”
 - 2. “Don’t worship the messenger”
- e. I’m just a messenger
 - 1. Times when I’ve had to confront
 - a. “Don’t taze me bro!”
 - 2. And please don’t worship me
 - a. An honor to proclaim God’s message
 - b. Worship God and God alone
- f. The angel set John straight

(9) But he said to me, “Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!”

- 1. Cut that out!
 - a. “I’m just a created being also”
- 2. The line between obedience and worship (be careful)
- g. ***“Worship God!”***
 - 1. Two word summation of your life’s goal
- h. What do you worship?
- i. How to worship?
 - 1. Sing praises (Rev. 4:8, 11), (Rev. 5:9-10, 12, 13)
 - 2. Imitate him
 - 3. Brag about Jesus.....tell others about Him
 - 4. Never bring disgrace to His name!

3. *Witness to all you know (v. 10-11)*

Then he told me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near.

- a. Don't write it down and then hide it
 - 1. Get the message out
 - 2. When a disaster looms—
 - a. get the word out
 - b. each one reach one
 - c. NOW.....Before too late
- b. John did his job!
 - 1. Got the word out
 - 2. What about you
 - a. You now know of the horrors awaiting the unsaved
- c. Not cool to talk religion or politics
 - 1. We certainly talk about politics
 - 2. Religion so much more important!
- d. “The time is near”
 - 1. True then as today
 - 2. For each person
 - a. Now is the acceptable time
 - b. Rapture (or) death
 - *my heart
- e. The confusion of the next verse

(11) Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy.”

1. This message confirms the saved or the lost
 - a. Separates
2. Can't add anything else
 - a. If they refuse this gospel
 - b. Nothing else to add
3. The Word either softens or hardens
 - a. Their rejection hardens
- f. The message gives hope to the righteous
 1. And motivation to the Holy!
 2. Compels them to work tirelessly

4. Work for your rewards (v. 12)

(12) Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.

- a. Coming soon
 1. Coming “suddenly”
 2. Bringing rewards with Him
 - a. Will be given to saved based on their works
- b. Time is almost over!
 1. Two possibilities
 - a. The Lord's return (4th quarter)
 - (or)
 - b. Your death

- c. Finish the race strong
 - 1. The kick in a race
 - a. I ran the quarter mile (400 meters)
 - *a long sprint
 - 2. The importance of the finish
- d. Apostle Paul
 - 1. Old man (tired)
 - 2. If anybody deserved some rest, it was Paul
 - 3. But He set the standard for a strong finish
 - 4. His words in Phil. 3:12-14 tell how to finish strong

C. How to finish strong

1. Don't coast while the race is still being run

Philippians 3:12-14 (12) Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

- a. Can't quit until the race is over
- b. Athletes that finish strong
- c. Christians that don't finish well

2. Don't rest on your past successes

(13) Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, (14) I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

- a. Never look back while running
 - 1. Eyes on the goal
- b. "forgetting what is behind"
 - 1. Only as good as your last race

c. Move on from:

1. Your past victories, and
2. Get over your past failures

*give them to God

3. Always keep the goal in mind

But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, (14) I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

a. The “purpose filled life”

1. What is God’s purpose for your life?

b. What are you going to do with the rest of your life?

1. How to best invest for the goal

2. Our one year “*journey through life*”

4. Live for this moment in time

a. Can’t live in the past....yesterday’s gone

1. Some of you are coasting

b. Can’t live future.....tomorrow never arrives

1. “Some day”

2. May never come

3. Always tomorrow

4. Serve Him today

c. It’s all about what you do “today”

5. Get personally involved in the race

a. Don’t just cheer on others—

1. Get in the race

2. Too many spectators
 - a. Soccer stadium in Rio de Janeiro
 1. 22 player....200,000 spectators
 - b. Theodore Roosevelt

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again; because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumphs of high achievement and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

6. Strive to win...not just finish

- a. Each will be rewarded according to their works
 1. God is fair!
 2. Backsliders will lose
 3. Lazy Christians will pay
 - a. Loss of rewards in Heaven
- b. Give your best to Christ
 1. Service in this church....excellence

7. Don't make excuses

- a. Even though you have failed in the past
- b. Churchill defined success as going from one failure to the next without loss of enthusiasm

IV. Summary

Revelation 22:12 Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.