

Easter, Day 4  
Thursday, April 25, 2019

Revelation 22:12–17

I sometimes imagine what it would be like for my older (which is actually younger) self to meet my present self. When I picture it I see both persons being annoyed and disliking the other. The younger me wondering how he could have ever gotten like *this*; clean cut, polite, and *domesticated*. My present self would look at that younger man and want to smack him for being such a self centred *idiot*. There is little doubt that there has been tremendous change in who I am, but I cannot take all the credit for that change.

Other people were involved. My dad's third wife played a role, people in churches, and my wife to name only a few. Perhaps the most significant, from a human perspective, is my wife. She is the person who I opened myself most to. As a result, she is the one who has had the most influence. Much of my changed person comes from her patient love and mercy. But, as great as she is, she only gets a limited contribution. Ultimately, all of my conversion (past, present, and future) can be attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit; directly and through those other people, including my wife.

It is the same picture in Revelation; the bride can say, "Come," because the Spirit says it. I love what Wright says about the Spirit in Revelation:

It is the spirit that enables the bride to be the bride. It is the spirit that enables the martyrs to keep up their courage and bear true witness. It is the spirit that inspires the great shouts and songs of praise. The spirit goes out from God's throne and, creating into and then through the hearts, minds and lives of people of every nation, tribe and tongue, returns praise to the father and the lamb.<sup>1</sup>

The Spirit is essential to the life and witness of the church and to yours and mine. It is tempting, especially in lent to see ourselves as doing the work of examination and purgation. But, in truth, this has been and is the Spirit's work through and through. That's the only reason why the work is successful at all.

Prayer

Spirit of God, thank you for your work of redemption and sanctification. Would you carry on your work of renewal and conversion in us and keep us from thinking that we are the one doing the work. Amen.

---

<sup>1</sup> N. T. Wright, *Revelation for Everyone* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 206.