Please open your Bibles with me to The Book of Revelation, chapter one. And let's read verse 3.

Revelation 1:3 (NKJV)  Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

Prayer

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Introduction

If you are a student of the Bible you know there are certain "numbers” that are given great significance in the Bible.

One of those numbers is the number “3.” God is “three in one” ……God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus prayed three times in the Garden before His arrest. And Jesus was in the grave for three days before His resurrection. So the number “3” is a special number in the Bible.

Another number that has special significance in the Bible is the number “10.” There were ten generations of people who lived prior to the Great Flood. God sent 10 Plagues upon the land of Egypt. And God gave Moses The Ten Commandments. So the number “10” is a special number in the Bible.
Another number that has special significance in the Bible is the number “12.” There were twelve tribes of Israel. Jesus chose twelve apostles. Heaven will have twelve gates and twelve angels at the gates. So the number “12” is also a very special number in the Bible.

But one number that seems to have very special significance throughout the whole Bible is the number “SEVEN.” There were seven days in the creation week. God designated the seventh day of the week as “a day of rest” or the Sabbath day. The Golden Candlestick in the Tabernacle had seven branches. Naaman was told to go dip seven times in the Jordan River to be cleansed of his leprosy.

In His “Sermon on The Mount” Jesus gave us The Seven Beatitudes. In Matthew 23 Jesus pronounced Seven woes on the scribes and Pharisees. When Peter asked Jesus, “How many times should I forgive a brother who sins against me, SEVEN? Jesus told Peter, “seventy times seven.

So the number “7” is a very special number in the Bible. Seven is “the number of completion.” And so when you come to the Book of Revelation, the final book that completes the whole Bible the usage of the number “7” increases dramatically.

-There are THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA and THE LORD’S SEVEN LETTERS to those Churches.

-There are SEVEN SPIRITS.
-There are SEVEN GOLDEN LAMPSTANDS.
-In Revelation 10 John mentions SEVEN THUNDERS
-There are THE SEVEN SEAL JUDGMENTS......THE SEVEN TRUMPET JUDGMENTS......and THE SEVEN BOWL JUDGMENTS.
-THE BEAST FROM THE SEA had “SEVEN HEADS.”
But one thing you may not know is that in The Book of Revelation there are **SEVEN BLESSINGS**. These seven blessings are often called “The Seven Beatitudes of Revelation.”

Let’s focus on these “seven blessings” or “seven beatitudes” for the remainder of the message.

**The First Blessing (Revelation 1:3)**

_Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near._

*(Revel 1:3 NKJV)*

1. It is a blessing to read any part of the Bible; whether its the great history books of the Old Testament, or the beautiful poetry of Psalms, or the short wise sayings of Proverbs, or the wonderful accounts of Jesus’ life in the Gospels. Any time we spend time reading our Bibles we receive a blessing.

2. But did you know there is a special blessing in store for those **read and study and heed and obey** what is written in the Book of Revelation.

3. And yet a vast majority of Christians steer away from reading the Book of Revelation because they find it difficult to understand all the symbolic language John uses in this book.

   Many preachers steer away from preaching from the Book of Revelation because of the difficulty in interpreting and explaining the meaning of its difficult passages.
4. Quite frankly, many avoid the Book of Revelation because they find it fearful and disturbing. Now if I were not a Christian.......if I was not saved.....I think the Book of Revelation would “scare the ever-loving daylights out of me”........and for good reason!

5. But for the Christian.....for every true believer in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, there is much to rejoice about in the Book of Revelation.

Let me tell you just a few of the things you will discover if you will read and study this wonderful book.

* In the pages of this wonderful prophetic book you will discover that we Christians are going to WIN in the end. You will discover that the paradise that was “lost” in the beginning is going to be restored in the end, and we are truly going to live happily ever after for all eternity, not in the Garden of Eden, but someplace better....HEAVEN!

* Also if you will take the time to read and study the Book of Revelation you will discover that Satan and all his demonic forces are going to meet their ultimate doom and be cast into hell forever and ever.

* Also in this wonderful book you will discover that every unrepentant thief.....murderer.....child molester.......wife-abuser.....drug dealer.....human trafficker....pedophile.....and rapist will be shut out of heaven forever and ever and we will never have to deal with the likes of these people again!
*In these pages you will discover that every scoffer and skeptic who made fun of Christians and mocked Christians....and ridiculed Christians and persecuted Christians is going to pay for it with their souls when they stand before GOD in the Great White Throne Judgment!

6. Do you see now why John says, “Blessed is he who READS and those who HEAR the words of this prophecy, and KEEP those things which are written in it; for the time is near.”

Well, let's move on to......

**The Second Blessing (Revelation 14:13)**

Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me,“Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.” (Revelation 14:13 NKJV)

1. None of us likes to think about or talk about our death do we? But all of us know its going to happen one day don’t we. The Hebrew writer tells us, “It is appointed unto man once to die, and then to face the judgment.”

2. You can take a bath in Oil of Olay every night.....you can jog every day through rain, sleet and snow...... you can eat the healthiest foods on the planet......you can take the best multi-vitamin on the market......and you could even go see your doctor for a physical check-up every week of your life. And you will still keep your appointment with death .......all of us will!
3. But John tells us there's a difference between our deaths as Christians and the deaths of non-Christians.

Notice John doesn't say, “Blessed are all who die!”

He says, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” Blessed are those who die as Christians.

4. Notice two “blessings” that will be ours' upon our deaths......

(A) The blessing of having REST from our LABORS.

The very moment you and I close our eyes in death we will rest from everything that caused us to be weary in this life. We will rest from life's trials.....and life's troubles.....and life's hardships....and life's disappointments.....and life's sorrows......and life's frustrations.....and life's stresses and pressures.

But for those who die without Jesus Christ there won't be a moment of rest after they die. Their troubles will be multiplied and intensified in death, and will continue for all eternity. Those who “die in the Lord” will rest from their labors. Those who “die without the Lord will never rest.
(B) The blessing of having our **GOOD WORKS** follow us.

Those who die without Jesus Christ will not have their “good works” follow them, they will have **their SINS** follow them. *Every sinful deed.....every sinful word.....every sinful thought .....every sinful act.....* will follow each and every lost soul clear to the Great White Throne of GOD.

But for those of us “who die in the LORD” our sins won't follow us, because they have been covered by the blood of Christ. Instead our good works will follow us to the judgment seat of Christ where we will receive our reward.

This brings us to......

**The Third Blessing (Revelation 16:15)**

“Behold, I am coming as a thief. **Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.**” *(Revelations 16:15 NKJV)*

1. Notice John precedes this blessing with a warning: “**BEHOLD, I AM COMING AS A THIEF.**” If I understand my Bible correctly, the Lord will have already come and received His Church in the air prior to the Great Tribulation period of seven years. So to whom does this warning and this blessing apply?
2. If you carefully study the **Book of Revelation** you learn that there will be people who will come to know Christ during the Great Tribulation who will refuse to bow to worship the Antichrist.

There will be a mass slaughter of believers during the Great Tribulation. To profess faith and allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ rather than the Antichrist will cost the lives of most who follow Jesus in those horrible days.

3. But there will still be a number of believers in those days who will escape physical death, but live in constant danger of being killed every single day.

4. This **warning**............ **“Behold, I am coming as a thief”** and this **blessing**..... **“Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame”** are for those brave, courageous followers of Christ who will have escaped physical death, but live in constant danger during the days of the Great Tribulation.

5. This blessing is a reminder to those persecuted saints that **JESUS IS COMING AGAIN**......so **keep watching**..... **keep believing**......**keep hoping**.....**keep persevering** no matter how difficult their situation may get before He comes!
The Fourth Blessing (Revelation 19:9)

Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.” (Revelation 19:9 NKJV)

1. Weddings can be a spectacular affair. Thousands of dollars are spent trying to produce a perfect moment in time that will join a couple together in marital bliss.
   The bride is dressed in her pure white wedding dress, the groom stands nervously at the front of the church. It is a special moment in the lives of those two individuals and for the people who know and love them.

   Weddings, here on earth, are a special thing! Weddings are a time for singing, and dancing, and laughter, and celebration!

2. But no wedding on earth.......not yours, not mine, nor the wedding of any of our children or grandchildren can even begin to compare the marriage of Jesus Christ and His bride, the Church. It truly is “a wedding made in Heaven!”

   John says, “Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!”  In other words, “How blessed are those who receive an invitation to be present for the wedding of all weddings.”

3. Who will be there? All of those who have been saved by the blood of Jesus Christ. You will be there! I will be there! All of our Christian loved ones who have gone before us will be there. Brothers and sisters-in-Christ who once sat in these Church pews, but are now gone will be there! The saints through all the ages will be there. Peter....Andrew....James.....and John will be there! The apostle Paul.....and Barnabas.....and Timothy will be there. The great preachers and missionaries throughout the ages will be there!
4. Oh what a celebration it will be! The joy......the music......the fellowship......the excitement ......‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’”

This brings us to ……

**The Fifth Blessing  (Revelation 20:6)**

_Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection._ Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. *(Revelation 20:6 NKJV)*

1. Every human being who has ever lived will be resurrected from their graves, but not at the same time and not for the same purpose.

2. The scriptures teach us there are “two resurrections.” The first resurrection is for the SAVED. The second resurrection is for the LOST.

**The First Resurrection** consist of three distinct companies:

The first resurrection began with **JESUS CHRIST.** In **I Corinthians 15:20** the apostle Paul writes: “But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.” So “the first resurrection” actually began the day Jesus Christ came forth alive from the tomb.

Also in that **first resurrection** will be the resurrection of Christians, those who are saved. This will happen when Christ comes to get His Church.
Remember those familiar words of the apostle Paul in *I Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NKJV)*

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.
14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.
15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.
16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.
17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.
18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

So “the first resurrection” began with Christ Himself on the day He arose from the dead. We Christians are next to resurrect. That will happen when Christ comes to get His Church.

But then there's a third group of people who will be part of “the first resurrection” and that will be those who are saved and martyred during the Great Tribulation. These will be resurrected after the Great Tribulation prior to the beginning of the Thousand Year Reign.
3. While those who have part in “the first resurrection” are blessed, there is NO blessing for those who are part of the second resurrection. That is the resurrection of the lost. The lost will be brought out of their graves to stand before God at the Great White throne judgment and be sentenced to eternal punishment in hell.

Now you understand why John wrote: Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection.

This brings us to.....

The Sixth Blessing (Revelation 22:7)

“Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.” (Revelation 22:7 NKJV)

1. Now if this blessing sounds familiar it is because it is strikingly similar to the wording of the first blessing.

Remember the first blessing in Revelation 1:3 read......

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

This sixth blessing reads......

“Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”
2. We know the “coming of the Lord is near” don’t we! This has been the urgent message of the Lord’s Church ever since Christ ascended back to His heavenly Father. The Lord’s coming is always imminent….He can always come at any given moment.

3. In this verse, John is saying, “Blessed are those who live in a constant state of obedience knowing that the LORD could come at any time.”

4. Are you living in a constant state of obedience? Are you living your life with a constant awareness …..a constant sense of urgency that Christ could come back at any time?

   Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

This brings us to…..

**The Seventh Blessing (Revelation 22:14)**

Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. (Revelation 22:14 NKJV)

1. The first line of this blessing reads differently in the original Greek than it does here. In the original Greek it reads: “Blessed are they who have washed their robes” rather than “Blessed are those who do His commandments.”
We know we cannot inherit eternal life by keeping the commandments, just ask the Rich Young Ruler. We can only inherit eternal life by having our robes washed by the blood of Christ or by being “clothed in the righteousness of Christ.”

Paul tells us in Galatians 3:27 (NKJV) “For as many of you were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.”

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CONCLUSION

Let me leave you with these closing thoughts. When John wrote The Book of Revelation you remember he was exiled on the Isle of Patmos. Patmos was a barren island some 10 miles long and 6 miles wide in the middle of nowhere off the coast of Asia Minor. There were no green trees, no luscious grass, nothing! It was a barren rock where “the worst of the worst criminals” were sent to die.

Life was hard for John on that island. The guards were cruel, the conditions were inhumane, there was no privacy, no place to run, no place to hide.....food and water were scarce. John literally faced death each and every day.

John wasn’t exiled there because he had committed a crime. He was exiled there because he wouldn’t bow to Caesar. His undying allegiance was to His Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It was in the midst of John's great trials and terrible hardships that the LORD comforted Him with these seven blessings. These blessings nourished John's soul during the darkest days of his life.

Likewise, these blessings are intended to be a source of strength, and hope, and encouragement to you and me, that no matter how tough life gets, WE HAVE THE VICTORY THROUGH CHRIST JESUS!