

Rev41 – The Real New Jerusalem Revelation 21:9-23

Pastor Dave Shepardson Calvary Chapel Nuevo / www.wordbymail.com

Open your Bibles. Turn them back to Revelation Chapter 21. We are moving along from the first few verses, we are going to do verses 9-23.

But before we get started, did you hear that story about that old couple who'd been married forever and they died together? And they were super healthy at the end of their life because the wife, being the good wife and mother that she was, was absolutely obsessed with eating well and being healthy. And so they die together and they go to heaven together, and they meet Peter there at the Pearly Gates. And Peter takes them over and shows them their new house, and it is just spectacular. This incredible view of the entire universe from their new house. And then he takes them over to the most lavish buffet you could ever imagine. It just stretched forever.

And so this old man says to Peter, "How much does all this cost?" And Peter says, "This is heaven, it's all free." And the old man kind of sheepishly looks at his wife and says, "I guess you better take me to the low fat and high fiber section of the feast."

And Peter says, "It is heaven. Everything you see here you can eat as much as you want. You'll never get sick, you'll never gain weight, you will never be unhealthy."

And suddenly, the man turns and gives dagger eyes to his wife and says, "You and your stupid bran muffins! We could have been here ten years ago!"

How many of you know I never start messages with a joke? I couldn't pass that one up. Listen, I don't want you to rush to get to heaven, but I want you to be anxious to get to heaven. I don't want you to, you know, really, just ... you can eat an extra donut to help you along, to get there a little sooner, but I don't want you to do anything serious to help you get there, but I want you to want to get to heaven. I want you to be like, "I can't wait, man! I can't wait to get to heave!"

That's what we are talking about today. It's our fourth message just being excited about heaven. It's our fourth message and we have just said we want to know more about heaven. We started with that big message, it was kind of a vision message, called "Heaven is Real!" And then we took a whole week in order to draw out the realness of heaven, we looked at how real the earth was going to be and how real our bodies were going to be in heaven, in a message titled "Real Earth, Real Bodies."

And then because of your interaction, which I love, last week we kind of took a pause and stepped back a little bit, and we described the difference between the "Present Heaven, New Heaven." So if that has been a question on your mind you can get last week's message and see that.

Well, this message is titled, “The Real New Jerusalem.” I’m just keeping “real” in there so you know how real it is. Do you remember looking at and talking about deep space, courtesy of the Hubble telescope? This is a picture that took twenty three days to expose, and after ten years of taking that same picture the Hubble scientists have determined there are seven thousand galaxies in that picture.

The Real New Jerusalem. That is where we are going, I believe as I’ve said, and I keep saying this, that the enemy has used the influence of this world to deflate our excitement and to steal our passion about heaven. We are just not that passionate as Christians about heaven. And guess what? Maybe that is why we are not so proactive about trying to get other people to go there with us. I mean, how many times do you sense “Maybe I’m not that serious about trying to get people to go there with me. Maybe it’s because I’m not really that excited about it myself.”

I want to blow away the misconceptions and misunderstandings we have about heaven so that you will just be so pumped to get there that you just can’t wait. That every day is closer to eternity for you. So that is what we are doing this message. We are going to try to focus on the Real New Jerusalem, because I have to move off the first few verses because three weeks is enough on those verses from Revelation 21. But we are going to review them again today. But we are going to get to the New Jerusalem.

Let’s pray. *Father God, as we open your Word, please open your Word. As we open the Bible, the book, Lord you open your Word. As our hearts yearn to hear from you Lord, you speak to us. Holy Spirit, it is ink and paper without you. We need you. We need you to make the Living Word be living to us. Make it come alive in us. Start a fire in us that will not be put out. Reveal more of heaven to us today, we pray in Jesus’ name, amen.*

I need to start in verse 1 because there is something I have been putting off. Read Revelation 1:1 with me.

Revelation 21:1 (ESV)

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

Now I know that some of you have been wondering when am I going to deal with that last line, ***the sea was no more.*** Well, here’s the problem. First of all, I love the sea. I love the ocean, I love everything about the ocean and so maybe I have been a little bit hesitant to deal with that. But the real reason I haven’t dealt with it is because I can’t find two Bible scholars to agree as to what it means. So, you know, first of all, here is a clue when you are teaching the Bible. If you get ten Bible scholars and they all have ten different views, don’t throw your hat in the ring.

Here are some of the options. Number one it doesn’t mean there is no more water. We know there is going to be water. We will get to the River of Life that flows through the

center of the city in the next chapter. Maybe it is no more salt water, since in fact salt water is poisonous, though it might not be to our glorified bodies.

But here is an idea about what it could mean. Creation scientists mostly believe that before the flood there were no oceans. Have you ever heard that? That before the flood there were no oceans, it was just a canopy of mist around the whole earth and that the oceans were actually created by the ground opening up in the flood. And so this may be a reference to going back to pre-flood judgment. That's possible.

And the other thing, and kind of the one I like, is the sea was known then even more than now, for struggle and danger and death. In the day, in the first century when John was writing this, the sea was swallowing people daily. The sea was a symbol of high risk death. And certainly even a lot longer than after the first century. And so some scholars believe that it is just a symbol of the removing of the danger and the death and the high risk of the open seas. I like that one, because like many of you, I see parts of heaven (not the New Jerusalem, but the parts that I want to get to) kind of looking like Fiji. You know, I've never been to Fiji, but I've been thinking about starting a missionary ministry there. Just kidding. Listen, I've seen pictures of Fiji and some of you think that must be what heaven looks like. I hope it does. But in some way the danger of the sea isn't there.

Let's move on. Let's read verse 2-4. These are the everything verses. These are the summary verses. These are the verses that you just read and take a deep sigh and say, "Ah, Lord." These are the good verses.

Revelation 21:2-4 (ESV)

2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God."

4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

That's what I call the everything verses. That is the summary, the umbrella, the all encompassing verses. God will be with us. The primary definition of heaven is "the place where God dwells." And the New Jerusalem is where God is going to dwell with us. And so it is clear in these verses, we dealt with this last message, God is coming down to us. That we are not going up to heaven. There is kind of an inference here of a kind of a return to a Garden of Eden type relationship with God. You remember we talked last message about God did not beam up Adam and Eve (maybe because "Scotty" wasn't on the job yet. You know, "Beam me up Scotty.") It wasn't like that.

Here's the point! God came down. God came down to the Garden of Eden. He didn't beam Adam and Eve up. And if you read these first four verses of Revelation 21, you see God is coming down to the new earth that he has created for his people, much like he created the earth for Adam and Eve. He will be with us. He will wipe away every tear, he will forever remove death and mourning and crying and pain. Those things have passed away.

Here is the big difference. There is one huge difference and you have to see it today. The big difference between the Garden of Eden and the new earth is the New Jerusalem. That is the big difference. The rest of the earth may be very similar to a Garden of Eden type existence. The New Jerusalem is the game changer. That is what makes everything different. In fact, it is the New Jerusalem that makes the earth heaven. Now some of us are still struggling with that, even though I have been dealing with it for three messages, the new earth is heaven. The new earth is not separate from heaven. It's not like we'll be on the new earth and then heaven will still be up there somewhere floating on the clouds. Heaven is coming to the new earth in the New Jerusalem. Because heaven is defined as the place where God dwells. And God is going to dwell on the new earth, in the New Jerusalem. Do you see why the New Jerusalem is the game changer? Everything changes because of what we are going to read today. That is how big it is.

Before we start, down in verse 9, Revelation 21:9, let me remind you – this is real! It is real. It's real. It is not symbolic, it's real.

Revelation 21:9 (ESV)

9 Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb."

The angel uses the description that John used of the city, the New Jerusalem. He said it was coming down as a bride adorned for her husband. Some of you will say, "Oh no, see, it is symbolic because who is the Bride of Christ? We are."

Listen, a city is not just made up of stuff, of material, a city is made up of people. And so when this angel shows John the city, he is showing John the Bride of Christ, meaning us also, the city also taking on that description.

Revelation 21:10 (esv)

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God,

Again this is a big point of what I am trying to do here, is get you to see that heaven is coming to the new earth, so you will feel more real about it. Eleven times in two chapters the Holy Spirit uses the word "city" to define the place where God is going to dwell with all believers. Now if you happen to live in a small farm town, like we do, you might not

be that thrilled with that description. It is not a city like you can imagine. It is not a city like this earth has ever seen. It is a city with all good and no bad. It is a perfect paradise of a city. Is it a city still? Yes. It is a city still. It is a city, but it is not a city associated with the sin and the decay and the decline of cities that we see today. The important thing about this New Jerusalem is it is our base of eternal life. It is our base of operations. It is probably where we will dwell with God, but we will be in no way confined to this city. There are no confinements in heaven. All of the universe is new. And you and I are going to be travelling and we are going to be serving, (more about that next message.) We are just going to be doing stuff. But this is our base of operations.

It is a city that has been longed for throughout the Bible. All the way back to Abraham this city has been longed for. You should long for it too. Write down Hebrew 11:10 in your margin.

Hebrews 11:10 (NLT)

10 Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God.

We keep mentioning how creative God is. What an architect! What a celestial architect God is! God is the architect. The foundations are eternal. God has designed the city.

It is indescribable, yet John has to try to describe it to us so we have to grasp whatever we can grasp and what he can share. John tries to summarize this indescribable city, and there is a real key thing. The most primary description of the New Jerusalem is actually found here in Revelation 21:11.

Revelation 21:11 (esv)

11 having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

The glory of God. How do you even define the glory of God? This city has it at its very core, and in fact it is the primary description. The defining point of this city is the glory of God. The best we could do to say what is the glory of God is to say, it is his full deity manifested. It is his full deity manifested. It is all of his divinity manifested.

In Exodus Chapter 40 when the glory of God came down upon the tabernacle, Moses couldn't even go into the tent because the glory of God would keep him out. In 1 Kings Chapter 8 when Solomon is dedicating the temple, the glory of God filled the temple so that the priests could not even minister in the temple. The glory of God is indescribable, yet not in heaven. Yet not in the New Jerusalem. Instead of the glory of God being unapproachable to us, we will live in the full presence of the glory of God. In fact, it is so all encompassing that we will see it affects every part of the city.

So in attempting to describe it John says, *its radiance is like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal*. This is a gem that we would say when it is clear that it would be a diamond. And so most scholars believe that John is trying to describe a diamond here, a perfect diamond. Now, just in case you are thinking “Wow it must be a big diamond like I see on Housewives of Beverly Hills,” listen, we have to talk about the size of the diamond. We are going to get to it. But we have to talk about it because you are thinking in your mind something like the Hope Diamond, like the size of my fist. There’s a couple of diamonds that are almost immeasurable in their value based on their size and clarity. So this diamond is perfect in its shape and in its clarity. The only issue is how big is it?

So let me just tell you, so that we can try to grasp the glory of God. This diamond is the size of one half of the United States. So imagine the United States, half as big as our country, that is the size of this diamond. This is a really big diamond. This is what John is seeing. He is seeing a diamond, a perfect diamond, half the size of the United States coming down out of heaven. And, it is not just a diamond half the size of the United States. The glory of God is shining from inside of it. The glory of God that man couldn’t even get near until this moment, is shining from inside a perfect diamond the size of half the size of the United States.

This is an awesome view that John is seeing. The full glory of God shining through this city, that the only way that he could describe it is like the most rare jewel, like a diamond. And truly, the New Jerusalem is the crown jewel, it’s the center point, it’s the focal point of the new earth and the new heavens. The entire universe focused on where God is dwelling with his people. That is the New Jerusalem.

Look down at verse 23. While we are talking about the full glory of God, I just want you to see Revelation 21:23. How big, how definitive, how all-encompassing is the glory of God?

Revelation 21:23

23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

That’s how incredible the glory of God is in the New Jerusalem. Our new home, this is where we are going to live with God, it is literally lit by the very presence, the full glory of God. That is the most vital, the most all-encompassing, the most indescribable truth of the New Jerusalem. The permanent, tangible glory of God. You might say you’ve got the picture now. I’m not sure we do. In fact, I am pretty sure we don’t.

When Moses wanted to know that God was with him, because God kind of got a little miffed at the Jews, and Moses was trying to “talk him down” a little. And God says “You know, you guys can go ahead, but I’m not going with you. You are stiff-necked, rebellious.” They were just like us. And Moses said, “If you’re not going, we’re not

going. We're not going if you're not going." And so God says he would go. And so Moses at this point wants to know that God is really going to go. And so Moses cries out, "God, show me your glory. I need to see your glory to know that you are going with us, I need to see your glory." And what does God say? He says "I can't show you my glory because you would die. You go into the cleft of the rock and I will cover you, and you can see the back side of my glory, just so you'll know I am going with you."

It's not so in heaven. We are going to dwell in the glory of God. This is a big deal. And it takes some tearing away of the layers of our misunderstandings until we are in awe of the glory of God. We have got to move on. But that is the first and most important description of our new home – the full glory of God.

Continuing to describe the indescribable, if in fact it were possible, Revelation 21:12

Revelation 21:12-13 (esv)

12 It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed—

13 on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.

A great high wall encircling the New Jerusalem. Just so you can get an idea again of what this means, if you'll just look down at verse 17, it says that this wall is 216 feet thick (144 cubits.) So a two hundred foot thick wall, like a diamond, the size of half of the United States, with the glory of God shining through it like a laser. Is anybody at all awed yet? This is incredible. This is indescribable. This is almost unimaginable.

And then notice twelve gates. Twelve angels with the names of twelve tribes of Israel inscribed on them. And I have to do this now, we will look at it again. But Just glance down at verse 21. You will see that it says that each of the gates are made of pearl. Each of the gates are made of one single pearl. So, not so much "pearly" gates, but a pearl for each gate. What you will notice there is it does not say that St. Peter is standing there telling jokes about Priests and Rabbi's at the gate. That is not Biblical. That is not a Biblical view of heaven. But there are pearly gates, each being one great pearl. (We'll get to it down in verse 21.)

What it actually says is there are twelve angels (in verse 12.) What are they doing there? They certainly aren't there to protect anything because there is nothing to be protected from. These angels are greeting us as we go in and out of this pure diamond city. Hebrews says the angels were sent to minister to us. And that is what they are going to be doing. Some will actually be joining them in serving God in heaven. But these angels are going to be at the gates saying, "Isn't it cool we're in heaven?"

It's that real! We have to leave here realizing it is as real as today is. It's real.

Moving on. Notice the number twelve. As we go through this you see over and over again the number 12. Number twelve plays a key role in the description of the New Jerusalem. Like the number seven, the number twelve is about perfection and completeness. But it actually symbolizes perfect order, or perfect government. And so we see as John describes the New Jerusalem, we see twelve gates, twelve pearls, twelve angels, twelve tribes, twelve foundations, twelve Apostles, twelve kinds of fruit and the measurements of the city (which we will see in a minute) are multiples of twelve. Why? Because God can. That's why. Because he is like, "Creating the New Jerusalem, that's cool. But I have still some spare time, so I'm going to make everything in multiples of twelve just to blow somebody's mind."

Listen, I'm not saying you should get all wacky about numbers, like some people get. Don't go overboard. Just know this. God is unlimited in his ability to communicate. Do you believe that? God is unlimited in his ability to communicate. And one of the ways he communicates supernaturally is through this phenomenal numeric system that is woven through the Word. Just don't get overboard on it.

Back in verse 12. Twelve gates, names of twelve tribes of the Sons of Israel. Isn't that cool? Has God inscribed on the twelve gates a reminder to us of something? Yes. Twelve gates, twelve pearls, twelve angels, twelve tribes of Israel. Why? I believe it is so that every time we pass through the gates of heaven we remember how the gospel got to us. Listen, anybody that thinks that God is going to forget Israel has never read the Bible. Because he is going to inscribe the names of the twelve tribes on the gates of heaven of the New Jerusalem for eternity. And every time we pass in and out, we will remember how important Israel was to eternity. Let's not forget that.

Revelation 21:14 (esv)

14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

So look at this! Look at what God does! He inscribes the names of the twelve tribes of Israel on the gates and then on the twelve foundations he inscribes what? The names of the Apostles of the New Testament church. It's almost like they go together. Like the Old Testament and the New Testament go together like it is one message from God. Right? It is. It is if you're wondering.

Ephesians 2:20 says the we as the body of Christ, have been built on the foundation of the Apostles and the prophets and that Jesus Christ himself is the Chief Cornerstone. And so, listen. Catch this for me. In the New Jerusalem, God forever, eternally inscribes that the knowledge of the Savior came through the twelve tribes of Israel. The knowledge of the Savior, in fact the Savior himself, came through the twelve tribes of Israel just as we will come in and out through the gates. And our faith has been built on the foundation of the Apostles and the prophets. Isn't it incredible? It's incredible! These will be eternal

reminders for us of how God got us to heaven. And trust me, you are going to be really thankful for those things as soon as you see them.

Verse 15, the angel measures the city for us.

Revelation 21:15-17 (esv)

15 And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls.

16 The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia (1,500 Miles). Its length and width and height are equal. (1,500 mi *high*)

17 He also measured its wall, 144 cubits (216 ft) by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement.

That's so the people don't say that is an angel's measurement and not a human's measurement. The Holy Spirit is so far ahead of us. That's by human measurement. The New Jerusalem is a perfect cube 1,500 miles cubed, in length and width and height. 1,500 miles. 1,500 miles is from Mexico to Canada. From Los Angeles to the Arkansas border is 1,500 miles. It's a long way. That is how big this city is. But it's not two dimensional. If it were two dimensional, it would cover half of the United States. But it is not, it is three dimensional. Its height is the same as its width and its length. It's a cube.

If you can't think three dimensional, it's okay, it doesn't change the New Jerusalem, it is still three dimensional. But if you can grasp three dimensional, then let's think about it. If it is three dimensional, why? Why would there be a city 1,500 miles high? What if it is to put levels, like floors? And what if (just for talking, because we don't really know) and God says hey, how about a floor every mile. How about a level of the city every mile so that there are 1,500 levels in this cube.

Well, number one, it would have to be transparent, right, so that the glory could light the whole place. That's not a problem for God. But number two, if it were 1,500 levels half the size of the United States how much surface area is that? I'll just tell you. It's 750 times the surface area of the United States. So you take the surface area of the United States times 750 and that is the surface area in the cube of the New Jerusalem if God sets a level every mile. That is a lot of area. *That's a lot of area.* This is a big city. It is the center of the new earth and the new heaven.

That is a big deal! And it is just the base of our operations. It's just where we park our Harley. We go from the New Jerusalem to wherever we want to go, to do whatever God calls us to do.

Revelation 21:18.

Revelation 21:18 (esv)

18 The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

So there is a clear jasper or diamond wall that is 200 feet thick. And the city is pure gold like clear glass. Look down at verse 21 again, it is the “I’ve got to put in the specifics” verse. Verse 21 says ***the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.*** Now we have to hold on to this concept that this city keeps being described in terms of transparent jewels. If in fact it is three dimensional, which seems right if it is 1,500 miles high, if in fact it is three dimensional it would have to be transparent, wouldn’t it. And so if the streets of gold are transparent, you’re like “Wait a minute, gold is not transparent.”

Well, not any that you’ve seen. Listen, do you know that when you look at a gold bar, so you know that it is actually the impurities in the gold that you are seeing? That gold, the purer and purer it gets, the more clear, translucent it gets, like a gold glass. They actually make perfectly clear gold today. They use it to line airplane windows and some office building windows. They put a clear layer of gold over them. Today. That is being done today.

So don’t get hung up on a bar of gold. Get hung up on gold glass, so that if there are 1,500 levels of streets, and the glory of God is shining through it and it is all pure gold, wrapped in a diamond it is just incredible! Listen, I have a hard time not comparing this to some experiences I had in the seventies! Listen, this is like I can’t even imagine this! But you have to. You have to grasp a diamond half the size of the United States with 1,500 layers of transparent gold with the glory of God shooting through it in all directions, like a laser beam. And you’re just like “WHOA! That’s cool!” I mean we have to get to this point. *We have to get to this point.* It’s amazing.

John returns to the twelve foundations now. Revelation 21:19.

Revelation 21:19-20 (esv)

19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.

John lists twelve transparent jewels. See he is going with this transparent jewel thing, and the glory of God shining through it to give you an image.

Listen, all you need to know is these are all precious stones of varying colors that are all transparent. And so God says, “Listen, this is cool so far, wait until I throw the foundation in.” And he puts twelve layers of precious stones in the foundation that are also transparent. Now what do you have? Right now your mind is just crumbling in on itself. You can’t even grasp what this looks like with the glory of God shining through it.

It is beyond the ability to grasp. Incredible! Incredible! And again those twelve foundations, each inscribed with the twelve Apostles.

Revelation 21:21. We have seen these two facts already.

Revelation 21:21 (esv)

21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Two hundred feet thick pearls, how high of the 1,500 miles is this pearl? Wow! Indescribable glory. Indescribable beauty.

Then, in our final two verses this message, we see two things that will not be in the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:22 (esv)

22 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.

When John says he saw no temple, he means he saw no physical temple. Why? Because the temple was the place where God met with the people. The temple, just like the tabernacle, was the place where God communed, where he interacted with the people. Guess what? This entire city is the temple. The temple is now half the size of the United States looking like a diamond 1,500 miles high and it is all the temple, because it is all where God will meet with his people. The entire city has become the temple. That's a big deal. No longer just the holy of holies, but the entire New City of Jerusalem. Wow! All the place where God meets with the people.

Let's remind ourselves of the glory in verse 23. The second no. Of course in the earlier verses from 2 to 4 there was a bunch of things that won't be in heaven anymore. But this also, we have already made reference to.

Revelation 21:23 (esv)

23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

The glory of God gives the light to the New Jerusalem. Its lamp is the Lamb. That is the primary characteristic of heaven. The number one primary characteristic is God is with man. The number two primary characteristic is that the glory of God overwhelms, overshadows, all –encompasses all of the New Jerusalem.

How do we grasp this stuff? We can't. And that is why we say, "Okay, I understand floating on a cloud in a toga strumming a harp. That I can grasp. But this I can't grasp."

Listen, do not succumb to the enemy's ploys, his devices to convince you that heaven is boring or heaven is something other than what it is. It is mind boggling, unbelievable with our little finite minds. We can't describe its glory fully. We can't describe its magnificence fully. We cannot define its unlimited possibilities significantly or even at all.

Here's what Henry Morris says. He is a great creation scientist.

Henry Morris

"The New Jerusalem is composed of such beautiful materials, such unique construction, and such amazing dimensions as to be almost beyond human comprehension."

All I can say about heaven, please hear me.

#1) Heaven is more than you think. It's more than you *can* think. It's more than you are able to think. It's better than you think. It's better than you can think. It's better than you are able to think.

#2) Be there. Just make sure you are there! Don't dice up the specifics. Just say "Okay, it sounds plenty cool enough for me to want to make sure I am there." Make sure you are there.

Get your name on the citizen roll. You can have your name on the citizen role, which was a big deal in the first century, I'll tell you about it some other time. Get your name on the citizen role of the New Jerusalem. How do you do that?

Skip down to verse 27.

Revelation 21:27 (ESV)

27 But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

That can be you today. That can be you *today*. How do you get your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life? It's a turning. You turn from sin and you turn to God. You say no to the world that is leading to your destruction and you say yes to God. You recognize that you're a sinner caught up in the mire of the world, already dead without God in your sin. And you turn from that and say "Lord Jesus, you alone are life. Forgive me of my sin. Wash me clean and write my name in your own blood in the Lamb's Book of Life. Because I want to make sure my last breath here is my first breath with you."

Let's pray. *Heavenly Father, please, don't let one person leave this room still headed to hell. Lord we know that it takes faith but we pray you would give us the faith. That Lord, if we could have just a glimpse, no matter what I do or how much I jump up and down, I can't even produce a glimpse of the glory of heaven. But God you can reveal it to us.*

Give us a glimpse of heaven. And Lord to make it more real, a small glimpse of hell that we would be moved.

I pray you are moved today, and I want to give you a chance to respond. If you don't make it home from church, will you be in heaven? Do you *know* that you'll be there? And if you don't know I want to see you get your name written in this Book right now. You pray this where you are right now. I am going to ask you to make a life-long commitment to Jesus Christ. A no turning back, all in, forever following commitment to a Lord and a Savior who has already died in your place and has created an eternal home for you. We aren't messing around trying to get you to get your ticket punched trying to enter some type of an amusement park in heaven. I'm asking you right now to turn from your sin, to turn from the ways of this world, to throw yourself completely on the mercy of God and to say "Jesus, I want you in my life, I'll follow you every day." If that is you, then you can pray a prayer like this, right now.

Lord Jesus. I am lost in my sin. This world has me in bondage. I am hopeless and helpless without you. All I can do Lord is turn from that sin. And so I turn from it today. I turn from the world, Lord, and I turn to you. Save me. Save me Jesus. Please forgive me of my sin. Please make me clean. Please make me right before God. Please come into my life and fill me with your Self. Fill me with your Spirit. Fill me with the power to follow you, Lord. Make me a disciple every day in every area of my life. Give me the power to cling to you. Write my name in your Lamb's Book of Life, please and I will see you there, Lord. I will see you there. Thank you for saving me. It's in your own name I pray, amen.