

M i s s i o D e i F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

Behold! All Things New!

Revelation 21 - 22:5

Keywords: Revelation, End Times, Heaven, New Heavens and Earth, Eternity, New Jerusalem

PowerPoint Presentation included: None

SermonAudio Blurb: We come now to the end of all things as we currently know them and the recreation of all things. It is the heart throb of every person who hopes in Jesus Christ, especially those afflicted and burdened. We see imagery that draws our minds all the way back to Eden. God dwells among us and we among Him. Our enemies of sin, Satan and death shall never enter into our lives again. They are gone, banished in the glory of God's righteous wrath. And the children of God now enter into the joy of their Master. And in this the glory of God shines brightly.

I. Introduction.

- A. What we have today in Revelation is our hope and joy.
- B. If we wanted to, we could spend a significant time talking about what we hate about this age. Even the most wealthy or healthy of people are well acquainted with sin and grief.
 - 1. Cancer.
 - 2. Crime.
 - 3. Lies.
 - 4. Lost dreams.
 - 5. Broken bodies.
 - 6. Broken relationships.
 - 7. Loneliness.
 - 8. Fear.
- C. But hear me today beloved. Better yet hear the Word of God!
- D. Read Revelation 21- 22:5.

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1. In vss 1-8 we have a general description of eternity and the new heaven and earth.
 2. In the rest of this section John gives us an incredible description of what we will call the capital city of eternity.
- E. Allow yourselves a moment to think about this message we just read.
1. For months we have read and heard nothing but the wrath of God and the vile hate of Satan.
 2. We read of death, destruction, and persecution.
 3. But now it is done. The battle of Armageddon is gone. Jesus' 2nd coming is done. His earthly rule is finished. The final battle is done. And most importantly sin, Satan and death are judged and cast away.
 4. And now we hear these words from God Himself, "Behold, I am making all things new."
- F. Beloved, may we all find rest today.

II. The New Heaves and Earth (21:1-8).

- A. A restored universe (1-2).
1. John is given a wonderful vision right at the start. A vision of what is to come. A new heaven and a new earth.
 2. Right now this is lived in faith, in Revelation 21 it becomes sight.
 3. Many see this is the final task of the Second Adam (Romans 5).
 - a. The first Adam took us out of paradise, and the second Adam restores us.
 - b. However it is more than a restoration of Eden, it is that, but much, much more.
 - c. Here is the culmination of the promises of God.
 - (1) We could start all the way back to Genesis but it is enough to start with Jesus' advent.
 - (2) Next was His death, resurrection, and ascension.
 - (3) Next will be His return.
 - (4) And finally this re-creation.

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- d. “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create a Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy” (Isaiah 65:17-19).
 - (1) What is made shall be such that there is nothing of this age that we will think upon.
 - (2) Nothing shall be missed. No sense of loss.
 - (3) Rather, the driving reaction to the new heaven and earth is joy and delight.
- 4. Many wonder why there will be no more sea.
 - a. First, remember that it is symbolic of chaos and the fallen world.
 - b. In Genesis 1 before the creation, only the sea was present, making it a formless and void place.
 - c. And what you should note is how these final two chapters are tightly connected back to Genesis 1-3. The first world came from the chaos of the sea. The second world does away with the sea.
- B. A unified universe (3a).
 - 1. Can you even begin to grasp the mystery and the glory of this statement? I cannot. I shake my head and I am filled with questions.
 - 2. The tabernacle of God here is referring to the New Jerusalem that was just mentioned.
 - a. But it is calling to mind first the garden of Eden where God met with Adam and Eve. It was the first “tabernacle” and due to sin that intimate connection was broken.
 - b. With Israel that tabernacle came again and there are many connections between the tabernacle and the garden of Eden. Again this was where the presence of God dwelt among His people.
 - c. Then in the gospel of John we read that it was Jesus who dwelt among us, God in flesh.

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3. But in the end God will draw heaven and earth together. No longer shall there be a divide between that realm and what we see.
- C. A pure universe (3b-8).
1. Sin is gone so there shall be no weeping in sorrow. Notice the incredible closeness pictured in vs 3. God wiping your tears away. The ultimate Comforter.
 2. The constant reminders of the presence of sin are done away and so we are relieved of so much of what it means to be human today.
 3. In vs 4 God reminds us to trust in His Word. John is to write these things. He is to bluntly state that God shall make all things new and the basis for this is His faithfulness to His promises.
 - a. This is the point of vs 6. It is a statement of sovereignty. A declaration of sufficiency.
 - b. God alone brackets all of time and creation. He alone is outside of it. And He alone is the one who brings all things to their appointed end.
 4. And so as our sovereign King, He also attends to our needs. This is pictured in the giving of the water of life to those who are thirsty.
 - a. Compare the perfection of this cup of liquid life to that of the harlot in chapter 17 and 18.
 - b. Her wineglass was filled with her abominations and idolatrous immoralities.
 - c. She brought war and death but He brings comfort and life.
 5. In this new world we will enter into the fulness of our relationship with God. He shall be our Father and we will see Him as that.
 - a. This is the image of unimaginable unity and purity.
 - b. All racism is gone. The family of God is drawn together in perfection.

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- c. No more divisions and no more distinctions that become the excuse for separation. Rather we shall all call Him Father and we shall call one another brother or sister.
6. And far away from this new reality shall dwell all who rejected God.
 - a. They lived the lie that they were sovereign, captains of their own soul.
 - b. They were afraid to lose this life and its pleasures for the sake of following Jesus.
 - c. They walked in unbelief, pushing back the knowledge of God that was implanted in their heart from birth.
 - d. They sought every pleasure and every desire and they treasured their bitterness and hate toward others. And they worshiped anything and everything but the true God.
 - e. And forevermore they are gone. They have only one view of God now—His perfect, holy and eternal wrath. And all who are God's shall see them as they truly are and shall say, "Amen!"

III. The Capital City (21:9 - 22:5).

- A. Now we come to a long portion that describes for us what many, including myself, call the capital city of the new heavens and earth.
 1. It is called the new Jerusalem. The new "city of God" as opposed to the old Jerusalem, which like all things was stained with sin.
 2. For many this is a symbolic city that represents all of "heaven." This could be however the huge amount of detail speaks against that. If it is symbolic then everything in the description must symbolize something but with no way to know what.
 3. Other see it symbolic in a different way, as the Church which is called the "bride" in a way similar to vs 2. However, the details given move us away from that initial temptation.
 4. Others see it more literal, seeing it as the center of the new heavens and earth which is what I believe we have before us.

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- a. It is the dwelling place God set in the middle of this new creation.
 - b. In my bible reading I often wondered about the detail given to the building of the tabernacle in the Old Testament. Everything detailed out and an obvious concern with beauty and detail.
 - c. But when you read this section you see it was merely a shadow of the detail of what was to come in the final dwelling place of God when He would forevermore dwell with us.
- B. The New Jerusalem in detail.
1. The city is called the bride and the wife of the Lamb in vs 9.
 - a. Again this could easily be seen as a reference to the Church itself, since she is the bride of Christ.
 - b. However though that is tempting, the rest of the verses seem to go into great detail about its size and make up that it is an actual place.
 - c. It is worth pointing out that it was common practice that the name of the material city stands for the community composed of the city's inhabitants. In other words, this city is both the people of God and the seat of their abode, the new Jerusalem.
 - d. It would be where the people of God dwell.
 2. It is coming down out of heaven, that is the source of its existence. It is a gift from God to His children.
 3. Vss 11-21 is a description of its appearance, structures, dimensions and construction materials.
 - a. It glows with God's glory. This is built into the idea of "jasper."
 - (1) Not what we call jasper today which is a red, opaque stone.
 - (2) Rather it was a stone that was likely what we call a diamond. But like no diamond of today. In the city

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bursting forth from it was the glory of God in its
fulness.

(3) And so it becomes this beacon of joy and life.

b. Take note of the gates representing the 12 tribes and the
foundation stones the 12 Apostles in vs 12 and 14.

(1) Note how God continues to make a distinction between
the Church and Israel. But also how they are brought
together as the people of God.

(2) And so the walls of the city serve as an eternal story of
the redemption of God

4. Its huge size.

a. 12,000 stadia would be 1,500 miles.

b. So you have this massive cube (some say a pyramid) that is
literally flowing with the light of the glory of God.

c. And the size is really beyond our ability to grasp. Just the
footprint would cover over half of the United States.

d. I don't want to waste time here but I want to try to give you a
sense of the size. I am going to work with 7 billion people.

(1) Stick them shoulder to shoulder and they fit into a bit
less than a 17 mile square. That is smaller than New
York City.

(2) You want all humans ever? That is believed to be
around 100 billion. Easy, 65 square miles. That is the
size of little Connecticut.

(3) Stack them up and you need a cube with each side less
than a mile and only around 3500 feet high.

(4) This city is 1500 miles square and high. Amazing and
mind-boggling.

C. No temple (22).

1. What was the function of the Temple in the Old Testament?

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- a. To deal with sin and to intercede before God.
 - b. It was the center piece of worship and identity for Israel.
 2. We saw in Revelation that there would be a new temple built in the future.
 - a. It too would be in Jerusalem.
 - b. It would be tightly connected to the presence and rule of Jesus during His earthly kingdom.
 3. And right now the Church is the temple of God, His dwelling place.
 4. But notice that all of these are done and therefore a temple is unnecessary.
 - a. Rather, God becomes our true temple.
 - b. Note that well. It doesn't say there is no temple but rather that the temple is no longer a place or a building, but rather, it is now God Himself.
 - c. Any sense of a barrier to seeing and worshiping God is now fully abolished.
- D. Its illumination (23-27)
1. It does not actually say that there is no sun or moon, only that they are unnecessary as light, for God's glory is far glorious and brighter.
 2. In fact notice in vs 25 points out that there is never to be "night" there. This makes it very possible that there will still be the coming and going of day and night in other parts of the world but not specifically there.
 3. It serves as a beacon to guide all who are redeemed.
 - a. This is what is meant by the nations.
 - b. We don't all dwell in the city. There are a lot of questions and mystery attached to this part so I must be careful. But the New Jerusalem is the centerpiece of the new creation.

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- c. I believe that part of the rewards given by God to each person in eternity will involve some sort of responsibility and oversight in the new world.
- d. It is possible that those who live in the city are uniquely rewarded by God for faithfulness, and that the others are believers in general.
- 4. Finally we have this statement of purity in vs 27.
 - a. Some actually see this as a possibility of unbelievers being in the eternal state. But this is missing the point of this whole section.
 - b. This is a recreation of what was seen in a small part in the garden of Eden.
 - c. But in the garden we find Satan entering and bringing havoc in the most horrid of ways. But not here. It remains pure forevermore.
- E. Life in the new Jerusalem (22:1-5).
 - 1. The imagery is again from the garden of Eden.
 - 2. In Genesis 2:10, 14 it flowed from the garden and then branched out into four great rivers in the middle east.
 - 3. The tree of life is again from the garden. It is written as a single tree but by putting it into this imagery we are given a picture a tree lining this river. You can read of this imagery in Ezekiel 47:12.
 - 4. Notice the lifting of the curse in vs 3.
 - 5. The point of all of this is that God has more than fully restored paradise.

IV. Conclusion.

- A. And so this vision draws to a close with the final picture being one of life like we have never tasted. Life in the full presence of God. Life that is fully worship and without regret.
- B. In vs 4 God offers the water of life to any who thirst. Do you thirst? Is your soul dry and parched, broken due to sin?

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- C. Are you building your life and hope in this age? Can you not see today that it is all but dust? Can you see that all we have and boast in shall be gone in an instant?
- D. There is only one answer and one hope.
 - 1. Place your trust in God who through Jesus Christ dealt with sin and death.
 - 2. See the hope that is found in Jesus Christ, who is the perfect sacrifice to resolve your sin. Who destroyed the power of death through His resurrection.
 - 3. Even today Jesus calls out to come and believe in Him. To follow Him. To bow before Him as your Lord.
- E. And the promise attached to that is earth-shattering. “He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be His God and he will be My Son.”

V. Benediction/Doxology.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Small Group Questions

- Talk about things you hate in this age we live in. How much of your life is spent factoring in the fact that all is broken?
- For each of you, what was most encouraging in this passage? What fills you with the most questions? Is there any sense of dread? If so why?