

EVIL CAN'T WIN

Part 3: Jesus Wins, We Win
(preached 11/17/24)

Please turn to *Romans 8:18-25*,

LAST WEEK:

- Satan can't win. He can't endure nor can he sustain himself.
- Satan depends on God to exist and have purpose, not the other way around.
- Satan needs the church to be adversarial to, not the other way around.
- He was created an immortal angel and worship leader of Heaven.
- Once he sinned, his immortality was taken away and his purpose changed to being the enemy of God and man.
- He not only became mortal, but his purpose did too.
- Once his purpose expires there will be no more need of him: he will be cast in the LOF where he can no longer tempt anyone ever again.

TODAY **Jesus wins and that means we do too.**

- The Light wins over darkness.
- Righteousness wins over sin.
- Life defeats death.
- Good overcomes evil.
- Joy beats sorrow.
- Smiles replace tears.

I've had two prophetic dreams about the NJ—where people go when they go to Heaven. In the first dream it was nighttime and I was on a journey. I came to a massive swamp that went as far as the eye could see. In the distance I saw the NJ—the Golden City of God—shining like a lighthouse and my spirit and heart longed for it with such depth I started to cry. They were tears of sorrow because there was no way to get through this swamp and I was on foot.

I looked again and suddenly saw a **perfectly made wooden bridge** with railings that extended through the swamp straight to the NJ. The bridge was pristine and looked as though it had just been built. It was also strong and sturdy, running several feet above the murky swamp waters. There were several people with me and I shouted to them with joy at this discovery, and all of us ran to the bridge and began to cross into Paradise.

The swamp represents evil, the devil, sin, and death. It's the fallen world. It's the miry quicksand that threatens to drag us all down.

Jesus was and is the Bridge, the straight and narrow way to God our Father and His Kingdom.

In a second dream I was lifted up by my hair (just like Ezekiel) and set down on the summit of a really high mountain. With me was an older man who used to come to Gateway. From this lofty position I saw the Holy City, the NJ, and although it shone as brightly as the sun my eyes weren't hurt by it. It was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen. The old man who was with me was suddenly transfigured and became young. He began to shout, jump up and down, and then sprinted helter-skelter toward the NJ yelling with joy the entire way.

Suddenly God grabbed me by the hair again and **lifted me up into the sky** so that I was above the NJ and could get an even better view of it. I was both exuberant and incredibly peaceful in the same moment as I hovered in the sky, thinking "*this is it! I've finally made it!*"

Yesterday our founding Pastor Fran Mather was laid to rest. In my early days as a Christian he disciplined me and taught much on God's coming Kingdom and all we would enjoy there. As I speak to you right now, he's in Heaven with Christ enjoying all the things he believed in and hoped for his entire life.

Today's message is about the promises Jesus made that when He returned, He would bring His entire Kingdom with Him.

Not only would we be resurrected from the dead into everlasting life, but that He would transform the entire planet to resemble Heaven.

[Rom 8:18-25 ESV] 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. 23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Verse 18: we do suffer right now with many things but please consider this: when we compare that with the GLORY that is to be revealed to us, it will be like nothing. Francis Chan once preached a sermon about eternity and he brought out a **long mostly white rope**. He'd colored one small portion of it red. He pointed to the red part and said "*this is life right now*" then he pointed to the far longer white part and said "*this is eternity with Christ.*"

Verse 19: *something that's already in us will be revealed by Jesus.* We are His bride and imagine we're walking down the aisle toward Him and we have a veil over our faces. Suppose He spent hours preparing us beforehand for this wedding: making us shine. Then He draped the veil over our faces...which He then lifts up on our wedding day. When he does so, everyone gathered gasps in awe at our resplendent beauty that He created!

When the day of our resurrection arrives, ***Jesus will lift the veil He's placed over us*** and the full glory of who He's made us into will be revealed for all to see!

Verses 19-22: creation is this planet including our sky. The whole universe too. Even though it's not sentient like we are, it has God's impeccable timing programmed into it that goes like this: the Church is raised up into immortality first. **Then the planet gets its own makeover by Jesus.**

Imagine that right now. ***Picture yourself first as an immortal***—a foreign concept to all of us. No more death, sorrow, or evil inside of us—only goodness, righteousness, love, and joy. Imagine living in a world that's as good or better than the GOE—***the whole planet completely healed and restored and made to look like it does in Heaven.***

[Isa 11:6-9 ESV] 6 The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. 9 They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

That's not all. When the spirits of those in Christ leave this mortal shell, they ascend to Heaven and **live in a massive city Jesus has prepared for us called the New Jerusalem.**

[Heb 12:22-24 ESV] 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, 23 and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

In John 14 Jesus told us that He was going back to Heaven **to prepare a place for us** that where He is, there we will be also. He said this place has “many mansions.”

This wonderful city is called the NJ and we’re given an amazing description of it:

[Rev 21:9-14 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." 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, 11 having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. 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. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

God called earthly Jerusalem the Apple of His eye and prophesied that it would be the most sought-after piece of real estate on the planet, especially in the end times. That entire nations would go to war to possess it and indeed, history has already proved it. Why is it so coveted?

Answer: **earthly Jerusalem was designed to resemble (as best as possible) the Holy City of the Heavens that Jesus built for us.** Satan knows this and wants to possess it as do the spirits of men.

Yet the day will come when the **NJ descends from its place in Heaven and comes here**...to earth. When it comes we will all live there with Jesus forever and ever. The NJ will be a shining, resplendent city glowing with the glory of God.

[Rev 21:15-21 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. Its length and width and height are equal. 17 He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which

is also an angel's measurement. 18 The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 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 chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. 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.

The city is 1500 miles long, wide, and high. If it were flattened out it would be the size of the USA. First let's talk about the various jewels Jesus decided to build into the walls and ground.

For many years I scratched my head and wondered **why He chose the 12 stones He did** but first: said stones were the same ones He commanded be built in the breastplate of the High Priest way back in the day.

Remember the ***Priest would wear this breastplate on his chest whenever he went into the HOH*** to face God...Who is Light. Keep that on your backburner and we'll come back to it.

Why these 12 stones? Why not ones we consider to be more valuable and expensive like diamonds?

Interesting fact: **there's something science calls "perfect light"** and it described as being monochromatic—coming from a single source and on only 1 wavelength.

When normal "non-perfect" light (from multiple sources) is shone on diamonds it will cause them to "light up" and even throw a prism type effect which is why we like and covet them so much **in this world**. Yet when you shine perfect light on a diamond it has the opposite effect: it goes dark and loses all of its "glory." ***It becomes an item no one would want!***

The 12 gems God chosen for the HP's breastplate and the NJ are unique in this sense: when perfect pure light from a single source is shone upon them, they start 1) glowing and 2) creates a mesmerizing super prism effect!

Imagine Scenario 1: the High Priest enters the Holy of Holies in the Temple wearing the Breastplate with the 12 stones. God the Holy Spirit is hovering like a glowing ball of pure Light above the Ark of the Covenant. As the HP approaches God, the pure Light of the Lord shines on His breastplate creating a super-prism effect in the whole room! ***Every part of the room would be "lit up" and there would be no darkness or shadow!!!***

Scenario #2: What did we just read in Rev 21? These 12 gems are everywhere in the NJ! Now all they need is a single, pure, and perfect Source of Light shining on them like was had in the HOH in the Temple....

Last, the street and walls of the NJ are **made of gold so pure it's almost crystalline** and transparent like glass. How is this possible and why do we care? According to science, when gold is thinned down to .0003 inches it allows LIGHT to shine through it. We love gold because when normal impure light shines on it, it shines and sparkles. The higher karat content of gold, the more it glitters. Yet said gold is thick and is merely reflecting the light shining on it. *Now imagine how "normal" gold would look if pure light were shining on it.*

The streets and walls of the NJ will have a layer of gold "hammered" down to .0003 inches, **allowing light to pass THROUGH it which will make it GLOW**. Imagine if that light were pure, perfect, and from a single source!

[Rev 21:22-27 ESV] 22 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 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.** 24 By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates will never be shut by day--and there will be no night there. 26 They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. 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.

Now we get to the important part...*the part that makes the entire city GLOW with God's glory and WHY the glory is God's!*

GOD IS THE LIGHT.

Since Jesus will be living in the NJ with us He is the Single, Pure, and Perfect Source of eternal Light that will never fade!

From Him Light will shine and:

- Cause all the gems to glow and throw an amazing prism effect EVERYWHERE and
- Cause all the gold to GLOW!
- We will walk the streets of the Holy City by the Light of God and every moment of every day will be filled with awe, wonder, and joy!!!!!!

Each of the 12 gates is a single massive pearl. These things will be HUGE. Do you know why pearls are so coveted and expensive here on earth? Because of what light does to them. I looked it up online; when Light shines on a pearl it has the following effects:

- LUSTER is when light reflects off it. The more layers a pearl has, the most luster it has in light.
- IRIDESCENCE is when light hits the pearl and each layer reflects it differently, causing a prism effect. The more layers a pearl has, the more iridescence it has.
- DIFFRACTION is when the layers of the pearl BENDS the light hitting it, causing a shimmering effect. Again: the more layers it has....
- REFRACTION is similar, bending light rays and giving pearls the appearance of depth and radiance.

Now imagine the pure light of Christ shining on those 12 gates....

Jesus pulled out all the stops church! This is where we're going to live forever and ever.

[Rev 22:1-5 ESV] 1 Then the angel showed me **the river of the water of life, bright as crystal,** flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. 4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

The ROL is described as being “bright and crystal” and there's an interesting phenomena called ***“Total Internal Reflection”*** where Light travels to the water, bounces back to the air, which then bounces it BACK to the water...creating an effect that makes the water appear like its glowing. Simply: if you've ever looked at water and been blinded, you've seen this effect.

The Light of Christ will be shining on the ROL constantly making it appear as though its glowing...but it won't hurt our resurrected eyes!

Where is the Tree of Life that once appeared in the GOE? It's here, in the NJ. We'll eat from it and its fruit only brings HEALING to all. Notice John says it brings said healing “to the nations.” In other words we will finally have world peace. All the former hatred, divisions, and wars will be gone once and for all and we'll get along!

And please notice there's no mention of the other tree—the one that got us in all this trouble in the first place! Why is that? Because neither humanity nor creation will ever know evil again. We'll only know God and goodness.

My favorite is verse 4: ***we will see Jesus and Father face to face!***

I end today with one of my favorite set of verses in all the Bible. As I read them to you, picture yourself there...experiencing everything said in these scriptures of life.

In dreams, visions, and other experiences we get brief glimpses of Jesus now that are fleeting and gone, so we must fall back on faith. When the Kingdom Comes we will be with Him in person and He's never going to go away again.

We all have loved one in Christ who passed away and while we know they're in Heaven with Christ, we still miss them. I think of my Dad, stepmother, my sister Melody, my grandparents, and Pastor Fran. The day will come when Jesus descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, at the last trump. He'll bring the spirits of the dead in Christ with Him and they will be raised up first...then those of us who are alive and remain will immediately follow. ALL OF US WILL BE REUNITED IN THE AIR. Death will never be able to separate us again.

[Rev 21:1-4 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. 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."