

## LESSON 10

# God's Eternal Presence

Revelation 21:23

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*The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, because the glory of God illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lamb,* Revelation 21:23.

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**Class Overview:** Heaven's greatest blessing is not its beauty or rewards but the eternal presence of God. From Eden to the tabernacle, from the temple to Christ Himself, Scripture reveals God's desire to dwell with His people. In the eternal city, that longing will be fully realized—no more separation, no more night, no more curse. God Himself will be our light, our security, and our joy. This lesson reminds us that what makes heaven truly heaven is not the place, but the presence of God.

### Class Objectives:

By the end of this class, you should be able to:

1. Trace the theme of God's presence throughout Scripture and see its fulfillment in heaven.
2. Explain why God's presence—not material images of heaven—is the greatest blessing of eternity.
3. Identify what "night" symbolizes in Scripture and how its end points to God's eternal light and security.
4. Apply the hope of God's eternal presence to daily life, finding courage, strength, and joy in His nearness now.
5. Deepen their longing for heaven by recognizing that the ultimate promise is to see God's face and dwell with Him forever.

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### Introduction:

When I was a child, I spent a lot of time at my grandparents' house. It was a typical 1970's ranch-style home in a subdivision. It sat on a cul-de-sac at the top of a hill. They owned multiple lots with woods on either side, and behind them sat an old homestead. The back yard had been cleared out of the woods, but many trees were left standing. They had an above-ground swimming pool and plenty of space for me to play. Even though we were in town, it felt like we were in the country.

But what made it feel so special was them—their presence. I can still hear their voices, smell my grandmother's cooking, and remember all the fun I had there. This year marks thirty years since they left that house to move in with my parents, where they lived for a few years. My grandfather passed in 1997, my grandmother in 2016. I still think of them often. Every now and then I drive by their old place. It seems much smaller than I remember. And the truth is, it simply isn't the same. As I reflect, I realize it was never about the place. It was about who was there.

That's how heaven is. It isn't the streets of gold or the gates of pearl that make it glorious. The beauty of the city is not its true treasure. The real joy of heaven is that **God Himself will be there**. Revelation 21:3 declares, "*Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God.*" That is the promise. Heaven will be heaven because we will live in the eternal presence of God.

## God Has Always Desired to Dwell with His People

*The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, because the glory of God illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lamb,* Revelation 21:23.

### From the Text

From the very beginning, Scripture shows that God's greatest gift to His people is His presence. In Eden, God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day (Genesis 3:8). When sin broke that fellowship, humanity was driven away (Genesis 3:23-24). Yet the story of the Bible is God working to draw near again. He dwelt among Israel in the tabernacle and temple (Exodus 25:8; 1 Kings 8:10-11). In Christ, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). And today, His Spirit lives in His people (1 Corinthians 3:16). All this points forward to heaven, where His presence will never be broken again (Revelation 21:3).

### Biblical Themes of God's Presence

- God's presence meant blessing and peace for Israel (Numbers 6:24-26).
- His presence gave strength and courage in times of fear (Joshua 1:9).
- Sin separated man from God, but His plan has always been restoration (Isaiah 59:2; Jeremiah 31:33).
- Jesus came as Immanuel, "God with us" (Matthew 1:23), the clearest expression of God's desire to dwell among His people.

### The Fulfillment in Heaven

- No more barriers of sin or separation.
- No more symbols (tabernacle, temple) to remind us... God Himself will be there.
- Revelation 21:3-4: God will dwell with His people, wipe away every tear, and remove death and pain forever.

### Application

- Heaven is not just about beauty or reward: it is about God Himself.
- Our deepest longing will be fulfilled in His presence.
- As Christians, we should hunger now for fellowship with God, knowing heaven will be the complete realization of what we taste here on earth.

## God's Presence is the Greatest Blessing of Heaven

*Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God,* Revelation 21:3

### From the Text

The greatest promise of heaven is not golden streets or jeweled walls: it is that God will dwell with His people forever. His presence will be the source of every blessing and the center of all joy.

### Biblical Themes of God's Presence as Blessing

- Psalm 16:11: *"In your presence is abundant joy; at your right hand are eternal pleasures."*
- Psalm 73:25-26: Nothing on earth compares to being near God.
- Exodus 33:14-15: Moses refused to go without God's presence, showing that His presence is more valuable than any earthly land or promise.
- Revelation 22:4: "They will see his face." The ultimate blessing is to behold God without fear.

### The Experience of His Presence in Heaven

- Every joy of heaven flows from God Himself.
- His presence will bring unbroken fellowship and endless delight.
- No temple will be needed, for "the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple" (Revelation 21:22).
- His presence will be personal... we will see Him face to face (1 John 3:2).

### Application

- Heaven is heaven because God is there. Without Him, even paradise would be empty.
- The Christian life now should reflect this hunger for His presence through worship, prayer, and holiness.
- Anticipating heaven means cultivating joy in God now, knowing the greatest blessing is not the place, but the Person.

## God's Presence Brings Eternal Security and Rest

*and there will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him,* Revelation 22:3.

### From the Text

Revelation 22:3-5 promises a life where the curse is gone, His servants serve Him, they see His face, and they reign with Him forever. The security of heaven comes from the fact that God Himself is there. No more threats, no more enemies, no more curse... only the safety and rest of His eternal presence.

## Biblical Themes of Security in God's Presence

- Psalm 23:4: *"I will fear no danger, for you are with me."*
- Psalm 46:1: God is our refuge and strength, a helper always found in times of trouble.
- Isaiah 32:18: God's people will dwell in peaceful places, in secure dwellings, in quiet resting places.
- John 10:28: No one can snatch God's people from His hand.

## The Experience of His Presence in Heaven

- The curse of sin and death is removed forever (Revelation 22:3).
- No more separation, sorrow, or danger: perfect rest in God's presence.
- Eternal reign with God means no enemy can rise against His people again.
- His face will be the constant assurance of His love and protection.

## Application

- Heaven is the end of fear. No more uncertainty, no more waiting for relief... only safety in God's presence.
- Heaven is the end of struggle. The fight against sin, temptation, and weakness will be over.
- Heaven is the beginning of perfect rest. To be with God forever means unbroken peace and eternal security.

## Conclusion

The greatest joy of heaven is not found in the beauty of the city or the blessings it holds. The true glory of heaven is that *God will be there*. From the first pages of Scripture, God has shown His desire to dwell with His people. Sin separated us, but His plan of redemption has always pointed to the day when separation would end.

In heaven, there will be no more night, no more fear, no more curse. God's presence will fill every corner. His face will be our light. His nearness will be our security. His fellowship will be our joy.

When we think about heaven, it is easy to get caught up in the pictures of gold, gates, and beauty. But if those things were there and God was not, it would not be heaven. What makes heaven heaven is the eternal presence of our God. And that is the promise that gives us hope now and forever.

## For Discussion

1. When you think about heaven, what images or ideas come to mind first? How does Revelation 21:3 help reframe our focus?




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2. In what ways did God make His presence known to His people in the Old Testament (tabernacle, temple, etc.)? How do those point forward to heaven?

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3. How does Jesus, as Immanuel (“God with us”), show us God’s desire to dwell among His people?

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4. Revelation 22:5 says, “*Night will be no more.*” What does “night” represent in Scripture, and why is its removal so important?

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5. How does the promise of God’s eternal presence give us strength to endure trials and temptations now?

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6. If heaven's greatest blessing is being with God, how should that shape our priorities and values today?

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7. Why do you think Scripture emphasizes seeing God's face (Revelation 22:4; 1 John 3:2)? What does that reveal about the kind of relationship we will have with Him?

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