



Sermon Discussion Guide: Restores Creation

Series: *Rebel Grace*

Date: 04/19/2026

Scripture: Revelation 21:1-5 (The Message)

Opening Prayer

Gardener God, thank you for loving what you have made and refusing to abandon creation. Open our hearts to your promise of renewal. Where we feel overwhelmed by the not-yet, give us courage to live the already of resurrection hope. Teach us to practice your Kingdom in concrete ways—here, now, and together. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Introduction & Context

Revelation is often misunderstood as an end-times codebook or a fear-inducing forecast. But John wrote it for churches living under the pressure of empire—propaganda, violence, and the constant message that “this is just how the world works.” Revelation “reveals” something different: God is not abandoning the world; God is restoring it. In Revelation 21, the movement is not us escaping upward, but God coming down—“God has moved into the neighborhood.” The vision echoes Genesis: what began in a garden is healed in a garden-city. This week’s message leans into the already/not-yet of new creation: resurrection has begun God’s renewal, even as tears and pain remain real.





Discussion Questions

1) Escape Pods or Resurrection?

1. The sermon opens with Star Wars “escape pod” imagery—wanting a way out when things feel heavy. Where do you feel that impulse right now (stress, grief, news fatigue, conflict, burnout)?
2. The message reframes hope: “God’s plan isn’t for us to escape; it’s for us to be resurrected.” What’s the difference between escape and resurrection as ways of coping and living?

2) God Moves In

3. Revelation 21 says, “God has moved into the neighborhood.” What does that challenge in you—your assumptions about heaven, earth, holiness, or “getting out of here”?
4. Where do you most need to believe “God moved in”—your body, your home, your work, your relationships, your grief, your sense of purpose?

3) Garden to Garden: The Curse Reversed

5. The sermon links Genesis and Revelation: hiding, shame, and rupture vs. mercy, presence, and healing. Where do you notice “hiding” in your own life—avoidance, secrecy, numbing, performing, pretending?
6. The sermon claims “new-created” means restored/repared, not scrapped. What part of creation—or your own life—do you tend to treat as disposable when it gets hard?

4) Already / Not-Yet

7. How would you describe the “already” of resurrection you’ve seen lately (small signs of life, repair, courage, reconciliation, hope)? And what’s the “not-yet” you’re still carrying (tears, pain, death, disappointment, ecological grief)?
8. The sermon says we live “in the overlap.” What helps you stay engaged without sliding into denial (“it’s fine”) or despair (“nothing changes”)?



5) Practicing the Future

9. The sermon points to Blue River cleanup as “practicing the future.” What are a few “small-but-not-nothing” practices that help you live like renewal is real?
10. The sermon asks us to join God’s renewal without pretending we can finish the job ourselves. Where do you tend to over-function (carry it all) or under-function (check out)? What would a faithful middle look like?

6) “Rebellions Are Built on Hope”

11. The sermon quotes the line “rebellions are built on hope,” then reframes it: hope fueled by grace. What does “hope” look like when it’s not naïve optimism but resurrection-shaped courage?
12. What’s one place this week you can resist “old story” living (disposability, isolation, shame, cynicism) and practice the “new story” (repair, belonging, honesty, care)?

Closing Prayer

Risen Jesus, thank you for moving into the neighborhood and making your home with us. Where we carry tears, meet us with your tenderness. Where creation groans, give us love that acts. Help us live in the already/not-yet with humility and courage—joining your work of renewal in small, faithful ways. Make us people of hope, fueled by grace. Amen.

Key Takeaway

Easter hope isn’t escape; it’s renewal. God doesn’t discard creation—God restores it, and invites us to practice that new story now, even while we wait for the not-yet to be finished.



Next Step — P.A.R.

Pray:

Name one place where you feel the not-yet—grief, cynicism, overwhelm, numbness. Then pray:

“Risen Jesus, rewrite my story with your new-creation hope.”

Act:

Practice one small act of creation care this week (Earth Day is April 22). Choose one:

- Pick up trash on your block or at a park (10 minutes counts).
- Replace one disposable habit with a reusable one.
- Plant something and tend it like a prayer.
- Support a cleanup or conservation effort (show up or give).
- Make one household shift: energy, water, waste—one step.

Reflect:

What helped you live the already without denying the not-yet? Where did you notice the “old story,” and where did you notice the “new story” breaking in?

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