

The End and the Beginning
Message #2 – The New Heaven & the New Earth
Revelation 21:1-8 (1/14/2018 AM)

❖ **God will create heaven on earth (1).**

These last two chapters look forward to what we call the eternal state or heaven. The reality is that heaven will be on earth. Our eternal existence is a physical existence. Our understanding of eternity should impact how we live on earth. Colossians 3:2 “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.”

➤ Many Christians live in such a way that one would think that they have no hope of eternal life.

1 Corinthians 15:19, “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.” All of us at times become so focused upon this world that we seem not to be influenced by the next as we should be. The circumstances of life seem to rob us of our joy and peace. We get bogged down in the mundane as well. Joseph Stowell, “The fault is not with God. It is with us; we have assumed that this world should be a pleasant and friendly place and that the answers to the troublesome questions of life can be found in the temporal realm. We have assumed that the answers to life’s dilemmas lie somewhere within us, among us, or within the realm of the immediate world. We are wrong.” We need to recognize that we live **in** this world but we are not **of** this world. Jesus makes this clear in His intercessory prayer to the Father for His disciples, John 17:15-18.

▪ **This reality should focus our overall perspective.**

Philippians 1:21-23, should not just be going to Christian funerals!

Dr. Gary Habermas describes this as having “a ‘top-down’ perspective, God and His kingdom come first, followed by various aspects of our earthly existence.” This is the instruction of Jesus in Matthew 6:33, “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness...” For many Christians eternity seems distant and dim. Author A.J. Conyers calls this “the eclipse of heaven.” He writes about earlier generations of believers who lived with a clear view of heaven.

▪ **One reason for this is a distorted view of eternity.**

Many Christians do not have a biblically informed view of heaven. Their concept of heaven is not based upon reality. Peter Kreft, *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Heaven*, “It is our picture of heaven and of God that threatens faith most potently today. Our pictures of heaven are dull, platitudinous and syrupy; therefore, so is our faith, our hope, and our love of heaven.” Revelation 20-21 properly understood helps to give us an accurate understanding of what awaits us. It brings the warning of Jesus into a clearer focus. Matthew 16:26, “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” God will uncreate the current universe and create a new one. Some believe that God merely refashions the current universe. Scripture seems to indicate otherwise, Isaiah 65:17 & 2 Peter 3:10, “...The word ‘new’ means new in character, in the Millennium God renews the creation in eternity God recreates the universe. This is in fulfillment of what Jesus prophesied. Luke 21:33, “Heaven and earth will pass away but My words will by no means pass away.”

The essence of the new heaven and the new earth is the presence of God (2).

John “saw” the New Jerusalem which we will look at in detail next week. Next John “heard” a heavenly pronouncement (3). We are not leaving earth behind and going to dwell in heaven. We will live eternally upon a new earth and new heavens. Heaven literally comes down to earth and renews everything.

➤ God will purge the universe of the effects of the curse

John’s first description involves the things that will not exist in the eternal state (4). Imagine no tears of remorse, regret or loss. Death, defeated at Calvary, now passes out of existence for the believer. God will cast death along with Satan into the Lake of Fire (20:10, 14). Grief and mourning will be forgotten. There will be no cause for any of these heartaches. Our new glorified bodies will experience no pain or suffering, Philippians 3:20-21,

▪ **Eternity for the believer means the absence of sin.**

It was Adam’s sin which caused the curse to come upon the Creation. Sin cannot dwell in the presence of God. The “law of sin and death”, Romans 8:2 will be no more. We will live in glorified bodies in a glorified universe in the presence of our glorified Savior.

➤ We will dwell in the presence of the triune God in the Person of Jesus Christ (5-6).

The Person on the throne is Jesus Christ and refers back to (20:11). We have the personal promise of Jesus Himself that these things will become reality! “The Alpha and the Omega” appeared at the beginning of the book (1:8). It reminds us that God who started it all will end it all. History is truly His Story and has unfolded according to His sovereign plan.

▪ **We will realize our promised inheritance (6-7).**

The “thirst” here is the thirst spoken of by Jesus, Matthew 5:6. This is spiritual thirst, Psalm 42:2. This is a picture of complete satisfaction. The water will be literal but it symbolizes eternal life which God gives freely to those who come to Him for salvation.

▪ ***The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is God’s personal guarantee given to each believer***, Ephesians 1:11-14

God describes His sons and daughters as “he who overcomes”. This is the person who has placed their faith in Jesus Christ and accepted God’s gift of salvation. We are born again into God’s family as children and adopted as sons and daughters of God. We are reminded again that all unbelievers have no part in God’s new heaven and earth (8).

This is not an exhaustive list but a representative list. The “cowardly” are those who claimed to trust Christ but turned back. They did not have the courage to stand for Christ when persecution came. The word “sorcerers” is where we get our word pharmacy. Hallucinatory drugs were often used in idolatrous worship. These words describe a person’s lifestyle.

There Will Be an Eternal Separation between Believers and Unbelievers