

Revelation 21: 1-8; “Behold I Make All Things New” A Sermon for the New Year,
Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on January 3rd, 2020,
in the Morning Worship Service.

Well, yet another 365 days have passed away, never return to us again. And you and I are now closer to the regions of eternity where our state before God will be fixed forever! What lies ahead for you will be determined by whether or not you have been made new in your heart by the Lord Jesus Christ to love God and to keep His commandments. What lies ahead for each one who believes in the Lord Jesus, will be a New Heavens and New Earth in which righteousness dwells. The things which are mentioned in this text will come about in their appointed time, for God has clearly promised them, here in His Word. They will come about and they will come to pass because of the greatness of the power and the purpose of God, in Christ, being completely fulfilled.

And so, I want to declare to you the three things of our text which are coming in the future, for the everlasting encouragement of God’s dear people. 1st – The Old things will pass away, and there will be New things that will come. (verse 1) 2nd – The Tabernacle of God will be with men, and He will dwell with us. (verses 2-4) And 3rd – The person who overcomes will inherit all things. (verses 5-8)

1st of all – The Old things will pass away, and there will be New things that will come. (verse 1)

It says – “Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.” “There was also no sea.” We need to understand the context here. Christ will have come in His 2nd Coming, all of the dead will have been raised. All men will be judged according to their works, and Death and Hades will have been cast into the lake of fire, along with all the wicked. Anyone not found written in the Lamb’s Book of Life will have been cast into the lake of fire. The first thing that will pass away, as we have it mentioned here, is the First Heaven and the First Earth. That is; the present physical creation; the whole universe as it was created by God in the beginning shall have an end at that time.

All of God’s saints will have been raised from the dead on the Day when Christ returns. All will hear the sound of the trumpet and the voice of the archangel, and all of the righteous dead will be raised, and they will all be raptured to meet the Lord in the air. At that time, we will judge the world with Him. After we have judged the world with Him, all of His saints will be gathered from the four winds, from every corner of heaven, to will watch Him recreate the New Heavens and New Earth! What an event it will be! The First Heaven and the First Earth will pass away. Our great Triune God shall perform this mighty and awesome work. It will be done at the bidding of God the Father, through and by His Word the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and with and by the great power of the Holy Spirit.

Christ shall not annihilate the heavens and the earth, but rather He shall purge and purify them of all sinful influence and elements. The whole fabric of the present physical universe is to pass away and be changed, and a New Heavens and New Earth will be brought into being; a place where only righteousness dwells. In order to understand the need for this New Heavens and New Earth, we need to remember that in the beginning, God created the present heavens and earth, but that something came into it, to ruin it and mar this first creation. That something was sin; the sin of Adam and Eve in eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That one sin was transmitted to the nature and to the hearts of every man descended from Adam. It affects all of us here this morning.

But in the Beginning God’s work of creating, it was like all the work that He does; it was done in perfection. Turn with me back to Genesis Chapter 1, and verse 1. “In the Beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” “The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was

on the face of the deep.” “And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” Now look at verse 6. “Then God said, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters.’” “Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so.” “And God called the firmament Heaven.” “So the evening and the morning were the second day.” And the last part of verse 10 says that, “God saw that it was good.” This is how the Lord God formed the physical heavens and earth.

When the word “heaven” in the New King James Version is capitalized in the 8th verse, I personally think that it is a mistake. (The NAS has correctly not capitalized it.) I do not believe that we ought to be thinking of this as the heaven of heavens where God Himself dwells. That is another dimension altogether and it should not be confused with the physical heavens that He created. No, I want you to see that God created the physical heavens and earth, and he created man as the center piece of it. But because of Adam’s sin, sin entered not only his and Eve’s hearts to cause their fall from their original righteousness, but it was also true that all the creation fell with him. And because the creation fell with Adam; because of his sin, we live in a fallen and dying physical world. This is the physical world which is passing away and the lusts thereof.

This is the world which will finally pass away forever when our Lord Jesus returns. Turn with me to Romans Chapter 8, verse 18. “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” “For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.” “For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” “For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs until now.” “And not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.”

You see, the redemption of our body is a very real part of our eternal salvation. When we believe in the Lord Jesus, we are saved as a whole person. But the accomplishment of that whole salvation, of our whole person, takes place in certain and definite stages. First we are born again, when our hearts are regenerated and made alive. Our sinful heart is changed by imparted grace; by the Spirit’s working and power. Our spirit is regenerated and given life in accordance with God’s eternal purpose to save us with a holy calling. And then, over time, He is going to make us holy. This is why we were raised from our spiritual death in sins. It was so that the old things of our love of sin would pass away, and behold, all things would become new. We believe, and we are justified. We are declared righteous in the sight of a holy God. We are clothed with the garments of salvation and we rejoice greatly in the finished work of Jesus Christ in His perfect life and sacrificial death.

But our body, after a time, will still grow old and die. It will pass away. It will die and it will fall into the earth in burial, or cremation, or some other way of destruction, and eventually it will become dust again. But you should rejoice dear believer! You who believe in Jesus are buried with Him into death. You are planted in the likeness of His death. And even as He died physically, so you too must die physically someday. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. But the death that Jesus died, spiritually, He died to sin once for all. (Romans 6: 10) And so He conquered sin and death and He rose from the dead physically. Because of His death, we shall never die spiritually; we who believe in Jesus.

But we shall die physically because Adam’s sin was connected with his physically eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. His was a physical eating which brought eventual physical death to his physical body. It was his eating, and our being his descendants, that brought about death to all men. In the day that Adam and Eve ate of this physical fruit, they died spiritually. And after 900 and some years, then, they died physically. But because of the

promise of God and His mercy in Christ, they did not die eternally, either spiritually or physically. And because of His mercy they were born again spiritually when they believed His promise concerning Christ, the seed who would crush the serpent's head.

They both died in faith, in the promise of Christ. And they are now in Heaven with Him, awaiting for this same Day of His return that we are waiting for; the Day when all things sinful shall pass away. Because of God's good purpose through Christ, we shall all eventually conquer even physical death itself, when we will rise again at the last Day. We groan now; we who have the first-fruits of the Spirit. But we groan in the sure and certain hope of the Resurrection from the dead. Both we, and this fallen world, shall be purged, refined, changed and transformed in the time just before Christ recreates the the New Heavens and New Earth. It is called in the Scriptures, the time of the restoration of all things. (Acts 3: 21) All that is related to sin and death will, on that great Day, pass away forever for the believer.

Then 2nd – The Tabernacle of God will be with men, and He will dwell with us.
(verses 2-4)

“Then I, John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” “And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with me, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people.’ “God Himself will be with them and be their God.” “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying.” “There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” This holy city, the New Jerusalem, is all of the saints of God, who have been made holy in their glorification; all of the saints who were in heaven and earth together, now coming down from heaven to a New Heavens and a New Earth. Here they will dwell there together forever. Christ will dwell with us, and we shall be His people. God Himself will be our God.

Christ Himself will wipe all of our tears away, and He will Himself assure us that there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. His presence with us as our Shepherd-King shall convince us that there will be no more pain, for the former things will have all passed away. This is what we have to look forward to. Because of Christ, all that is sinful, all that belongs to the old life of sin, has already begun to pass away in our conversion, and it will forever be left behind at His Second Coming. Turn with me over to 2 Peter 3: 9-14. “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.” “Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?” “Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for New Heavens and a New Earth in which righteousness dwells.”

Oh dear Christian, will you not determine before God in your heart, that in this year of 2021 that you will not live the life of a worldling, but that you will live in light of this glorious future time? Will you resolve, that you will strive to be holy, as you look forward to the day of your meeting your Lord face to face, all the glorious things that He will do for you in that day? Prepare yourself! Take stock, and repent of every known sin. Verse 8 of our text says that those who are fearful and cowardly, those who are unbelieving and abominable, and murderers; those who are immoral persons and sorcerers, those who are idolaters and liars; their part will be in the lake of fire. They will pass away eternally and they perish forever in the lake of fire. But for those who know the Lord, the tabernacle of God will be with men. His dwelling place with us will be forever established.

You must remember too, that there will be no sea in this New Heavens and New earth. The sea will pass away. In the Beginning, it says in Genesis 1: 10, “God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas.” If this removal of the sea in Revelation 21

is to be taken literally and physically, there will no longer be anything which separates the land masses on the recreated physical earth. And yet, if I am not mistaken, the earth will be filled with rivers and fountains of water even as the garden of Eden was in the Beginning. All will be green and lush in the physical environment. There will be nothing that will separate God from men and nothing to separate a righteous man from other righteous men, as the oceans and seas presently do geographically. Spiritually speaking, there will be no more persecutors; there will be no more of men killing each other to get their own way, no more people whose passions and rages controlling them. It is the only the wicked which are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, "whose waters cast up mire and dirt", it says in Isaiah 57: 20.

But in that day, after the wicked are sent away to hell, there will be perfect peace beginning then, and lasting forever in the New Heavens and New Earth. We have already seen the need of a new creation because of sin's marring and polluting effect upon the creation and our lives. You and I have been marred by sin, and because of that, we must be made new by Christ or perish forever. But God has re-created you in Jesus Christ. He has re-created you to live forever, and so you shall live forever, in the best of places, because holiness is what characterizes you. It is God's imputed grace which justifies you. But it will be Christ's imparted grace to you which will purge and purify you. This happens with every believer and this is also what will also happen with the physical creation.

I want you to see and to understand that God created the heavens and the earth to endure forever. The creation bears the effects of Adam's sin and the collective sins of all mankind, but God has plans to refine her and to take all of her impurities away. The earth, He has made to be established forever. He will establish the earth forever through Jesus Christ our Lord. You find this confirmed in Psalm 78, verses 65-72, if you will turn over there with me there. The context of these verses is God's judgments upon Israel for their sin of idolatry. And His intention was to establish through David, and His descendant, the Lord Jesus Christ, an eternal kingdom.

After talking about the judgments that God had brought upon Israel, giving His glory into the enemy's hand, and delivering His strength into captivity, in verse 61, he says in verse 65, "Then the Lord awoke as from sleep, like a mighty man who shouts because of wine." "And He beat back His enemies; He put them to a perpetual reproach." "Moreover He rejected the tent of Joseph, and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim, but chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion which He loved, and He built His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth which He has established forever." "He also chose David His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; from following the ewes that had young He brought him, to shepherd Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance." "So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands."

You see; what God is saying here is that it was His purpose to have a people for His own possession who would not turn back from following Him to follow other gods. And He knew that He could not have such a people as this, unless He could raise up a Savior for Himself who would "build His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth which God had established forever." David would do this in an earthly sense, through His son Solomon. David was from the tribe of Judah and he purposed to build the temple. But he could not go on to actually build it, because he was a man of war and bloodshed. Solomon would build the temple because he was a man of peace and great wisdom. But the Lord Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of both of them as David and Solomon were types of Him.

The Lord Jesus fought the battle for our souls at the cross. He conquered our greatest enemies through the shedding of His own precious blood. And after conquering these spiritual enemies of Satan, sin, and death; God raised Him from the dead. Now He is "building His sanctuary as the heights". He will make His Church spiritually to be a New Heavens and New earth, which will endure forever. You need to know today that you have both a solemn and joyful responsibility to live in relation to that perfection which you will someday become. If you

have been made new in your spirit, your life should really reflect that change which regeneration has brought you. You are one of God's saints. You are one of His holy ones. And if you are being honest with yourself and with the truth of the Word of God; you will recognize that there are still the remnants of sin within you which, this body of death, which someday you will be completely delivered from. You groan over this wretched condition; you mourn over it; you are burdened by the corruption that you still find within yourself. But you believe and you know that Christ is stronger than all of your sinful weakness. You know that His resurrection power can make you more than a conqueror through Him who loved you. You believe with all your heart that someday you will be made completely new.

But you also know what your responsibility is. It is that you should be learning to put off the old things of sinful attitudes and practices, and to put on the new things of Christ's attitude in the fruit of the Spirit. If you will remember that your physical body will be made over into a new and glorious body, and that it will be someday be made like unto Christ's glorious body; this will help you in pursuing holiness. Your body will be reunited to your spirit someday; your spirit which will have already been made perfect. If you will remember this, it will help you as you strive to live godly now. Your desire is to taste of these new things now. You want to experience the new things of Christ's grace and truth, more and more. You know that when you someday receive your new body, that you as the son or daughter of God shall rejoice greatly, and everlastingly, over the redemption of your body.

So, let me ask you then; why should you present your body to sin any longer? Why will you go on letting sin have dominion over any area of your life? You have been set free from sin by Christ. Will you not now present your body to do righteous deeds? You will if you are wise. You are a new creature, a new creation in Christ. You and I, as the saints of God, should be learning to work and wait for Christ. We should be, every day, working to not let sin reign in our mortal bodies. We work in relation to our faith; we should be waiting patiently for the things which God will reveal to us and in us, in regard to our salvation. We should be eager for them, but we should also realize that we have spiritual work to do in the meantime. We work in doing deeds of kindness and thoughtfulness in relation to people around us. We share the gospel with our deeds.

If we deeply appreciate the work that God has done for us in regeneration, and what He is doing for us in our sanctification, then we will become less selfish in our view of life. God will help us, and He will give us what is lastingly good if we live in this way. This is living the life of faith; perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. We have been raised to newness of life if we have believed in Jesus. We are being sanctified by the Spirit's working in our hearts. And God is perfectly faithful in His supplying us with grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. The question is; will you, in this New Year, be renewed in the spirit of your mind? Will you ignore all the propaganda of the world which says that following Christ is not important? Will you instead live your life according to the Word of God? Will you resist the schemes of the Devil which are designed to distract you and keep you from a pure devotion to Jesus Christ?

Will you put on the New Man which is created according to God in true righteousness and holiness? (Ephesians 4: 24) Will you not realize that what you will do in this regard, with the rest of your time here upon the earth, will determine the degree of glory which will be yours, as a reward, in your resurrection from the dead? All of God's dear saints will have glory. All will shine as stars in the brightness of the firmament. But some will shine brighter than others. Star will differ from star in glory. Daniel chapter 12, verse 3 says, "Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever." Ask yourself now, does my life shine like this? Am I turning increasingly to righteousness and turning others to righteousness as well? If we patiently wait we shall indeed rejoice in the reality of being made perfectly holy and perfectly happy forever.

3rd – The person who overcomes will inherit all things. (verses 5-8)

“Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ “And He said to me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful.’ “And He said to me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful.’ “And He said to me, ‘It is done!’ “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.” “I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.” “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.” These words are faithful and true to the one who knows that they could not, and cannot change their own heart. You know that you are being made new, day by day, as a Christian because you have a thirst for Christ which brings you back to Him time and time again, every day. What wonderful words are these: “I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.” Do you have this thirst to meet with Christ today? He desires to meet with you in your heart right now. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for Him and for righteousness.”

And there is another way that you will know that you are being made new day by day in your journey of sanctification. You are one who is trying to overcome. Verse 7 says, “He who overcomes shall inherit all things.” You know that you are being made new day by day when you have this great desire to overcome the world, the sinful tendencies of your flesh, and the schemes of the Devil to get you to, in some way, to dishonor your God. The Christian is not one who rationalizes his or her lack of faith, or lack of obedience to God’s word with the words – That is just the way that I am. No, No! You are an overcomer. You are resolved that by the grace of God, which has come to you through the Lord Jesus Christ living for you and dying for you; that you will become a righteous person, a godly person, and one who is conquering their weaknesses and remaining sinfulness in your heart.

Even though you know that Satan is prowling around like a roaring lion seeking to devour you, you are resolved that by the grace of Christ, you will resist him, steadfast in your faith. You are resolved, by the grace of Jesus Christ that you will not be overcome by the philosophies of this world. You will not be overcome by the pull, and the boastful pride of worldly people around you, who are trying to get you to live more for the things of the world than for God; you will overcome those repeated assaults and be spiritually minded. The Lord in this year of 2020 will be knocking on the door your heart. And He will be seeking to have fellowship with you in there, day by day. May you make His heart glad in coming days. And may He make your heart glad, even now, with His presence and wisdom and power coming to your soul, during this day of worship, today.