

Tuesday, June 23, 2020 ▫ Read Revelation 21:1–8

Questions from the Scripture text: Of what did John see new ones in v1? What had happened to the first ones? What was no more? What did he see coming down in v2? How was this city prepared? What did John hear in v3? What did it say about God's dwelling? What does it say about His relationship with them? What will God do for them in v4? What four things will no longer exist? Why? Who speaks in v5? What does He say—Who makes all things new? What does He tell John to do? Why? Of what does v6a remind you (John 19:30)? What does the Lord call Himself? What will He give to whom? What does He call believers in v7? What will they inherit? What will be their relationship with God? What is the first thing that He calls unbelievers in v8? What other categories of sinners are named in v8? In what do they have their part? What does He call it at the end of the verse?

Next week's Call to Worship, Prayer for Help, and Confession of Sin come from Revelation 21:1–8 in order that we will see that we are singing God's thoughts after Him with *Lo, What a Glorious Sight Appeared*.

There's a good—and glorious!—reason that God is making His people holy. It's because He intends that we would be His tabernacle, His dwelling place, the center of His display of Himself and His presence in all of the new creation (v3).

Heaven and earth are passing away, and there will be new ones that replace them (v1). The sea won't be returning (v1b), and there won't be any need for the sun or moon (cf. v23, 25, 22:5). But most of all, the Lord will not permit anything that grieves either us (v4) or Him (v8) in this new creation.

One of the things that trouble the church these days is those who suffer from false identity. They have remaining sin, so they identify themselves with that sin, like the folks in v8. But that is not the identity of a Christian. **The identity of a Christian is that of a forgiven, adopted child** of God (cf. 1Jn 3:1); and, though he hasn't grown fully into it yet, a Christian will be pursuing that end, which is sure to come (v7, cf. 1Jn 3:2–3).

Believers are already super-conquerors (cf. Rom 8:37), who are guaranteed by the blood-sealed promises of God that they will one day be described as those who have overcome (v7).

Sanctification is difficult, but these are the marvelous and effective beauty treatments by which **the Lord is adorning us for Himself as a bride** for her wedding day (v2), and when what we shall be is revealed, **all of the new creation will gasp at the glorious beauty of the bride!**

Ultimately, however, the glory is not the bride's but Christ's. Our great contribution to this final beauty and glory? Need. Thirstiness (end of v6). It is Christ Who is the beginning and the end. It is Christ Who gives of the fountain of the water of life. And He gives it without cost, so that even in this last day, when His work is done, and our sinfulness is gone, all who behold that glory may know that it is entirely from Christ!

Believers who struggle with their sin (and those who really ought to be struggling harder!) would do well to join Asaph in considering our end (cf. Ps 73:13–28).

The Holy Spirit gives us this glimpse in Revelation 21, so that we will not think “in vain I have kept my hands clean,” but will say, “for me, what is good is to be near to God”; and thus, we will look forward to being rid of sin, and to God wiping away every tear from our eyes, and finally banishing death/sorrow/crying/pain (v4).

But most of all, we will look forward to, “the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God [...] He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be My son” (vv3, 7).

When do you get glimpses of “your end”? What does that teach you to value most of all? How does it help you in the pursuit of “purifying yourself even as He is pure”?

Suggested songs: ARP181 “God Our Only Good” or TPH384 “Lo, What a Glorious Sight Appeared”