



Sermon Series Notes

“A New Day!” (Rev.21:1-8)

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v.1a Whoever started the crazy idea that we’re all gonna sit on clouds in heaven playing harps, and for all eternity, has never read the Bible. God’s going to create new heavens and a new earth. And it appears that we will be there to witness it. Fascinating stuff!

We are not given the dimensions of the new heaven and new earth, so there is no need to speculate. But it’s going to be awesome!

Isaiah 65: 17 "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.

Why will we not remember the former things? Does God wipe away our memory? That can’t be, otherwise we would not remember that Jesus died for our sins. The new heavens and new earth are so glorious that we never think about the past (See Matthew 17:2-4). Perhaps you have experienced (however brief) those moments in life that enable you to forget all of your problems. Some of us shared our most glorious experiences of God’s creation last weekend. Perhaps that was a moment in time you were able to. For those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life, this is what eternity will be like!

v.1b No more sea; When I have taught on this in the past, people have approached me, concerned that because I love the water so much (especially the salt water of the Gulf of Mexico), fishing scuba diving, etc. I then refer them to Ezekiel 47:1-10. The Dead Sea will actually team with life during the 1,000 year reign. And the varieties of fish, though the Dead Sea will become fresh water, will be like the varieties in the Mediterranean (presently salt water fish). So we will have salt water fish thriving in fresh water! No more sea does not mean no more water (also see Rev.22:1).

v.2 The story of redemption is a love story; John 3:16; Eph.5:32

v.3 I told you last weekend about God speaking to me several years ago from the Psalms – “I am more glorious than my creation.” The most glorious thing about the new heavens and the new earth is that God will dwell **with us**. This city, the new Jerusalem, is amazing. It’s in heaven right now, Paul the apostle mentions it in Galatians 4:26 (“the Jerusalem that is above”), and the writer of Hebrews mentions it in Heb.12:22 (“the heavenly Jerusalem”). In our next study we will read about this city shining as a precious jewel (Eat your heart out OZ!), & having a wall made of jasper (200’ thick). The city itself is said to be made of pure gold (21:18), and its main street is made of pure gold (21:21). The foundations of the city are

decorated with every kind of precious stone. It has twelve gates, each made of a single pearl! But this city is not the most glorious thing in the new heavens and earth, because God is more glorious than His creation. Try and fathom that!

v.4 Saints of God (OT & New) have often suffered more than the unsaved. They have been persecuted, martyred, many times sacrificed greatly in order to follow God's will, and sometimes suffered things they did not understand. Asaph actually almost lost his spiritual footing because of this; See Psalm 73:1-4, 12-16, 17 (renewed eternal perspective), 25-26. As I prepared for this message, I have prayed for some of you who are going through struggles and sufferings none of us understand. May the Lord grant you fresh faith, and a renewed eternal perspective.

Jeremiah had similar issues with God (see Jer.12:1-3).

Think about the earthy lives of some of the most committed saints in the Bible: Daniel (Belteshazzar), Hananiah (Shadrach), Mischael (Meshach), & Azariah (Abednego). They were deported to Babylon, castrated, faced incredible temptation to become like their pagan Babylonian captors, were severely persecuted, each one threatened with death for not bowing to the gods of Babylon; Then there's the story of Job. Job lost his seven sons & three daughters in one day! He then proceeded to lose everything else he had, last of all his health. The only thing God left him was an ungodly wife who told him to curse god and die. God never adequately explained to Job why he allowed Satan to buffet him the way he did. God repeatedly says in the opening two chapters of the book of Job that he was "blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil." God told Satan in Job 2:3 that he had incited him against Job "without any reason."

Perhaps what God is allowing you to go through has no rhyme or reason, at least on this side of eternity; Paul (Acts 9:16; II Cor.11:23-29; Timothy (II Timothy 1:8-10; I Tim.5:23); all the apostles died martyrs deaths, except for John, who was boiled in oil, then banished to the island of Patmos as an aged saint; God told Paul & Peter ahead of time about their future suffering for Christ, but he does not tell most of his saints.

I Cor.15:19 If only in this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

Rom.8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Heaven will make right all the disappointments of this life.

Ever look forward to a vacation, anticipate how great it's gonna be, then when it finally comes things don't go exactly like you had dreamed of or planned? My wife used to tell me that my plans to take the kids to Disney/vacation were more exciting than the actual experience. By the way, I've never seen many really happy families together at Disneyworld! But our eternal vacation as Christians will not be a disappointment!

Ephesians 1:17-18 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.

See I Peter 1:3-6

vv.5-8

The cowardly; How many people will not experience heaven simply because they were afraid to make a public commitment to Christ? (See John 12:42); Matt.10:32 Whoever confesses me before me, him will I also confess before my Father...

We need to be reminded that those who inherit this glorious future world do not do so because they have never committed any of the sins listed here. We saw this very clearly last week in the examples of those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. See I Cor.6:9-11; note Rom.3:23; Eph.2:8-9; Rev.21:6 "without cost."

I'd like to spend our last few minutes going back and contemplating v.4: No more death, mourning, crying, or pain.

a. Death

- Read from Genesis 5; Read from obituaries? File of all the funerals I've done ("survivors"); Can you imagine living in a world where nobody ever dies?

b. Mourning

- How many are mourning the death of a loved one right now? I still tear up sometimes when I think about my mother, my grandmother, and others I love that have passed from this life.

c. Crying

- When the children were younger, occasionally one of them would start to tear up over something I thought was no reason to cry about. So I would say something like "Suck it up!"

- Have you ever fought to hold back tears? In eternity, you not only will never have to fight back the tears, you will never even think about crying!

d. Pain

- I hurt myself snow skiing a week ago Wednesday. I hyper-extended my right calf. I worked hard at not limping last weekend during the services because I didn't want anybody asking me about it. One of the reasons I didn't want anyone asking me is because of how I hurt it. If I had done it while racing my in-law down a double black diamond, I would have faked a limp if I had to, and probably embellished the story a little. But I fell just after coming off the lift on a pretty flat section, on my way to the steeper stuff. My in-law was behind me, and he said "How in the world did you fall?" I said I have no idea, it was like someone just grabbed my right ski, turned it sideways, and I felt like my right left leg was going to break. But like any committed redneck, I not only skied the rest of that day in pain, I skied over 30,000 vertical feet the following day, which was my last on the slopes. What was I going to do, I had already bought the lift pass?

- This past Wednesday, right after the evening service, I walked into the green room and immediately felt sick to my stomach. I began having severe chills in the car on the way home (cranked the heat in the car). When I got home, I sat trembling over a space heater, then went to bed fully clothed (black leather jacket & all). When Wendy got home, she came upstairs and found me in the bed. After interrogating me, she reached under the covers and discovered my full dress. After a bit I braved the courage to get out of the bed just long enough to ditch the church clothes, then buried myself under all

the cover, including the thick comforter that is really there only for looks. All night I struggled. I had a fever, chills, body aches, and my low back felt like someone was sticking me with a knife. And by morning I was completely purged, if you know what I mean! The next night was even worse! I already had an appt. on Friday afternoon to see an orthopedic doctor about my leg, and when my wife witnessed me lying in the bed in between trying to study for the weekend message Friday morning, she asked how I was doing? Chills, occasional fever, and feeling like someone had pulled the power plug on my body. "Sounds like the flu," she said. My ortho appt. was at 2:30, so around noon I decided to try and get into a "dock in the box" clinic and get something for the flu. But I tested negative for the flu. That really threw me. So what was causing the chills, fever, lack of energy, etc.? Saw the orthopedic doc at 2:30, and went home a bit puzzled. With a little more online research that evening, we firmly concluded that all my symptoms were a result of my leg injury. And my lack of energy Friday was from dehydration. It's been a tough week!

- Why is it when men have pain, the pain is so much worse than when women have pain for the same exact reason?

- And it's not just physical pain we have to deal with, but emotional pain as well. Anybody ever had a girlfriend or boyfriend break up with you? When my first real love in high school broke up with me, I couldn't eat or sleep. It was awful!

- Some spouses deal with emotional pain in their marriage, and it can be severe. Imagine being married and your spouse doesn't love you? That's painful!

- For some people their pain is a pain in the neck, and it's not their neck!

- In the thousand year reign we get glimpses of eternal glory, but not the full package. For example, there will still be death during this time (Isa.65:20). I believe we will be able to grieve, even though we are in our new bodies. In this future day when God makes all things new, there will be no more grief or pain, for ANY reason!

- There will no more pain for God; See Gen.6:6; "grieved" = to be sorry; "pain" = be vexed, torture; Same word in II Sam.19:2 of David grieving for Absalom; Psalm 78:40 How often they rebelled against him in the desert and grieved him in the wasteland; Eph.4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption; This Greek word means to make sorrowful; When God creates new heavens and a new earth, he will never again have pain, grieve, or be made sorry again. The final judgment is over, and everything about that judgment was just. God will never feel bad about the punishment of the wicked, because the judgment was righteous & holy (see Rev.16:5-7). God will never be filled with pain because He had made man. Everyone that's ever been born will have been born, there will be no more Adam's & Eve's created. Every person that has ever lived would have had ample opportunity to respond in worship to the God who created all of us, and those who did not received their just due (Rom.1). There will not be any more rebellion, the last one we read about in Rev.20:7-10. No one in the new heavens and new earth will ever grieve the Holy Spirit, because we will never again do anything displeasing to God.

When God created the first heavens and earth, it says when He had finished the job He "rested" (Gen.2:2-3). When God creates the new heavens and earth, he will enter His final rest, and those whose names are found written in the Lamb's book of life will enter it with him (See Hebrews 4:1-10). And what a rest it's going to be!

Psalm 30:5 Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

A new day is dawning for those in the Lamb's book of life, a forever world where there is no longer death, mourning, crying or pain. There are no accidents, ambulances, firemen, doctors, hospitals, assisted living facilities, undertakers, funerals, funeral homes, or cemeteries. There are no retarded, cripple, maimed, blind, or bruised. No bug spray, antiseptics, antibiotics, aspirin, Excedrin, Advil, Motrin, Visine, sunscreen,

band-aids, bandages, or blood. There are no cavities, root canals, braces, dentures, dentists, or Novocain shots. There are no counselors, psychologists, therapists or mental institutions. There are no police, FBI, CIA, DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration), DIA (Dept. of Intelligence Agency), ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms), no office of homeland security (see Rev.21:27). And let's not forget there will be no Secret Service Agency. There are no terrorists, bombs, bullets, or war. No political parties or elections. No human trafficking, pornography, prostitution, strip clubs, drug addicts, alcoholics, or homeless shelters. No cursing, swearing, or obscene language. No misunderstandings, ill feelings, fights, divorces, lawyers, or courts. No pollution, rust, decay, moths, or mosquitos. No fear, doubt, worry, or perplexity. No hurricanes, tornados, tsunamis, or floods. No cold or heat. No aging, diets, face lifts, fat, skinny, or ugly (all glorious, Daniel 12:3). No struggles, temptation, sin, devil, or demons.

It's going to be a perfect world, and it's never going to end!

CONCLUSION

- Life is most despairing when lived as though this world is all we have. Inequities abound in our imperfect world. The world around us tends toward unfairness, danger, and disappointment. It is a world controlled by our adversary, the devil. And its intrinsic nature is temporal.
- I Cor.15:19 If only in this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.
- "And they lived happily ever after!"