

What Will Our Eternal Home Be Like?

HEAVEN #5 – Pastor Gary Combs – May 12, 2024 – Mother’s Day – Revelation 21:1-8


INTRO: Good morning church! We’re continuing our 6-week sermon series entitled: “HEAVEN: It’s Better Than You Ever Imagined.” In today’s sermon, we will be asking, “What Will Our Eternal Home Be Like?”

We learned in our first sermon, “Why Focus On Heaven,” that God’s Word calls us to “Seek and set our hearts and minds on the things of heaven.” Then we talked about “What’s Heaven Like?” and we learned that believers in heaven are: With Christ, Fully Conscious, Actively Engaged, and Eagerly Waiting. Week three we asked, “Will We Know One Another in Heaven?” And we learned that “Yes,” we will know and recognize one another in heaven. And last week we asked, “Should We Care About Heavenly Rewards?” And we learned that the Scripture commands us to “take care” how we build our lives upon the free salvation we have in Christ Jesus, so that we receive a reward in heaven.

Now this week, we’ll be looking to see what the Bible says about our eternal home. Because God’s ultimate plan for His redeemed people is that we live forever with Him in a new heaven and a new earth as a new you!

Need: New you... that’s what many promise to help you accomplish in this life. “You can live your best life now” the latest self-help books and gurus promise. That’s why we make “bucket lists.” We think, “If only I can experience all that this life offers, I will be happy and fulfilled.” We think, “I better live for myself now because we only get one life.” As the old beer commercial used to say, “You only go around once in life, so you have to grab for all the gusto you can get!” And that’s the lie that many of us live by. As pastor Colin Smith noted:

“Satan’s master strategy is to have people think that life in God’s hands is less than life in our hands. The idea that if you hold onto it yourself your life will be more than if it’s in the hand of God.” — Colin Smith

The idea that you come out better running your own life than surrendering your life to God is the lie that Satan used to deceive our original parents, Adam and Eve. And it’s the lie that many of us are still buying into. But trusting your life into God’s hands is better. Indeed, it’s better by far! Consider the arc of God’s story with man  (Explain chart. Explain that the consummation of God’s plan for redeemed humanity is the new heaven and new earth where we will dwell forever in our new resurrection bodies!

Trans: Having Christ in this life is good. But as the apostle Paul said, “To depart and be with Christ, is far better” (Phil. 1:23). To be in the Present Heaven with Christ is better. But the best is yet to come. For the new heaven and new earth and new body that God has planned for His redeemed people will be the very, very, best life you can live!

BODY: In the last two chapters of the book of Revelation, the Lord revealed to the apostle John what the eternal home of His redeemed people with Christ would be like. We can know what God has revealed about our eternal home with Christ. What has God revealed about our eternal home with Christ? The text gives **four important details** about our eternal home with Christ.

Today’s text: Revelation 21:1-8 (ESV) ¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” ⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶ And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. ⁷ The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. ⁸ But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

WHAT WILL OUR ETERNAL HOME BE LIKE?

1. It will be a new place for a new you.

EXP: (1-2) John saw “a new heaven and a new earth.” He saw our world and the universe rejuvenated and fundamentally transformed. The God who first spoke all creation into existence is going to make it new. And it’s going to be the perfect place for the new resurrection bodies of the redeemed!

“**New**” (1) (καινός, *kainos*) - Not *neos*, which means “new” as opposed to old. It’s the word *kainos*, which means “new in quality.” As in that which recently made is superior to that which came before.

“**New Heaven**” (1) (οὐρανός, *ouranos*) - this speaks of the atmospheric and celestial heavens, which God makes new. No more hurricanes, no more tornados. The atmosphere prior to the flood was different than the one today and the new heavens, the new atmosphere will be different too. It will be perfect.

“**New Earth**” (1) (γῆ, *gē*) - in continuity with the present earth, but fundamentally remade.

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It’s as if God handed John Isaiah’s quill to tell us more about the New Heaven and New Earth!

Isaiah 65:17 (ESV) “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.

Isaiah 66:22 (ESV) “For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your offspring and your name remain.

“Passed away” (1) (παρέρχομαι, *parerchomai*) - to pass away, perish. Just as our former bodies passed away before being raised up with new resurrection bodies, so will the heavens and the earth.

Man’s sin affected all creation, so that it “groans” with us eagerly awaiting its new edition.

Romans 8:22-23 (ESV) For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Peter explained the “passing away” of the earth in greater detail. For scoffers will say...

2 Peter 3:4-7 (ESV) ⁴ They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” ⁵ For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, ⁶ and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. ⁷ But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

2 Peter 3:10-13 (NKJV) ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² 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? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

“Sea was no more” (1) (θάλασσα, *thalassa*) - The sea may be seen as a symbol of chaos, human rebellion and danger. It’s out of the sea that the enemies of God arise. It’s where the wicked nations ply their trade and rule the earth. It may mean that “all the effects of human sin and treachery and God-hating have been erased!” (Joshua Harris). Or it may literally describe just how different the new earth is.

“Holy city” (2) (πόλιν τὴν ἁγίαν, *polin tēn hagian*) - This is the Church, the bride of Christ.

“Coming down out of heaven” (2) (καταβαίνω, *katabainō*) - This is the “place” Jesus prepared. It was prepared in present heaven, but now comes down to the New Earth.

ARG: Jesus promised to prepare a “place” for us in His Father’s house. It’s a new place...

John 14:1-3 (NKJV) ¹ “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

... For a new you! Our former bodies will die, but we will receive new glorified bodies!

1 Corinthians 15:35, 42-53 (NLT) But someone may ask, “How will the dead be raised? What kind of bodies will they have?” ... Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. Our bodies are buried in brokenness, but they will be raised in glory... But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

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ILL: What will this new place and new you be like? We can look to the Garden of Eden for hints for the place and to the resurrected body of Jesus for hints about our new bodies.

APP: Believer, what will our eternal home be like? It will be perfect! Not only good, or better, but the very best!

2. It will be a new family where God dwells with us.

EXP: (2-3) Now let’s look a little closer at the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven.

“**New Jerusalem**” (2) - It is not only the “place,” but the redeemed “people” of God. For it comes down out of the Present Heaven and is inhabited by the family of God and the Lord Himself.

Notice what one of the seven angels “showed” John... (12K stadia = nearly 1380 miles; 144 cubits = 213 feet)

Revelation 21:9-21 (ESV) “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.” And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal. He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement. The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysopease, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

This is the city that Abraham and the OT saints looked forward to...

Hebrews 11:10, 16 (ESV) For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. ...they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

“**Loud voice from the throne**” (3) (φωνῆς μεγάλης, *phōnēs megalēs*) - a big, loud, huge, sound, or voice. Perhaps an angel standing next the throne?

“**Dwelling place**” (3) (σκηνή, *skēnē*) - Lit., “tent, tabernacle.” Also, of Jesus’ incarnation in John 1:14 “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (Lit., “Tabernacled among us”). This may speak of Jesus.

ARG: That we would be God’s family has always been His ultimate plan!

Ephesians 1:5 (NLT) God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

Jesus promised that we will dwell with Him and He with us.

John 14:3 (NKJV) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

ILL:

APP: Believer, we will have new family made up of redeemed humanity and the Lord Himself will dwell with us!

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3. It will be a new existence without pain and death.

EXP: (4) The “megaphone” voiced one continues his proclamation. No more pain and death!

“**Wipe away every tear**” (4) (ἐξαλείφω, *exaleiphō*) - to wipe off, wipe away, to obliterate, erase, wipe out, blot out. Every tear from the past will be totally erased or blotted out.

“**Death shall be no more**” (4) (θάνατος, *thanatos*) - no more separation from the body, nor spiritual separation from the Lord.

“**No mourning ... crying**” (4) (πένθος, *penthos*) - grief, mourning, sorrow

“**Nor pain**” (4) (πόνος, *ponos*) - great trouble, intense desire, pain, toil, anguish

“**Former things have passed away**” (4) (πρῶτα ἀπῆλθον, *prōta apēlthon*) - first or former things. The rapture, the resurrection of believers, the Bema Seat of Christ, the Tribulation, the passing away of the former earth and heavens, the Great White Throne judgment ... all these have passed. And along with this historical progression, all the pain, tears, grief, sorrow and death of the former earth have passed away!

ARG: **Isaiah prophesied of a “mountain” (See Rev. 21:9), where God will “swallow up death forever.”**

Isaiah 25:6-8 (ESV) On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken.

Isaiah prophesied of a new earth with a new existence with the animal kingdom.

Isaiah 11:6-9 (ESV) The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

ILL: For someone in my CG this past week asked, “Will there be eating in heaven?” Yes, I replied. Then he asked, “What about Brussel sprouts?” Well, if they’re not a result of the Fall, then yes. But better by far!

APP: Believer, we will have a new existence where death shall be no more!

4. It will be a new reality for only the redeemed.

EXP: (5-8) Now the Lord Jesus speaks from the throne of God, announcing the new reality for the redeemed.

“**He who was seated on the throne**” (5) (θρόνος, *thronos*) - “throne.” This is Christ Jesus speaking. He is the One making all things new and now He is finished (“It is done.”).

“**Alpha and the Omega**” (6) - The 1st and last letters of the Greek alphabet. This is Jesus (see Rev. 1:8).

“**The spring of the water of life**” (6) - As Jesus offered the woman at the well...

John 4:14 (ESV) Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

“**The one who conquers**” (7) (νικάω, *nikaō*) - conquer, overcome, prevail, get the victory. See 1 John...

1 John 5:4-5 (ESV) ⁴ For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. ⁵ Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

“**Will have this heritage**” (7) - Those who overcome by faith in Jesus will inherit this new reality.

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“Cowardly ... liars” (8) - a list of unrepentant sinners who will not inherit heaven, but hell.

“Second death” (8) - The first being the death of the body, but this being the eternal death apart from God.

ARG: Paul warned that the unrighteous “will not inherit the kingdom.” But weren’t we once as such?

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (ESV) ⁹ Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

ILL: Of course the Lord can’t allow the unrighteous in this new reality. Remember what happened with Noah and his sons as soon as they left the ark? God put a rainbow in the heavens as a covenant sign that He would never “destroy the earth by flood again” (Gen. 9:15). He gave them a new earth (changed by the floods and the earthquakes. No longer Pangea, but continents separated by oceans) and a new heavens (no longer a canopy atmosphere that watered the earth with dew, but now a blue sky with clouds and rain that made rainbows possible). After the flood, God shortened humanity’s lifespan to 120 years (Gen. 6:3) to limit sin, but soon Noah was getting drunk on wine (Gen. 9:21) and cursing his son Ham for looking upon his nakedness and gossiping about it to his brothers. In response, Noah cursed Ham and his descendants.

APP: Believer, we will live in a new reality, where only the redeemed shall live. There’ll be no more unreconciled relationships, no more unforgiveness between family and friends, no more fighting, no more lying, no more war... no more sin!

CONCLUSION: Instead of trying to live our best life now by taking our life into our own hands. Why not completely surrender your life to God by trusting in the Lord Jesus! The truth is, knowing Jesus we can live the good life now, live a life that is better by far when our bodies die and our souls are with Christ in the present heaven. But the best life? That’s God’s ultimate plan for us. Our best life will be lived forever with Christ in our eternal home!

Let’s pray.