

End of the Age part 2

8/7/2022

1. This Summer we have talked about eternity.

A. When we leave this life, we will end up in eternity.

1. Those who believe in and love Jesus enter eternal life.
2. Those who ignore and reject Jesus, eternal death.

B. Eternal death is not what we were made for.

1. That is not God's heart towards humanity.
2. However, **Rejection of God on Earth leads to rejection by God in eternity.**

C. This morning, I want to share one more biblical glimpse into eternity.

1. Revelation grants us a beautiful, but complicated glimpse into eternity.
2. This morning, I hope to leave you with a better understanding of what God has prepared for the Saints, specifically, after this Age is over.
3. We will briefly several key themes connected to eternal life.

Revelation 21:1-27 (CSB)

THE NEW CREATION

21 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. ²I also saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband.

³Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: 'Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God. ⁴He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away.

⁵Then the one seated on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new." He also said, "Write, because these words are faithful and true." ⁶Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will freely give to the thirsty from the spring of the water of life. ⁷The one who conquers will inherit these things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son. ⁸But the cowards, faithless, detestable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars—their share will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

THE NEW JERUSALEM

⁹Then one of the seven angels, who had held the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me: "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." ¹⁰He then 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, ¹¹arrayed with God's glory. Her radiance was like a precious jewel, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. ¹²The city had a massive high wall, with twelve gates. Twelve angels were at the gates; the names of the twelve tribes of Israel's sons were inscribed on the gates. ¹³There were three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. ¹⁴The city wall had twelve foundations, and the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb were on the foundations.

¹⁵The one who spoke with me had a golden measuring rod to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. ¹⁶The city is laid out in a square; its length and width are the same. He measured the city with the rod at 12,000 *stadia*. Its length, width, and height are equal. ¹⁷Then he measured its wall, 144 cubits according to human measurement, which the angel used. ¹⁸The building material of its wall was jasper, and the city was pure gold clear as glass. ¹⁹The foundations of the city wall were adorned with every kind of jewel: the first foundation is jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. ²¹The twelve gates are twelve pearls;

each individual gate was made of a single pearl. The main street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass.

²²I did not see a temple in it, because the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, because the glory of God illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. ²⁵Its gates will never close by day because it will never be night there. ²⁶They will bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. ²⁷Nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those written in the Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 22:1–15 (CSB)

THE SOURCE OF LIFE

22 Then he showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²down the middle of the city's main street. The tree of life was on each side of the river, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree are for healing the nations, ³and there will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him. ⁴They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵Night will be no more; people will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, because the Lord God will give them light, and they will reign forever and ever.

THE TIME IS NEAR

⁶Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place."

⁷"Look, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

⁸I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had shown them to me. ⁹But he said to me, "Don't do that! I am a fellow servant with you, your brothers the prophets, and those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"

¹⁰Then he said to me, "Don't seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near. ¹¹Let the unrighteous go on in unrighteousness; let the filthy still be filthy; let the righteous go on in righteousness; let the holy still be holy."

¹²"Look, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me to repay each person according to his work. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

¹⁴"Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates. ¹⁵Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

2. The New Covenant requires a New Home.

A. The first heaven and earth "passed away".

1. This is not "passed away" as in died.
2. The Greek means to "go away" or depart.
3. God moved the first heaven and earth out of the way to make room for the new one.

B. Behold, I am making everything new.

1. This is the anthem of eternal life.
2. The people of God become "new creations" in Christ Jesus.
3. That which was tainted and tormented by sin is no more, replaced by that which is perfect and untainted.

C. Revelation stresses the vast difference between the way things presently are and the way it will be.

1. One of the greatest differences is the central role God's presence has in eternity.
2. God's presence in eternity will be unmistakable, as His throne is in the center.
 - a. As the sun gives way to God's glory, the moon is needed no more for there is no longer night.

b. The greatest benefit and blessing of Heaven is the presence of God

3. Eternal life is described by both what is missing and what is present.

A. What is missing is the pain and tragedy brought by sin.

1. Verse 4: "Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away."

a. Eternal life means that What was dying has died, and will die no more.

b. Grief, crying, and pain are all the result of sin and sin's decay.

c. But that will be no more for those who enter eternal life.

2. Sin is no more, which means no more sinners.

a. Notice the absence of sinners.

1. *⁸But the cowards, faithless, detestable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars—their share will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."*

2. God draws a strong dividing line between those who receive eternal life and those who do not.

b. What is a "sinner"?

1. Anyone who is apart from Jesus.

2. If we do not receive forgiveness for our sins through confession, repentance, and faith, we are not part of Jesus.

a. Without Jesus, our identity is still tied to our sin.

b. Through Jesus, our identity is no longer tied to our sin but to Christ.

c. But we have to remain in Christ.

B. What separates us from Jesus?

1. The simple answer is "sin".

a. All sin separates.

b. All sin needs Jesus' forgiveness.

2. But praying a solitary prayer when we are young isn't what salvation is.

a. Salvation is the inbreaking of eternal life in the here and now.

b. It is a radical change in a person's life because of what Jesus has done in us and to us.

3. The promise of Eternal Life requires us to live for Jesus here on Earth.

a. When we do not live for Jesus, we have no other sacrifice!

b. Hebrews 10:26–31 (CSB)

WARNING AGAINST DELIBERATE SIN

²⁶For if we deliberately go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire about to consume the adversaries. ²⁸Anyone who disregarded the law of Moses died without mercy, based on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹How much worse punishment do you think one will deserve who has trampled on the Son of God, who has regarded as profane the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰For we know the one who has said,

Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay,

and again,

The Lord will judge his people.'

³¹ It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

C. Living with our eyes on eternity must lead us to live in a manner worthy of Jesus' sacrifice.

1. Here's the Good News about salvation.
2. For those of us who are scared about "losing" our salvation every time we cross our eyes wrong, we are far more secure than we realize.
3. For those of us who live for the Devil but expect a Saints reward, be careful lest you hear Jesus' words, "depart from me, I never knew you."

D. Some of Jesus' last words recorded in Scripture are found in Rev. 22:14

1. Jesus' last words:

¹⁴ "Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

2. The key here is the word "wash".

- a. Wash is a verb.
- b. There is an action here.
- c. It also means that all of us are clothed in that which is dirty.

3. But the difference between someone who is with Jesus or apart from Jesus is "have you washed your robes in the blood of the Lamb"?

- a. In other words, have you admitted that your life is dirty?
- b. Have you come to the only One who can make you clean?
- c. And are you walking in the realization that only Jesus saves, and only Jesus cleanses, and only Jesus satisfies?
- d. Or are you walking around with a dirty robe, unfit for entrance into the Kingdom?

E. If your robes, your actions, deeds, and lifestyle, have not been washed in Jesus' blood, then you are positioned with the dogs.

1. Jesus told several parables about guests being invited to a banquet but not being dressed for it.

a. In those parables, the one who isn't dressed appropriately is thrown out where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

b. Weeping speaks to pain, and the gnashing of teeth speaks to anger, especially directed to God.

2. But **the people who are still known by their sin will not inherit the Kingdom.**

3. To put it bluntly, **"Are you a Saint or are you a Sinner?"**

a. If you are a sinner, walking in sin, dressed in sin, living in sin, and known by your sin, you are not entering into Eternal Life.

b. If you are saint, someone who confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who has washed their life/robes in the Blood of the Lamb, who has been created as a New Creation in Christ Jesus, then you are Saint and saints have privileges.

c. Salvation was never meant to be kept "past tense".

1. Yes, there was a day when we made a decision to follow Jesus.

2. But every day since then, we walk in that salvation and that newness of life.
3. Jesus said that He came to “give life and life abundantly.”
4. That is something you live in, not remember.

4. The saints are given the privilege to access the Tree of Life.

A. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had access to the Tree of Life.

1. But their rebellion, to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil cost them the right to this tree.

2. Why?

a. If they had eaten of the Tree of Life in their now sinful state, they would have remained forever sinful.

b. But God, in His mercy, banished humanity from that Tree so that He could redeem them and restore the right.

c. This is the restoration of Eden.

d. What was restricted due to sin, is now unrestricted. The cherubim have been removed and access restored.

B. Therefore, in Eternity, the Nations will eat from this tree and delight in it.

1. Revelation beautifully depicts the restoration of Eden.

2. What sin destroyed, God restores.

3. What was lost because of sin is returned through Jesus.

4. Not only that, the one Tree in Genesis is now an unlimited number of trees.

Revelation 22:1–3 (CSB)

THE SOURCE OF LIFE

22 Then he showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²down the middle of the city's main street. The tree of life was on each side of the river, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree are for healing the nations, ³and there will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him.

5. Lastly, eternal life is an invitation to a marriage.

A. The Old Testament is full of wedding language.

1. Often it is negative, accusing Israel of infidelity and unfaithfulness.
2. This is because God had committed to "marry" Israel.
 - a. Repeatedly, God uses the formula "I will be your God, and you will be my People".
 - b. This Old Testament language is brought full force in Revelation.

Revelation 21:3 (CSB)

³Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: 'Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God.

Revelation 21:9 (CSB)

⁹Then one of the seven angels, who had held the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me: "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

B. A confusing part of Revelation is the mixing of the imagery.

1. John describes both God's people and the New Jerusalem as the bride.

2. But this is consistent with other portions of Scripture.

a. The Apostle Paul calls the Church the Bride of Christ, and he is right.

b. But John uses the language of the prophets to show God's delight in Jerusalem.

Isaiah 62:1–2 (CSB)

62 I will not keep silent because of Zion,
and I will not keep still because of Jerusalem,
until her righteousness shines like a bright light
and her salvation, like a flaming torch.

²Nations will see your righteousness
and all kings, your glory.

You will be given a new name
that the LORD's mouth will announce.

Isaiah 62:3–5 (CSB)

³You will be a glorious crown in the LORD's hand,
and a royal diadem in the palm of your God's hand.

⁴You will no longer be called Deserted,
and your land will not be called Desolate;
instead, you will be called My Delight Is in Her,
and your land Married;

for the LORD delights in you,
and your land will be married.

⁵For as a young man marries a young woman,

so your sons will marry you;
and as a groom rejoices over his bride,
so your God will rejoice over you.

Isaiah 62:11–12 (CSB)

¹¹Look, the LORD has proclaimed
to the ends of the earth,
“Say to Daughter Zion:
Look, your salvation is coming,
his wages are with him,
and his reward accompanies him.”

¹²And they will be called the Holy People,
the LORD’s Redeemed;
and you will be called Cared For,
A City Not Deserted.

C. What do we do with this mixed imagery?

1. We embrace God’s excitement about the future eternity He has prepared for His people.

2. God is excited about the New Jerusalem, and the people that will fill it.

a. God is excited to show off what He has been working on, fulfilling John 14 “I go to prepare a place for you...”

b. God is excited that, finally, redeemed and sinless humanity will again enjoy full fellowship with God.

c. Jesus isn’t merely excited for the beauty of the city, but for the enjoyment He and His people will have there.

3. Sin separated humanity from God's presence.
 - a. Jesus' sacrificial death undid this separation.
 - b. Eternity with Jesus ushers in a new age, where humanity is restored to God's presence.
4. This new relationship is symbolized in both the City and in Marriage.
 - a. That's why Revelation 19 talks about the Marriage Supper of the Lamb!
 - b. It is the bringing together of what has been two, distinct, parts into a new and unified whole.

D. The consummation of the Marriage, the uniting, points to more fun to come.

1. "To think about the new heaven and new earth as though there might not be sufficient contrast to make it interesting would be as foolish as a single man being worried that after the wedding day there is nothing left to which to look forward."¹

2. The Wedding Day is not meant to be the high point of any marriage.

- a. The Wedding Day is designed to be the first of many great days and times together.
- b. And Revelation really only describe the first moments of this new relationship between God and the Saints.
- c. What lies beyond that is yet to be known.
- d. But that which awaits the believer is greater than anything yet known.

¹ Hamilton, James M., Jr. 2012. [*Preaching the Word: Revelation—The Spirit Speaks to the Churches*](#). Edited by R. Kent Hughes. Wheaton, IL: Crossway. 382-383.

Close: Eternity with Jesus is going to be amazing.

A. The picture of this beautiful future is intended to bring hope and encouragement to believers.

1. This picture gives me hope of infinitely better days, where Jesus is before us and he wipes the tears from the corners of our eyes.
2. In that place and that time, death will no longer wreak havoc upon our bodies, our minds, and communities.
3. In that place, we will experience life the way God fully intended.

B. Today, if you are tired and weary; if you are tired of the struggle, wondering if it is worth it, think about these things.

1. Jesus is preparing a place for all of us, and that includes you.
2. Now is not the time to give up.
3. Now is the time to draw closer to Jesus, and let Him minister to your soul.

C. Question: Are you ready?

1. If Jesus was to return today, are you ready to meet Him?
2. What about your, your friends, and your neighbors?
3. Eternal life is too good to not share, and hell is too harsh to not warn about.