Series: Heaven

Message: 06 Life in the New Heaven Revelation 21\_1-5

Text: Revelation 21:1-5

Theme:

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Location: Christ Community EFC

**If you would, open your Bibles please to Revelation chapter 21 and we are going to be reading the first five verses of Revelation 21. (p. 1041)**

We are going to be wrapping up heaven this morning—well we are at least going to bring our series on Heaven to a conclusion.

The reality is, we won’t fully answer all the questions we have about the new heaven and the new earth until we get there.

However, last week we did ask and answered a number of questions about what we will be like in our new resurrected bodies.

This week I want to ask and answer a few more questions about what life will be like in the new heaven and the new earth.

Though there are a lot of things we cannot know with any degree of certainty about the resurrected life there are still a lot of things we can know with a great deal of certainty.

Where the Bible is silent we will just have to wait and see. Where the Bible speaks clearly we’re going to rest on those promises.

When the Bible speaks but not in absolute terms we need to move very carefully deciding on what conclusions that we draw.

So what can we learn about life on the new earth?

But before we address the questions I want to read, one more time, from our passage in Revelation 21:1-5.

“**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.”**

Ok, here is our first question.

**Will we get bored in heaven?**

I’m going to let a little of my West Virginian heritage slip in here but, thar ain’t no way!

Here on this fallen earth there are so many things that I would love to be able to do, if I had the time, if I had money, if I had the talent, if I had the courage, if I had the opportunity.

So if that’s true here in this fallen earth, what must it be like with a new heaven and a new earth, with our resurrected body where time is no longer an issue, where my abilities will not be governed by time, where money is not an object where we have every opportunity?

How can you imagine getting bored? (Pause)

I think one of the main reasons as some of us think that life in heaven is going to be boring is because life with Christ on earth is boring.

When we fail to walk into the adventure that the Holy Spirit has for us each and every day, those divine appointments that He has set aside for us, when we don’t sense the adventure that God has us on, when we don’t allow Him to push us out of our comfort zone, when we don’t respond to those stirrings of Holy Spirit in our heart, when we are not melted and in tears with His glorious kindness and grace towards us…then I would suggest to you that our present Christian life with Christ is boring.

Those of us who are living boring Christian lives now because we have never trusted Him, we’ve never taken divine risks, we have never venturing out into the unknown.

We miss the fact that God is fun loving, creative, and adventuresome and there’s nothing that He enjoys more than taking His children on a great adventure.

So, if you think heavens boring look and see if maybe you are bored in your Christian walk.

Look and see if maybe your life is not being lived with the adventuresome spirit that Holy Spirit would like for you to have.

I have been asked this. **Will we rest in heaven?** Yes. Rest is a very important part of our lives in heaven.

We read Revelation 14:13 says: “**And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Blessed indeed,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!**”

Rest is good! God rested on the 7th day, not because he was tired. He rested to set the model for us that life involves both work and rest.

Think back to Adam and Eve in the garden for a moment. Did they lay around resting all the time? No.

The Bible is very clear. They were to have dominion over all of the animals, everything that was there. They had to care for the garden.

But they also had times of rest.

But God didn’t create the world and then retire.

In John 5:17 Jesus said to: “…**them, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.**”

God is a God of work. God is at work. Christ is at work. Holy Spirit continues to be at work. And we are called to be at work.

What did Jesus say in John 4:34? He said “**my food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work**.”

Here’s what I want you know. Work is not a part of the curse!

Work is not a part of the curse of man falling. Work was there before the fall and work will be there long after the restoration of all things.

When God created the world work was meaningful, it was productive, it was a joy to do.

But when man fell what was it that was cursed?

The ground would no longer be as productive. It would not yield freely its fruit. It was going to take toil and the sweat of his brow to make it’s fruit come forth.

It wasn’t work that was the curse. The earth had been cursed and so more work would have to be put into it get out of it what we need.

Work in the new earth will be meaningful. It’ll be productive, done in the spirit and the power of Jesus Christ and in His presence and for His glory.

Yes we will work there and we will also have our times for rest.

Ok, that leads me to another question. **What kind of work will we have to do?**

In the new heaven and on the new earth there will be no more curse.

In Revelation 22:3 we read that in heaven “…**No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him**.”

What do servants do? Serve. And their service amounts to some kind of heavenly work.

That means these servants are active. They’re occupied. They’re providing meaningful task and accomplishing goals.

Freed from the curse, work will be a joy.

I know some people who get up in the morning, grown, as they say, “I got to go to work.”

What a difference when you get up a say; “I get to go to work!”

What will we get to do?

Listen to what Jesus says in Matthew 25:23. “**His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much** [rule over much]**. Enter into the joy of your master.**’

God says He sets His faithful servants over much. In other words those who are faithful in this life will be given greater responsibility and stewardship in the life to come.

What will that work look like? I’m not really sure. I know will be meaningful and be productive. I know that it will bring glory and joy to the Father..

Maybe you will join Adam in overseeing the garden. Maybe you will be tending sheep with David. Maybe you and Jesus can make a cabinet together.

Maybe you will discuss medicine with Dr. Luke, sow with Dorcas, dye fabric with Lydia, or make a new tent with Pricilla and Aquila.

Maybe you will write a song with Isaac Wates, ride a horse with John Wesley, sing a song with Keith Green, talk theology with Paul, or worship with the cherubim’s around the throne.

By and through His wisdom you and I will have some work to do.

Everything you do will be in His presence and He will be there.

So what exactly will be ruling over? It doesn’t matter. It doesn’t matter because we’re partnering with Him in His new heaven and the new earth.

Here is another question asked sometimes. **Will we live in homes?** In other words what our homes be like?

Will we live in homes? Let me give you a real definite yes…and no.

This comes primarily from John 14:2: John 14:2-3 “**In my Father’s house are many rooms** [KJV mansions]**. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also**.

Each of us have individual places that Jesus Christ has been personally designed and built for us in heaven.

I don’t know what your place is going to look like and I don’t know what mine is going to look like. But listen this. It is going absolutely suit you.

The Greek word that is translated “rooms” or “mansion” in the KJV means an abiding place.

It comes from the noun from of the Greek word Monet. The verb from of that same root word is “meno”.

The verb meno means to abide. Jesus used this word in John 15 where we are told to abide in Christ and that Christ is going to abide in us.

This abiding is to live in life giving union with the savior. Well if that’s what the verb means, now think about what the noun means.

Monet, rooms, is the place, prepared for us by Christ himself, where we will live in life giving, moment by moment union with God.

I don’t care what color the carpet will be, I’ll be in the presence of Christ my Lord.

Someone asked me, “**Well if we have a home in heaven, will we entertain guests?** Will we have folks in our homes and will we eat together and enjoy life together?

Let me tell you absolutely yes. That is a part of living in the kingdom.

The Bible hints at this in several different places.

Jesus, speaking in Luke 16:9 where he said “**And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive** [or welcomed] **you into the eternal dwellings**.”

I think having lodging and meals and fellowship is so precious to us here on earth, it is so precious to us as the church, and is an important part of what we believe we are as we were doing a life together, why would that not be a part of the new heaven and a new earth?

Now the question that comes. **Well I want to be with anybody other than Christ when I get to heaven.**

In Psalm 73 Asaph writes; “**Whom have I in heaven *but You?* And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You**.”

There are time where it feels as if Jesus is as close and intimate as our very next breath.

And then there are other times, though He has a moved, we have moved and we don’t feel His intimacy and His presence anymore.

Listen, we are going to experience His presence all the time then.

Not everything about Eden applies to the new heaven and new earth but most of it does. And remember the relationship that Adam and Eve had with God in the Garden of Eden.

They walked together in the cool of the day. They had fellowship one with another and that fellowship was unhindered, that fellowship was complete.

But look, God created Adam and he created all of those wonderful animals to go along with him. But God still looked and He said “it is not good for man to be alone.” And so God created woman for him.

It’s still not good for man to be alone. God didn’t create us to live in isolation. He created us to live in unity. He created us to live in family.

He created us to do life together as the body of Christ and I anticipate it being the same way when we get to heaven.

A question that I’ve heard ask in different ways is this. **Well we have opportunities to regain some lost relationships in heaven?**

Well we have opportunity to experience life with people that we have loved?

For that parent who has lost a child, a baby. I wonder how things are in heaven for this child. What will it be like when we see them there.

Will we be able to somehow redeem the years missed as that child grew up?

What kind of relationship will I have with my grandmother Ruby in heaven? She died when I was only 4, but I know I loved her.

One of my biggest regrets is that Dana never had the opportunity to meet my mother. Dana often laments that her family always takes my side.

Of course that’s because they see that I am right.

Well I can tell you, if my mother were alive, she would take Dana’s side. She would have loved Dana.

What will their relationship be like in heaven? This is one of those areas I can’t point to a text and give a definitive answer.

There are some things that God promises that really ministers to my heart. God spoke through the prophet Joel and said in Joel 2:25 “**I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten….**”

That horrible plague the came and devastated so much of the land and for years and years there was lost, want, hunger, and famine.

God says, I want to restore to use those years. How do you restore years? How do you give years back in a situation like that?

I think He did it by making that which follows all the more abundant and all the more precious.

I think God gives us opportunity in heaven to finish some conversations that we couldn’t finish here on earth.

I think Bob and Ruby are going to have long talks and belly laugh with Roy in heaven.

I’ve heard people say, I wish I’d had this discussion with my father or my mother or this one or that one before they died.

I believe we will be allowed to regain some of the opportunities we’ve lost here on earth.

Well another question I’ve been asking is “what about animals?”

**Will there be animals in heaven?** Absolutely! The Bible has much to say about God’s creation of the animals.

Throughout the Bible, in the pictures and prophecies of heaven, animals abound in the new heaven and earth.

Isaiah 11 says that, starting in Isaiah 11:6: “**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.**

**7 The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.**

**8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den. 9 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**.

So, yes. I think that says they’re going to be animals there.

When people ask if there is going to be animals in heaven the question they are really asking is, is Fluffy going to be there.

Animals don’t have a conscious, a soul, the way we do but obviously they are important.

God gave us animals not only to have dominion over but for companionship and some of them are precious companions indeed.

So, let me give you a real definite maybe. There’s no clear word from God on this.

Here is one thing I know for sure. In the new heaven and the new earth there will be no sorry, no tears.

So if Fluffy’s not being there is going to make you sad then Fluffy will be there.

Now this is not of God but my own opinion.

Now let me ask, when you put together everything we have talked about in this series, can any of you imagine how it’s going to be boring in heaven!?

I mean it can’t be boring.

Eye has not seen nor ear heard nor has it entered into the mind of man the things God has prepared for those who love him.

So we are getting just a glimpse, now we see through that glass just a little bit darkly. Ah but one day, come Lord Jesus we will be with you face to face.

In two weeks were are going to begin a new series on 1 John. Now that we have looked at life in the new heaven and earth we will be looking at how we are to live the Christian life now on this earth.

Let’s pray.

**Benediction: “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.” (Num. 6:24-26)**