

SEVEN RIVERS

— CHURCH —

Sermon Discussion Guide

The Book of Revelation: All Things New

Revelation 21:1-8

December 12 & 13, 2020

Part 1: Pray

The primary goal for our Life Group meetings is to *experience Jesus in our midst in his presence and power*. We want him to be at work by His Spirit ministering to us and through us to one another so that people are cared for and encouraged to lead God-pleasing lives. Ask God to reveal his truth in this passage to transform you through your discussion time.

Part 2: Read the Text

Read the passage from the sermon. Keep a focus on key words, repeated phrases or major themes.

Part 3: Reflect on the Sermon

Introduction

1. Are you fascinated with new things? What “new thing” are you hoping to get for Christmas?
2. Adam quoted a passage from C. S. Lewis’ sermon *The Weight of Glory*:

“We call [moments of wonder] beauty and behave as if that had settled the matter... [But if we go] back to those moments in the past, [we] would not have found the thing itself, but only the reminder of it; what [we] remembered would turn out to be itself a remembering. The books or the music in which we thought the beauty was located will betray us if we trust to them; it was not in them, it only came through them, and what came through them was longing. These things—the beauty, the memory of our own past—are good images of what we really desire; but if they are mistaken for the thing itself they turn into dumb idols, breaking the hearts of their worshipers. For they are not the thing itself; they are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never yet visited.”

Can you recall such moments of beauty? How are they a dim reflection of eternity?
(See Ecclesiastes 3:11.)

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3. Adam said, “The Kingdom of God is *already* here, but *not yet* here in its fullness?” We are celebrating Christ’s first Advent *and* awaiting his second. Adam went on to say that 2020 has been an extended Advent season? What does this mean for you practically during this season?

All Things New: A New World

1. Revelation 21:1 says that in the new heaven and new earth, the sea is no more. What did Adam say this means? (See Revelation 15:2; 21:6; 22:1-2.)
2. When the new heaven and new earth come down, what happens to the first heaven and the first earth? Read 2 Peter 3:10-13 and compare with Revelation 21:1. How does Peter say the coming of the new heavens and new earth should affect how we live our lives now? (vv. 11-12) Why? (v. 13)

3. Adam quotes Vinoth Ramachandra:

“Christian salvation lies not in an escape from this world but in the transformation of this world. You will not find hope for this physical world in any other religious system or philosophy. The biblical vision is unique and that is why if someone says, ‘Surely there is salvation in other faiths’, I always ask them ‘What salvation are you talking about?’. Not this salvation. No salvation holds hope for the world, like this salvation, for the ordinary world, ordinary human life: fireplaces, friends, food, hugging, kissing and dancing. No faith holds out a promise of eternal salvation for the world like the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ do.”

Does this differ at all from your thoughts about heaven? How so? Can you picture the “ordinary” parts of human life in the new heaven and new earth?

All Things New: A New City

1. John Piper famously asked, “If you could have heaven, with no sickness, and with all the friends you ever had on earth, and all the food you ever liked, and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed, and all the natural beauties you ever saw, all the physical

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pleasures you ever tasted, and no human conflict or any natural disasters, could you be satisfied with heaven, if Christ were not there?"

What is the new city marked by? What is the most dominate feature of it? (Rev. 21:3-4)

2. Can you trace the theme of "I will be their God and they will be my people" throughout the Bible? (See Lev. 26:11-12; Ezek. 37:27; Matt. 1:23; John 1:14; John 14:18, 23.) Is this a major theme in your life? Is it what you long for?
3. Adam stated that the early Christians pulled the truth of their glorious future into their present hardships and persecution until their hearts caught fire? How did they do this? (See Romans 8:18.) Can you do the math?

All Things New: A New Family

1. What are the benefits of being a child of God? Reread Revelation 21:3-6 and list them.
2. How do we gain these benefits, this heritage? (See verses 6-7.) Who has paid for it? (See Ephesians 1:7-14.)
3. Compare Revelation 1:8 with 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Do any of these descriptions of unrighteousness apply to your life? Have you received pardon *from* and power *over* these kinds of sin? Is grace still amazing to you? Perhaps share how God's grace has played out in your story with the group.

Part 4: Summarize the Message

How would you summarize the sermon to someone who has never heard it? What are your two or three key takeaways from the message and your discussion? How does this sermon change your perspective on God? Your own heart? And/or, how to follow Jesus?