

Session 6: Eternal Life



QUESTION 1:

*If you could live anywhere in the world,
where would it be?*

THE POINT

We can live forever in the presence of God.

THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Location, location, location. Real estate agents often repeat that saying for clients searching for a new home. The Internet is flooded with lists to help us decide the best places to live, the best places to retire, the best places to raise our kids, the most affordable place to live, and the best places to live for clean air and water.

People have myriad reasons for choosing where they live. Of course, many people say they do not choose where they live, the place “chooses” them. For example, many live where they do because it is close to family or it is where their jobs are. Regardless, we all have our ideas of what makes a place ideal. Yet, no matter how idyllic, no place is perfect. Problems still arise. And, of course, sin is ever present.

That will not always be the case, however. God has promised His followers a perfect home with Him that will last for eternity. The apostle John gave us a brief glimpse into the eternal life that awaits those who follow Christ.



WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

REVELATION 21:1-5

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 I also saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. ³ Then 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. ⁴ He 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. ⁵ Then the one seated on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new." He also said, "Write, because these words are faithful and true."

God has promised His children an eternal home that eclipses even the finest neighborhoods in the most exclusive zip codes. Our home with God will be perfect because it is in the presence of God Himself.

John referred to the new Jerusalem as "the holy city." The place is holy because everyone and everything inside it is holy and righteous. We will be with God, and "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more."

QUESTION 2:

What are some ways our culture expresses the concept of heaven?

Revelation 21 begins with a wonderful picture. The pain and grief we presently experience will no longer be an issue "for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away." In their place will be "a new heaven and a new earth." The new heaven and earth will transcend anything we have ever experienced.

Along with the new heaven and the new earth, John saw "the new Jerusalem" and likened it to a beautiful bride walking down the aisle on her wedding day. A bride looks most radiant on her wedding day, and here is a bride whose radiance will never fade.

- ▶ **No death.** Our new home in heaven will be a place of total victory. John wrote previously that death would be thrown in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14).
- ▶ **No grief.** No sin, regret, or loss will remain to cause us to grieve or mourn.
- ▶ **No crying.** Since grief will exist no longer, we will have no more cause for crying.
- ▶ **No pain.** Since the sin that led to the fall will have been removed completely, all pain will be gone.

QUESTION 3:

What part of the description of heaven in verses 1-5 are you most looking forward to?

Speaking from His throne, Jesus told us why the old things have passed away: “Look, I am making everything new” (Revelation 21:5). Jesus is not merely giving a makeover to what

we currently know. In Christ, we become a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), and we will dwell eternally with Him in His new creation.

REVELATION 21:6-8

⁶ Then 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.” ⁷ The one who conquers will inherit these things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son. ⁸ But 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.”

In Revelation 21, Jesus marks the end of redemptive history. He can do this because He is “the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.” He began history, and He will bring it to an end. Jesus is God; He existed in the very beginning and He still exists beyond the end.

▶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled” (Matthew 5:6).

2. “The one who conquers will inherit these things.” We are conquerors when we stand strong and faithful to Christ, and we overcome and are victorious through Him. We overcome only when we rely on Jesus.

The Lord made it clear that not everyone will enjoy the glories of the new heaven and new earth. In verse 8, He listed “the cowards, faithless, detestable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars.” In the past, we may have been guilty of these sins, but this verse is referring to those who have chosen to remain in sin and not choose Christ.

God is preparing an amazing home where we will live eternally, but it will only be available to those who believe in Jesus Christ. He is “the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father” (John 14:6) and His eternal home without looking to Jesus as the only way.

QUESTION 4:

How do the promises in these verses reflect God’s character?

Jesus’ offer of eternity is open to all, but the only ones who can enter this new heaven and new earth are those who follow Him.

1. “I will freely give to the thirsty from the spring of the water of life.” We must admit we are thirsty and believe that Jesus is the only One who can quench that thirst.
- ▶ “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink” (John 7:37).



"ONCE YOU BELIEVE IN FOREVER AND LIVE WITH

FOREVER IN VIEW ...

THAN YOU DID BEFORE."

YOU WILL LIVE IN A RADICALLY DIFFERENT WAY

Paul David Tripp

REVELATION 22:1-5

¹ Then he showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down 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, ³ and 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. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ Night 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.

John painted a clear picture with his vision of the new heaven and the new earth. In these verses, we “see” the incredible home promised to every believer. John was focused in particular on the new Jerusalem (21:10), and five images stand out in what he saw.

- 1. The river of the water of life.** A river flowed through the garden (Genesis 2:10), and one flows in our eternal home, but the difference is that this river flows “from the throne of God and of the Lamb.”
- 2. The tree of life.** The tree of life was present in the garden of Eden (v. 9), but through His death on the cross, Jesus removed the curse, and we can eat from the tree of life.
- 3. The tree's fruit.** The tree of life will bear “twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit every month.” We can see this as a picture of unending provision and blessing.
- 4. The tree's leaves.** The leaves symbolize the full and healthy lives all peoples will enjoy in God's presence.
- 5. The throne of God.** God will rule and reign from His throne in this city.

We've been given a great picture of our eternal home, but what will we be doing? We will do three things:

- 1. We will worship God.** We will certainly declare His praises, but worship is far more than the words we sing or speak. In eternity, our worship and service will be perfect because we will be unhindered by sin.
- 2. We will serve God.** We're not told what our service will entail, but keep in mind that as we serve there is a third thing we will do.
- 3. We will reign with God.** God is the sovereign and supreme Ruler over all creation, yet He will grant us the privilege to reign with Him.

God will not hold back from His children! John's vision points to the magnificence of eternal life. He wrote that Jesus declared to him, “These words are faithful and true” (Revelation 22:6).

QUESTION 5:

In what ways does knowing how the story ends change your everyday life?

GONE, GONE, GAIN

*Certain things will no longer exist in heaven; they will be gone.
We will also gain certain things. Look back over today's Scripture passages and
write the things that will be gone and the things we will gain.*

GONE

GAIN



LIVE IT OUT

Eternal life with Jesus is forever and ever, so choose to make a difference in the short time you have on earth. How will the promise of an eternal life with Christ affect the way you live this week?

- ▶ **Look to Christ.** If you have not trusted Christ, place your faith in Him. He desires for you to come to Him and live with Him for eternity.
- ▶ **Focus on heaven.** As a follower of Christ, your citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). Don't let the temporary things of life consume you, but "seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on earthly things" (Colossians 3:1-2).
- ▶ **Invite others to heaven.** Identify specific people you know who have no hope of eternal life because they have not placed their faith in Christ. Pray and seek opportunities to tell them how they can have an eternal life in heaven with Christ.

The Bible concludes with God's creation of an eternal paradise called heaven. **It will be the reward for those who have placed their faith and hope in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.**
