



BOOKENDS

GENESIS

REVELATION

HEAVEN NOW AND THEN

REVELATION 21:1-22:5

SYNOPSIS

John's vision of the New Heaven, New Earth, and New Jerusalem is both a window into our future and a mirror revealing our present identity in Christ. The blessings that will one day be perfected in eternity have already begun in the Church through the work of Jesus Christ. God already dwells with His people, is making all things new, satisfies our deepest thirst, and has made His Church His holy dwelling place. Yet we still await the day when these realities will be experienced without sin, suffering, or death. The Christian life is living today in light of the glorious future Christ has guaranteed.

SERMON OUTLINE

Main Idea: *What God finishes in eternity, he has already started in his church.*

- 1. The New Earth**
 - a. Dwelling Place (3)
 - b. All Things New (5)
 - c. To the Thirsty (6)
- 2. The New Jerusalem**
 - a. Size
 - b. Shape
 - c. Décor
 - d. Purpose
- 3. The New City-Center**

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Observing the Text:** First, make sure to have your group spend time looking at the text, and observing the text without reflecting on the sermon. You want the group to get familiar with the text, and the words, and the flow of thought. Keep making observations until you feel the group has a solid grasp of the entire text.
2. The sermon argued that we often think far too little of what Christ has already accomplished in His Church. In what ways do you struggle to believe that God's presence, power, and kingdom are realities for you today rather than merely promises for the future?
3. The New Jerusalem is pictured as breathtakingly glorious, yet Christians often become discouraged or embarrassed by the Church. What shapes your view of the Church more: your experiences or God's promises? How would your attitudes and priorities change if you saw the Church the way Christ sees her?
4. The center of both heaven and the Christian life is Christ Himself. If someone observed your daily decisions, what would they conclude is truly at the center of your life? What competes with Christ for your deepest love and affection?
5. The sermon repeatedly emphasized that "What God finishes in eternity, He has already started in His Church." Where have you already seen Christ making all things new in your own life? Where do you most need to trust that His work is not yet finished?

FOR THE MEN: GOD'S WARRIORS ARE FORGED, NOT BORN.

- God intends His Church to display His glory to the world today, not merely after Christ returns. As a man, where is God calling you to courageously represent His kingdom—in your home, workplace, neighborhood, or church—and what step of faithful leadership have you been avoiding?

FOR THE WOMEN

- The Church is described as the radiant Bride of Christ, adorned with His beauty. How does your identity as part of the Church, Christ's beloved bride, reshape the way you pursue holiness, serve others, and encourage the women and families God has placed around you?

FOR FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

If Jesus came to your house today, what would make you happiest: all the wonderful things He could give you, or simply being with Him? Why? How can our family show this week that Jesus is our greatest treasure?