

Revelation Ch21v1-Ch22v5 - All Things New

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Preacher: Jonny Grant

[0 : 00] Today. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride, beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Look, God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them.

They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death, or mourning, or crying, or pain.

For the old order of things has passed away. He who was seated on the throne said, I am making everything new. Then he said, Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.

He said to me, It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water without cost, from the spring of the water of life.

[1 : 27] Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God, and they will be my children. But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters, and all liars, they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

However, this is the second death. One of the seven angels, who had the seven bowls, full of the seven last plagues, came and said to me, Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

And he carried me away in the spirit, to a mountain, great and high, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

It had a great high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south, and three on the west.

The wall of the city, had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The angel who talked with me, had a measuring rod of gold, to measure the city, its gates, and its walls.

[3 : 05] The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod, and found it to be 12,000 stadia, about 2,200 kilometers, as wide and as high as it is long.

The angel measured the wall, with using human measurement, and it was 144 cubits thick, about 65 meters.

The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold is pure as glass. The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone.

The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third ajit, the fourth emerald, the fifth anx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.

The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. This great seat of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass.

[4 : 34] I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.

The glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, down the middle of the great street of the city.

On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

[5 : 55] 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. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Well, let's pray. Our Father God, we thank you for this vision given to John hundreds of years ago, written down for us today, so that we can read it and hear it and be blessed.

Father, would you please, by your Spirit, shine the light of your Spirit upon your Word and upon our hearts, so that what we see in these words will fill us with joy and praise and lead us to be a people of worship.

Please help us. Amen. It's like being hit by one wave after another.

[7 : 55] We just about manage to resurface and draw breath when another wave comes crushing down upon us, tossed and churned by the relentless pressures and hardships of life, sinking deeper and deeper in despair.

It's easy to lose hope, isn't it? And to doubt God's goodness. In those times, we wonder where God is and does God even care?

Life's struggles can really overwhelm us. But whatever our personal suffering is today, and every one of us here has a story to tell.

Whatever it is, listen to God's voice. Verse 5. He who is seated on the throne, God who has supreme authority and absolute power over all things, who knows all things and sees all things, who sees us where we are today.

Listen to what he said. I am making everything new. Then he said, write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.

[9 : 27] These words, the words, I am making everything new is what we all need to hear. Write these words on your heart.

This is the word that is going to sustain us in times of struggle. It's the word that's going to keep us in times of opposition. It's the word that's going to strengthen us when we want to give up.

So in your struggle and suffering today, hear God speak to you. I am making everything new.

Well, you say, when will everything be made new? Well, as we've already heard this morning as John has led us, it is to come.

We've been given a wonderful vision here in chapter 21 of what to expect when the risen Lord Jesus returns. Look at verse 1. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.

[10 : 38] Well, why is there a new one? Because the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.

This is God's promise to restore and renew all things. It's the longed for new creation. It's a world where, look at the rest of verse 1, where there was no longer any sea.

All through revelation, the sea has represented the dark forces of evil. So in making everything new, it will mean the end of all the devastation and all the destruction we see around us.

no more waves crashing down upon us. In fact, it's a world where, look at the end of verse 4, the old order of things has passed away.

the things that trouble us today will all be washed away. No more sin, no more suffering, and no more Satan.

[11 : 54] Instead of death, there is life. Instead of sorrow, there is joy. The world and our bodies will never perish and never spoil and never fade. here in this new creation, nothing bad happens, nothing will ever break.

So hear God's word to you today. I am making everything new, not revamped or refurbished or upcycled or recycled.

No, this world will be renewed and restored. and the day is coming when we will shout out in excitement, the old has gone and the new has come.

Well, to help us see and understand what we can expect to come, we are given three word pictures filled with images and symbols.

We're told that the new creation will be like a marriage filled with joy. It'll be like a city shining with glory. It'll be like a garden flowing with beauty.

[13 : 07] So one by one we're going to look at these three big pictures, a marriage, a city and a garden. And as we do, they are going to sustain you and keep you and strengthen you as we walk through this broken world.

so first big picture, a marriage filled with joy. A marriage filled with joy.

We've been created for relationship, not just our relationships with each other, but ultimately with God. The primary reason we were made, why we exist, was to know God and to enjoy him forever.

So it's no surprise that the new creation is pictured as a marriage. Look at verse 2. I saw the holy city or the new Jerusalem.

Now, holy city here in its context is used to describe God's people. So when we see the city here, it's God's people, the new Jerusalem.

[14 : 19] They're coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride. So the people are now the bride, being beautifully dressed for her husband.

Brides take forever to get ready for their wedding, don't they? The lads, the suit is on in five minutes. But the bride, well, six hours later and the hair still isn't right.

You see, she's getting prepared, beautifully dressed for her husband because this is the day when they will say their vows and be committed forever.

Well, God's people, you and I, the church, are being made beautiful by God. In fact, he has already clothed us with the beauty of Christ.

He has taken the dirty stain of sin and has placed it with his purity and he calls us to live holy lives. You see, our life on earth right now is all preparation for our ultimate wedding day.

[15 : 39] God is using the struggles and the trials that we go through to make us more beautiful. Sometimes they hurt.

Sometimes they're painful. But in the hands of God, the suffering we face, the opposition that we endure, are all God's means of making us holy, making us ready, making us more beautiful for the wedding that is to come.

Each day we live is preparation for that great day. And so when the new creation begins, a wedding will take place.

In a Christian marriage, one of the signs of commitment when you get married is that you move in together. You live in the same house. You're one.

Well, in the new creation, God comes to move in with us and we get to move in with him. Look at verse 3. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, look, look what's happening.

[16 : 53] God's dwelling place is now among the people and he will dwell with them. They will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God.

This is the longing and desire of God to be with us. Yes, God is with us now by his spirit, but we can't see him.

But the day is coming when he will be with us. We will walk with him, we will eat with him, and we will be there forever. It's a marriage that will never ever break.

Verse 7, those who are victorious, that is, those who are trusting in Christ will inherit all this, and I will be their gods, and they will be my children.

This is the promised commitment of God. This is what awaits God's people. We are being made beautiful. God is preparing us through all the waves and troubles of life so that we can move in with God.

[18 : 10] Now, this marriage is going to be filled with eternal joy. Look what marks this marriage.

There will be no more tears. Look at verse 4. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. life hurts.

And living in this broken world will mean we shed many tears, disappointments, broken dreams, shattered lives, and they all take their toll and we cry, longing for that pain to pass, for the hurt to be over.

Well, like a loving husband comforting his bride, God himself will wipe away every tear. He will remove all that hurts and all that pains and all that frustrates so that our tears are no more.

But more than that, not only no more tears, but no more death. death. Look at the rest of verse four.

[19 : 30] There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. Death is what always hurts the most.

Death takes from us those we most love. It steals our joy and laughter. It breaks us and destroys us. But in the new creation, there will be no more death, no more sad news to tell, no more hospitals to visit, no funerals to attend, no more mourning or crying or pain.

He who was seated on the throne said, I am making everything new. One day these words will become a reality the new creation will be like a marriage filled with joy.

So write these words on your heart. Listen to these words because they will sustain you. So, picture number one, a marriage filled with joy.

But he takes us very quickly to another picture, a city shining shining with glory. Look at verse 9, the middle of verse 9.

[21 : 00] He says, come, I will show you the bride and the wife of the Lamb. So he's saying, look, come and look at this marriage, this wedding we've been talking about. Verse 10, and then he carried me away in the spirit to a mountain great and high and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

So he changes from one image, the image of a marriage, and now we jump to a city, the place where God dwells with his people.

And look how this city is described in verse 11. It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal.

You go into Cork City this evening, and you'll see the light shining brightly. It's very nice, actually. Go and have a look. Their neon lights are inviting and enticing.

They offer the good life, the free life, the be whoever you want life. But walk the streets as I did last Friday evening, and in within the space of a few yards, you'll experience homelessness, addictions, violence, crime.

[22 : 33] They advertise success, wealth, and fame, but in reality, they're filled with fear and hate. Cities are divided socially and racially.

They're places where terrorism happens and riots take place. But the city of God, verse 11, is shining with the glory of God.

God is present in the city. This is God's city and he is reflecting his glory, his character in all its brilliant beauty.

Like a precious jewel reflecting light, so God is filling his city with the light of his grace and goodness and justice and mercy.

God's very present means his glory is ruling and shining and being enjoyed by the people of God. But not only that, this is a city where God receives all the glory.

[23 : 41] Look over at verse 23. verse 23. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives its light and the lamb is its lamp.

Just as the sun and moon bring light in the darkness, so God's presence, his glory shatters and dispels the darkness.

His greatness shines so brightly that the nations are attracted and enticed by his glory. Verse 24. The nations will walk by its light and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it.

Nations, the people who have trusted in Christ and followed with Christ and persevered with him, will walk into that city.

Rather than seeking the fame and honour for themselves, they come in their droves to give thanks and praise to God for their salvation. Verse 26.

[24 : 56] The glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it. There's no war or fight against God here.

The people aren't rebelling or rejecting God's good rule. Instead, they're coming together to worship God who saved them and kept them. And this is the city that we will one day walk into ourselves.

Even right now as we have gathered today, we have walked through that door, we have gathered together to worship God just a taste, a tiny taste of gathering together from all the nations to say thank you God for my salvation and thank you for keeping me.

It's a city with no more fears. Look at the building plan that we've been given.

Sorry, this flicker is not. No more fears. Look at verse, go back to verse 12. We've been given all this description of what the city looks like.

[26 : 19] Beginning of verse 12, it had a great high wall. In fact, we're given the measurements of these walls. Jump down to verse 16. the city was laid out like a square as long as it is wide.

He measured the city with the rod and found it to be, well it works out about 2,200 kilometres in length and as wide and as high, walls 2,000 kilometres high, symbolism here.

Amazing. What's it telling us? Well it's only telling us that this city is secure. No harm can come to the people in this city.

No danger threatens them. Who's going to scale these walls? No more fears. The cities of this world are vulnerable, destroyed by the madness of men.

Missiles and bombs have reduced the cities of this world to rubble. Cities aren't safe. But in the new creation we will be secure forever.

[27 : 32] No gangs, no crime, no armies are needed. No police will be required. No more fears. And no more divisions.

The city isn't just about walls. It's also full of gates. Did you see that? Let's look back at verse 12 again. It had a great high wall with twelve gates.

Why so many gates? Verse 13. There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south, three on the west. Well, why so many?

Because God's people from all over the world are going to be there. People are going to come from the north, the south, the east and the west. People from every tribe, nation, people and language.

And they'll all be gathered as one new people. The people of God. And there will be people from Carigoline Baptist Church.

[28 : 45] And people who've been reached through polo and through rock and through rooted. And through the friends and contacts that we've had as we've shared the gospel and as they have trusted Christ, they too will come streaming through the gates.

And there'll be no more division because they are just one people. No racism, no refugees, all as one, all at peace.

He who was seated on the throne said, I am making everything new. One day these words will become a reality.

The new creation will be like a city shining with glory. So listen to these words. they will keep you.

So, a wedding filled with joy, a city shining with glory, and then his picture of a garden flowing with beauty.

[30 : 05] He takes us to a beautiful garden, chapter 22, a garden that in some ways is reflected of the garden of Eden, but yet so much better.

It's a garden of life. Verse 1, then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing down from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

You see, picture it here, God is the source of this life, not just physical life, but life in all its fullness, flowing down from God, verse 2, down the middle of the great street of the city, and on each side of the river stood the tree of life.

So this cascade of water from God representing life, flowing in through the city, giving water to the tree of life, which itself, the end of verse 2, is bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month.

It's a garden filled, overflowing with life. We're constantly searching for life. The problem is we invest in the wrong places.

[31 : 33] if I had more money, a better job, then I would have life. If I had better health and weren't so sick, then I would have life.

If I had the partner that I so desire, then I would have life. But no, we must look to the source, to the one, the person who is life in and of himself, and in God we are completely filled, and fully satisfied.

He is all we need. You see, God is the water we thirst for. God is the fruit that we long to taste.

In the garden, all our searching and longings will be over because we will have access to life in all its abundance. But not just a garden of life.

it will be a garden of healing. What's so stunning about this garden? Not just the abundance of life in the fruit tree, but look at the end of verse 2.

[32 : 47] And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Fruits that satisfies, leaves that heal, death.

This is what we long for. You see, the garden of this world is full of disease and decay and death. As gardeners who are tasked with looking after the world, we fail.

Rather than helping, we so often end up hurting. And we carry with us not just physical wounds, but emotional scars. Things that hold us back and keep us down.

But here in this garden, at last the nations will be able to come and we will be healed of all of our hurts, all our sins and all our scars, will be remembered no more.

This is a garden of everlasting beauty. Marked by the absence of two things.

[33 : 52] Did you see what's missing in the garden? them? No more curse, verse 3. No longer will there be any curse.

The world is under the curse of God. Why? Well, because of our disobedience, because of the choices we've made and well now we live with thorns and thistles all around us.

Every step we make is a sting or a prick. And one day the curse will be lifted and the blessings will flow like a waterfall.

Disobedience will end and we will live pure, obedient lives forever more. No more failing, no more falling, no more sin.

The curse gone and blessing forever. But also, look what else is missing, verse 5. There is going to be no more night.

[35 : 07] No more night. Night means darkness. And darkness as we've seen is the realm where sin and evil rule, but night will be no more.

the seductive ways of Satan will be no more. There will be no more deceiving, no more tempting, no more accusing, no more dragging us down. Instead, we will live in perfect harmony with God as he called us.

And he who is seated on the throne said, I am making everything new. And one day these words will become a reality.

The new creation will be like a garden flowing with beauty. Listen to these words and they will strengthen you. Isn't this the Christmas gift we all so desperately want?

isn't this the Christmas gift we would long for our friends and family to open, to understand and realise?

[36 : 20] this. Well, the good news is this marriage of joy, this city of glory, this garden of beauty is assured and guaranteed to all.

It is open to all who will trust and walk with Christ today. Look at verse 27, the end of chapter 21.

nothing impure will ever enter it.

Nothing impure will ever be part of that marriage or will enter the city or will enjoy the garden. Nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

You see, the invitation is for all who will come to Christ, who will make us pure, who will make us ready and make us right.

[37 : 35] This is our hope, this is our joy. Listen to his words, I am making everything new.

let's pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Our Father God, how we need for our eyes to be lifted, to see the glory that is to come.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. We pray that we will take these words. Amen. We pray and ask that you will impress these words deep in our life so that you will sustain us, strengthen us and keep us.

That we can know that through every struggle it is all but preparation for the great marriage to come. to know that we can share of a great city to come where everything will be put right and that together we can enjoy a garden filled with life Father help us to share this story to tell this story to others this Christmas help us we pray in Jesus name Amen well we're going to sing we're going to sing about heaven and the glory that is to come let's