

OUR NEW HOME- THE CITY THAT IS TO COME

By Pastor Rene Lussier

INTRO

- If you'd choose a city for your vacation, where would it be?
- If you'd choose a city to live and establish a home, where would it be?
- What citizenship, would you like to hold?

I think you know where I am going to get to...

Hebr 13:14 (NIV) For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.

Now a day people don't talk much about heaven...

We are uncomfortable nowadays of mentioning Heaven. We are afraid to be mocked about the "pie in the sky," and of being told that we are trying to "*escape from the duty of making a happy world here and now and instead we're making up our own dreams of a happy world elsewhere.*"

But either there is "pie in the sky" or there is not.

If there is, then this truth, like any other, must be faced, and proclaimed... C.S. Lewis

In 1991, in North America, a survey showed that 78 percent of people interviewed expect to go to heaven when they die. However, many of them hardly ever pray, read the Bible, or attend church. Only 34 percent of those who call themselves Christians attend church at least once a week. They admit that they live to please themselves instead of God.

I wonder why these people would want to go to heaven. What's the point of singing:

When all my labors and trials are o'er, and I am safe on that beautiful shore, just to be near the dear Lord I adore will through the ages be glory for me.' However, unless our attitudes toward the Lord and our appreciation of Him change greatly, heaven may be more of a shock than a glory."

Daily Bread, July 31, 1992.

When was it the last time we had a conversation about heaven during our fellowship, not in a Bible study?

LOOKING AHEAD TO HEAVEN should be our main goal & hope...

Phil 3:14 (KJS) I press toward the **mark** for the prize of the **high** calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Mark: goal, the distant mark looked at, the end one has in view.

High: Upwards, in Heaven, heavenward.

We should talk about heaven this morning, but how do we describe what we've never seen?

Reve 21:1 (NIV) 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. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband**

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "**Now the dwelling of God is with men**, and he will live **with** them. They will be his people, and God himself will be **with** them and be their God.

4 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."

5 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."

6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7 **He who overcomes will inherit all this**, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

8 **But** the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars --their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

OBSERVATIONS:

v. 3 The Dwelling of God is with men (repetitions)—1. Presence of God.

- When Jesus came He fulfilled the prophecy that said His name was Emmanuel—**God with us...**

He came to live among us to seek & save us and to make us ready for us to be with him...

Here the picture is: "**US WITH GOD**" in His country...

V. 4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be **no more death or mourning or crying or pain**

In Rev 22:1, there are other meaningful truths:

Reve 22:1 (NIV) 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 2 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.

3 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.

4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

5 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 for ever and ever.

V. 1 We see **“the river of the water of life”**

V. 2 We see **“the tree of life”**

- The water of life is the spiritual life given to us from the HS.
- Even in heaven we will depend on the HS to enable us to live an heavenly life... (Like the astronauts in space or scuba-diving).
- The tree of life bears fruits every month, indicating our daily need-food & its leaves serve for the healing of the nations... Indicating the absence of anything that brings physical or spiritual harm.
- Our strength and health will always depend upon the Lord, but in the New Jerusalem, the Holy City we will be in the perfect presence of the Lord, in His fullness and everything in Heaven will transpire of God’s fullness and glory...

V. 3 No longer will there be any curse—No one allowed to enter in the Holy City will be left out or cut off of God’s blessings...

V. 3 **his servants will serve him, 4 They will see his face** — *What shall we do in Heaven?*

The picture of heaven as an eternity of idleness is not biblical. Instead, the N. T. unites the two thoughts of **“being with Christ and serving him”**.

Someone said: *“Heaven is where the redeemed will find all their heart’s desire: joy with their Lord, joy with his people, and joy in the ending of all frustration and distress and joy in the abundance of God’s riches..*

What shall we do in heaven? Not lie around but worship, work, think, and communicate, enjoying activity, beauty, people, and God. First and foremost, we shall see and love Jesus, our Savior, Master, and Friend.”

But remember that if there is to be service there, the training ground is here. Life on earth would be meaningless unless we are being trained here for a nobler work which lies beyond the grave.

- Alexander Maclaren

We could go on describing in details the blessed state of those living in the Holy City, but we want to look at other aspects this morning.

THE BEAUTY AND GLORY OF THE CITY

Rev 21: 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

Reve 21:11 It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ... 18 The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.

THE NEW ORDER OF THINGS TO COME

But before the new creation comes, something must first take place...

Rev 21:1 “...for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.”

Rev 21: 4 “... for the old order of things has passed away.” v. 5 ... “I am making everything new”

We will look at a closer description of that new order of things—what it is going to be like, and how we can make sure to make it there...

THE OLD ORDER MUST PASS AWAY

- The old order must pass away. Everything must be destroyed...

2Pet 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. 2Pet 3:12 ...That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

- To erase all traces of sin, there will be a destruction by fire of the earth, stars and galaxies...

Reve 21:27 (NIV) 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.

MESSAGE... Nothing dirty or defiled will get into the City, and no one who defiles or deceives.

CEV-... But nothing unworthy will be allowed to enter. No one who is dirty -minded or who tells lies will be there.

PHILIPPS ... But nothing unclean, no one who deals in filthiness and lies, shall ever at any time enter it
AMPLIFIED Rev 21:27 *But nothing that defiles or profanes or is unwashed shall ever enter it, nor anyone who commits abominations (unclean, detestable, morally repugnant things) or practices falsehood, but only those whose names are recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life.*

APPLICATION

- Maybe you're here this morning. You look good, smile, hand shake, hugs, but you know and God knows that there is a hidden secret life (lived in darkness).
- You hope that somehow, God will understand and you can still be accepted. God understands—but he will not let anything that defiles enter in the Holy City. If you pay attention to how the City is called: THE HOLY CITY...

Hebr 12:14 *Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.*

- **To be part of the new order, you first need to become a new creation yourself...**

2Cor 5:17 (NIV) *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*

Reve 21:27 (NIV) *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.***

Rev 21:6... *To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7 **He who overcomes will inherit all this**, and I will be his God and he will be my son.*

1Cor 15:50 *I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.*

- This actual flesh & blood is not fit to live in the eternal kingdom of God...
- We 1st need to become a new spiritual creature, forgiven and justified...
- **2nd our body must go through a change...**
- This change makes most of us uncomfortable and fearful (*It is described below*)...

2Cor 5:1 *Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands ...4 For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. (now in our actual state, we groan...)*

Paul presents it again in:

1Cor 15:52 *in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.*

53 **For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable**, and the mortal with immortality.

I was thinking of Rev 21:2 ...prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband...

- The last important thing in the preparation of a wedding is the preparation of the bride...(not only in the western culture but in every culture). It's so important and time consuming—hair, make-up, jewels, the veil, etc... everything must be perfect...
- It reminds me of the **unclothing and clothing**—the mortal must clothe itself with immortality... It is necessary.

Phil 3:20 *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*

HOW SHOULD WE THEN LIVE? (Thinking of heaven influence totally the way we live)

2Pet 3:11 (NIV) **Since everything will be destroyed** in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ...13 *But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. 14 **So then**, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*

Abraham's example

11:8 It was **by faith** that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going.

9 And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith – for he was like a foreigner, living in a tent. And so did Isaac and Jacob, to whom God gave the same promise.

10 Abraham did this because he was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God. (He lived by faith even after he reached the promise land...)

If you read history you will find that the Christians who did the most for the present world were just those who thought most of the world to come. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this present world.

C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity.

What motivated Paul throughout his life? We are all impressed with his life style, his endurance, his devotion to God, what's his secret?

2Tim 4:7 (NIV) I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

THE SWAN & THE CRANE

There is an old legend of a swan and a crane. A beautiful swan LANDED on a lake. Nearby a crane was busy looking for snails. The crane asked the swan:

"Where do you come from?" "I come from heaven!" replied the swan. *"And where is heaven?"* asked the crane.

"Heaven!" said the swan, *"Heaven! have you never heard of heaven?"*

And the beautiful bird went on & on describing the grandeur of the Eternal City—the streets of gold, the gates and walls made of precious stones; the river of life, the tree of life with its leaves used for the healing of the nations. In eloquent terms the swan described the generous Master who lives in the other world.

Finally, not showing the slightest interest, the crane asked: *"Are there any snails there?"*

"Snails!" repeated the swan; *"No! Of course there are not."*

"Then," said the crane, as it continued its search along the dirty banks of the lake, *"you can have your heaven. I want snails!"*

This legend has a deep truth in it. How many people have turned their back upon the glory of heaven and are searching for snails!

Where is your treasure this morning?

Matt 6:20 (NIV) But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

English Puritan pastor and author Richard Baxter (1615-1691) wrote:

"Why are not our hearts continually set on heaven?"

...Bend thy soul to study eternity, busy thyself about the life to come, habituate thyself to such contemplations, and let not those thoughts be seldom and cursory, but bathe thyself in heaven's delights."

John Bradford (1510-1555), less than five months before his fiery departure from life for preaching the gospel in violent times, wrote to a friend of the glories of heaven he anticipated:

I am assured that though I want here, I have riches there; though I hunger here, I shall have fullness there; though I faint here, I shall be refreshed there; and though I be accounted here as a dead man, I shall there live in perpetual glory.

That is the city promised to the captives whom Christ shall make free; that is the kingdom assured to them whom Christ shall crown; there is the light that shall never go out; there is the health that shall never be impaired; there is the glory that shall never be defaced; there is the life that shall taste no death; and there is the portion that passes all the world's preferment. There is the world that shall never wax worse; there is every want supplied freely without money; there is not danger, but happiness, and honour, and singing, and praise and thanksgiving unto the heavenly Jehovah, "to him that sits on the throne," "to the lamb" that here was led to the slaughter, that now "reigns" with whom I "shall reign" after I have run this comfortless race through this miserable earthly vale.

NEW CREATION

London businessman Lindsay Clegg told the story of a warehouse property he was selling. The building had been empty for months and needed repairs. Vandals had damaged the doors, smashed the windows, and strewn trash around the interior.

As he showed a prospective buyer the property, Clegg took pains to say that he would replace the broken windows, bring in a crew to correct any structural damage, and clean out the garbage.

"Forget about the repairs," the buyer said. "When I buy this place, I'm going to build something completely different. I don't want the building; I want the site."

Compared with the renovation God has in mind, our efforts to improve our own lives are as trivial as sweeping a warehouse slated for the wrecking ball. When we become God's, the old life is over (2 Cor. 5:17). He makes all things new. All he wants is the site and the permission to build.

[Ian L. Wilson.](#)

An unknown author once said, "As a boy, I thought of heaven as a city with domes, spires, and beautiful streets, inhabited by angels. By and by my little brother died, and I thought of heaven much as before, but with one inhabitant that I knew. Then another died, and then some of my acquaintances, so in time I began to think of heaven as containing several people that I knew. But it was not until one of my own little children died that I began to think I had treasure in heaven myself. Afterward another went, and yet another. By that time I had so many acquaintances and children in heaven that I no more thought of it as a city merely with streets of gold but as a place full of inhabitants. Now there are so many loved ones there I sometimes think I know more people in heaven than I do on earth."

[Source Unknown.](#)