

Eternity Revealed

Revelation 22:1-7

11/25/07

Intro

We have now come to the last chapter in Revelation. All the terrible catastrophes of the Tribulation are gone, the Antichrist, the false prophet, and even Satan have all been cast into the Lake of Fire. Even the millennial reign of Christ, where He ruled physically on the earth for a thousand years, has past.

Last week we studied about the fact that the earth as we know it today will pass away; be burned up in fire. Even the current heaven will pass away, the scripture tells us.

Then we learned that there will be a New Heaven and a New Earth and that there will an amazing city called the New Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven and will be our eternal home!!

Here in these verses we learn of more insights as God reveals what eternity will be like.

I. It Will Flow with the River of Life

- We left off last week with God saying, “I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life.”
- Here in this verse we have further insight that it is the *river* of the water of life.
- It is wonderful to see the heart of God for us in that He wants these truths to be applied to our lives right now.

A. How far in will you go right now?

- We studied a verse last week that we need to understand fully.

John 7:37-39, Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’” But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

- The point for us here is that the Holy Spirit that flows as the River of life in heaven is the same Holy Spirit that God gives to us for life right now.
- The question is how much of us will we surrender to God? That’s the picture we see in Ezekiel 47.

Ezekiel 47:1-12 the River that flows in the Millennium

Illus – When Jesus gave a parable about a king who gave some funds (talents) to his servants and then when one who had received five talents made five talents more he commended him with the invitation to “enter into the joy of your lord.”

Matthew 25:21-22, His lord said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. *Enter into the joy of your lord.*”

B. Choose what you will drink

- In eternity, we will drink of the water of life without cost and without any hesitation.

- But though we have the same Holy Spirit available to us right now, we also have our flesh with us giving us a battle with our flesh and our soul.

Illus – the battle within us is to see what will take charge, our flesh or our soul. The body says eat whatever looks or sounds good... if the flesh is in charge it will actually destroy itself because it doesn't care.

Romans 7:15, 18, For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.... For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

App – What that means is that sometimes God has to fight against us in order to help us. We sometimes lay the ax at our own tree and God has to resist us to help us.

Illus – When I had appendix surgery I didn't feel like doing anything, and nurses had to fight with me to get me better.

- We won't have this battle in heaven, but for now there needs to be a denial of things that will hurt us.
- Our flesh doesn't want spiritual things, but our soul knows that it will bring life.

App – choose what you will drink. We of all societies should understand that we can choose that which is good. We will pay more for water than we will be for

gasoline. I was in an airport once where water was more expensive than grapefruit juice!!

- If only we could keep this clear in our hearts; that in the presence of the Lord there is fullness of joy.

Psalm 16:11, You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

II. There Shall No Longer Be Any Curse

- We are once again reminded of the very beginning of creation when Adam and Eve lived before the curse.
- Here the New Heaven and New Earth are being revealed and we read that once again there will be no curse.
- But something important for us to note here is that in Christ, we are not given the righteousness of Adam, we are given the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God.
- We now have received everything that is behind the name of Jesus and all that it means to us for eternity.

A. The Tree of Life will bear fruit

- In verse 2 we read another similarity to the first heaven and earth in that the Tree of Life will be there in all its wonder.
- The history of man could actually be seen as an account of three trees.

- The trouble for man started of course with the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the one tree that they were not to eat from.
- ‘Why did God place it there in the first place?’ many have asked.
 - Love is a choice and every one of us must choose to love God of our own free will.
 - Reliance on God is also a choice. When Adam walked with God he could ask whatever he wished. But when they chose their own way, they became independent of God. They knew good and evil apart from Him.

App – God wants us to rely on Him by walking with Him in constant fellowship. There are many things that happen in life that cannot be fixed in a moment and we must walk with Him step by step.

Illus – When I had to fly to speak at a stockholders meeting of a company that was to help us in missions and I missed the flight...

- The second tree we must understand is the cross of Calvary. It was there that Jesus paid for all the sins of our lives.
- But the fullness of the curse cannot be removed until the final day when the last believer has come to the cross of Calvary.

Romans 8:18-25 The anxious longing of creation

- Finally we see the Tree of Life and all its fullness in Revelation 22. It yields its fruit every month of the year with twelve different kinds of fruit.

Illus – Fruit trees are awesome. Growing up there were many fruit trees; cherries, apples, and plums. But I had no idea what other kinds of fruit God had created.

It wasn’t until I was older did I discover mangoes, kiwi, durian, star fruit, papaya, and who knows how many more that God has created.

Illus – God longs to show us the riches of His glory that He has prepared for us. We’ve experienced just a touch of this when we eagerly wait for our kids to wake up on Christmas morning.

Ephesians 2:4-7, But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

B. We shall see His face

- Verse 4 – the bond-servants will see His face.
- The scripture tells us that we cannot see His face now.

Exodus 33:20, But He said, “You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!”

- We also know that we see life as through a glass darkly.

I Corinthians 13:12, For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. KJV

Psalm 17:15, As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake.

Illus – There should be a longing for the presence of God and to see Him face to face. I remember especially when the kids were young how excited they would be when I came home.

C. Blessed is the one who heeds these words

- Verse 7, “Blessed is the one who heeds the words of this prophecy.”
- Interestingly, the Book of Revelation is the only biblical book that is not read by the Orthodox Church.
- Some avoid the book considering it to be too difficult, but not only are we to study and understand these words; we are to heed them, or literally to guard them in our hearts.

App – But those who will not hear, those who will not heed, those who do not want Jesus will get their wish. But those who heed, even it’s late, will come.

Illus – I had an early morning talk with my dad where he said, “I’ve wasted most of my life... I want to make something of what I have left... will you help me?”

Revelation 22:17, The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.