

Living in Eternity

In the last two sessions we looked at how God transforms us personally and at the resurrection of the body and eternal judgment. In this final session we look at how God not only transforms us individually but transforms the heavens and earth. Sin corrupted both people and creation.

In Genesis 3:17 we read,

'Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake;"

In Revelation 21:1 we read,

'Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.'

Revelation 21:5

'Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."

By making all things new, all environmental and heavenly corruption is taken away.

Paul's vision of Heaven

Paul writes of a vision he had of heaven describing what he saw as 'inexpressible'...

2 Corinthians 12:4

'...of how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.'

In another passage Paul describes life in the next age as being 'incomparable'...

Romans 8:18

'For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us'

These two passages show us that the next age, eternity, will bring us into a totally new dimension of living. The glory of God's presence comes to earth and will be 'inexpressible and incomparable' to our present age.

Creation itself will come into a freedom similar to the freedom of each believer. Just as we become perfect, so our eternal living environment will be made perfect.

Romans 8:21

'...because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.'

Our eternal dwelling place

The most outstanding and the most significant verses that give us understanding about the nature of our eternal dwelling place are the following:-

Revelation 21:3-4

‘And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.”⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

Revelation 22:3

‘And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.’

These verses reveal that God will move his Throne-room; his ‘HQ’ from heaven to the New Earth. The earth’s spiritual environment will be infused with God’s presence. We know God’s presence in this age but this will be beyond all comparison.

Perhaps this is what the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk saw ahead of time.

Habakkuk 2:14

‘For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.’

What are some implications of this?

1. A Closeness to God and to one another

Ephesians 5:27

‘...that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.’

Being ‘without spot or wrinkle’ means that we will be able to relate to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in a closeness that is beyond our current experience. This will also have a profound impact on our fellowship together. We will be able to relate to one another without all the imperfections that currently cause relational separation.

Revelation 21:3

‘And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.”

2. No Fear and Anxiety

Fear and anxiety about the future will no longer be concepts that enter our minds.

Revelation 21:4

‘And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

How will our lives be organised?

We do not know much about this but the following two verses suggest that we will live in what we could describe as 'God-centred' and 'God-honouring' societies of both cities and nations that have leadership structures.

Luke 19:16-19

'And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' Likewise he said to him, 'You also, be over five cities.'

Revelation 21:24

'And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honour into it.'

Final exhortation

The whole of the bible and your Christian journey makes no sense unless you understand the final destination for a believer. It would be like reading a great novel and then not reading the last chapter that makes sense of the whole book.

If you lose your anticipation of eternity you will lose your motivation for faithfulness. Faithfulness in this life shapes the honour that God will give to you in eternity; in the new heavens and earth.

Matthew 6:19-21

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.'