

Pleasant Springs Church

WDGW? — *What Does God Want?* • Lesson 6 of 6

Lesson 6 — The Family Restored Forever

Tuesday, July 7 -- 6:00 PM

After Michael S. Heiser, *What Does God Want?* · Septuagint (LXX) & ESV side-by-side

KEY TEXTS

Isaiah 65:17-19 - 1 Corinthians 15:50-58 - Revelation 19:6-9 - Revelation 21:1-4, 22-27 - Revelation 22:1-5, 17 - Romans 8:18-25

THE BIG IDEA

What does God want? He wants the family home for dinner forever. The Bible's last scene is not believers leaving earth to float around heaven on clouds. It is heaven coming down. New heavens, new earth, no temple because the Lord God Himself is the temple, no sun because the Lamb is the lamp, and a river running out of the throne down a city street with the tree of life on both banks. Everything Eden lost — and infinitely more — restored. **The two families live together in God's presence at last.**

INTRODUCTION

We began with God in the beginning, making a family. We watched the family break in three rebellions. We watched God pick a single line, become a member of the human family Himself, die our death, and rise as the firstborn of a new humanity. We saw the door of the family marked “believing loyalty.” Now we walk through the door and look at what is on the other side. This is what God wants. This is what we were always made for.

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PART ONE

Resurrection of the Body

1 Corinthians 15 - the family will have flesh again

The Christian hope is not that our souls escape our bodies. The Christian hope is that our bodies will be raised, transformed, and made fit for the new creation. Paul calls the resurrection body *spiritual* (*pneumatikon*) — not meaning ghostly, but meaning *animated by the Spirit and fit for the age to come*. It is more solid than the body we have now, not less.

Death is the “last enemy” (1 Cor. 15:26). Jesus' resurrection has broken its back. Our resurrection will finish the job. *O death, where is your sting?*

KEY INSIGHT

The mortal puts on immortality. Paul does not say we trade in our bodies for a different kind of existence. He says *this* body puts on imperishability. The continuity matters. The you who follows Christ now is the you who will rise. Glorified, transformed, and finally what you were always made to be.

1 Corinthians 15:53-55 - Death Swallowed Up in Victory

Greek New Testament

⁵³ Δεῖ γὰρ τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσασθαι ἀφθαρσίαν, καὶ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσασθαι ἀθανασίαν.

⁵⁴ Κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νίκος.

⁵⁵ Πού σου, θάνατε, τὸ κέντρον? Πού σου, ἄδη, τὸ νίκος?

English Standard Version

⁵³For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.

⁵⁴“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

⁵⁵“O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”

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PART TWO

New Heavens and New Earth

Isaiah 65 quoted in Revelation 21 - the world remade

Isaiah promised it first, seven centuries before Christ: *I create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind* (Isa. 65:17). Revelation 21 picks up the promise and shows John the scene at last. The first heaven and earth pass away. A New Jerusalem comes down from God. A voice from the throne says, *Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man.*

Notice the direction of travel. The New Jerusalem comes *down*. The Bible never says we go up to live in heaven forever. The Bible says heaven and earth are reunited, and God moves in. Eden was always meant to be God's home office. Now His home office covers the planet.

Revelation 21:3-4 - God's Dwelling Is With Man

Greek New Testament

³καὶ ἤκουσα φωνῆς μεγάλης ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ
λεγοῦσης· ἰδοὺ ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ μετὰ τῶν
ἀνθρώπων, καὶ σκηνώσει μετ' αὐτῶν...

⁴καὶ ἐξαλείψει πᾶν δάκρυον ἐκ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν
αὐτῶν, καὶ ὁ θάνατος οὐκ ἔσται ἔτι.

English Standard Version

³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,
"Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man.
He will dwell with them, and they will be his
people, and God himself will be with them as their
God.

⁴He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and
death shall be no more, neither shall there be
mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the
former things have passed away."

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PART THREE

A City Without a Temple

Revelation 21:22-27 - because the family lives with God now

John walks the city and reports the most arresting absence: *I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb.* The whole point of the Tabernacle and the Temple was to be the place where God's presence met His people. In the New Jerusalem the presence and the people occupy the same space. There is no need for a curtain anymore. No need for a sun anymore. The Lamb is the lamp.

The gates never close (Rev. 21:25). The nations — remember the disinherited nations from lesson 2 — bring their glory into the city (21:26). Babel is undone. The disinheritance is reversed. The two families live as one.

KEY INSIGHT

The family has the Father's house. Jesus told the disciples, "In my Father's house are many rooms.... I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). Revelation 21 is John seeing the house. There is space for every imager. There is room for every nation. There is a seat at the table with your name on it.

Revelation 21:22-27 - No Temple, No Night

Greek New Testament

²²καὶ ναὸν οὐκ εἶδον ἐν αὐτῇ· ὁ γὰρ Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ ναὸς αὐτῆς ἐστὶ καὶ τὸ ἄρνιον.

²³καὶ ἡ πόλις οὐ χρειαν ἔχει τοῦ ἡλίου οὐδὲ τῆς σελήνης ἵνα φαίνωσιν αὐτῇ· ἡ γὰρ δόξα τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐφώτισεν αὐτήν, καὶ ὁ λύχνος αὐτῆς τὸ ἄρνιον.

English Standard Version

²²And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.

²³And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

²⁵and its gates will never be shut by day — and there will be no night there.

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PART FOUR

The River, the Tree, the Face

Revelation 22 - Eden made larger and forever

Then John sees the river. A river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the city's great street. The tree of life is back — not one tree this time, but a row of them on both banks of the river. Twelve kinds of fruit. Leaves for the healing of the nations. Everything Eden lost, restored at a scale Eden could not contain.

And the climactic line of the whole Bible: **they will see his face** (Rev. 22:4). Moses could not see God's face and live. Now the family does. *They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.* What does God want? Faces. He wants His family's faces, turned toward Him forever.

KEY INSIGHT

The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. The last invitation in the Bible (Rev. 22:17) is the family throwing open the door to the world. While there is still time. While the offer still stands. Anyone who is thirsty, come. The Father is still seeking.

Revelation 22:1-4 - The River, the Tree, the Face

Greek New Testament

¹καὶ ἔδειξέ μοι ποταμὸν ὕδατος ζωῆς λαμπρὸν ὡς κρύσταλλον, ἐκπορευόμενον ἐκ τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀρνίου.

²ἐν μέσῳ τῆς πλατείας αὐτῆς καὶ τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἐκεῖθεν ξύλον ζωῆς..

⁴καὶ ὄψονται τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῶν μετώπων αὐτῶν.

English Standard Version

¹Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

²through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life...

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

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PART FIVE

Come

Revelation 22:17 - the last invitation of the Bible

The Bible's last invitation is not addressed to angels. It is not addressed to the Lamb. It is addressed to *you*. 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 desires take the water of life without price.

This is what God wants. He wants the family home. He wants you home. He has spent His Son to get you home. The door is open. The water is free. The family is gathering. There is room at the table. Come.

KEY INSIGHT

The whole Bible in seven words. "God wanted a family, and God wants you."

Revelation 22:17 - Come

Greek New Testament

καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ νύμφη λέγουσιν· ἔρχου. καὶ ὁ ἀκούων εἰπάτω· ἔρχου. καὶ ὁ διψῶν ἐρχέσθω, καὶ ὁ θέλων λαβέτω ὕδωρ ζωῆς δωρεάν.

English Standard Version

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 desires take the water of life without price.

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DISCUSSION & REFLECTION

1. Did you grow up thinking heaven was a disembodied existence in the clouds? How does Revelation 21–22 change that picture?
2. 1 Corinthians 15 says our bodies will be raised, not discarded. What does it mean that the you who follows Christ now is the you who will rise glorified?
3. Revelation 21 says the New Jerusalem comes *down*. Why does the direction of travel matter for how Christians think about “going to heaven”?
4. There is no temple in the New Jerusalem because the Lord God and the Lamb *are* the temple. What does that tell you about what God has wanted all along?
5. Revelation 22:4 promises, *they will see his face*. What is one thing in your life now that is keeping you from looking toward Him?
6. The river, the tree, and the face are all Edenic. How does it land for you that the Bible's last scene is Eden — only larger, fuller, and forever?
7. The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” Who in your life needs to hear that invitation from *you* this week?

A PRAYER IN RESPONSE

*Father, you have shown us what you want. You wanted a family from the beginning. You kept that family even when we broke it. You picked Abram, sent your Son, opened the tomb, opened the door, and you keep saying come. Make us part of the family that the New Jerusalem will hold. Wipe every tear. Open the gates. Until the day we see your face, keep us faithful to Jesus the Lamb, and through us, keep the invitation moving outward to every thirsty soul we meet. **Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen.***

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

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