

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The River and the Tree of Life

Revelation 22:1-5

INTRODUCTION:

Last week we saw a vision of the New Jerusalem which is the bride of Christ, the church.

This week we will get a very glorious vision of the new earth (heaven) that is being prepared for us.

Once we get past all of the horrors of the **beast**, and the **false prophet**, and the **harlot**, and the **red dragon**, and the **trumpets**, and the **seals**, and the **bowls**, and all of the chaos that is going to happen in these "last days", and we begin to cross over into this new age to come and we just sit back and soak in the glories that await us.

When Christ returns then we will be able to stand, once again, before God in all of His glory with our new immortal bodies. When Christ returns there will be no more mourning, no crying, no pain, and no grief. Righteousness will rule. There will no longer be any sin. These former things have passed away along with our present heaven and earth. We will be able to receive all the eternal rewards and blessings promised to the faithful.

This morning we are shown a beautiful vision that reiterates what life will be like for those who overcome during their lifetime here on this earth.

All Stand and Read Scripture

Revelation 22:1-5 (NASB)

22 Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ² in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve *kinds of* fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³ There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; ⁴ they will see His face, and His name *will be* on their foreheads. ⁵ And there will no longer be *any* night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.

Prayer

BODY:

I. THE VISION OF THE RIVER OF LIFE AND THE TREE OF LIFE.

Revelation 22:1-2 (NASB)

22 Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ² in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve *kinds of fruit*, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

The angel shows John the river of the water of life. This river of living water is pictured as being as clear as crystal.

ILLUSTRATION:

If you go North on I-435 along the East side of Kansas City, you cross the Missouri river. It is not a beautiful river. It has a putrid smell when you cross over it due to the manufacturing plants that exist there. There is nothing about that part of the river that calls for a person to jump in.

The river flowing through the New Jerusalem is desirable and beautiful. These are the flowing waters that bring life. These are pure waters. The river of the water of life flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. Remember that there is no temple in the city. God and the Lamb are on the throne and the river of life is flowing from the throne through the middle of the street of the city. All who belong to this city have access to the river of the water of life for it flows through the middle of the city right down its main street. Zechariah and Ezekiel use the same imagery for this glorious time.

Zechariah 14:8 (NASB)

⁸ And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

On either side of the river of the water of life is the tree of life. The tree of life yields fruit each month and the leaves bring healing to the nations. This imagery also comes from Ezekiel's prophecy.

Ezekiel 47:12 (NASB)

¹² By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all *kinds of trees for food*. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.”

The first time we read about the tree of life, it was in the garden of Eden in Genesis. The tree of life was put in the midst of the garden. When Adam and Eve sinned, they had to be cast out of the garden because God did not want them to eat of the Tree of Life in their sinful nature because it would cause them to live eternally in sin.

Due to their sin, they were separated from God. They could no longer be in eternal fellowship with God nor be in the presence of God because of their sin. But now we are seeing that our fellowship will be restored.

As you can probably imagine, this vision is beautifully describing what we have already been told about what heaven will be like. I want you to hear once again what has already been described so you can visualize the beauty of this vision.

Revelation 21:3-4 (NASB)

³And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, ⁴and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

II. THE MEANING OF THE VISION.

Revelation 22:1-3 (NASB)

22 Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ²in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve *kinds of* fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him;

The Water of Life and the Tree of Life both represent the fact that we will have eternal life. **There will be no longer any death.**

The Water of Life goes clear through the new earth and is available to anyone at anytime free of charge. **There will be no thirst.**

There will be many "Trees of Life". They will grow on both sides of the river and will also be available to anyone. They will bear twelve kinds of fruit on them and will bear fruit every month. Twelve represents completeness. Like the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles. God will provide all we want for food. We will not have to work for it any longer. **We will not hunger.**

The leaves of the tree will heal the nations. God will offer healing for all seasons for all time. **There will be no more tears, mourning, crying, or pain.**

What an inviting picture! A perfect life is available for all seasons in the very presence of God. The tree of life is now in the midst of New Jerusalem, representing God's people having full fellowship with God and full access to God forever. This access and this healing is available to all people, not a select group. Anyone can be part of God's people and join in this eternal fellowship to come.

We are not sure if we will be able to enjoy physical food and physical water as we have here on this first earth, but we do know that despite the exact nature of the fruit from the Tree of Life and the nature of the pure water that flows throughout the new earth, it will all be given to us freely and abundantly. We will not be driven to it due to hunger or fleshly desire.

³There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him;

When Adam and Eve sinned, they and all mankind after them had to experience the curse of sin. In the new earth will be in complete righteousness. There is no sin and therefore no curse. The throne of God and the Lamb are in the midst of this city and his servants worship God.

III. FACE TO FACE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

Revelation 22:4-5 (NASB)

⁴ they will see His face, and His name *will be* on their foreheads. ⁵ And there will no longer be *any* night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.

Verse 4 is simply staggering if we let it the words sink into our hearts. The servants of God and the Lamb will see his face and his name will be on their foreheads. The hope of God's people is finally realized: seeing God face to face. We even sing songs in our hymnals now longing for that time when we can see God's face. The godly are pictured as priests, worshiping God in His presence, seeing His face. His name on the foreheads of the servants continues to picture the intimate fellowship between God and his people. God recognizes his people.

John 10:27-28a (NASB)

²⁷ **My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;** ²⁸ **and I give eternal life to them, ...**

These are the faithful who have not succumb to worshipping things that are false gods and idols.

But note that this promise is only for those who follow Jesus.

Those who reject Christ during this lifetime will have an eternal separation from God. This is the second death.

Revelation 21:8 (NASB)

⁸ But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

In the letter to the church in Philadelphia, John wrote:

Revelation 3:12 (NASB)

¹² He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

Finally, we are reminded that there is no night there as we will live in the light and the glory of God. Everything is now perfect. There is no more evil, no more death, and no more pain.

Isaiah 60:19-20 (NASB)

¹⁹ "No longer will you have the sun for light by day, Nor for brightness will the moon give you light; But you will have the Lord for an everlasting light, And your God for your glory.

²⁰ "Your sun will no longer set, Nor will your moon wane; For you will have the Lord for an

everlasting light, And the days of your mourning will be over.

The servants of God reign forever and ever with the Lord, just as Daniel prophesied and Jesus promised.

Daniel 7:27 (NASB)

²⁷ Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom *will be* an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

CONCLUSION:

1 Corinthians 13:12-13 (NASB)

¹² For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. ¹³ But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.

So for now we live by **faith**. We believe that Jesus was the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament, that He is the Son of God, and what He taught was truth from God. We live in **assured hope** that Christ will accomplish what He promised. And we try to emulate His **love** while we serve Him on this earth.

But when He returns to take His bride, we will no longer have to accept all of this through **faith**. We will see Him face to face in all of His glory and we will finally fully understand. Our **hope** will be realized, and we will experience His **love** in full measure.

While we are awaiting Christ's return, we are told that we must remain ready by living a faithful life for Christ. That is what it means to follow Christ.

1 John 3:2 (NASB)

² Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

We will be “like Him” because we are being conformed into His image daily as we face various trials and temptations. The genuineness of our faith will be tested through all of these trials and then we will offer up our praises unto Him because it will all have been worth it. And then we will see that we will be “like Him”

1 Peter 1:7 (NASB)

⁷ so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

We were created in the “likeness” of God and that likeness doesn’t mean our external appearance. To become like Him in every way means that those attributes that the Father has and is, are becoming our character. We then are becoming more gentle and kind through this process. When we remain faithful through all types of trials and tribulations, our character takes on endurance and long-suffering. It takes time for the fruit to manifest, but when it does, it lasts and it has its rewards.

When we were young, we thought like a child and we acted like a child. But when we become a man, we put away childish things. As we mature spiritually in Christ, then our nature doesn't want to partake in those things that it did in its former life. Now those things that are eternal, that are ever-lasting, become our focus. Now faith, hope and love abide, but the greatest of these is love.

Are you living a faithful life?

Only you can answer that question.

Are you reading God's Word regularly?

Are you continuously in prayer with God.

Are you trying to live righteously every moment of your life?

Are you listening for God's will in your life? Are you doing His will?

The promises of eternal life with God are only available to those who remain faithful!

This is the Day!