

# THE GOOD LIFE NOW

## Future hope, immeasurable joy

This week, as we come to the conclusion of our series The Good Life Now, we will be setting our sights on what awaits us in the future, and we will see that that future should inspire in us an immense amount of joy.

### Today's Text: Revelation 21:1-8

#### 1. Our joy will be completed at the renewal of all things

- Read Revelation 21:1-2, 5; Isaiah 65:17; John 14:1-3; Hebrews 11:16

Scripture promises that a day is coming when God will provide an entirely new creation - a new heaven and a new earth. The longing in our hearts for our true home will at last be satisfied, as Jesus himself will have prepared a place especially for each one of us, and we will be at home with him there for eternity.

- i. In this context, what is the meaning of the word 'new'?
- ii. The new creation will be unlike anything that we have ever experienced before. However, based on John's vision that is recorded in verses 1-8, what can we know for certain about it? For example -
  - Who/what will be present?
  - Who/what will be absent?
  - What will it be like? (Consider the simile in v.2 and what it implies.)
- iii. How does the use of the present continuous tense in v.5 ('I am making') highlight the concept of the 'now and not yet' of God's kingdom? What does this mean for our experience of joy *today*?

#### 2. Our joy will be completed in the never-ending, manifest presence of the living God

- Read Revelation 21:3,7 and Genesis 3:8-10.

It has always been God's desire to be with those he created - and this is the ultimate desire of our hearts also, since God created us to be in relationship with him. But when sin entered into human history, it fractured our relationship with God and separated us from him. Enter, also, all our sorrow, pain and discontent. But God's commitment to us never changed, and by the cross he has made a way to restore that broken relationship forever. In the new



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creation, we will dwell in the very presence of God, and our joy will be complete!

- i.
  - What do you know about God's dwelling place throughout the span of scripture? Trace it from Genesis, through the Old and New Testaments, to the Book of Acts, and finally to Revelation.
  - In v.3, which preposition is repeated to emphasise the locus of God's dwelling place in the new creation?
- ii. Why can we never know true joy outside of communion with God?
- iii. Each one of us has idols to which we repeatedly turn, believing that they will bring us happiness. Explain how idolatry actually robs us of joy.
- iv. In v.7, to whom does 'my son' refer? Why does John use this term here?
- v. What can you do today, to experience the joy of God's presence in greater measure?

## 3. Our joy will be completed in our full and final redemption through Christ

- Read Revelation 21:4,6

In the culmination of God's redemption, he will remove all the things from our lives that ever caused us pain, sorrow, mourning and weeping. Even the very memory of them will pass away with the old heaven and the old earth, to be lost in the presence of a tenderhearted God!

- i. Prayerfully study verses 4 and 6. As you do so, consider whether the Holy Spirit is reminding you of any other passages of scripture. If so, how do these passages expand your understanding of verses 4 and 6?
- ii. What is the ultimate cause of death, mourning, crying and pain? How does the finished work of the cross 'make everything sad come untrue'?
- iii. What is your biggest learning from this week's message? How will it help you to experience the joy of the Lord today?



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