

Westwood Baptist Church Grounded. Growing. Going.

Worship Guide for November 21, 2021

Sermon Notes

A Vision of the New Jerusalem

Revelation 21:9-27

When it comes to the return of Christ and the Kingdom he will consummate, we want to know details! This is true of the description John offers us from his vision in Revelation 21. We hear measurements and gates and jewels and inscriptions, and we immediately try to gain a vision of what this place will look like one day. This is a good thing, because out of our longing for heaven naturally grows a longing to understand all that heaven will be like. But, as James Hamilton writes in his commentary on Revelation, John's description is "meant to be overwhelming in proportion, and it is, but we're not intended to try to make it into a blueprint." The vision of Revelation 21 is not intended to grant us a tangible view of this new city, but rather to cast our gaze on the true treasure that will one day be realized by God's people: his presence. This is the end of our salvation and God's objective in redemption, as summarized by Peter when he writes, "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, *that he might bring us to God...*" (1 Peter 3:18, emphasis mine). What is intended to excite us in this chapter, what is intended to capture our imaginations and our affections, is not the beauty of a place, but the essence of that place as the full and unhindered dwelling place of God *with* his people. Every beautiful thing recorded in this chapter is intended to stir our hearts with the sure hope of one day abiding fully in the true blessedness of his holy presence. Oh, that our hearts would be stirred with a deep longing to experience his presence in this way!

The City's Contrast (v. 9-14)

The City's Description (v. 15-21)

The City's Essence (v. 22-27)

Weekly Discipleship Guide

Know

**What does God intend for me to know?
In your journal, use the following prompts to write
some truths that stood out from this week's message.**

I never knew...	I was reminded...	A question I still have...
I was challenged...	I was convicted...	A truth I could share...
I was encouraged to...		I need to dig deeper into...

Be (Consider)

**What does God's Word lead me to prayerfully consider?
In your journal, use the following questions to write
some prompts to use in praying through this week's passage.**

Is there a command to obey?	Am I convicted to confess any sin?
How am I compelled to exalt God?	Is there a sin to avoid?
Is there a promise to claim?	How do I need to rest in Jesus/the gospel?
Is there a principle to follow?	How can I pray for someone else?
Is there an example to follow?	What am I compelled to love or desire?

Do (Yield)

**How does God's Word call me to yield my life? In your journal, write
your answers and thoughts in response to the following questions.**

What happens to our prayer life, our time in the Word, and our participation in the Body when we develop an intense passion for the presence of God? How does that passion reveal itself in our lives?

How does this chapter in Revelation shape the way we understand our identity (for those who are in Christ)?

Why should this vision cause us to passionately pursue holiness? What is the connection between holiness and God's presence? In what ways should we pursue holiness individually? Corporately?

*Use this guide to help you internalize this week's message & to prepare for Life Group.

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