

Prayer

The book of Revelation is a prophetic book that tells us what is to come and where it all ends. We have an inspired outline in Revelation 1:19.

Slide # 1

Revelation 1:19 – Inspired Outline

Revelation 1:19 (NKJV)

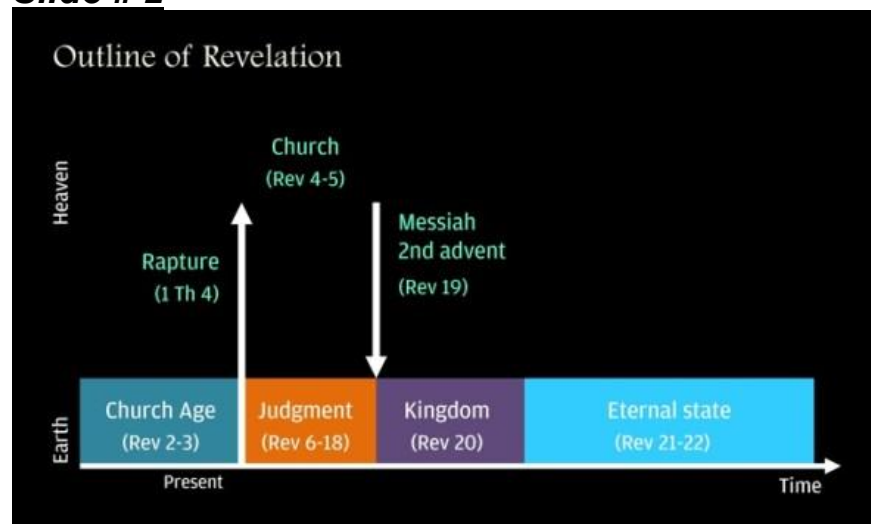
19 “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

- “have seen” – Past (Vision of Christ) – **Ch. 1**
- “which are” – Present (Church Age) – Ch. 2-3
- “after this” – Future (Post-Church Age) – Ch. 4-22
 - - Scene in heaven – Ch. 4-5
 - - Tribulation – Ch. 6-18
 - - Second Coming – Ch. 19
 - - Kingdom – Ch. 20
 - - **Eternal State – Ch. 21-22**

In our study, we have come to the THE END – the ETERNAL STATE. In the end, the eternal destiny for all unbelievers is in the lake of fire. In contrast, the eternal destiny for all believers is the New Jerusalem.

Last time, in Revelation 21:1-2, we were introduced to the eternal state, which will involve a new heaven, a new earth, and the new Jerusalem.

Slide # 2



I shared last time that some think God is going to totally annihilate the present heaven and earth and start over from scratch. He is going to once again create a new heaven and a new earth out of nothing, as He did the first time in Genesis 1.

Others, such as I, believe that the better view is that God is going to totally purge the present heaven and earth with fire, but then He is going to create it anew so that, in fact, what is in view is a complete renewal constituting a new heaven and a new earth. This allows for continuity and yet a completely NEW reality.

Good scholars disagree over annihilation versus renovation, and it is a point where we can agree to disagree. In the end, we all agree that there will be a new heaven and a new earth; however, God does it.

After the service last week, a brother shared with me an intriguing thought that really makes sense in terms of the renovation view.

Satan, as the adversary of God, is out to destroy whatever God does. He goes about seeking to devour God's people (1 Pet. 5:8). It was Satan who introduced the destructive reality of sin into the world, resulting in it being cursed. The Devil goes about to steal, to kill, and to destroy (cf. Jn. 10:10).

If Satan could actually force God to start all over from nothing, it would seem to imply he gained some level of victory if God is forced to start all over. Of course, no matter how God does it – it will not be because Satan forced His hand, but rather according to His sovereign will.

However, if God in His greatness is able to bring about the restoration of all things, and is shown to even be able to salvage Satan's greatest efforts of destruction, then that makes a statement of utter defeat of Satan.

Thus, the renovation of all things, the heaven and the earth, redounds to the glory of God – thus defeating Satan entirely at his destructive game. This fits well with what the Scripture says...

Slide # 3

Colossians 1:20 (NKJV)

20 and by Him **to reconcile all things** to Himself, by Him, whether **things on earth or things in heaven**, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

1 John 3:8 (NKJV)

8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might **destroy the works of the devil.**

Just as God has made a NEW creation out of believers, involving the creation of a new person out of the original, so I believe God will do so in relation to the present heaven and earth. He will so renew the old that it will be brand new – a brand new heaven and earth that is completely different and yet has some semblance of continuity.

It would seem therefore that God is more glorified in the concept of renewal than that of annihilation. That is true on the individual level, and consistency would seem to apply it to the cosmic level as well.

Slide # 4

Romans 8:19–21 (NKJV)

19 For the earnest **expectation of the creation** eagerly **waits for the revealing of the sons of God.**

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;

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

This would indicate that creation itself will share in the glorious liberty of being set free from all the effects of sin, which ultimately takes place in the eternal state. The full realization of “***Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven***” awaits the creation of a new earth.

Last time we were also introduced to the New Jerusalem.

This is presently the “***heavenly Jerusalem***” spoken of in Hebrews 12. But now in the eternal state we see it descending out of heaven, and I take it that it comes to rest on the New Earth.

A key reason to believe this is that it goes on to say that the nations of the earth will “***bring their glory and honor into it***” (Rev. 21:24, 26). This shows a close connection between the New Jerusalem and the new earth as the nations of the earth interact with it.

We saw last time that the New Jerusalem is a holy place, a prepared place, and a beautiful place.

Many theologians refer to the New Jerusalem as “the crown of the new creation.” – **David Jeremiah**

But the most amazing thing about this place is that it will be the special dwelling place of God and that it is here that He will dwell for all eternity with His people. It will now be the worship center of the universe, and we as believers will live there in the utmost intimacy with God. And that is where our study today takes us...

Revelation 21:3 (NKJV)

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.

This is the last of 21 times in the book of Revelation that it speaks of a “loud voice.” It is undoubtedly that of a powerful angel because the statement speaks of God in the second person.

Loud Voice speaks of dramatic emphasis, signifying that which is weighty and of great importance. It is the voice of authority!

And the loud voice said: “***Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men.***”

The word “**tabernacle**” is the translation of the Greek word “**skene**” which corresponds to the Hebrew word “**mishkan**.” It means “dwelling place”, “habitation”, where you “make yourself at home”, or “tent.” It denotes the intimate presence of God. In the New Jerusalem, the intimate dwelling presence of God is going to dwell with mankind.

Note this emphasis is made not just once, not just twice, but three times in this single verse of Revelation 21:3.

Slide # 5

The tabernacle of **God is with men**
He will dwell with them
 God Himself will **be with them**

In the Bible, the triple emphasis is a superlative emphasis, such as in Isaiah 6:3, where it says, “**Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts.**”

God has always desired to have fellowship with mankind. In fact, He created us for that purpose, that we might glorify Him.

In the garden of Eden, before sin entered, Adam and Eve walked with God (Gen. 3:8). But upon sinning, Genesis 3:8 says, “**Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.**” Sin broke their previous intimate relationship with God.

Later, God “tabernacled” amongst His people Israel.

Slide # 6

Exodus 25:8–9 (NKJV)

8 And let them make Me a sanctuary, **that I may dwell among them.**

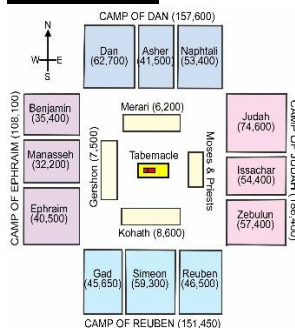
9 According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the **tabernacle** and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.

Exodus 40:38 (NKJV)

38 For the cloud of the LORD was above **the tabernacle** by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

A warming pillar of fire by night and a protecting cloud by day resided above the tabernacle. This was the Shekinah glory of God. The tabernacle was always right in the MIDDLE of the congregation of Israel. Thus God’s special presence was right in the midst of His people.

Slide # 7



Later, this concept of God dwelling in the midst of His people was extended to the Temple.

Slide # 8

1 Kings 6:11–14 (NKJV)

11 Then the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying:

12 “Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David.

13 And **I will dwell among the children of Israel**, and will not forsake My people Israel.”

14 So Solomon built the temple and finished it.

If you do a thorough study of the temple, you will discover in the Book of Deuteronomy that it was God Who chose the exact location where His special dwelling place would reside in the land of promise. There was no other place approved. The location was exact and was unchangeable (cf. Deut. 12:5, 10-11; 14:23; 16:6; 26:2).

Now back up further. One thousand years before the time of Solomon’s temple, there was a king-priest by the name of Melchizedek who reigned over Jerusalem (cf. Gen. 14:17-20). It was there that Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek.

Then it was in this same area where God told Abraham to offer up his son Isaac on Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:2). This location was not random but specifically chosen by God. Abraham called this place “the Mount of the LORD,” which later became known as Mount Zion. It was here that God reiterated the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 22:16-18; Heb. 6:17).

It was this exact location that later would be the location of the Temple Mount called Mount Zion. Mount Zion is a specific hilltop (or peak) in the Moriah mountain range (cf. 2 Chronicles 3:1).

Slide # 9

2 Chronicles 3:1 (NKJV)

1 Now Solomon began to build the house of the LORD **at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah**, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

The name Zion suddenly appears in about 1000 BC when David took the stronghold of the Jebusites (cf. 2 Sam. 5:7; 1 Chronicles 11:5). From then on, Zion is inseparably linked with the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the city that is built on Mount Zion.

Slide # 10

Mount Zion geographically consisted of David's Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:7; Isaiah 4:3) on its southern nine-acre ridge, and the Temple on its northern seventeen-acre hilltop. The saddle or flat area separating these two areas is known as the Ophel (2 Chronicles 27:3; 33:14).

– **Kevin Howard**

Now what is interesting is what God says in His word about Zion.

Slide # 11

2 Kings 21:7 (NKJV)

... "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, **I will put My name forever**;

Psalm 132:13–14 (NKJV)

13 For the LORD has chosen **Zion**; He has desired it for His dwelling place:

14 "This is **My resting place forever**; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.

I think "***forever***" means forever, and Zion ultimately relates to the New Jerusalem, where God will live forever with His people. The New Jerusalem descending out of heaven will ultimately rest on Mount Zion located on the new earth. This is God's "***resting place forever***."

Slide # 12

Psalm 125:1 (NKJV)

1 Those who trust in the LORD Are like **Mount Zion, Which cannot be moved, but abides forever**.

But alas, Israel sinned against God. In Ezekiel 8-11 we see the process of God's presence leaving the temple (cf. Ezek. 8:4; 9:3; 10:4, 19; 11:23). To date it has never returned.

However, over 500 years later, God sent His Son to “tabernacle” among us.

Slide # 13

John 1:14 (NKJV)

14 And the Word became flesh and **dwelt among us** [*lit* “**tabernacled**” – same word as in Rev. 21:3], and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Matthew 1:23 (NKJV)

23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “**God with us.**”

But what happened? Jesus was rejected and crucified!

God then took up residence in His people, called the CHURCH, who are now known as the Temple of God!

Slide # 14

1 Corinthians 6:19 (NKJV)

19 Or do you not know that **your body** is the **temple of the Holy Spirit** who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

Today, believers have the incredible privilege of being the temple of the living God. He intimately lives inside all true believers. We are said to be the “naos” (temple), which is the word for the innermost sanctuary – the Holy of Holies of God.

The local church is also called “the temple of God” in 1 Corinthians 3:16.

Today, the intimate presence of God is housed within His people. We are the house of God! God literally lives within us. Now, of course, God is sovereign and omnipresent, but His intimate presence is found within His temple, which is the body of all believers.

But one day the Church will be removed from the world; judgment will fall on the world, but then, at the Second Coming, Jesus will come to establish His kingdom and will again live on earth amongst His people residing in Jerusalem.

Slide #15**Isaiah 24:23 (NKJV)**

23 Then the moon will be disgraced And the sun ashamed; For the LORD of hosts will **reign On Mount Zion and in Jerusalem** And before His elders, gloriously.

Ezekiel 43:7 (NKJV)

7 And He said to me, "Son of man, this is **the place of My throne** and the place of the soles of My feet, where **I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever.** ...

And that brings us to the eternal state. As seen, there is continuity in the place that God has chosen to abide with His people forever, related to Jerusalem and Mount Zion.

All that has gone before was just a **FORETASTE** of what eternity has in store. God has long been dwelling with His people in one fashion or another, and yet the fullness of this reality awaits eternity.

Then God will pitch His tent among His people. He will no longer be distant or seemingly far off. He will be living in our immediate presence. **It will be like living in the Holy of Holies forever.**

He will dwell with them: You know what it's like to dwell with someone. When someone comes to **visit for a day or two**, that is not dwelling.

When your **in-laws come for a vacation**, that might seem like forever – but it is not dwelling.

You know what DWELLING WITH someone is It is **being married** to them. You live together in intimacy day in and day out! You know each other backwards and forwards. We are going to live with God like that – He is going to dwell with His people.

There is a tract titled "***If Jesus came to your house.***" It reads like this:

If Jesus came to your house

You know, if you really can't stand Jesus now – why would you think you are going to heaven?

Until we repent and have a change of heart, we really don't like the thought of Jesus living that close. We might like to think of Him as living across town, and we go to visit Him at church once a week or once a year depending on our priorities. We might like to see Him as the neighbor 5 houses down that we could call on if we get in a pinch. Next door is a little much. But to dwell in your house. For unbelievers, this is unthinkable – they are in rebellion to Him and don't want Him interfering with their life.

I once talked to a woman who had an unbelieving husband. She told me that he said to her that living with her was ***“like having God in the bed.”*** He didn't know it, but that was a great compliment to her. Her life radiated the presence of the Lord!

For believers, it's even more than having Him live in the house – He lives inside us. Colossians 1:27 says, ***“Christ in you, the hope of glory.”***

The greatest thing about heaven is going to be our intimate relationship with God! If one can't stand Jesus here, how could they put up with heaven? Sadly, they won't have to because they are not going to be there.

Here is the heart cry of the true believer...

Slide # 16

Psalm 73:25–26 (NKJV)

25 Whom **have** I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I **desire** besides You.

26 My flesh and my heart fail; But God is the strength of my heart and **my portion forever.**

God has always desired to live in intimate fellowship with His people. That is true from the garden of Eden all the way through to where it has a satisfying conclusion in the eternal state.

Up until this point, there were always barriers. Sin was an ongoing barrier. After the incident of the golden calf, Moses moved the tabernacle of meeting outside the camp, as God said if He remained in close proximity to them, He would consume them (Ex. 33:5-11).

David, the man after God's own heart, knew the reality of his fellowship walk with the Lord being affected by sin (Ps. 51).

To this day, we all know of this struggle. And even though we might get very close to the Lord, there remain hindrances and struggles (cf. Rom. 7; Gal. 5).

But in the eternal state we will see Jesus as He is in all His glory (Mt. 5:8; 1 Jn. 3:2). Then we shall know unhindered fellowship, living as intimately as possible with God in the New Jerusalem.

There is nothing greater than the presence of God. Moses knew this. In Exodus 33:15, he said to God, ***“If Your presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here.”***

Moses saw no point in moving forward if God was not with them.

And then Moses asked God to show him His glory. God only showed him a partial view from the back because no one in their mortal body can see God in His full glory and live (cf. Ex. 33:20).

But when Moses saw God’s glory, the Bible says ***“he made haste and bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped.”*** (Ex. 34:8).

To see God in His glory – to live with Him constantly forever- we can’t even begin to imagine, but this is the destiny of all true believers.

Jesus said He would come again and receive us to Himself (Jn. 14:3). 1 Thessalonians 4:17 says that when we are caught up to meet the Lord, we shall “always be with the Lord.” This is what eternity is all about for us, and it will be the greatest experience imaginable.

Slide # 17

John 17:24 (NKJV)

24 “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

That prayer is going to be answered, as seen here in Revelation 21:3 (cf. Rev. 7:15).

Note, not only is there the triple emphasis in this verse on God dwelling with His people, but then, in the third clause, it makes the emphasis especially emphatic, saying, ***“God Himself will be with them.”***

This is direct! This is face to face! This is intimate! This is as personal as it gets! This is God in all His intimate glory living with His people. This is us living in the throne room of God with God's vital presence our forever experience. God will truly be our all in all, and in this there is fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore (cf. Ps. 16:11).

And then note the language of relationship – “**they shall be His people**” and “**God...will be... their God.**” This is the language denoting those who truly know God. To know God is to know Him first and foremost as God.

In the “Hall of Faith” chapter of Hebrews 11, it says in verse 6, “Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is.” This is not saying we must simply believe in God's existence, but rather that we must believe in Him as He has revealed Himself to be! And He has revealed Himself most fully and finally in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ Who is the Word – the communication of God to us (cf. Jn. 1:1, 14, Heb. 1:1-3).

Slide # 18

John 17:3 (NKJV)

3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

It must be personal, as Thomas said upon seeing the risen Christ, “**My Lord and my God!**” and Jesus said, “*Thomas, you have seen and believed.*” (Jn. 20:28-29) This is the stuff of true conversion. It is faith in the Lord for Who He has revealed Himself to be in the person of Christ that is the stuff of true saving faith.

The citizens of the New Jerusalem are those who know God as their personal God. Note it carefully: “**God Himself will be with them and be their God.**” Unless God is truly God to you, you won't be there. Jesus said, MANY will say, “Lord, Lord” and He will say I never knew you! They say it, but He was never truly Lord-God to them (Matt. 7:21-23).

This formula, “**My people – Your God,**” is often repeated in the Bible, emphasizing the nature of relationship that the saved have with God. One scholar says it is found at least 21 times in the Scriptures (cf. Ex. 6:7; Lev. 26:11-12; Deut. 7:6; Jer. 31:33-34; Ezek. 37:27; Zech. 8:8, etc.).

Slide # 19**Jeremiah 31:33 (NKJV)**

33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and **I will be their God, and they shall be My people.**

Zechariah 13:9 (NKJV)

9 I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, **'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.'** ”

To know God as God is to worship Him; it is to adore Him above all others; it is to fear or hold Him in awe. It is to recognize His sovereign authority over you.

Sometimes people ask what I mean by saying that, in saving faith, one must recognize Christ as Lord. Well, all I am saying is that you must personally recognize Him as Lord-God. You must believe in Jesus as your personal God! God is sovereign over all, and in saving faith we recognize Jesus for who He is as the eternal “I AM,” the eternal God who is sovereign over us. Salvation personalizes it as in “My Lord, and my God!”

And then of course, as our God we recognize Him as our Savior. Salvation is of the LORD (Jonah 2:9). In order to be Savior Jesus must be Lord. He is qualified to be Savior by virtue of being Lord.

If Jesus isn't your God, He is not your Savior. Only God is Savior! Jesus told the Jews, ***“If you do not believe that I am [God] you will die in your sins.”*** (Jn. 8:24) In Isaiah 43:11 God says...

Slide # 20**Isaiah 43:11 (NKJV)**

11 I, even I, am the **LORD**, And besides Me there is no **savior**.

Isaiah 45:22 (NKJV)

22 **“Look to Me,** and be **saved,** All you ends of the earth! For **I am God,** and there is no other.

Revelation 21:3 drives home the most important aspect of eternity for the believer – it will be the presence of God – to be with Jesus in person. That's what will make **glory, glory!**

The New Jerusalem is a place reserved for those who know God as God. They shall be His people, and He will be their God! This is as God intended from the beginning.

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."

God will wipe away every tear is a poetic way of saying God will comfort His people, and there will never again be any suffering.

God Himself will dry our tears! The picture is one of tenderness – God Himself personally wiping away the tears.

An elderly beloved husband sat by the bedside of his dying wife as their eyes met, a tear ran down the side of her wrinkled cheek, and she passed into glory. Gently he wiped it away and said: "**Thank God that's the last**".

No more death: Tears come for lots of reasons, but probably there are more tears shed over the reality of death than for any other reason. In the Holy City where God dwells with His people, there will be no more death. No funeral to go to there. No cemeteries there! No more parting over there! In the New Jerusalem, there will be no more broken relationships. Never again will we say "*I hope to see you again.*" There will be no more "Goodbyes." There will be no parting in **death**. Nothing will ever separate us again.

Separation is the law of earth, but reunion is the law of heaven. And that reunion is forever! No more tears – no more death!

Nor sorrow, nor crying. I am sure there will be emotions in heaven because it is a place filled with joy, but there will be no negative emotions.

I used to know a Christian leader who said he lived by the motto "**No regrets**". Well, that is the language of heaven, but not realistic here. We all have regrets – if we are honest. There is sorrow here.

Things happen that crush us and give us a heavy heart. Things happen that make us cry! But not in the holy city!

In that happy home there will be **no bad days – no sad days** – no depression. All is well forevermore!

There is a Bible word for this experience, and it is the word “***shalom***,” meaning “peace”. Shalom means all is well! Everything is as it should be! This will be life in the New Jerusalem!

There shall be no more pain: No inward pain – no outward physical pain. The older you get, the more aches and pains you have. It’s as if God is getting you ready for heaven. He is getting you into the frame of mind that will really make you appreciate “***No more pain***”.

Isn’t that exactly what Paul teaches in 2 Corinthians 5.

Slide # 21

2 Corinthians 5:2 (NKJV)

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven,

People get old and frail, and it just keeps getting worse until the bitter end, and then release into the presence of God, where there is no more pain.

Tears, death, sorrow, crying, pain – all of these things relate to sin (cf. Gen. 3:17-19). Sin at this point in the eternal state is completely banished with all the effects that come with it.

As believers, we...

Have been saved from the penalty of sin.

Are being saved from the power of sin.

Will be saved from the very presence of sin.

However, there is consolation in the here and now.

Slide # 22

2 Corinthians 4:16 (NKJV)

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the **inward man is being renewed day by day.**

I have seen older saints who really learned to walk with God. Even though life gets to be more and more of a physical challenge, inwardly they get stronger and stronger to where it really doesn't matter. They have come to where they just accept it from God and submit to His will – looking forward to the brighter eternal day in which all these things will be behind them.

Proverbs 4:18 (NKJV)

18 But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.

“If God had told me some time ago that He was about to make me as happy as I could be in this world, and then had told me that He should begin by crippling me arm or limb and removing me from all my usual sources of enjoyment, I should have thought it a very strange mode of accomplishing His purpose.

And yet, how is His wisdom manifest even in this! For if you should see a man shut up in a closed room, idolizing a set of lamps and rejoicing in their light, and you wished to make him truly happy, you would begin by blowing out all his lamps, and then throw open the shutters to let in the light of Heaven.” - **Samuel Rutherford**

And then he says...

The former things have passed away. There are those that teach if we just had enough faith all of our pains would just go away. They call themselves “faith teachers”. That sounds good, but the problem is that it just doesn't square with sound doctrine or reality.

Slide # 23

- The curse is still with us – we still get sick – we still have pain. (Gen. 3; Rev. 22:3).
- Bodily redemption is yet future. (Rom. 8:18, 22-23; Eph. 4:30; 1 Cor. 15).
- Elisha got sick and died (2 Kg. 13:14-21).

- Our bodies – even those of godly people like Timothy are still prone to sickness and infirmity (1 Tim. 5:23).
- We do not have glorified bodies yet - these bodies are breaking down (check out a mirror).
- Godly Epaphroditus got sick in service for Christ and nearly died (Phil. 2:26-30).

Slide # 24

- Paul wrote of the outward man perishing (2 Cor. 4:16).
- Trophimus got sick while working with Paul (2 Tim. 4:20).
- John's recognized that his readers were in good spiritual health and desired that they might also be in good physical health (3 Jn. 2). Note the two don't necessarily go together.
- The good Samaritan was commended for his use of medicine (Lk. 10:30-37).
- Christ recognized a place for doctors (Mt. 9:12).
- Paul and doctor Luke worked together (Acts 28:8; Col. 4:14).

My counsel is this: If you are really sick, start the prayer chain and then get to see a doctor immediately. God works through prayer, and He works through doctors. But the reality is that tears, pain, and death are still a part of the era we live in. We still live in the present which in the eternal state will be the former things.

No matter how much you might name it and claim otherwise, the reality of tears, death, sorrow, crying, and pain is still a present reality. To deny this is to deny reality! These realities will exist until we get to glory.

A godly man lost his wife after much prayer for her healing. He said: "There is a greater miracle than the miracle of healing – it's the **miracle of the Resurrection.**"

In eternity, instead of us passing away, all the effects of sin will have passed away. They will simply be the former things that have no place in the eternal city.

As believers, we are headed to...

A holy city
A prepared city

An indescribably beautiful city
 A city where God intimately dwells with His people
 A city where never again will the effect of sin be felt

There we will enter that wonderful era of “no mores”...

No more tears
 No more crying
 No more sorrow
 No more pain
 No more death
 No more sin

This is what the holy city – the new Jerusalem will be all about!

Ultimately, the New Jerusalem is the eternal HOME of the believer. It's about home. You know what home is about. Home is about RELATIONSHIPS.

When the family all gathers in the HOME over the holidays. It's not really about the HOUSE. Oh sure, that is nice, and it has some sentimental value perhaps – but the real thing we look forward to is FAMILY – the sharing of sweet communion with those we love!

And so it will be with God and His children – unending blissful fellowship for all eternity.

An aged saint was not far from His eternal home, and his pastor came to see him. The pastor looked down at him and said I am now going to read to you the **sweetest verse in the Bible** and then we will have prayer together. He opened his NT and from John 14 read verse 2.

John 14:2 (NKJV) In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

He was closing his Bible and was about to pray when the dying man stretched out his hand and whispered, “***No, that isn't the sweetest verse – read on!***”

So he read the next verse...

Slide # 25

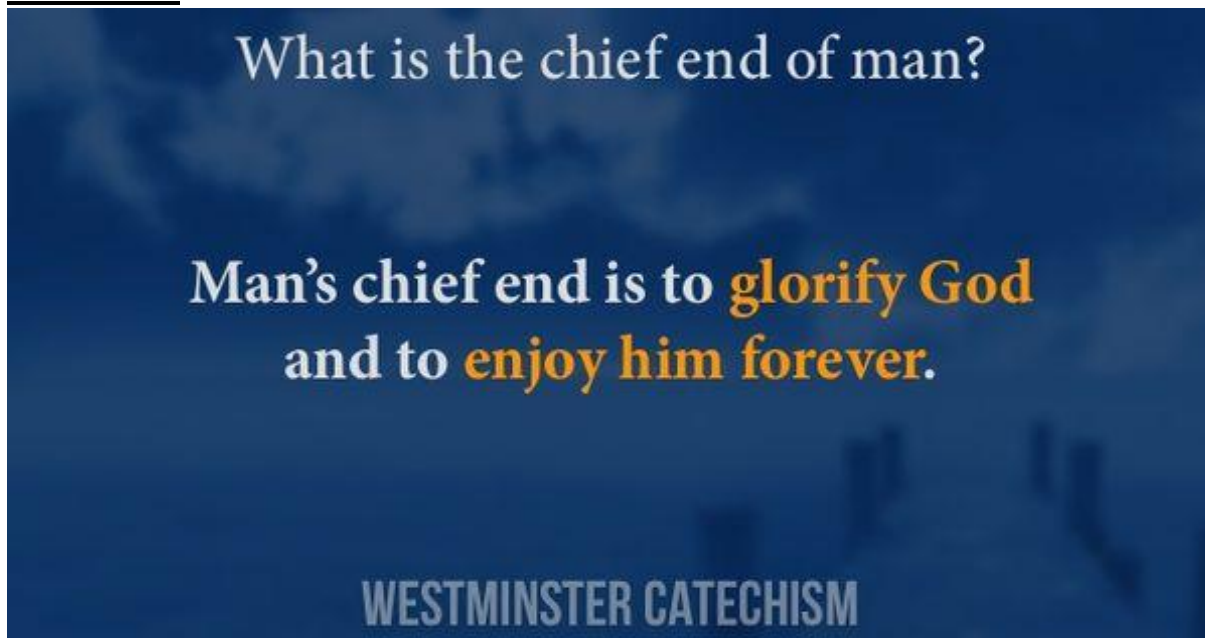
John 14:3 (NKJV)

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

A peaceful smile came over the dying saint as he said: "That is the sweetest verse. **It's not the mansions; it is Him I want.**"

Above all our eternal home is not about a **PLACE** but a **PERSON** and all the PERSONS who will dwell there. Heaven will be about relationships, first and foremost with God, and then with each other. We will enjoy fellowship with God and each other forever!

Slide # 26



The Westminster Shorter Catechism was published in 1647.

- **Our Chief End is our ultimate goal.**
- **To Glorify God** is to honor, praise, and reflect God in all that we do!
- **To Enjoy Him Forever** is to find our deepest joy and satisfaction in God for all eternity.

"God is most glorified when people are most satisfied in Him."

– **John Piper**

John Wesley was 87 years old and at his home in London surrounded by close friends and family. Everyone knew he was dying! They felt the pull of tears and death.

Struggling to speak, John gathered his remaining strength, raised his arm in triumph, and repeated this twice to comfort those weeping around him. And what he said was:

“The best of all is, God is with us.”

“The best of all is, God is with us.”

A LOUD voice

Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men... Amen!

He will dwell with them... Amen!

God Himself will be with them and be their God...Amen!

“THE BEST OF ALL IS, GOD IS WITH US!”