

# Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of Nov 1, 2020

## Victory! Revelation 21:1-7

Pastor Temple, 10:30am, see [www.Christchurchsl.org/sermons](http://www.Christchurchsl.org/sermons)

### Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)

- Anything to share about personal events or faith experiences since you last met?
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

**Opening Discussion Question:** Among those who passed away in this past year, who has left a positive impact upon your Christian faith or life and why?

### Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the scriptures from this week's sermon message (see [www.christchurchsl.org/sermons](http://www.christchurchsl.org/sermons)) and then discuss the questions which follow as time allows.

### Revelation 21:1-7

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. <sup>2</sup>I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup>'He will wipe every tear from their eyes.

There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." <sup>5</sup>He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." <sup>6</sup>He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. <sup>7</sup>Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
- How does the passage above agree with or confront your pre-existing notions about what heaven is or is like?
- If the vision is taken not to be taken as a physical or geographic description of what is to come, when then do we learn from these passages?
- A recurring phrase throughout the Old Testament is "I will be your God, and you will be my people." How is this theme continued in this prophetic passage?
- C.S. Lewis in his essay "The Weight of Glory" speaks of Christians being homesick for a place they have never been before as indicative of heaven being real. "A man's physical hunger does not prove that that man will get any bread; he may die of starvation on a raft in the Atlantic. But surely a man's hunger does prove that he comes of a race which repairs its body by eating and inhabits a world where eatable

substances exist. In the same way, though I do not believe (I wish I did) that my desire for Paradise proves that I shall enjoy it, I think it a pretty good indication that such a thing exists and that some men will." Do you believe this is a compelling case for heaven? Why or why not?

- Given the difficult year we have had in 2020, what about the acknowledgement in the existence of heaven and the souls of humans inspires strength to face our challenges?
- How about the examples of others such as Helen Keller, whose disadvantages and challenges far exceeded our own yet were able to persevere with great faith and with great accomplishments?

### **Other Related Readings (10 min)**

- Would a volunteer please read aloud John 1:14-18.
- Heaven has been called the dwelling place of God. The word for dwelling, is the same root word for tabernacle, the place where the glory of the Lord was with God's people Israel. It is also used in John 1:14 in a verb form, God tabernacled with us. How do you see these themes of glory and heaven residing in Jesus, the Word made flesh?
- Verse 16-17 says also that blessings come to His followers out of the fullness of His grace, and grace and truth as well. How do you believe people are to receive these great blessings of heaven offered to them through Christ?
- How is Jesus uniquely qualified to be the means of these blessings according to verse 18?

### **Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)**

- As you reflect upon the sermon and the scripture readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
- Do you remember when you first received the blessings of heaven through Jesus Christ? Would any care to share about this?
- Would others care to share about when they were given the assurance of salvation in their life?
- Are there any who do not have that assurance now?
- Would they be willing to pray with someone about receiving Christ now?

### **Witness and Closing (5 minutes)**

- How do you think the hope and joy of heaven is apparent to others through you sometimes?
- A volunteer may conclude by leading the group in prayer about the joys and concerns shared earlier in the meeting