

PERSONAL STUDY

HOME - Week of December 31

Introduction

As the end of the year draws near, we are reminded of how one day life on this earth will end and something new will unfold – something that has been in the mind of God and on heaven’s calendar from before the beginning of time. In preparation of Christ’s return, John the apostle is given a vision of a new heaven and a new earth coming down from God out of heaven. This is what the psalmist saw when he declared: “The LORD is king! Let the nations tremble... The LORD sits in majesty in Jerusalem, exalted above all the nations” (Psalm 99:1a,2); and in another psalm: “When you ascended to the heights, you led a crowd of captives. You received gifts from the people, even from those who rebelled against you. Now the LORD God will live among us there” (Psalm 69:18). God’s heart has always been to be in a personal love relationship with us.

Background

Scripture is clear: this earth is not our permanent home. There is coming a day when we will join our Father in heaven (see Hebrews 13:14). It is no wonder that on the night Jesus’ suffering began, Jesus, the Son of God said: “... I am going to prepare a place for you... when everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am” (John 14:2b-3). When Christ came into this world and was given the name *Jesus*, the Word became flesh and lived among us. Jesus laid down his life; no one *took* his life. In obedience to the Father and for our sake, Christ did what was required of him. By taking our place in death, every man, woman, boy and girl who professes faith in Christ, now has an Advocate to reverse the curse of sin. Trusting in the finished work of Christ on the cross, assures of our home in heaven. We can know *personally* the One who is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.

Read Revelation 21:1-8, 22-27; Revelation 22:1-5

1. For a moment, reflect upon your home growing up. Was it a place you enjoyed being?
2. Do you have a place you call home now?
3. What would it be like to have no home... no one waiting for you, no one looking forward to your return?

Reflection

There are many eyewitness accounts of Jesus’ physical resurrection in Scripture (for example, Acts 10:39-43, 2 Peter 1:16-18, 1 John 1:1-4). Because of Christ’s

physical resurrection, we have hope of one day being raised to life and joining Christ in heaven’s glory. John the apostle was given an amazing Revelation from God when he was exiled, far away from his home. Yet like John, when we choose to be faithful to our Lord and Savior, God’s revealed word comforts us as we journey through life and compels us to share with others the great message of salvation. What is the Gospel, the Good News of Christ?... All are invited to be part of God’s family!

I, John, am your brother and your partner in suffering and in God’s Kingdom and in the patient endurance to which Jesus calls us. I was exiled to the island of Patmos, for preaching the word of God and for my testimony about Jesus. It was the Lord’s Day, and I was worshiping in the Spirit. Suddenly, I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet blast. It said, “Write in a book everything you see, and send it to the seven churches in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea” (Revelation 1:9-11).

Much is made over physical homelessness. Homelessness is growing at an alarming rate across our nation and should get our attention, our prayers, and our active efforts to reduce the rate. However, it seems no one is talking about spiritual homelessness. There are tens of thousands of people within a ten-mile radius of each of our campuses who have no church home. Do we care about those who are spiritually homeless? Do we share the heart of God who “wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). Our Lord has made a way for all people to be a part of his family. No one has to die in their sin, for God’s grace is an amazing gift for all people. Have you accepted the forgiveness offered in the Lord Jesus Christ?

In Closing

The New Jerusalem is God’s take back from the Garden of Eden. Everything sin destroyed can be restored and made new through Christ. The New Jerusalem is God’s promise that one day all suffering will be gone, every tear wiped away. The promise of a New Jerusalem is heaven’s urgent call for each of us to help others find their way home to God. Christmas is about the wonder of incarnation: God through His Son moving into the neighborhood. And the promise of a New Jerusalem is about us *one day* moving in with God and abiding with our heavenly Father. He is a God of second chances and doesn’t want anyone to be out on the streets of failure and regret. Like the woman of Sychar, may we go back to the village and tell everyone: “Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?” (John 4:29).

The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” Let anyone who hears this say, “Come.” Let anyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who desires drink freely from the water of life” (Revelation 22:17).

New Sermon Series Begins Jan. 7



This series will empower us to move the spiritual needle in our lives, our relationships and our family. In addition to the new series on Jan. 7, we will begin 21 Days of Fasting & Prayer as we start the New Year.

Then on Jan. 28 Christ Church presents:



This series will reveal spiritual principles which will help restore and renew our relationships with family, spouses, coworkers and peers. You don't want to miss this potentially life changing series!

One Year Bible Reading For This Week:

December 31: Malachi 3:1-4:6, Revelation 22:1-21, Psalm 150:1-6, Proverbs 31:25-31

January 1: Genesis 1:1-2:25, Matthew 1:1-2:12, Psalm 1:1-6, Proverbs 1:1-6

January 2: Genesis 3:1-4:26, Matthew 2:13-3:6, Psalm 2:1-12, Proverbs 1:7-9

January 3: Genesis 5:1-7:24, Matthew 3:7-4:11, Psalm 3:1-8, Proverbs 1:10-19

January 4: Genesis 8:1-10:32, Matthew 4:12-25, Psalm 4:1-8, Proverbs 1:20-23

January 5: Genesis 11:1-13:4, Matthew 5:1-26, Psalm 5:1-12, Proverbs 1:24-28

January 6: Genesis 13:5-15:21, Matthew 5:27-48, Psalm 6:1-10, Proverbs 1:29-33

HOME

Text: Revelation 21:1-8, 21-27, 22:1-5

PLAIN TRUTH

Christmas is God _____ into the
_____ and the New Jerusalem
is us _____ in with _____.

1. The New Jerusalem is God's _____ from
the _____.
2. In New Jerusalem _____ is _____!
3. The New Jerusalem is our urgent _____ to
help _____ find their _____ with
_____.

Morning of December 31, 2023