

**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on August 8, 2021:**

**"Where Shall We Live for Eternity – Heaven or the Kingdom?
(Revelation 21-22)"**

[In today's sermon, Pastor Craig Kuhlman, at church in the Y, shows us from Revelation what our wonderful future is going to be like.]

Introduction:

- Today, Pastor Craig starts off with a question for us, which perhaps leads to a dream or a vision.
- “How many of you are looking forward to a time when there will be no more pain, no more sickness, no more bills to pay, no more mourning, and no more death?”
- In the last few years, in our church family, we have not been untouched by death.

- Pastor Craig thinks of our dear sister, Rita Bricker, our brother Ron Dailey, recently our brother Ron Vance, our sister Dorothy Walker.
- Who else do we know? Congregation answers: our dear sister, Socorro Martinez, our dear brother Bill Pixley, our dear sisters Robin Sanders and Alberta Ecker.
- Now, there’s coming a day, when that is no more.

- So, today’s message is an extension of Pastor Craig’s message of a few weeks ago where he discussed “Where does God reside and where shall we reside in the future?”
- Today’s message is titled: “Where shall we dwell or live for all eternity?”
- That’s because there is coming a time where there is no more death, no more crying, no more mourning, and no more sickness.

- In the verses we’re going to walk through today, we’re going to see that all pressures, all sadness, all death and dying, all sin and all the things that would keep us from a relationship with our Father, Son and Spirit will no longer exist.
- It’s a definite promise and we have hope in that, because the One who has secured all this is the Creator of everything.

- We’re going to start off in Revelation 21 and end up with the first 6 verses of Revelation 22.
- And in most Bibles, each chapter has a title.
- The title of chapter 21 in the NASB is, “The New Heaven and New Earth.”
- And the title of chapter 22 is “The River and the Tree of Life.”

Revelation 21:1 (NASB), Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth;

- We need to remember that Jesus said that at one point heaven and earth will pass away. And this is what He was referring to in a kind of prophetic way.

1b) for the first heaven and the first earth passed away,

- So, today, everything we know about heaven and earth will change.

- Revelation also will tell us that in the future, heaven and earth will combine and we will all be together as one family of believers.

1c) and there is no longer any sea.

- Now, in Jewish culture, sea was not a good thing, because that's where sea monsters lived – so the word “sea” had a bad connotation.
- So, getting rid of the sea was a positive thing in the eyes of John.

2) And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

- So, here we have the imagery that God is up there in heaven, even though He's all around us.
- Today, Jerusalem is not a holy city, because it was the city that killed our Christ.
- But, someday the New Jerusalem will replace the former Jerusalem and will be considered holy.

3) And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among the people, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,

- In the future, God will be dwelling with us in the new heaven and the new earth and in the New Jerusalem.
- Now, we know that in the church right now, God's dwelling place, through His Spirit, is within us, as believers.
- We'll also see that, in the future, there will no longer be a need for a tabernacle or a temple, because God will be dwelling among all of us.

4) and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

- That is such a beautiful picture.
- In the world tomorrow, what we do and how we love each other is going to be vastly, vastly different and so improved.

5) And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” And He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.”

- The words “faithful and true” mean that all these things promised through John's vision will come to pass without any doubts or questions.

6) Then He said to me, “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega (Jesus), the beginning and the end. I will give water to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life, without cost.

- In this vision, the living water will be flowing out of Jesus, the Creator of all, and those who partake of it will be made well.

7) The one who overcomes will inherit these things,

- We need to remember, “Who was the one who overcame?” It’s only Jesus.
- It’s not like we have to get on a treadmill and try to overcome things by ourselves.
- Jesus has overcome and our participation, now, is to believe in the One who overcame and has included and accepted us in Him.
- We just simply need to believe and participate in what He did.

and I will be his God and he will be My son. 8) But for the cowardly, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and sexually immoral persons, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars,

- Here John lists 8 different categories of those who have chosen not believe in the One who overcame.
- Now, John doesn’t tell us how long these unbelievers will exist.
- Later, we’re going to see how and where these unbelievers might fit within the new city of Jerusalem that has open gates.

their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

- Now, earlier in Revelation, the lake of fire and the second death were discussed.
- But here we are passed the judgment time.

9) Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, full of the seven last plagues, came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”

- We need to remember that Revelation is written in apocryphal language which is written in visionary terms and hyperbole, in such a way that we can’t take any of these things literally.
- But that doesn’t mean that things written in apocryphal language are not true.
- Now, we know that Jesus is not a real lamb – this is just part of the apocryphal language depicting what Jesus accomplished for us by His sacrifice on the cross.

10) And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

- Jerusalem represents the church, as well.

11) having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very valuable stone, like a stone of crystal-clear jasper. 12) It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on the gates, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. 13) There were three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.

- In the past, the way to protect the city was to surround it with walls and have only one gate.
- But the New Jerusalem has 12 gates and they are all open.

14) And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

- In the book of Acts, we saw the nation of Israel was changed and the church and the 12 apostles became predominant.

15) The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. 16) The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, twelve thousand stadia; its length, width, and height are equal.

- Do we realize how many miles twelve thousand stadia represent?
- It's equivalent to about 1500 miles.
- This future square city then would cover all of America and a good portion of Europe.
- In apocryphal language, John is showing us that the New Jerusalem is very huge and that everyone can live there.

17) And he measured its wall, 144 cubits, by human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. 18) The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 19) The foundation stones of the city wall were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; 20) the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoptase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.

- These are not typical earthly jewels but jewels from our almighty Creator.
- And John is trying to tell us that there are no earthly imaginable precious stones we could use to describe the incredible beauty of what the New Jerusalem will look like.

21) And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

- Many authors use these words to depict heaven in their stories.

22) I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23) And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illuminated it, and its lamp is the Lamb.

- In the kingdom, there will be no night, meaning that we won't need to sleep and be inactive.

24) The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. 25) In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; 26) and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it;

- Earlier in Revelation, the kings of the earth were said to have fought Jesus on His return, which was depicted as the Battle of Armageddon.
- So things have changed.

27) and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

- Again, this is difficult to properly interpret because of the apocryphal language.
- Apparently, there are a group of not-yet-believers who are quarantined outside the city of New Jerusalem and are not allowed to enter.
- That's because no evil will be allowed to enter the gates of the city.
- Now, when we believe in the One who overcomes, we're being told that our names are somehow written in this apocryphal book.

Revelation 22:1 (NASB), And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, 2) in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life,

- Now, in non - canonical Jewish literature, it was written that the Garden of Eden was lifted up and taken up into heaven.
- And here, we have the picture of the Garden of Eden coming back.

bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

- Now, we've got these nations, that seem to be saved, but are outside the gates of the New Jerusalem.
- In a spiritual sense that healing comes automatically with their belief in Jesus.
- Again, this is apocryphal language.

3) There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; 4) they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. 5 And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illuminate them; and they will reign forever and ever.

- That's where we shall dwell for eternity.
- That's why we proclaim the message to not-yet-believers, to open their minds to what their future is.
- Now, we don't call them; we don't convert them – that's the work of the Holy Spirit.
- When we wake up in the morning, we need to ask God, "Father, show me where You are at work and I'll participate."
- We don't bring people into a relationship with the Father, Son and Spirit, but God allows us to participate in what He is doing.
- God is out there calling people, He's wooing and nudging them and showing them His love.
- So, this is our future – no more death, no more pain, no more crying, no more sadness.

Closing prayer: