

Sermon Text Discussion 9/3/2017

Revelation 21:1-8: 'The Hope of Heaven' by Colin Smith

Overview

As Christians, we have both hope for today, as God renews His mercies to us daily, and the ultimate hope for tomorrow. In Revelation 21 we read of John's description of A New Heaven and A New Earth and of the unclouded joy Christians will experience forever and forever in God's restored creation. This future hope can be described from four perspectives:

- Add: Heaven will not be less or other than we know now, but more than we know in the here and now.
- Subtract: There will be no more death, mourning, crying, or pain for the old order of things has passed away.
- Divide: God will separate all evil from His people and all evil from His creation.
- Multiply: The joys that lie ahead are exponential compared to the taste of joy we currently experience.

Quotations

"God will remake the heavens and the earth, merging His heaven with this earth as the perfect dwelling place that will be our home forever." – John MacArthur

"Most men hope to go to heaven when they die, but few, it may be feared, take the trouble to consider if they would enjoy heaven if they got there." – Bishop J.C. Ryle

"Lord, make me as holy as it is possible for a sinner on this earth to be." – Robert Murray McCheyne

Understanding & Application

- 1) Colin used an analogy of two types of 'new' homes – one that is completely different and disconnected from a previous experience and one that is completely restored and having continuity with the past. Explain this analogy in your own words. How does it apply to your perspective of heaven?
- 2) Consider moments in your life when you have experienced tremendous joy? Describe your feelings. Do you think it is possible for you to experience even greater joy in the redeemed creation? Why or why not?
- 3) Share three things you do not expect to experience in the new creation. How can you be sure you won't experience them?
- 4) Painful and difficult relationship amongst Christians in this life will not be a source of conflict and stress in the new creation. All unresolved issues will cease to exist when we are restored with perfect repentance, forgiveness, humility, and love. What unresolved relational issues do you experience now? What steps can you take to resolve them now in anticipation of the new creation?
- 5) It is clear God will separate evil from His new creation. Their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. "Wait a minute! I made the list of evildoers in verse 8!" How can you be sure you will not be cast out of the new creation because you are sinful? What Biblical text supports your hope? Describe the difference between a redeemed and an unredeemed sinner.
- 6) In what ways are life circumstances keeping you from making a full commitment to Christ? What are you afraid of 'giving up' if you give full control to Jesus? What is weighing you down and not allowing you to focus on your inheritance that is yours in Christ?