

God's Design for the Church

[Revelation 21:1-27](#)

"The Church Made New"—November 27, 2022



Introduction

Many of us like the excitement of watching a sporting event unfold. Knowing the outcome beforehand is a spoiler. While we hate spoilers in the context of movies, books, or sports, there are other instances where we want to know the outcome, and we look for it. We don't care for the unfolding drama. Having a spoiler would give us peace.

This scripture today is a "spoiler." It is meant to give us extraordinary peace. The apostle John writes to people suffering persecution from the outside as well as fighting their own sin on the inside. Satan seems to be using everything that he can to defeat and discourage the church. He did it then, and continues today.

Over the last few weeks, we have been looking at God's good design for the church. We can also recognize that the world, the flesh and the Devil make it difficult to persevere in faith. How can we know it's worth it to hobble along when the church is misunderstood? "Spoiler Alert" - in those final days, God will make all things new!

Read & Discuss

1) Read vs. 1 – 27

In Revelation 20, we are shown how God will get rid of all His enemies - sin, death, the Devil. The story of redemption will be complete. In chapter 21 and 22, God goes beyond restoring what was lost in the garden. He makes all things new. It is perfect in every way.

The Holy City is perfectly built. It is compared to a bride dressed for her wedding and ready to be presented to her husband. Often the church is referred to as the bride of Christ. God's people will live in His presence and experience joy.

Right now because of sin, God is not able to dwell with his people. In eternity, God will dwell with his people, and sin will be defeated. Nothing will separate us from God. Sometimes in our current circumstances, we feel that God is so far from us. Have you ever felt that, when you pray, God is not listening? Have you been discouraged that He doesn't seem to answer? We know He is with us, but sometimes we feel differently.

We are reminded in scripture that we can boldly come before the throne of God now. ([Hebrews 4:11](#)) One day, we will be able to come to God unhindered. Until then, we must be patient and wait. We don't like to hear that, but waiting is what we must do.

Because of sin, it's often difficult for us to feel these truths in our current circumstances. There is no doubt that in this world, we will have trouble. We all experience varying degrees of suffering. What is going on in your life now causing real pain and sorrow? There are some circumstances that we experience from which we will not heal in this life. But let's remember this declaration as an encouragement - in the end – "Behold, I (God) am making all things new!!" This includes US! It will come to pass. What He starts, He will finish. ([Philippians 1:6](#)) Nothing will alter the plans of the almighty God. We will reign with Him. We will be fully satisfied forever. God's justice will be fully dispensed. (Vs. 7) Those who are faithful will be given their heritage. Those who have rejected God will suffer the second death. (Vs.8)

As we read on in chapter 21, John gives us the dimensions of the city, and we must note that the dimensions are not meant to secure it, but to make a demarcation of who is inside and who is outside. God will make abundantly clear who is for Him and who is against Him. This is sobering, but it can cause us to praise Him for His extravagant grace toward us. Does your life reflect an attitude of thankfulness to God for salvation? Does your life reflect a confident trust in the truth of this scripture? Are you tempted to be discontent? Are you struggling to find the joy of your salvation? Look to Christ. See His perfect example of a response to suffering, crisis, etc. Look to Him who perfectly did these things on your behalf. He has made us right before God. Keep going!! Keep pressing in to Him. Look to Christ.

The claims of scripture require all mankind to consider Jesus. ([John 14:6](#)) God has made a way for us to be reconciled to Him through Jesus. Look to Christ today so that you can dwell with Him on the last day.

Perhaps the circumstances of your life today have made the voice in vs. 5 seem like a whisper. This is why we need each other - for encouragement in faith. Don't neglect God's good design for the local church where you are stirred up to love and good deeds. ([Hebrews 10:24](#)) We need to gather together so that our affections are stirred up and so we are able to persevere till the end.

Our intentional absence from gathering together in worship is sin. Sin separates. Do you ever grow so weary of sin and Satan's schemes that you want to stop fighting for faith? He will make all things new again including the bride of Christ. Don't give up on the church. Embrace her with all her beauty and brokenness. If you are united in Christ, you contribute to both her beauty and brokenness. But one day, God will make her new and glorious, without spot and blemish. It will be worth it all to persevere today. In the end, Christ returns, and He reigns victorious!!

Additional reading: Genesis 1 – 3; Revelation 20 – 22

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to com. If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

Next week's sermon text: we turn to [Ephesians 6:1-9](#) "Walk with God: Family and Work"