

97-35

Looking Forward

The Present Effects of Anticipating Our Future Home

21:9 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. 11 It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. 12 It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. 13 There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. 14 The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. 16 The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long. 17 He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits thick, by man's measurement, which the angel was using. 18 The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. 19 The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysolite, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. 21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass.

22 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. 24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. 25 On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. 26 The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. 27 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. (NIV)

The Place

The People

...then

...now

1



2



3



Application Questions

These questions are provided for your further study and application of today's message. It is recommended that you take time this week to write out your response to each of these questions. This will help to drive home the point of today's message and will help you to apply the principles to your life situation.

1. Although one could never earn God's favor and understanding that our acceptability before a holy God comes solely from the credited righteousness of Christ, it is still important to realize that God is very much interested in (and well pleased by) Christians living a righteous and "beautiful" life before him. From God's perspective, how attractive would you say your life has been in the past week?

What things can you identify in your life that have been "ugly" in God's sight in the last seven days?

2. Why do you think Jesus considered the act recorded in Matthew 26:7-10 as a "beautiful thing"? Why is this so attractive to Christ?

In what ways do you see yourself in the pragmatic response of the disciples in Matthew 26:8-9?

What other things do you think God finds attractive that others in this world consider ugly or "a waste"?

3. In what areas do you lack courage?

First Peter 1:3-5 states strongly the "security" of the Christian's participation in the Revelation 21 "inheritance". How should a firm grasp on this truth change your level of courage this week?

4. If your closest friends and acquaintances were forced to describe your level of joy throughout the average day, what do you think they would say?

Based on our study of the New Jerusalem (and our look at 1 Peter 1:3-9) why do you think it is important to change your current level and expression of joy?

5. Read Hebrews 11:1-2 and write out a restatement of these verses in your own words.

How do these verses relate to the application of this entire lesson from Revelation 21:9-27