

All things new

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[0 : 0 0] Would you turn with me now for a little time as we meditate together in a portion we have read from God's word. The book of Revelation and chapter 21 and words we have in verse 5.

And he that sat upon the throne said, behold, I make all things new. These words, the revelation granted to John the Apostle contains many profound and many inscrutable truths.

There are some things written in these pages of scripture. And all we can do is bow our heads submissively and admit that they are too high for us, too hard to understand.

And we believe that incalculable harm has been done throughout the centuries by giving extreme and unbalanced interpretations to some of these passages in Revelation.

And possibly relating them to some of the more obscure passages in the Old Testament. Principally passages in the prophecies of Daniel and Ezekiel.

[1 : 2 7] Why God should have been fit to cause such dark passages to be inserted in his word is not for us to question. But he must have had his own good and wise and holy reasons for doing so.

And while we can legitimately surmise what these passages are intended to teach us, we have to guard on all occasions against unsanctified dogmatism.

Most of scripture itself is beautifully clear and perspicuous. And we are to recognise that while secret things belong unto the Lord our God, things that are revealed belong unto us and belong to our children.

We are not left in the dark as to any essential matter relating to the needs of our souls. Everything that is necessary for our salvation and need for our spiritual enrichment and nourishment is abundantly and clearly set forth in the words of scripture.

Knowing several parts of this great book, John by the Holy Spirit has many and beautiful things to say of the new order that will be ushered in at the consummation of world history.

[3 : 0 0] This indeed is largely, we believe, what the Holy Spirit intended in giving this revelation to the Church. To place on record and to give to the Church of God a glimpse of what is yet to be.

The glory and the excellence of her future destiny when he shall bring her to be with himself. In the midst of her earthly employments and in the face of a constant conflict in this world, it is all too easy for the Church to lose sight of her glorious destiny.

And so these revelations are intended, we believe, among other things, to stimulate and to revive the faith of the people of God so that they might be strong in the face of conflict.

One can well imagine that John himself must have often felt downcast and despondent as he labored in exile on Patmos far away from those who were dearest to him from the fellowship and communion of God's Church and people.

He would therefore appreciate more under such circumstances as these. He would appreciate the revelation that was here given to him and the word that God by his Spirit had spoken.

[4 : 27] Where he was now in this world was but a temporary abode, his present life and his present ministry were but a passing faith to something infinitely grander and better and more enduring.

As Samuel Rutherford has so attractively put this matter of the future and the glory that lies in the future with the Savior, soon it is, shall the cup of glory wash down earth's bitterest walls.

Soon shall the desert briar break into Eden's rose. We see then here, first of all, the new order of which we have, which is referred to.

John simply calls it a new heaven and a new earth. Whether this earth purged and purified, the earth in which we are now living will form part of heaven, we are not prepared to say but simply assert that a new order will at length be ushered in.

And in this order, it is very evident and very clear that God will be the supreme object of the Church's delight. God in the plinity of his person, Father, Son and Holy Spirit will be the object of supreme delight.

[5 : 58] We sometimes speak and I believe we sometimes think, do we not, that if God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, will have a kind of preeminence over the other persons in heaven.

This is perhaps due to inadequate thinking on a subject or to the unqualified acceptance on our part of such terms as the Lamb is all the glory of Emmanuel's land.

Well, of course, this is true in every detail. The Lamb will have the preeminence in heaven. The Son will have the preeminence in heaven.

But the Father will also have the preeminence in heaven. The Holy Spirit will have the preeminence in heaven. As the Son will be all the glory, so will the Father, so will the Spirit.

Here in verses 22 and 23, we have the Father and the Son coupled together in reference to this matter. I saw, says John, no temple there, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

[7 : 11] Again, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Then in chapter 22 at verse 3, and there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and the servants shall serve him.

And so then, God, in the glory of his tri-owned being, will be the eternal object of the delight of the saints of God, the glorified people of God.

And it's very clear, too, that in this order, in this new order, that external mediums will be abolished, such as the means of grace and the stated ordinances of religion.

In chapter 22 at verse 5, it is stated that they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign forever and ever. Why should they require the dim light of the word, or the obscure practice of ordinances, when the divine heavenly sun in all his glory and brightness will stand before them?

They shall see his face, says John here, in chapter 22 at verse 4. We know, of course, that the reason why the word and ordinances are given to the church of God is that looking into them, they might see the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ.

[8 : 49] The believing soul wants to see his face, for we are yearning to have communion and fellowship with him, and these are the means whereby he makes himself known, particularly and specifically.

Thus, when these avenues are made precious and meaningful to the believer, when we are able to say we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and of truth.

When we are able to say, did not our hearts burn within us, we are indeed seeing the face of God shining in Jesus Christ. But my dear friends, what purpose would means and ordinances serve in a new order when his people shall see him as he is.

The means of grace and the ordinance of religion have served their purpose and their day, and these can be safely allowed to pass away. So in this new order, external mediums will be abolished.

Then too, it is very evident that creature or creature agencies will be eclipsed when the sun rises and shines forth in all its splendor, the stars which lighten the night, they are no longer visible.

[10 : 19] The glory and the radiance of the sun has obliterated their fainter beams and while they are still there, they are no longer seen.

They are still in their place, but they are no longer to be observed. Now the Lord has his creature agents in the world and in the church and some of these they shine with greater lustre than others, but they all of them dim and fade before the glory and the majesty of the heavenly bridegroom as he comes forth to claim his bride and to bring his bride to be with himself.

and all of them, of these agents, all of them will want to be eclipsed. None of them will wish to have any preeminence because all the glory will be desired for the one who is the bridegroom.

This will be part of the delight of all who will be his followers and his children on that day. and in that new order God will be all and in all because they are in the immediate presence of their God.

Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people and God himself shall be with them and be their God, God the Father will be the grand temple God the Son the holy altar God the Spirit of fire that will inflame their souls and cause sweetest orders to ascend forever and ever around the throne.

[12 : 12] Then will be experienced in all its fullness that mutual indwelling of God in his people and his people in God. Now what Scripture so frequently speaks and which is surpassed only by the union of the sacred three themselves.

So then we have this new order brought before us in these words. But then too here we have the things that will have no place in that new order.

And we find some of these referred to in the context. verse 4 in this chapter is surely a comprehensive summing up of the of sin of the fruits of sin in the world.

These are the things which sin has brought with it into this world. And these are the things which the new order of heaven will exclude.

There is reference made in this verse to sorrow. God shall wipe away all tears and there shall be no more sorrow nor crying.

[13 : 31] Sorrow as we know is a lot of man. Man is born unto sorrow as the sparks fly upward. This is the province where sorrow holds sway where it is dominant.

and nothing which man himself can do will ever banish sorrow from the realm of time. Sorrow is one of the inevitable consequences of sin having entered into the world.

The do what we will or go where we may it will meet with us and it will desolate us at some point or other in our lives.

But in the new order which reference is made here sorrow will have no place because sin itself the father of sorrow is excluded. And there shall in no wise say John in verse 27 there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defile neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life sorrow is incompatible with perfect happiness and infinite felicity and that is what this order will bestow upon those who will enter it perfect infinite felicity and perfect happiness and so sorrow will be excluded and there is reference made in this fourth verse to suffering being excluded neither shall there be any more pain suffering is of a twofold character mental and physical we all know too well the terrible amount of physical suffering there is in the world but we seldom pause to think of its origin and generally when men do it is to blame

God for allowing it oh my friends the deceitfulness of the human heart the deceitfulness of sin that will thus divert the eyes of men from the true cause of suffering the true real source of suffering that is sin and mental suffering is no less intense than physical suffering and only those who have passed through it and know the mental anguish occasioned by it can enter into it but in the new order in the heavenly order suffering will be unknown because that which gave it being will itself have been destroyed there will be no physical infirmities in heaven or anything that will cause suffering at the morning service we sought to say something about how we should respond and react to suffering as we see it as we experience it as we experience it basing our comments on words in

[16 : 44] Romans chapter 8 where the apostle says I reckon for I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us the Christian is to look upon suffering and to consider suffering in the light of eternity in the light of glory in the light of the new order even the sufferings through which we are called to pass they are intended to prepare the Christian for that glory God so there is sorrow there is suffering and there is death mentioned also in this fourth verse God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death and so the most common occasion for tears and sorrow and anguish will be excluded will be removed death is as ugly as it is unnatural it is an intruder in the world it was never intended to be there it had no place in the original order of

God and blessed be God's name it will have no place in the ultimate order of God death came to the burst with the entrance of sin along with every other mischief and it will go to its eternal doom with sin in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone there shall be no more death what a glorious statement what a blessed reality this will be what a realm that new order will be when this greatest of all enemies of humanity will have no place by its ruthless and inexorable action it causes many places to be made empty and many hearts torn asunder but in the new order its place will be empty because the blessed lamb the blessed son of

God by his death destroyed death and he who had the power over death that is the devil and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage he did this for it was in order to the bringing of many sons into glory that the captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings these are the things which are here mentioned that will be excluded from the new order and so we ask we go proceed to ask the effects what effects this should produce on ourselves thinking upon these matters believing these truths what effect should all this have upon us there are none of us who ought not to look seriously at this teaching of scripture and derive from it some valuable lesson or other for our lives for one thing these teachings ought surely to temper natural sorrow so far as any one of us are concerned if and when we believe that our loved ones have died in the

Lord then such knowledge as this of God's truth ought to temper our sorrow sorrow there will be and sorrow there must be but excessive sorrow can be an evidence of a rebellious spirit against the providence of God the person who doesn't feel deeply and sorely the midst of one who was a joy and a rejoicing to his life is showing a deplorable lack of feeling and of sensitivity we are to sorrow and we are not to be ashamed to be seen to sorrow when a believer is taken from us our dear brother in the Lord passed promise in the church in recent days only a few short weeks ago he stood in this very pulpit for the last time and gave his public testimony a man who was used of

God in proclaiming the truth the gospel of his grace and a man who could eloquently do so and it would be unnatural if we didn't feel a sense of grief and a sense of sorrow at the loss that the church has endured and ourselves personally but in the light of what we believe and the good hope which we cherish for those who die in Christ we have to modify and limit our grief at all times we are to set bounds to it we are to ensure that we are not grieving the spirit of God by excessive grief we are to seek comfort and strengthening through what we believe and him whom we believe for if we then them also which sleep in Jesus will

[22 : 24] God bring with him and so as scripture says comfort one another with these words that is why these things are written for your comfort for your consolation for the strengthening of your faith and so when we believe with all our heart these truths concerning the new order of things then it will and it ought to temper natural sorrow but then to these teachings and these truths ought surely to loosen our earthly ties and cause us to realize that we are but mere sojourners in this world as our fathers were before us this is a lesson that all of us are terribly slow to learn for the most part we act and we live and we behave as if we are going to live here forever and ever there is not one of us who is so very different from the man in a parable of our

Lord who said to himself so thou hast many things laid up for many years take thy knees eat drink and be merry if then these truths truths if they are proving profitable and beneficial then we shall surely gird up the lines of our mind we shall be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought to us at the appearing of Jesus Christ we are exhorted by the apostle that if you be risen with Christ seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God set your affections on things above not on things on the earth when Christ to his life shall appear then shall ye also appear with him in glory in other words we are to fit with increasing looseness to the things of sense and the things of time and by this we are of course far from suggesting that we should perform our duties loosely at any time or indifferently whatever thine hand findeth to do you are to do it with your might as unto the

Lord plus the best way to sit loosely to the things of time is to give increasing time and thought to the things of the hereafter to this grand new order of which scripture speaks here and so these teachings are to loosen our earthly ties increasingly but teachings such as these and teachings concerning the new order ought also surely to intensify our believing joy our Christian joy and our Christian happiness by anticipating the blessedness and the felicity of the new order and being with Christ and being with the saints in that environment where there shall be no more death neither sorrow nor crying neither shall there be any more pain and where chapter 22 verse 5 there shall be no night and they need no candle neither light of the sun for the

Lord God giveth them light and they shall reign forever and ever ought not that to stimulate our believing our Christian joy in the new heavenly order God will display all the full radiance of his glory to his people to his saints he will be seen there not as a mere symbol like that of the bright cloud or through the dim vision of faith but clearly and perfectly as with our bodily eyes we behold the sun in his glory in the firmament nor will his communications there to his people be any longer partial scanty and occasional but full complete and endimmed forever and ever the throne of God and of the lamb shall be in it says John in chapter 22 at verse 5 and his servants shall serve him and they shall see his face and his name shall be in their forehead and if the joy of believing fellowship with

Jesus Christ is so sweet here below what must it be like when we are in his immediate presence and near to him oh Christ said Samuel Rutherford again oh Christ he is the fountain the deep sweet well of love the streams on earth I have tested more deep I will drink above there to an ocean fullness his mercy doth expand and glory glory dweller in Emmanuel's land and by these teachings too and what is given to us to understand of the new order surely my friends we are to examine our status as we now stand before God in this place with his infallible word before us and in our hands one day we are all going to stand before him at that great tribunal which is his judgment seat and he is going to scrutinize us and we shall have to respond positively to his scrutiny on that day and on the outcome of that scrutiny will depend our eternal destiny yes we shall stand before him as we are now standing in his presence in his house but will we be with him this is the question that

[28 : 42] I wish you to ask yourself that is a question that has to be determined in this world while we enjoy the blessings of the gospel of the grace of God and whether or not we shall be with them depends on whether or not we are prepared to accept the terms on which he is offering reconciliation to us here and now for if we are not reconciled here we shall certainly not be with them yonder in a new order in a new heaven and so my dear friends this is the lesson or one of the great lessons which this portion of scripture directs us to to examine ourselves whether we are in the faith whether in other words we are in the Lord Jesus Christ these are awesome words that we read together in chapter 21 at verse 8 let me read them again but the fearful and unbelieving and the abominable and murderers and whoremongers and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death this is not the new order this is certainly another order it is not the new order of heaven it is the awesome order of a lost eternity to which the unbeliever to which all unbelievers are destined for it's only by faith in

Jesus Christ that men will participate in the new order of heaven and will enter into it and so then there is the question are you reconciled to God through Jesus Christ O Lord this is the purpose for preaching the gospel of the grace of God as though God did beseech you by us as the apostle else was as though God did beseech you by us we pray you in Christ dead be reconciled to God because he has made him to be sin for us who knew no sin so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him this my friend is the way into the new order of God and if we are to deliberately reject the provision that God has made for reconciling sinners to himself our portion will be in the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone forever and ever let me not nix my words

I do not use these words I trust from a cold heart from any indifference or from any sense of cruelty I use them because they are the words of the living God this is what God by his spirit through his apostle has to say to men and women if we are unbelieving we needn't be any of the other things mentioned in this verse if we are simply unbelieving if we reject the provision of God in Jesus Christ then we can have no part in a new order we shall have our part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone this is the unpardonable sin to reject the Lord Jesus Christ the provision that God has made for sinners to be reconciled to himself and so I say to you as I say to myself for all of us should examine ourselves anew

I say to you I ask you examine your status examine yourself whether you are in the faith examine yourself whether indeed and in truth you have come to exercise faith upon Jesus Christ examine yourself to discover whether you have received and rested upon him alone for salvation as he is now offered to you in the gospel that is the sure way of entering into the new order of heaven every other way is excluded there is no other door that enters into God's new order but Jesus Christ I am the way I am the truth I am the life is he your savior is your way my friend is he the one that leads to the new order for you

God grant that he may amen shall we unite together in prayer oh lord our god we magnify thy great and worthy name for having spoken so beautifully concerning the new order in thy word and in this way encouraging and strengthening the faith of thy people stimulating them in their spiritual lives and enabling them to run with patience the race that is set before them continuing to look unto Jesus who was the author and the finisher of their faith and we thank thee oh god also for having so clearly cautioned and warned sinners concerning the error of their ways and the destiny to which they are leading being led if they refuse and repudiate the way of reconciliation in the gospel do thou have mercy we beseech thee upon those who are still strangers to thy

[35 : 14] Christ and do thou grant to god that a day of thy power may dawn in their experience so that they may come to receive and to rest upon him only as he is offered to them freely and fully in the gospel be with us now as we join together in our song of praise continue oh god to lead and guide us in the way of life and do in us and do for us more than we can ask or think for Jesus sake Amen Amen