

**Sermon Series:** Stand Strong

**To be used with:** Session Six: God's Promise of a New Home

**Sermon Title Possibilities:** Heaven, Our New Home

**Scripture:** Revelation 21:1-8

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the small group study of *Stand Strong: Building Your Life on God's Promises*, these sermon outlines will use the same Scripture passages as the small group study, so the pastor can reinforce the study from the pulpit.

None of us has an idyllic life. We're pulled down by health issues, disappointing relationships, and problems in a world full of sin and insecurity. Thankfully, this world is not all there is. The closing chapters of the Book of Revelation show us God provides a permanent home where He will dwell with those in His family. It is a home with no health issues, insecurities, or sin. In Christ, we are promised the perfect home with Him.

**Introduction:** One of the all-time great American theologians was Dr. J. Gresham Machen, who taught at Princeton Theological Seminary for many years. He sometimes wrote about our futile attempts to establish world peace. He said when he studied in Germany in 1905, most people in that country would have laughed at the notion of war. After all, it was the twentieth century, and they thought war was as outmoded as jousting. Surely mankind had advanced beyond solving problems by such primitive means. Yet less than ten years later all of Europe, including Germany, was caught up in the most destructive war the world had ever seen. Dr. Machen did not live to see the Second World War, which was even more destructive than the First. Since then, people have made uncountable attempts to establish world peace, but still to no avail.

We live in a fallen world, and as long as this world is under the curse of sin, wars and other strife will continue to happen. This is why we can take comfort in God's promise of a new home. Someday He will create a world where there is no war or suffering or death, and this new world will last forever.

## I. The presentation of our new home.

- A. John saw a new heaven and a new earth.
  1. "New" carries the idea of new in quality or freshness.
    - a. Though God made our current earth and said it was "good", it has been marred by the presence of sin.
    - b. Even though our souls have been redeemed, our bodies are still under the curse of sin (Romans 8:22-23).
  2. John noted that this new earth had no sea.
    - a. We tend to romanticize the sea these days, but to the people of John's day, it had a certain foreboding quality (Rev. 13:1; 20:13).
      - Someone has wisely said that the sea does not suffer fools. Even though the ocean can be beautiful and inspiring, any experienced sailor knows that it can also be very dangerous.

- b. This new earth will contain nothing evil or sinister.
- B. He also saw a new Jerusalem.
  - 1. Isaiah had spoken of this city many years earlier (Is. 65:17-25).
    - a. Some argue that Isaiah was referring to the restoration of Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile, but this is unlikely, since the city he described would be free of war and conquest.
    - b. Isaiah's description of this city is very similar to John's.
  - 2. John said the city was "as a bride adorned for her husband".
    - a. The word translated "adorn" means to decorate or ornament.
    - b. Some try to connect this description with the church as the Bride of Christ. On the other hand, John may have just been using a word picture to signify the city's unspeakable beauty.

## II. The permanence of our new home.

- A. God will dwell among His people in a visible way.
  - 1. What did John mean when he spoke of "the tabernacle of God"?
    - a. The word "tabernacle" normally speaks of a temporary dwelling, but it was also used symbolically to denote the presence of God (Leviticus 26:11; Ezekiel 37:27).
    - b. God will be physically and visibly present in this new city. That means He will be present in a substantial and tangible way.
  - 2. Because of God's visible presence:
    - a. The city had no need for a temple (21:22).
    - b. There was no need for a sun, moon, or stars (v. 23).
- B. This new earth will not be under the curse of sin.
  - 1. Sickness, death, sorrow, and injustice would be things of the past.
  - 2. Because there would be no crime or wickedness, there was no need to close the city gates at night (v. 25).

## III. The purity of our new home.

- A. "It is done." – Most likely, Christ was talking about the things He had promised to reveal to John (Rev. 1:19).
  - 1. Christ reiterated that He is the Alpha and Omega.
    - a. Just as alpha and omega are the beginning and end of the Greek alphabet, Jesus Christ is the beginning and end of all things.
    - b. Just as He brought the first earth into existence (John 1:3), He will bring the new earth into existence.
  - 2. He still invites everyone to partake of the "water of life".
    - a. The water of life is found in Jesus alone.
    - b. "He who overcomes" – If we are truly followers of Christ, He will give us the strength to overcome the trials and tribulations of this world.
- B. Not everyone will be admitted to this new home.
  - 1. "Fearful" – Other translations say "cowardly". It may speak of those who were too timid to speak up for Christ when it really mattered.
  - 2. "Unbelieving" – Those who rejected Jesus.
  - 3. "Sorcerers" – This may include the superstitious.

4. “Liars” – Because our God is a God of truth, He will not allow any liars into His kingdom (Proverbs 6:16-19).

**Conclusion:** I started seminary in the fall of 1989. Shortly afterward, the Berlin Wall was torn down, and Communist governments all over Europe began to fall apart. In December of that year, President George H.W. Bush had a highly publicized peace conference at Malta with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Many people thought the hope of world peace would finally be realized. Along about that time, though, I heard a retired Southern Baptist missionary speak on the subject, “From Yalta to Malta”. He was an elderly man, and had seen a huge number of peace conferences during his lifetime. He pointed out that they all had one thing in common: they failed. Then he said something that I thought was rather profound: “There won’t be true peace in this world until the Prince of Peace comes.”

He was right. As long as sinful human beings are running this world, wars will continue to happen. Well-intentioned people will try to stop them, but they will still continue. One day, though, our Lord Jesus Christ will return from heaven. Christians disagree on the exact order of events, but some things are certain: Jesus will prevail, His enemies will be judged, and in the end we will have a new heaven and a new earth. Let us keep our eyes on our eternal home and work to bring others into that eternal kingdom.

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