

Introduction

Good morning, Houston Northwest! Guys, we have a problem; it's a good problem. We've got a few folks who are still trickling in and having difficulty finding seats. Would you do me a favor? In your section, if there's an empty seat next to you, could you move in and leave those seats on the end of the rows available? That would help our ushers; they're working pretty hard back there, trying to find seats for people. If you guys move in, they're able to find those empty seats a lot quicker, so we just want to leave those seats on the end of the rows available. I appreciate it. It's a good problem. I'm so grateful for the Lord to do that. I know it's such a little thing, but you making a sacrifice to move over a couple of chairs might be the difference between someone deciding to stay and deciding to leave, and we want them to hear the Scripture and hear the Gospel today. That's why we do that.

If you have your Bible, and I hope that you do, I want to ask you to open it up with me to the Book of Revelation, chapter 21. We're in week 2 of our "Heaven Matters" series, and we want you to discover why it is that heaven matters. I'm going to pray over us and we're going to jump into the Word of God today and see what it is that the Lord has to teach to us here this morning... to His people. "Heavenly Father, thank you... wow... You are the Great I Am. I'm still buzzing from singing that song, thinking about Your glory, Your power, and Your might... Lord, to just to be surrounded by Your children singing out... Man, what a gift. I can't even imagine what it's going to be like whenever we are with You in heaven, to hear the heavenly choir sing, Lord. People will not be embarrassed to sit next to me and singing in heaven. I'm excited about that. Lord, I'm excited that all types of music will somehow be combined into a beautiful arrangement that will bring endless glory unto You. God, I just give You praise that on that day, every tribe, every nation, and every tongue will no longer war with each other, but they will stand shoulder-to-shoulder bringing You praise. God, I just ask that today You would give us a vision of heaven. Help us to understand its beauty and its power, Lord. I pray that for the people who are here today that have yet to decide to place their faith in You, that they would hear a vision of heaven that would be so compelling that they could not help but say, 'I want to go there.' Rescue those, Lord, who are far from You today. Save them. I pray this in the Name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen."

Revelation chapter 21 is a picture of heaven. It is a vision that God gave to John. He showed him a glimpse of what heaven looks like. He showed him the heavenly throne room in Revelation 4, 5, and 6. But in Revelation 21, He gives him a picture of the future. For whatever reason, God decides now is the time, and He returns and He sets all things right. So, I want you to imagine, finally, on that day when God says, "Now is the time. It's time to retrieve My Bride; it's time now to set all things right." And this is Revelation 21: *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.' And He who was seated on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' Also He said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.' And He said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolators and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.'"*

Skip down with me to verse 22: *"And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His servants will worship Him. They will see His face, and His Name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever."

1. The Desire To Be Known.

You know, we're a people that, for whatever reason, have a lot of stuff that we want. We say it all the time, right? "I want a new car." "I don't want to go to work today." "I really want some Mexican food." We say these kinds of things all the time, and then we do whatever is in our power to get the things that we want. We are a people who have desires; we are ruled by those desires. What's even weird is that sometimes we expect people to know what we want. I'm going to go a little deeper here. We want them to know what we want, and we want them to know it without us having to tell them. We're kind of psycho. Right? (Laughter) Have you ever had one of those days... people, they aren't doing anything wrong... they're not being mean to you, they're not hurtful to you... but whenever they give you things that they think that you want, you're just like, "I don't want that... I want them to know what I want." We want them to be able to read our minds. We want them to fulfill our desires. Why? You see, God has placed desires in humanity. You want things because God wants you to want things. Why? Why does God want you to want things, and what in the world does that have to do with heaven in the first place? Glad you asked. Genesis chapter 2. (Laughter) Genesis 2:18... toward the end of the creation story there: *"Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.' Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.' Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."*

Listen to this verse: *"And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed."* ...Naked and not ashamed. They saw one another, totally, fully, completely who they were... And they received one another, totally... fully... completely. Sin had not yet corrupted the world. The greatest desire of the human heart is in Genesis 2:25, it is to be fully known... you see me exactly as I am and yet fully accepted. We want someone to fully know us and to fully accept us as well. That's what marriage is intended to be. Right? "You get me, better or worse, rich or poor... you're stuck with me. You see me for who I am, and that's the way it's supposed to work." Friendship is supposed to be that way too. Right? "Here I am... I'm

your friend... for better or for worse... we're together, we're buds, we're tight... it's this idea that you see me, you know me fully, and you accept me completely." Those are the desires of the human heart. Of course... there's a little problem. Some days I don't feel known or accepted, even in marriage. Some days I don't feel like knowing or accepting in marriage. Some days even my best friends probably don't want to accept me because I'm a punk some days. (Laughter) ...and so are you.

You see, the problem with human relationships is that eventually they break down. That's why the Gospel is so powerful... so beautiful. That's why the Church is intended to actually be this foretaste of heaven, because it's there in the Gospel that we read that God fully and completely knows us. He knows all of our sin, all of our brokenness, all of our trials, all of our travails, and yet He completely, fully, totally accepts us in His Son Jesus Christ. He makes us righteous. His Son Jesus died on the cross, replacing our sin with His righteousness. He puts it on us. He clothes us with that, and He fully knows us and He fully accepts us. But there's still another problem. Do you know what that problem is? "Some days, I just ain't feelin' it." It doesn't mean that it's not true. Right? Scripture says it is true, but there are days when, even though I read in the Bible that I'm adopted, I'm chosen, I'm predestined, I'm loved, I'm formed, I'm cared for, I'm blessed.... I read every single one of those words, but right here... it just doesn't feel like it. Maybe you've had one of those days too. Why would it be like that? Why would it be that my flesh could jump up in those moments and rob that joy... that satisfaction of being known... away from me? Why would that be allowed to happen? ...Because it's not done yet. You see, we have a desire, and that first great big desire is for each of us to be fully known and fully accepted, and there is one place that God has created where we will finally fully be known and that is heaven. It's when we are finally ushered into His presence that we will fully be known. Now look... we try to distract ourselves, we run around trying to get stuff... cars, money, people things, relationships... whatever... but it's all a distraction from the fact that we truly want to be known.

Jonathan Edwards put it this way: "To go to heaven fully, to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Better than fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the company of any... of all earthly friends. These are but shadows... but the enjoyment of God is the substance." Did you hear that? All of your earthly relationships... those are shadows... but God is the substance. "These are but scattered beams, but God is the sun. These are but streams, but God is the fountain. These are but drops, but God is the ocean." God wants you, the moment that you die, to be ushered into His presence, and in that very instant, suddenly, be fully and completely known, fully and completely accepted because you will no longer have to doubt. You will see Him face-to-face. On the days that you aren't feeling it... those days will go away because you won't have to feel it. You'll open your eyes... and there He'll be.

There are some people out there that think that it doesn't happen in an instant. I don't want to get into this whole thing. They have this doctrine out there called "Soul Sleep." It's the idea that you have to wait. Let me tell you why I don't believe that. I want to just read a few Scriptures to you that I think very clearly tell us that the preponderance of the Scriptures teaches that the moment that we die, we go to be with Him:

Luke 23:43: *"Truly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."*

Philippians 1:21-23: *"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better."*

2 Corinthians 5:6-8: *"So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord..."* (So, while we're in the body, we're away from the Lord.) *"...for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord."*

So what does that all point to? It points to this: That there will be a moment when finally this body shuts down, it ceases working. And on that day, as painful and as difficult as that might be for those who love me, that still I will be far better because... in that moment, in that instant... I will be transformed because I will finally be face-to-face with Jesus.

1 Corinthians 13:12: *"For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face-to-face. Now I know in part, then I shall know fully, even as I have been..."* (did you hear it?) *"...even as I have been fully known."*

In that moment, finally, I won't have to wonder what it's like... I won't have to think about it, imagine it, or pray to have more revelation. I won't have to study the Scriptures because then, in that moment, face-to-face... He will be able to take me by the hand, and I will be fully known and I will be fully loved, and God wants that for you. He put that desire in your heart. You have a desire to be fully loved, fully known, and fully accepted, and no human this side of death will ever be able to fully fulfill that in your life. They may come close, but they will fail in some way. Why? ...Because God wants you to know that all of that is a shadow... looking toward to what He wants to give you in heaven. I mean, I don't know about you, but I'm like, "Man.... that sounds pretty great! I want that." So when that happens, will all the desires go away? I don't think so. I think we'll have another desire. I want to tell you about it.

2. The Desire For Redemption

Revelation 21:4: This is a puzzling verse: *"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes."* Why am I crying? Why are people crying if they are in heaven? I mean, have you ever thought about that? Once you get there, isn't it supposed to be so great that there's no crying? There seems to be some tiny bit of tension that is created... that there is something that has been mourned, something that has not quite been totally perfected just yet. Revelation 6 gives us another clue. In verses 9 and 10, there's a scene where some martyrs... people who were killed for the faith here on earth... are crying out to the Lord. This is what they say: Revelation 6:9-10: *"When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice..."* Listen to this: *"... 'O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before You will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'"* I don't know if you're getting this, but it seems like those martyrs are not yet satisfied because God has not yet finally and fully and completely finished His work on the earth. They are enjoying His presence, but they still are saying, "Let's finish this."

There's another story that Jesus told in Luke chapter 16. I don't want to build an entire doctrine of heaven around this parable, but listen to this: *"There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he called out..."* Listen... this is after death... *"... 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'"* That's interesting. *"But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your*

good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us." Verse 27: *"And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house—" (It's as if he knows what is happening in his father's house, even though he has died) "...for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"*

In both of those little scenes right there, we seem to get a glimpse that those who have left the earth, who have died, who have gone to be with the Lord or, in the case of the rich man, gone to the place of torment... both individuals still are aware of something happening on earth, and they are hopeful that something will change. You see, our desire to be fully accepted and fully known happens whenever we are ushered into the presence of Christ, but it doesn't mean that all of our desires are gone. We still have another desire... What is that desire? We desire to see redemption. We desire to see redemption. What's redemption?

Did any of you guys make any resolutions to eat better in 2016? How's that going for you? (Laughter) Me too... I decided I was going to radically cut back my sugar intake in 2016. So far... so good. Now look, I'm not giving it up... I'm not a communist... I'm still going to eat some sugar from time to time. I have radically cut it back, okay? Joy is trying to help me. She's like, "We're going to replace those artificial sugars with more natural sugars, so when you have a craving for that, then you can have some fruit. She's found some of these really high-end, all-pureed juice smoothies that are there at the grocery store. I don't want to drink the whole bottle because that would kind of defeat the purpose, because they're filled with sugar... but just take a shot, so to speak, of smoothie, in the evenings. So when I want cookies, I get a smoothie instead. So that's kind of the tack that I've been taking at this moment. The thing is that these things are not cheap... like seven bucks for a bottle... and so she has discovered that she has been able to get some coupons for this. Do you guys know that whenever you take a coupon in and you use it... you've heard this term... you are "redeeming" the coupon. Redeeming it. What does that mean? It means that you are getting value for it. Right? We hit the jackpot yesterday... we had two dollars off. Man... (whistles) ...it was big. (Laughter) You take the two-dollar coupon to the bank and say, "I want to trade this in for two bucks." They're going to say, "No... that's not the way that works." ...Because they do not do that. In fact, if you look at the coupon... if you're weird like me, you've actually read coupons this closely. At the very bottom, it says... some of you are "I know, I did that too..." At the bottom it says that the cash value of the coupon is 1/20th of a cent. What kind of sicko collects 20 of those things and goes to the bank and says, "I'd like a penny please." Right? (Laughter) Apparently they're out there, though, I guess. But they really are worthless; they have no value unless I take them to the right authority, and I give it to them and then they give it value.

Guys... the Bible is filled with pictures and stories of people yearning for and receiving redemption. What is that? That means, the worthless, the value-less, is given value... (Clapping) Man... we didn't get it. ...We didn't get it; I'm sorry... (Louder) "The value-less is given value!" (Clapping) There! Alright! So what does that mean? That means that whenever, in this parable, Lazarus and the rich man... whenever we've got the martyrs who are crying out... they are saying, "God, would You please attribute the appropriate value to those who deserve it, and would You judge those worth-less who no longer need to have that value? God, do Your thing." That is what we are reading about and hearing. It seems that even those who have had

their desire to be fully known and fully accepted in the presence of God, are still crying out, saying, "God, redeem... give the appropriate value to the things that seem value-less." Now, even creation... guys, think about this. The Bible says, "Even creation is looking for value."

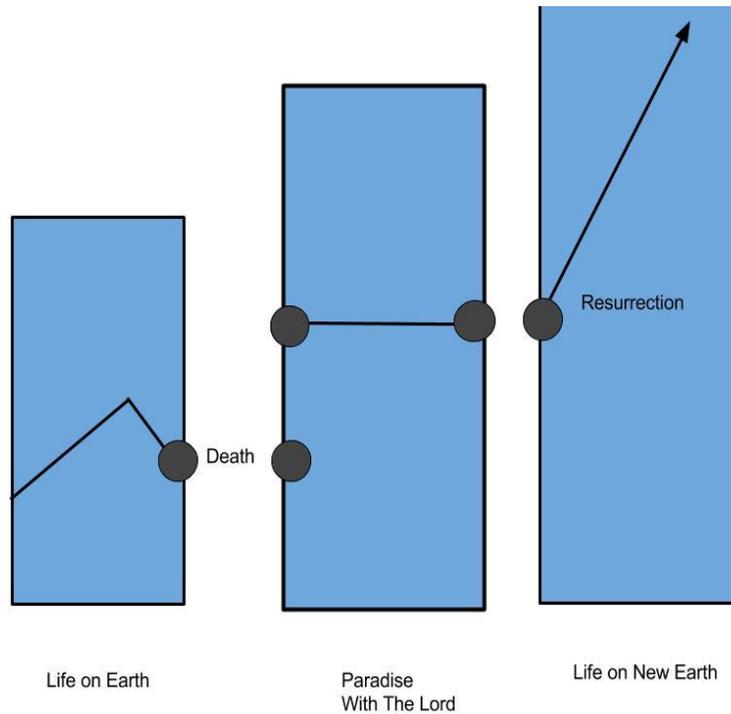
Romans 8:19-22: *"For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility..."* (In other words, it was cursed) *"...not willingly..."* (the creation didn't do anything; we did) *"...but because of him who subjected it, in hope, that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons..."* Translation: Even the trees... even the lakes... even the animals are crying out saying, "Lord, we have been infected with this disease of sin... we didn't rebel against You... they rebelled against You... but God would You please come and redeem... restore... give us the appropriate value... repair... God, would You please do that?" That is what creation and humanity is longing for.

So what happens? Revelation 21... do you know what that is? That is heaven finishing its job. I know what you're thinking. "Wait a minute... so heaven isn't finished?" I don't think so. I think that right now, people who have left are definitely with the Lord, and they are in Paradise; they are in His presence, but there is still a yearning and a longing from creation... from those who have already gone to be with Him. I believe even on the part of the Lord Himself to say "When the time is right, then I will return and I will perfect... I will redeem... the trees, creation." I don't know if you guys have any seen those graphs that show... but we can only see less than one percent of the color spectrum. Did you ever think about it? What would that be like if finally our eyes were perfected and you could see all the colors? We can hear less than one percent of audio waves. What if God finally redeems and perfects to where we can see and we can hear? You see, that's kind of the picture that we are getting in Revelation 21... a new heaven and a new earth, descending down and headed here to perfect the things... to perfect the things.

Ephesians 1:10 says this: *"As a plan for the fullness of time..."* In other words, when the time is right. *"...to unite all things in Him..."* All things... Now, all things means all things... Everything. Everything will be united in Him... Listen... things in heaven and things on earth... Everything at that appropriate moment; finally, the curtain will be pulled back. Finally, the veil will be removed. Finally, restoration will take place. Finally, redemption... Things in heaven... Things on earth... will be united. Finally, it will be finished. Redemption... the right value will be given... in that moment. So, finally there, God finishes His work. He rips back the veil and says, "Let's go and let's descend." Now, when does that time happen? I don't know. In fact, even Jesus, Himself, says... *"That's for the Father."* But He gave us a job. *"Go and make disciples."* So we go and we tell people about this place and the God who has made it.

So now, if you're starting to put all this together; you're starting to go, "Wait a minute..." So you're saying, "When I die, I go to be with the Lord, but that's still not done yet. Even though, as awesome as that's going to be, there is going to be a time when finally God is going to break through. He's not just going to let us be in His presence, but then there's going to be a moment when even creation... even your bodies... will be perfected. It's the resurrection... You see, because we'll still have another desire. Finally, whenever God returns and sets everything right... we're going to talk about Judgment next week... there will be a judgment... there will be a moment when God sets everything right, and then once He does that, in that moment, our desire to be fully known and fully accepted will have been met. We'll have another desire. That desire will be for Redemption. Now He has returned... He has set everything right... He has judged everything... That desire is met. So now what?

I saw this chart in this Book by a guy named Randy Alcorn about heaven, and I think it just really helped me understand it. I just want to show you this graphic real quick. It's kind of a good way to understand it.



So, life on earth... You reach a moment, a peak... When is that? I don't know. It happens at some point. I turned 40 this year... whatever... You hit that peak, and at some point, things start to get not as good. Your health goes down. The slope on the downside could be really quick... right? We don't know, but every person on the earth will one day hit a peak and things will go down. We will die. What happens then? Boom. Immediately it shoots up and we are at a new level of existence, and that level is, in the Bible, Paradise; we're with the Lord. But then God returns... a new heaven and a new earth... and sets all things right. And when that happens, the Resurrection, and then it just keeps getting better. Now, I just want to stop right there and go... Wait... What?? It never gets worse? I mean, it never hits its peak? Yeah.

First of all... Resurrection. Guys... I mean, maybe you love your body. (Laughter) And then again maybe you have a machine implanted in your chest, like me. Right? I look forward to the day that I don't have a pacemaker anymore. I look forward to the day that I don't think about smoothies versus cookies. (Laughter) I look forward to the day that finally my body will be fully restored. The Bible uses the word "glorified." Now how will that work? I don't know. 1 Thessalonians 4 says, "We'll meet the Lord in the air." For what it's worth, the word "rapture" never actually appears in Scripture, but I think that that's what we've been taught, that the rapture is this idea that in that moment we'll be resurrected... we'll meet the Lord, and somehow this body will be pulled back together, but it will be perfected, it will be glorified, you'll be in your prime. It can't get any better, and it will be met with your soul and... Boom... those things will be unified, and then somehow... again, I don't know how... Revelation 21... A new heaven and a new earth coming down and it says... "the old heaven and the old earth passing away..." I don't know if that's 2 Corinthians fire-testing. Things are being burned up that don't need to be here and finally rejuvenated... replenished. I

don't know what process God will use, but I do know this. He's going to do it. And whenever He does it, then guess what? It's perfected. So then what happens?

3. Desire For Glory

Well, we have a desire still. It's a different desire. I mean, I'm fully known... I'm fully accepted... I've got my resurrection-glorified body. God loves me fully and completely. I'm accepted in the presence of Jesus. All things have been redeemed. What kind of desire would I have? It's what we talked about last week... that the chief end of humanity is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. Here I am, in heaven, and I get now to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. Why does heaven have no peak? Why do things never peak on the new earth? If you go back and you look in the Garden, you'll see that humanity was placed in the Garden. They were given a job before sin. I know it's hard for us to imagine, but work is not supposed to be drudgery or sinful. It's the idea that we are placed there to cultivate, to do something productive, to give glory to God. And there in the new earth, there will be, I believe, jobs given to us, just like back in Eden. What will those jobs be? I don't know, but they're going to be incredible. Every day we will be building, creating, imagining, working... this is the nutty thing... every day we will be making heaven a little bit better in order to glorify God a little bit more. And every day, it will be a little more glorifying for the Lord, a little bit more... a little bit more. And we will continue to find new ways to create, compose, write, sing, and build... in order to bring added glory and added value to the One who is of supreme worth so that His Name will be lifted above all names and every tribe, tongue, people will gather together, to sing and work together, shoulder-to-shoulder, never in conflict, never in war... only bringing glory to God every single day. Wow... (Clapping) Yeah. It's amazing. And when that finally happens... this is the great thing... we will have a desire every day to bring God glory. But it won't be the kind of desire that causes us pain or angst or to be dissatisfied, but instead it will be the sort of desire that we will, every day, simply want to say, "I today get to live out my purpose which is simply to glorify my God and to enjoy Him a little more today." I don't know that we can fully even appreciate this. Isaiah 65 uses the same phrase, "new heavens and new earth." This is what it says: (Isaiah 65:17) *"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days or an old man who does fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and My chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands."* Did you hear that? *"...My chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the Lord, and their descendants with them. Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain," says the Lord.* Gardening, celebration, feasting, singing, worship, no violence, no war, things perfected, perfect human harmony... perfect harmony among creation. The Hebrew word for this is "Shalom." The idea that finally there is peace, there is harmony, there is belonging. Everything is doing its intended purpose, as it was created by God... simply to live together and to give Him glory. The curse is broken; the curse is no more to be found. And finally, every single day, I get to have my desire fulfilled. (Clapping) Every day.

God gave you a desire. You have a desire right now to be fully known and fully accepted. Listen to me. He has met that desire in Jesus Christ. If you want to be fully known and fully accepted, place your faith in Christ. The way that He has made that happen is that Jesus died a painful and excruciating death on a cross where your sin was punished in His body, and then He was resurrected three days later so that you could have eternal life with Him. Place your faith in this Jesus so that you too can be fully known and fully accepted. He has also created in you a desire for redemption. Whenever you turn on the news, and you look at those people and you say, "How in the world did those jokers get to be the ones running the place?" And you wonder, "Why in the world does this world have so much brokenness?" "Why is there so much hunger?" Why is there so much disease?" You are yearning for redemption. Guess what? One day God will set all things right. And if you want to see Him judge and you want to be there to enjoy that judgment and know his fruit and know the beauty of that, put your faith in Jesus Christ. God has also put in you a desire for glory. You may not even know it. Right now your life seems like drudgery, but God has put in you a desire to glorify Him and to enjoy Him forever. The way that you get to glorify Him now and glorify Him on into eternity, place your faith in Jesus Christ. Do you want to enjoy Him? Do you want to have a life that's filled with purpose and filled with meaning? Do you want a life that doesn't hinge on how much money you make every single hour? Do you want to have a life that doesn't depend on whether or not you and your spouse had a fight? Do you want to have a life that doesn't depend on whether or not you have a great friendship? Do you want to have a life that actually matters and counts for something? Place your faith in Jesus Christ. Spend eternity with Him and bring glory to Him, forever and ever. Amen and Amen. (Clapping)

So here's the thing. God has given you desires. Those desires to be known and accepted... those desires for redemption, and those desires for glory. They were placed in your heart before the foundation of the world, and today He says, "I want you to taste those answers. I want you to have glory. I want you to have shalom." Will you place your faith in Him? And if you have already, will you finally let Him be the One that fulfills your desires?

Let's pray. "Lord Jesus, how incredible to have a place that you've made for us. Wow. God, how incredible to have a place that meets every desire. It's not the place that meets the desire... it's You that meets the desire. So Lord, I thank you, God, that You would just create a place so that we could enjoy and taste Your goodness. God, I just want to pray this right now... that we would say 'Yes'... whatever that means right now. Father, for those who have never said 'Yes' to You, I pray that this would be their moment. Father, for those who have already said 'Yes' but they haven't been letting You fulfill their desires... or Lord, they haven't seen the beauty of those desires being fulfilled in heaven, that they'll see that. Lord, today be Your day."

Nobody is looking around. If right now you say, "I want what? I want that. I want this Jesus and I want to place my faith in Him so that I can spend eternity with Him." I want to ask you... would you just raise your hand... raise your hand and say "Today's the day I'm ready to say 'Yes' to Jesus." Raise it up where I can see it. I see you, Ma'am. Who else? I see you as well. Thank you. Who else? "Lord, for these who have raised their hand, right now I pray that today would be the day that they would stop fighting and would place their faith. Lord, I pray you would give them the courage to take this step, to be part of a church, whether it's this church or another one... to follow You in baptism, because Lord, you want them to make it public... to begin reading Your Word so that they could say 'Yes' to You, so they can grow in the knowledge of Your truth. I love You, Lord. Thanks for fulfilling our deepest desires. I pray this in the Name of Jesus. Amen."

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