

The Eternal State for Believers: The New Heaven and New Earth

I. The New Heaven and New Earth: The Consummation of the Biblical Storyline

- A. The biblical story centers on the kingdom of God.
- B. The story of God's people, in God's place, delighting under God's good rule.

Creation Heavens and Earth (Gen 1-2)

Fall into sin and the curse (Gen. 3)

Redemption (Most of the Bible; see Rom. 8:18-22)

Removal of sin and the curse (Rev. 20)

Consummation: new Heaven and Earth (Rom. 8:21-22, Rev. 21-22)

II. What Will the New Heaven and New Earth be Like?

A. The Place (Heb. 11:10, 16; 13:14; Phil 3:20; Rev 21:1-2, 10)

- 1. It is described as a homeland, a new Earth with a capital city. It is a physical earth.
- 2. The new Earth is directly connected to Heaven.
- 3. Time still exists
- 4. Full of beauty and splendor (City, natural features, culture, animals)
- 5. Bountiful

B. The People

- 1. Joyful (Rev. 21:3-4, Ps. 16:11)
- 2. Holy & Glorified: safe from sin, temptation, and evil (Rev. 21:7-8, 27)
- 3. Perfect fellowship with fellow citizens (No wrong motives or fear. Perfect love)
- 4. Enjoying rest: peace with God, each other, and creation (Heb. 4:9-11)

C. The Purpose (Enjoying God's presence in all we do).

- 1. God is at the center of it all (Rev. 21:3, 22:3-4).

Johnathan Edwards "God is the highest good of the reasonable creature, and the enjoyment of him is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. To go to heaven fully to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, children, or the company of earthly friends, are but shadows. But the enjoyment of 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."¹

John Piper: "The gospel is not a way to get people to heaven; it is a way to get people to God...If we don't want God above all things, we have not been converted by the gospel." . . . "The ultimate aim of the gospel is the display of God's glory and the removal of every obstacle to our seeing it and savoring it as our highest treasure"² (56).

- 2. Fellowship with God perfectly.
- 3. Worship God perfectly.
- 4. *Whatever we do*, we will do it all to the glory of God!

¹ Johnathan Edwards, "The Christian Pilgrim," sermon preached in 1733.

² John Piper, *God is the Gospel*, 47, 56.

III. Application

- A. We are pilgrims in the sense that *this* Earth is not our home. Encourage one another; travel together toward the celestial city (Heb. 10:24-25, see *Pilgrim's Progress* by Bunyan).
- B. Live godly lives, storing up treasures in Heaven (2 Pet. 3:11-13; Matt 6:19-21).
- C. Be self-discipline and persevere in trials and temptations knowing that the Lord will give us this crown (1 Cor. 9:24-25, James 1:12, Rev. 2:10).