



This Wednesday, I'm headed on an 11-day trip to Africa, and I am already missing my family. Over the 21 years of my marriage with Tracy, we have spent various times apart, and the longer we're married, I've found our times apart to feel more difficult for me. I recall a few years ago, being away from home, and realizing (like an "a-ha" moment) that home isn't just the physical house we live in. While there's comfort and familiarity with my house, home is more than that. Home is wherever Tracy and my children are. That's home. I bring this out because you may notice the title of this final sermon in this series on God's mercy and judgment is "Home." Why that title? Well, just like "home" is connected to a place, but even more so, it's connected to my wife and family; I think we also see in Scripture that the idea of "home" is more profound. A man named Randy Alcorn once said, **"We were created for a person and a place. Jesus is that person. Heaven is that place."** Did you know that ever since Adam and Eve's sin in the garden, that God has been drawing humanity to "home"? To both a place and also to himself?

We see examples of God's desire to create a new home as we look at how he relates to people. We're told in Genesis of Enoch who walked with God. Then God commanded Abraham to walk before him. We have examples of people who "walked with God," kind of like how God walked with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. There's an idea of fellowship. Without fellowship with God, we are lost. But then we move into the book of Exodus, and God commands for a tabernacle to be made. It's like a "home" for God in this world where God sets a table for people. This is so intriguing. It's like God wants to bring about more than what Eden ever had to offer. He doesn't simply want to go on walks with people and then go back to his place. He wants to dwell with humanity so that we can be with him always. Then we read about the psalmist's desire to dwell in the secret place of the Most High (Ps. 91). We read about Elijah standing in the presence of the Lord (1 Kgs 18:15). God also promises through Isaiah to dwell with the one who has a humble and contrite spirit (Is. 57:15). To the daughter of Zion, he says he will dwell in the midst of her (Zech. 2:10). After Adam and Eve's sin, God doesn't simply design to forgive humans and go back to the Garden, but he has a plan to forgive, save and bring about a greater creation where he will be with us forever – and sin can never threaten that future creation! He designs to bring people *home*. Are you homesick for this place? Are you homesick to see God face to face? God wants you to be with him and dwell with him.

What an amazing God, amen? As we've gone through this series, we've seen that God awakens people to his plan by him showing his glory to people: mercy coming through judgment. In other words, the judgment of God shows people what we deserve, and the mercy triumphs through the judgment to call people to turn from sin and turn to God. Remember Exodus 34? Let's read it again: ⁵**The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord.** ⁶**The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,** ⁷**keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of**

the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.”⁸ And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped.¹

God's name (or, his glory) is revealed as his judgment is on display, and his mercy triumphs. Have you seen this in the Scriptures as we've gone through this series? Have you experienced this in your own life? To simplify Exodus 34, I think the hymnwriter, John Newton, wrote it best in "Amazing Grace": 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved. Judgment brings fear. Grace relieves the fear.

Today, we come to the final sermon. We're focusing on the future home, and my question for each of us today is "Do you walk with the Lord or do you reject him?" Or, "will you walk with the Lord and no longer reject him?" The main idea of the text we're looking at today is **For all who trust Jesus, we will behold his glory perfectly in our eternal home.** I can't wait for this, and I pray that this sermon only excites, encourages, and emboldens us in our dependence on Jesus! So, this morning, we're going to address the different sections of this main idea, and we will also see clearly how mercy triumphs over judgment. We're going to primarily camp out in Revelation 21:1-5, and I'll mention other sections, too. Let's now start with the phrase "behold his glory."

1. Behold his glory (Rev. 21:1-3).

Let's read verses 1-3 together: 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.² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.³ 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."²

Someday, a new heaven and a new earth are coming. We'll talk about that in a moment, but I want to focus on the illustration given in verse 2. A new Jerusalem is coming down out of heaven like a bride adorned for her husband. To this day, weddings are still treated as being very special, and oftentimes, girls even dream of their wedding day. They think about what they're going to wear, and what the wedding is actually going to be like. In the ancient Jewish culture, it functioned a little differently. Sometimes, the wedding ceremony was a surprise for the bride and her family. There was an engagement period, and the man would make a surprise entrance into the city, and make his way to the bride's home. All the while, the bride would be making herself ready for the day that her groom would take her into his arms and take her to her long-awaited home.

This is the idea here in Revelation. There's a New Jerusalem coming down from the sky that has been adorned for millennia, awaiting to join a sinless and perfect world. This New Jerusalem is what Jesus was describing when speaking to his disciples: **I go to prepare a place for you?³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.**³ The words of Revelation are describing this place. Jesus has been adorning it ever since he ascended to Heaven. This is the most beautifully adorned home, like a bride adorned on her wedding day.

But what good is a place without a person and family to live with? To put another way, what good is a home for a bride to go to if there's no loving groom? If there's no loving groom, then the place you go to (no matter how nice) is just solitary confinement. So, we continue reading in Revelation that this perfect

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ex 34:5–8.

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Re 21:1–3.

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jn 14:2–3.

place will have God himself be its resident. John writes of his vision, ³ **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.”**⁴

This goes back to what I was saying earlier. Since Adam and Eve’s sin, God has designed to *dwell* with us. From the tabernacle and Temples in the Old Testament, and then even through Jesus’ coming 2,000 years ago, God has declared his intention to dwell with us. Remember John 1:14 that we’ve read the last few weeks? Let’s read it again: ¹⁴ **And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.** ⁵ Up to this point in the series, we’ve focused on how God’s glory is revealed in Jesus as Jesus speaks of grace and truth. But I want to focus on one other truth in this verse. Jesus came and dwelt among us. This term for dwelt is more literally translated as “tabernacled.” Jesus is the tabernacle of God. God’s presence came to earth. With eyes of faith, have you seen the gloriousness of Jesus? Have you trusted Jesus to rescue you from your sins and reconcile you to God? Then you await an eternal home with God!

This is glorious because John describes our God in verse 6 as, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.”⁶ Verse 5 states he is the One seated on the throne! This Ruler is Sovereign, all-powerful. God, the One who is all-powerful and has planned all things from beginning to end. The One who cannot be thwarted and is glorious beyond any glory we can comprehend, will dwell with us in friendship, in fatherly love.” This is *home*. Can you imagine it, Christian? God is preparing a place for us, and he’s the center One who makes it all home. Behold his glory! Now, let’s look at what this place will be like because God dwells there:

2. Behold our eternal home (vv. 1, 4).

Let’s read verses 1 and 4 now: 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. . . .⁴ 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.”⁷

John sees a new heaven and a new earth. Why is there a new heaven and earth? John says, “for” or “because” the first heaven and first earth had passed away. Because of humanity’s sinfulness, and the devil’s sin, all of creation has fallen. Did you know that even the intermediate Heaven that exists today can have sinfulness enter it? Remember the story of Job? Where does Satan go to speak with God? This doesn’t mean that Heaven isn’t glorious. This doesn’t mean that those who reside in Heaven sin. They don’t! But the point is that God is bringing a completely new creation. By this point in Revelation, John describes Jesus’ victorious ability to redeem all things. So, there’s a new heaven and earth because the old has passed away. It’s dead. Then John gives a second reason for the new heaven and new earth. Notice the word “for” connects to a new heaven and earth. And the “for” or “because” is connected to “the sea was no more.” That doesn’t make sense to our ears. What does no sea have to do with the necessity of a new creation? Some have thought this means that in the New Heaven and Earth, there’s no sea. However, that’s not the case. In Revelation 4:6, we read of a sea that’s clear as crystal. So, what is John saying? Well, in Revelation 13:1, we’re told the origin of the anti-Christ is from the sea. This is metaphorical. Throughout Scriptures, waters and seas communicated chaos and even wrath. The same is true here. So, when John says that the sea is no more, he’s speaking of the chaotic sea from which the

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Re 21:3.

⁵ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jn 1:14.

⁶ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Re 21:6.

⁷ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Re 21:1, 4.

anti-Christ comes. It's no more! Jesus is victorious over this fallen creation, and sin is finally punished! Righteousness wins! Therefore, the new creation comes.

Oh, how great, right? Like I said last week, pick your issue, this world has it. This past week, I was reading from the 19th century English preacher, Charles Spurgeon. He talks about how "men of intellect" in his day rack their brains to find out new ways to use gunpowder "so as to be able to blow twenty thousand souls into eternity as easily as twenty might be massacred by present appliances" (Spurgeon's sermon on Revelation 21). He goes on to say that those who figure out how to kill more are considered geniuses. Then Spurgeon writes this, "Oh! It is a horrible world, appalling to think of. When God looks at it, I wonder why He does not stamp it out, just as you and I do a spark of coal that flies upon our carpet from the fire. **It is a dreadful world. But Jesus Christ, who knew that we should never make this world much better, let us do what we would with it, designed from the very first to make a new world of it. Truly, truly, this seems to me to be a glorious purpose. To make a world is something wonderful, but to make a world new is something more wonderful still.**"

Now, what does this new creation look like? It's so great, all John can do to describe it is by telling us what it doesn't have. We are so tainted by the sin and the Fall, we can't imagine how glorious it's going to be, but we can maybe begin to imagine what it's like by saying what the new creation doesn't have. What doesn't it have? Based on the sea being no more, there's going to be **no more sin** whatsoever. Isn't that amazing to even ponder? Everyone there will naturally trust and obey. In chapter 22:3, we read, "**³No 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.**"⁸ Created to glory in God's glory, we will. And there is no way sin will ever enter. This is different than Eden because sin did enter. In the new creation, there's no threat. No longer will there be *anything accursed!* Why? Because the throne of God the Father and God the Son will be *in* it. He dwells with us, and we will worship him forever. We will (get this) naturally trust and obey him!

We also see that **God will wipe away our tears**. But the phrase is even more beautiful. He will wipe away the tears from our eyes. Oh Christian, I battle in this life, don't you? This life is a struggle. With internal temptations. With external trials. With friends and family members we love who die. Then someday, we'll be home. I can only imagine the emotions of being home. We will weep. And get this: the God who created us and has loved us from eternity past. The God who walked with us, we will see face-to-face, and we will feel his touch on our cheeks as he wipes away every tear. He's brought us to the place of no more sorrow. Can you imagine? This is home! Then, we're told there is **no more death**. No more death. The only thing certain in life is death. We're all decaying. We're made for relationships, and then those relationships are torn from us. Whether the agonizing sorrow of a child dying or a grandparent taking their final breath, death is the unwelcomed enemy. But it will be gone! This is home. Then, there's **no mourning, no crying, no pain**. John is accumulating phrases. All that we can think that burden us in this life are taken away. Can you for a moment think about the sorrows you are experiencing in this life? Take a moment. Now, imagine all of these things have been justly addressed by Christ. They're resolved. And none of that is going to come into our future home.

Finally, based on chapter 22, we see that this new creation, this home, is **better than Eden**. There's the Tree of Life, and there's Water in full supply from God. This is picturesque that we will feast in Heaven. We're provided for and nourished forever. Can you see what Randy Alcorn was saying? We were created for a Person and a place. Maybe we could more accurately say we were created for a Being: God, and a place: the New Heaven and New Earth. This is home. Do you behold God's mercy here? This is the reality for all who trust Jesus. So, let's end with this thought:

⁸ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Re 22:3.

3. Do you trust Jesus?

Read the end of verse 6 and then 7: To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. ⁷The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.⁹

To the one who conquers! What does that mean? That sounds like the new heaven and earth are for people who tried really hard and proved their victoriousness. But that can't be the case. The previous verse says, "To the thirsty." The idea is that those who are needy are those who find victory. Why? Because Jesus is victorious and then, by God the Spirit's power, we grow in obedience in the Lord and victory over sin. Have you trusted in Christ? If so, you are the conqueror! And, by the way, this whole text of Revelation 21 ought to be a great encouragement to your soul. If you have been saved, we're told that we all long for his coming. Look at the apostle Paul's words in 2 Timothy 4: **Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.**¹⁰ Everyone who longs for his appearing receive a crown. Oh, my longing has only increased through the years. Has yours? A crown awaits those who long for home. I'm homesick. Are you?

But maybe you haven't turned from your sin and trusted Jesus. Did you know God's judgment is interspersed throughout chapters 20-22? Immediately before chapter 21, we're told of God's judgment in condemning sinners. Then, in verse 8 of 21, we read that: ⁸But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."¹¹ If you are faithless. Meaning, if you haven't turned to Jesus as your salvation and rescuer and if you're trusting yourself and your efforts, there's condemnation. If you are an idolater, meaning you value other things at the level of God. Or you're sexually immoral, lie, etc. If you don't see your need for Jesus to save you from these things and reconcile you to God, then God's judgment resides over you! In the midst of this beautiful picture of home, God is still warning people of a judgment to come. In verse 27, we read, "nothing unclean will ever enter it. . ."¹² Is that you? In chapter 22, we read, "No longer will there be anything accursed. . ."¹³

Question, do you want to enter home with God or will you refuse him and embrace your just punishment? As the book of Revelation closes, and thus God's Word for humanity comes to a close, we hear God summoning people. The entire message of Scripture, of God revealing his glory of mercy through judgment from Genesis to Revelation, comes to these words in Revelation 22:17, **"¹⁷The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.**"¹⁴

Are you thirsty? Do you know your neediness for forgiveness from God? It costs nothing to you because it cost Jesus everything. **Two thousand years ago, Jesus came and lived the perfect life we could never live. He then died the death we deserved to die – condemned on the cross – and rose from the dead to conquer death. As a result, God's justice is satisfied in Jesus, and God is ready to give mercy to whoever would call on him! For all who trust Jesus, we will behold his glory perfectly in our eternal home.**

⁹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Re 21:6–7.

¹⁰ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 2 Ti 4:8.

¹¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Re 21:8.

¹² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Re 21:27.

¹³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Re 22:3.

¹⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Re 22:17.