

Real Christianity: The Sermon on the Mount

#5: Eternal life in God's Paradise will be new and perfect

Matt 5:3-12

I believe it is vitally important for us to use our wildest imaginations to see our eternity. For these promises to have that kind of impact, we must have pictures of Paradise in our minds.

John Eldredge writes: "Since you can't imagine it, you can't hope for it. The foggy and vague do not inspire, ever."

Keep asking God for glimpses of the kingdom any way God wants to bring them. This is how we reach into the future to take hold of the hope that is our anchor. The more our imaginations seize upon the reality, the more we will have confident expectation of all the goodness coming to us. Look for glimpses of heaven now." Unquote.

Eldredge reminds us that our hope of the New Earth is to be an anchor for our soul. But this will only happen if our ideas of the coming kingdom are clear and real to us.

Jesus wants these promises of paradise to profoundly effect our life now. Matthew 6:19-21.

The famous Christian author C. S. Lewis reminded us of this when he wrote: "If you read history you will find that the Christians who did the most for the present world, were precisely those who thought most of the next world. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world, that they have become so ineffective in this world."

So clear, biblical pictures of our promised paradise are essential for us to live Authentic Christianity in this life. This is why Jesus gives several descriptions of the next life in the Beatitudes.

Notice these amazing descriptions of what God is promising us. V. 3, we are promised the Kingdom of Heaven. V. 4, God Himself will personally comfort us. V. 5, we will inherit the New Earth. V. 6, God will satisfy us completely. V. 7, God will be merciful to us. V. 8, we will personally see God the Father. V. 9, God will call us His children. V. 10, Jesus repeats we will receive the Kingdom of Heaven. V. 12, we will receive a great reward.

Descriptions of these promises can be summarized in our primary point today: Eternal life in God's Paradise will be new and perfect.

Both the Kingdom of Heaven and the New Earth are described in Revelation 21:1-7. There are three words that could summarize the Bible's description of the coming Kingdom of God on Earth: PERFECT, NEW, and FOREVER. (Rev 2:7).

Jesus' promise to make "everything new" does not mean nothing will be familiar.

We will not lose our Christian spouses, children, and friends. But our relationships with them will be new and perfect! We will not lose our most

favorite things on Earth like having fun, loving friends, creating things, and serving God. But all of these things will be new and perfect in amazing ways!

I have described the eternal Kingdom of God on the New Earth like this: All of the best things in this life perfected forever, and all of the bad things in this life eliminated forever.

What is the purpose of all the new and perfect things God will have for us in the Kingdom of Heaven? To make us happy. **“My people will be happy forever because of the things I will make”** (Isa 65:18 NCV).

Our information about what life will be like in the Kingdom of God on the New Earth is greatly expanded to include the OT Prophets (Eph 2:12-15).

New and perfect Creation and Earth forever (Rev 21:1; 22:5; Isa 51:3 NIV; Isa 35:2; Zech 8:12; Isa 65:25; Ezek 34:25).

New and perfect nations and cities forever (Rev 21:24-26; Luke 19:17-19; Zech 14:9; Isa 32:1; Ps 16:6; 1 Chron 17:9; Isa 65:17, 21; Acts 2:44-46; Zeph 3:9)

New and perfect work (Rev 22:3; Jer 31:24; Matt 25:1, 21; Luke 19:17; Amos 9:14; John 4:34; 5:16-17; Gen 2:15; 65:23)

Discussion ?'s

- 1) What is in your “picture” of life in God’s Paradise on the New Earth?
- 2) Of all the verses shared about life on the New Earth, what are some of your favorite? (Perhaps you should read through all the references above, especially from Revelation and the OT Prophets)
- 3) What do you anticipate will be the same and different about your relationship with God?
- 4) What do you anticipate will be the same and different about your relationship with others?
- 5) What do you anticipate will be the same and different about Creation, animals, etc.?
- 6) What do you anticipate will be the same and different about cities and nations?
- 7) What do you anticipate will be the same and different about your home and land?
- 8) What do you anticipate will be the same and different about your work, ministry, activities?