

Overall Class Objective: To intensify our pursuit of a God-centered, Gospel-based life through a deeper understanding of the character and work of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Class Overview

1. Discuss the danger of understating the Gospel in view of the new heavens and new earth.
2. Understand how the new heaven and new earth complete the story of the Bible.
3. Explain God's ultimate goal in bringing about the new heavens and new earth.
4. Examine the scope of sin's effects as reflected in God's intent to renew all things.
5. Discover the way in which the Gospel is exalted by the promise of the new heaven and new earth.
6. Delineate what the resurrection of Jesus reveals about the new heavens and new earth.
7. Determine the relationship between the present heavens and earth and the new heavens and earth.
- 8. Consider the nature of our existence in the new heavens and earth.**
9. Reflect on why the Bible's teaching about the new heavens and earth is critical to joyful and faithful Christian life.

Notes

6) Consider the nature of our existence in the new heavens and earth.

- a) The center of the new heavens and earth is the glory of the Father and Son.
- b) It will be a place of consummate joy and awe.
- c) Multiple occasions of worship are recorded in the book of Revelation suggesting that the new heavens and earth is an environment of worship.
- d) Sin and all its effects, both internal and external, will be absent.
- e) Though the duration of the new heavens and earth is endless, believers will exist in time.
 - i) ⁷ Let us rejoice and exult
and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and his Bride has made herself ready;
⁸ it was granted her to clothe herself
with fine linen, bright and pure" —
for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. Revelation 19:7, 8
 - ii) ²⁴ By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, ²⁵ and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. ²⁶ They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. Revelation 21:24-26
 - iii) . . . on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. Revelation 22:2



- iv) Some suggest that over time we will develop expanded skills and knowledge.
- v) “While we may have some uncertainty about the understanding of certain details, it does not seem inconsistent with this picture to say that we will eat and drink in the new heavens and new earth, and carry on other physical activities as well. Music certainly is prominent in the descriptions of heaven in Revelation, and we might imagine that both musical and artistic activities would be done to the glory of God. Perhaps people will work at the whole range of investigation and development of the creation by technological, creative, and inventive means, thus exhibiting the full extent of their excellent creation in the image of God.

Moreover, since God is infinite and we can never exhaust his greatness (Ps. 145:3), and since we are finite creatures who will never equal God’s knowledge or be omniscient, we may expect that for all eternity we will be able to go on learning more about God and about his relationship to his creation. In this way we will continue the process of learning that was begun in this life, in which a life “fully pleasing to him” is one that includes continually “increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:10).” Wayne Grudem

- f) Believers will have some role of authority as they reign with Christ.

- i) ¹¹ The saying is trustworthy, for:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;

¹² if we endure, we will also reign with him;

if we deny him, he also will deny us;

¹³ if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself. 2 Timothy 2:12

- ii) ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are you to take the scroll

and to open its seals,

for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God

from every tribe and language and people and nation,

¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God,

and they shall reign on the earth.” Revelation 5:9, 10

- iii) 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. Revelation 22:5

- iv) ²⁸ Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matthew 19:28

- v) When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints? ² Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? ³ Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life! 1 Corinthians 6:1-3

- g) Human relationships will be much enhanced and thus far superior to what we now experience.
- i) There will be no marriage or procreation in the new heavens and earth.
 - (1) For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. Matthew 22:30
 - (2) In addition to the fact that marriage is not practiced in the new heavens and earth, it can be inferred from this passage (and others) that there will be no procreation.
 - ii) While it is reasonable to assume that we will recognize those believers with whom we have had earthly relationships, it is not clear what meaning those relationships will have, especially relationships of marriage and family. It may be, according to the context of this passage, that marital and family relationships will not be relevant in the new creation because they will be superseded by a far superior kind of relationship with all inhabitants of the new heaven and earth. We will have perfect relationships with all people in a God-centered way.
 - (1) “The power of God” (Matt. 22:29) creates something different, fitted to a life which is not temporary but eternal. Sexual life is obviously affected by this, since procreation belongs to earthly not to heavenly life where there is no birth, growth, or death. Marriage, as the institution within which earthly procreation is set, is therefore out of place. And that means that the exclusiveness which links one man with one woman in a jealously guarded relationship will no longer apply. . . . That seems to be the logic of Jesus’ response as it relates to the problem of multiple earthly marriages. It solves the problem by declaring the marriage relationship to be a temporary, earthly thing. But is this too high a price to pay? Those who have found some of the deepest joys of earthly life in the special bond of a married relationship may be dismayed to hear that that must be left behind. But note that what Jesus declares to be inappropriate in heaven is marriage, not love. So perhaps heavenly relationships are not something *less* than marriage. But something *more*. He does not say that the love between those who have been married on earth will vanish, but rather implies that it will be broadened so that no one is excluded. Our problem is that we, like the Sadducees, have only this life’s experience by which to measure what is to come.” R. T. France
 - iii) The New Testament presents our restored relationship with believing loved ones as a source of hope and encouragement thus affirming the significance of present human relationships.
 - (1) ¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18