

01-22-2017

Message: Inheriting with Christ the Glory of God, Part 4

Text: Revelation 22:1-5

Introduction

- A. Church, I have a word from the Lord concerning our present location - God wants us to relocate. As much as we appreciate this present property & building complex at 7452 Broad River Road with which He has blessed us, I have received a word from the Lord that all of this is going away - He is going to relocate us.
- B. I would understand and expect you to be hesitant to accept this word if it couldn't be verified, if I simply told you I heard an audible voice telling me this or dreamed it in a dream (though God has communicated in these ways in biblical times).
- C. But you actually can verify that this is God's word to us, because He has put it in writing and has preserved it for us, His church.

Revelation 1:1 **The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants,** ... ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like *the sound* of a trumpet, ¹¹ saying, "**Write in a book what you see,** and send it to the seven churches

- C. Well believers, you might ask, "What's our future address?" It's not Irmo, it's not Columbia, it's a place we might call - Eden.

I. The church's new address - God's new Eden

- A. No, we are not going back to the garden of Eden in Genesis, as wonderful as that was.

Genesis 2:8 The LORD God planted **a garden toward the east, in Eden;** and there He placed the man whom He had formed. ⁹ Out of the ground **the LORD God caused to grow every tree** that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; **the tree of life** also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁰ Now **a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden**

- B. We, God's people, inherit God's new Eden in the new heavens and earth when Christ returns. We, who were once dead in our sins, were by God's undeserved kindness born again by His Spirit unto a sincere faith in God's Son, Jesus Christ, and in Christ, become the bride of Christ, the city of God, a holy of holies, which become God's new Eden. Notice that the visions of Christ's church are fluid - they blend into one another.

Revelation 22:1 Then he showed me **a river of the water of life,** clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, ² in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was **the tree of life,** bearing twelve *kinds of* fruit, yielding its fruit every

month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

- C. The imagery here is drawn from Old Testament imagery, as is the case of about 70% of Revelation. There is not only the imagery of Eden in Genesis, but of the eschatological (end times) city and temple of Ezekiel 47.

Ezekiel 47:12 "**By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other**, will grow all *kinds of trees* for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. **They will bear every month** because **their water flows from the sanctuary**, and their fruit will be for food and **their leaves for healing**."

1. The new Eden is superior on many counts. The water and trees (excluding the tree of life, the tree of knowledge of good and evil) in the old Eden sustained biological life, but the water in the new Eden is the life-giving spring of the Lord Himself, Who by His Spirit sustains us body and souls forever. Those who believe in Him will be forgiven, healed, and live forever.

John 4:10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and **He would have given you living water**. ... ¹³ ... "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; ¹⁴ but **whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.**"

John 7:38 "**He who believes in Me**, as the Scripture said, '**From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.**'" ³⁹ But this **He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive;**

Revelation 7:14 ... "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and **they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb**. ... ¹⁵ "For this reason, they are before the throne of God; ... ¹⁷ ... **the Lamb** in the center of the throne will be **their shepherd**, and **will guide them to springs of the water of life;**"

2. There is no longer a curse (or threat of curse) by which we are banished from the tree of life and from fellowship with God. The tree of life, the Lord Himself is now made continually available to us.

Revelation 22:2 in the middle of its street. **On either side of the river was the tree of life**, bearing twelve *kinds of fruit*, **yielding its fruit every month**; and the leaves of the tree were for **the healing of the nations**. ³ **There will no longer be any curse;** and **the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it**, and His bond-servants will serve Him; ⁴ **they will see His face**, and His name *will be* on their foreheads.

- a. God cursed creation and sinful humanity with death, with no access to the tree of life and fellowship in the presence of the Lord.

Genesis 3:8 They heard the sound of **the LORD God walking in the garden** in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife **hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God** among the trees of the garden. ... Then to Adam He said, "... **Cursed** is the ground because of you; ... ¹⁹ By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, till you return to the ground ... ²⁴ **So He drove the man out;** and at the east of the garden of Eden **He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.**

- b. Yet our merciful God promised to provide a way back to a renewed Eden, back to the tree of life, back to the very presence of God. One way He did so was through the symbolism of the Old Covenant temple and rituals.

- (1) The tree of life was symbolized by the lampstand/candlesticks.

Exodus 25:31 "Then you shall make a **lampstand** of pure gold. The lampstand and its base and its shaft are to be made of hammered work; its cups, **its bulbs and its flowers shall be of one piece with it.** ³² **Six branches** shall go out from its sides; three branches of the lampstand from its one side and three branches of the lampstand from its other side. ³³ "Three **cups shall be shaped like almond blossoms in the one branch, a bulb and a flower,** and three cups shaped like almond blossoms in the other branch, a bulb and a flower-- so for six branches going out from the lampstand; ³⁴ **and in the lampstand four cups shaped like almond blossoms, its bulbs and its flowers.**

- (2) Solomon's temple was decorated with wood, fruit, and trees reminiscent of Eden

2 Chronicles 3:1 Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, ... ⁵ He overlaid the main room with **cypress wood** and overlaid it with fine gold, and ornamented it with **palm trees** and chains. ... ¹⁴ He made the veil of violet, purple, crimson and fine linen, and he worked cherubim on it. ... ¹⁶ He made chains in the inner sanctuary and placed them on the tops of the pillars; and he made **one hundred pomegranates** and placed them on the chains.

- (3) Cherubim were embroidered on the veil guarding the way to the presence of God in the Holy of Holies. (Exodus 26:30ff.)

Exodus 26:30 "Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to its plan which you have been shown in the mountain. ³¹ **You shall make a veil** of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen; **it shall be made with cherubim,** the work of a skillful workman. ³² "You shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, their hooks also being of gold, on four sockets of silver. ³³ **You shall hang up the veil under the clasps, and shall bring in the ark of the testimony**

there within the veil; and the veil shall serve for you as a partition between the holy place and the holy of holies.

3. The way back to the new Eden, the tree of life, the presence of God has now been provided by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. When at his death the temple veil was torn top to bottom, the embroidered cherubim as it were stood aside and the way to God's presence was opened!

Matthew 27:50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.⁵¹ And behold, **the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom;** and the earth shook and the rocks were split.

Hebrews 10:19 Therefore, brethren, **since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,²⁰ by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh,²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God,²² let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith,** having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

4. The tree of life that God provides to us is His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, so be wise and embrace Him.

John 1:4 In Him was life, and **the life was the Light of men.**

John 8:12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; **he who follows Me** will not walk in the darkness, but **will have the Light of life.**"

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "**I am** the way, and the truth, and **the life**; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

Proverbs 3:13 How blessed is the man who finds wisdom and the man who gains understanding. ∴ **She is a tree of life** to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who hold her fast.

Conclusion

- A. So you see, it was a word from the Lord that this church will have a new address. I have another word from the Lord, from the very mouth of Jesus, to everyone here.
- B. No, I didn't hear a voice or dream it in a dream. The Lord has spoken it to his apostle John and preserved it in writing for us.

Revelation 2:7 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'**

