



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Revelation 21:9-22:5

Summer 2026

"The City of God"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Joe; that is a great text, I love that text. Another one that's great is Romans 5 in which Paul talks about tribulation. And "tribulation" that we have is not without meaning or purpose, for he says that, 'It leads to perseverance, and perseverance leads to proven character, and proven character leads to hope.' (*Rom 5:3-4*).

And that's really what we study this morning in Revelation 21, verses 9 through chapter 22, verse 5. It's a long passage...and I'm going to read it, all of it, (and we will cover it, not in the kind of depth perhaps we would want).

But this is our hope, this is our *ultimate* hope. This is the ultimate goal of our pilgrimage through this world to 'The City Of God.'

So, I'm going to begin reading with verse 9 of chapter 21;

⁹ Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain..." (*Mark mentioned a 'mountain top experience' that we sometimes have. Well, this is the ultimate 'Mountain Top experience'!....So the angel takes him to this tall mountain, and speaks of it then, "...and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹ having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. ¹² It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and*

names *were* written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. ¹³ *There were* three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. ¹⁴ And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them *were* the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

¹⁵ The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. ¹⁶ The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. ¹⁷ And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, *according to* human measurements, which are *also* angelic *measurements*. ¹⁸ The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹ The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; ²⁰ the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. ²¹ And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

²² I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp *is* the Lamb. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. ²⁵ In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; ²⁶ and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; ²⁷ and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

22 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,...” (*It's an unusual tree—it's one tree on both sides of the river...*), 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. ⁵ And there will no longer be *any* night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.

Revelation 21:9 through 22:5

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word, and bless our time of study in it together. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, we do thank You for this time together and this opportunity to consider in some depth this great text of Scripture—this passage that in great detail gives us the hope that is ours, an eternal hope in which we will reign with the Lord forever and ever.

LORD, bless us as we consider this text. Guide us through it. We have Your Spirit as believers; He's sealed our heart and He's sealed us for the day of redemption. We are secure in this life and for all eternity.

That's a great blessing, but it's also a great blessing that that Spirit is our teacher, and we pray that He will illumine our minds and give us an understanding of the things that we have read and in appreciation for what was revealed to John from that mountain. So, bless us spiritually, LORD, build us up in the faith.

We pray for material blessing as well. We think of those that are traveling on vacation, or to camp as the young people from the church are. Give them safety. Give them health. Bless all who are away and bring them home safely as well. I pray for those that are in need of Your physical healing.

And now, LORD, bless us as we continue our service; guide us, illumine our minds—and bless us we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

(Message) Someone has said the Book of Revelation could be characterized as 'A tale of two cities; one city is a harlot and one is a bride.' Augustine called them 'The City of God' and 'The City of Man'. In Bunyan's story, they are 'The Celestial City' and 'The City of Destruction'.

Both cities invite people to live there and share their destinies. 'The harlot city' is destined for doomsday. 'The bride city' will ask for eternity.—And it is a city of joy.

In John's final vision in the Book of Revelation, he sees the eternal city, 'The Bride' come down from heaven...and in verse 9 of chapter 21 through verse 5 of chapter 22, he describes it.

He first describes its walls, gates, and foundations. Then he describes its great dimensions and its rich materials before describing the blessings within it. It's a glorious city.

But to understand the vision, we must understand...that it is a vision. John saw a real city that will be an actual place, a material and spiritual metropolis where the saints will dwell...but he describes it in figurative language.

In my opinion, this is not a literal description of the city, but 'a symbolic representation' of the New Jerusalem. John informed us from the very beginning, from the first verse of the Book, that these things were "communicated" to him in symbols. At least, that is one of the ways in which that word '*communicate*' in verse 1 of chapter 1 can be understood—and should be understood.

That's generally how the Book is revealed. And really, the only way we could understand what awaits us in "The new heaven and the new earth" (Rev 21:1), is through pictures, analogies, symbols.

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2, verse 9, that the "things" God has prepared for those who love Him, "have not entered into the heart of man" ...*or*, we've never seen them nor can we conceive of them.

Later, in chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians, he, (Paul), indicated just how different these future things are when he describes our present bodies—and then the resurrection

bodies...and he does that by the analogy of a seed and a tree. Well, they are both connected, they are one and the same—but there's a complete difference. Who can look at a seed...who can look at an acorn and see an oak tree?

‘The resurrection body’, ‘the new heaven and the new earth’, ‘the New Jerusalem’ will be so different as to bear no resemblance to what we see now. They are beyond our experience...they are beyond our ability to comprehend. They will be of a completely new and different dimension.

Where are the words to describe something like that? They don't exist...so John uses words that we do have to suggest the beauty, and the infinity, and the joy of it.—He pictures it with rare gems, and tall walls, and clear rivers—yet everything he says falls short of the reality.

But it is a city. And it is glorious...we know that. And it is the final destination of our pilgrimage on this earth...our future home, ‘The City Of God’, our ultimate hope, —which is eternal.

John is on a mountaintop when he sees it come down from heaven, and he described that earlier in verse 2. This isn't a second descent of the city or a case of bad editing. John gave a general description of ‘the new heaven and the new earth’ and ‘the New Jerusalem’ in the first part of the chapter...and now he focuses on the city in some detail. [And I think it's similar to the way Moses began the book of Genesis, in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2. In chapter 1, he gives a general account of the six days of creation. In chapter 2, he focuses on the most important part of the creation and of that Book of Genesis with the creation of man—of Adam and Eve.]

Here, John focuses on the city. Its descent from heaven is a real event, but it also indicates that eternal blessing is not man's achievement but God's gift. We don't build this city...it comes from heaven. It's God's creation and we, by His goodness and grace, are included in it.

What was described in verse 2 as, ‘a city adorned like a bride’ is described here in verse 11 as ‘a brilliant city’, “like a very costly stone”.

Then he describes it in some detail outside and inside. In verses 12 through 14, he describes it as having four walls, which were “great and high”. In verse 17 they measure “seventy-two yards”, (which is seven football fields high, or a building 18 stories tall).

Each wall has three gates. Each gate has over it one of the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. According to verse 14, the wall and city are built on, “twelve foundations”, (like ‘strata’ or ‘layers’), and on each foundation is written “the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

So, what does all this mean? Why would the city need walls? Ancient cities needed them for protection and they would build large walls. Babylon's walls were famous for their height and their width—but Babylon had enemies. There are no enemies or evil in the new heaven and the new earth, so there's no need of walls. [This has been interpreted of ‘The Capital of the Millennial Kingdom’ —and there's one reason for that, for chapter 20, verse 9 states that, ‘Gog and Magog will surround the beloved city’. One of the finest commentators on the Book of Revelation, R.H. Charles, (who wrote a classic commentary on it, a very scholarly commentary), takes that view...that what is being described here is not the eternal state, but the millennial state—‘The Millennial Kingdom’.]

That's one interpretation, and others have held it too, but my view is that while that's possible, this chapter, since it begins with ‘a new heaven and a new earth’, fits naturally in that context, and not going back to the Millennium. So, this is my interpretation and most people's interpretation: That this is, ‘Looking at a city in the eternal state.’

And what do walls represent?...What do walls do?

Well, as I suggested, they protect, and so they signify security. They signify security for the citizens within. And that's really the assurance that's being given here with that image...that's what they represent.

What city has twelve foundations? Every city, every house that's built on that's stable, and every city that is stable has a foundation...but this has twelve foundations which also is to signify that it's secure; it signifies that it cannot be shaken and it will stand forever. We will be absolutely secure—no trials, no troubles, no enemies...and nothing will shake that city. It is eternal where we will reign eternally.

The names of the twelve tribes and twelve apostles signify that the saints of the Old Testament and the saints of the New Testament, (the saints of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant), will be united as one people of God forever. [Now, I think we see that in Romans 11 and the olive tree. That is Israel's tree and the Gentiles, who are wild branches, are grafted into it. That certainly suggests one people of God.] But this is the testimony of this city, with these names of the twelve tribes and the names of the twelve apostles: There is one people of God forever...and united in the Lamb of verse 14.

That's significant because what it tells us is, 'No unbeliever can be a part of this city or company.' But, the believers who will be a part of it will be many—"a great multitude", (Rev 19:6), will be there together. And that's suggested in 'the twelve gates'... they indicate 'abundant entrance'. God's grace is abundant; He will save 'an innumerable multitude'.

That is suggested as well by the dimensions of the city given in verses 16 and 17. The angel who was guiding John has a gold measuring rod, and with it he measured the city; it is a square—a city of perfect symmetry. Each side is 1500 miles in length, width, and height. Commentators have said, "The size beggars the mind." In other words, 'It's mind-boggling!'

To get a sense of the magnitude of this city, 1500 miles is the distance between London and Athens; it's the distance between New York and Houston. It is hard to imagine a city of that size or shape.

And the shape of it is amazing. As tall as it is and it forms a cube, which indicates, (and I think this is one of the main points), the perfection of it...the vastness and the completeness of the New Jerusalem.

But also, and more significantly, the Holy of Holies in the Temple, (the place where God dwelt symbolically), was the shape of the cube. This is 'The City of God'...it is where He dwells and He will be present with us.

And that really is the essence of heaven and the world to come; God's presence and knowing Him...entering into a deeper and deeper personal relationship with Him. John has made that point, and will make it again in chapter 22, (vs1), where he says that, "the throne of God and of the Lamb" will be in it.

But first, he reveals the materials of the city...what it is made of. According to verse 18, it "was pure gold, like clear glass". Again, it resembles the Holy of Holies in the temple of Solomon because it was completely covered with gold. But this gold is of a completely different order from what we know as gold...this is 'transparent gold' that shimmers in the glory of God that fills the city. The twelve foundations of the city are 12 jewels listed in verses 19 and 20, and they give a variety of colors to the city. Sapphire is blue, emerald is green, chrysolite is yellow, jacinth is red, amethyst purple—just to name some of them. They recall Aaron's breastplate with the 12 stones on it. All of this suggests it is holy, it is glorious, it is paradise.

Its gates and streets are equally magnificent. Verse 21; "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls." Well, obviously, these are 'otherworldly pearls' signifying the opulence of the city. The street of the city is made of "pure gold like transparent glass." (ibid.). Again, this is gold like we don't know...it's something completely different. This may represent all the streets of the city collectively, or it may be that we're to see this as the central street of this 'City of God'. [Ancient Roman cities had one main street running through them.] And this street, maybe like that, it is 'glassy in appearance', and that may

suggest, as some have suggested, the Milky Way... 'a starry street beyond anything we know'.

All of this indicates the nature and the glory of 'The City of God'. It is material as jewels and gold are, (and as our bodies will be), and glorious beyond anything that we know or anything that we can even imagine.

That should produce within us a desire for it. The world that we live in has its charms and it is always competing for our affections...and it so often wins because we see things that are wonderful out there, (many of them legitimate). But it is nothing like this. Whatever this world has that can attract us and take hold of our affections cannot compare with what we are reading of here and what Paul said of what is to come; "Eye has not seen and ear has not heard...all that God has prepared for those who love Him." (1Cor 2:9). We cannot grasp the glory of it all and what it will involve.

But the greatest feature of that future city is in verse 22. It has, "...no temple...for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple."

God will dwell with us.

The Temple was a structure that was designed to restrict access to the worshiper. There were various courts: The court of the women, and the men and the women could gather there. But then there was 'the court of the men', (and only the men could go there), and then there was 'the court of the priests', and only the priests could go there. So, it narrows it down until you go into the Holy Place, and only a few priests could go there. And then the Holy of Holies, which only one man could go into, 'the high priest', and he could only go in there once a year with the blood of the sacrifice and went into that inner chamber with fear and trembling.

But in the future city here, that we are reading about, there will be no temple and no restriction—because sin is atoned for and will be removed altogether...sin and all

of its effects. The universe will be cleansed of the curse and we will have direct and free access to God...But that will still be through Christ, God's Son and our Mediator. He is the only Mediator between God and man. That's 1 Timothy 2:5; "...there's one God *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus..." And so, we'll always enter into this fellowship with the Father, with the Triune God, through the Son.

And we will live in God's glory. Verse 23 states; "And the city has no need of the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp *is* the Lamb."

All of this describes the holiness of the city. It is illuminated by God's glory. It is a city of purity. It is clean. That is emphasized in the remaining verses of the chapter. Since it is lit by God's glory, John wrote in verse 25 "...for there will be no night there..." He repeats that in chapter 22:5, "And there will no longer be *any* night..."

Night is symbolic—like the sea is. Night signifies separation from God; Unbelievers, "are cast out into the outer darkness...where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." (*Mat 8:10*). It's also a symbol of danger. In Psalm 91, verse 5, David speaks of God's protection and how He will be our refuge and shield and we, "will not be afraid of the terror by night." Night has terror because it hides danger that lurks in its shadows. It represents unbelief, rebellion, and danger—all that are opposed to God, Who, "...is Light and in Whom there is no darkness at all" (*1Jn 1:5*).

But darkness will be abolished forever. —In the New Jerusalem, 'The City of God', there will be no danger. No one will oppose God, so there will be no separation from God. The gates of the city will never be closed because there will be no enemy. All who are on the earth, (for this eternal state), will be righteous, they will have free and complete access to God. So the gates will never be closed.

So, why have gates? Why have walls? I think that's symbolic of what the point is that's being made...'We have absolute security!'

Don't need to close the gates because there's no enemy.

Don't need to worry about a threat from without.

We have these high walls...which I think are figurative for simply saying;

We have great security, absolute security.

Again all of this, as I say, is symbolic of our union with the Triune God. We will be in constant fellowship with Him and it will be fellowship that is enlightening, and joyful, and constantly growing—always expanding, always becoming greater and greater.

The nations are described in verse 24 as, 'walking by the LORD's light', living in the glow of His glory. And we're told in verse 27 that, "...nothing unclean...shall ever come into it." It is a Holy City.

In chapter 22, John moves from the imagery of a splendid city to that of a lush garden, (an allusion to Eden and Old Testament prophecies). John sees 'the river of life', "clear as crystal", flowing down, 'the middle of the street of Jerusalem', (this New Jerusalem, 'The City of God'), with, 'the tree of life on either side of the river'. As I said, that's an unusual tree; it's 'on both sides of the river, but one tree'. He describes the tree as "yielding its fruit every month" and says its leaves "were for the healing of the nations". (vs22:2). All of this recalls the Garden of Eden and paradise restored...paradise recreated.

This is a vision...its significance is found in the symbols, not in the literal landscape of the place. All of this represents 'health and satisfaction', it is a place beyond our liveliest imagination, so we shouldn't think of a city with streets like Dallas or canals like Venice. The point is, 'The centrality of eternal life in the New Jerusalem', and it is a picture that would be very pleasant, (you can imagine), in a hot, dry climate like the Middle East where so many of the believers were at this time...when this Book was written and sent out.

The water is clear and it is constant. It flows from the throne of God, which reminds us that God is the source of life...He is and He will be forever. We will always have our life from Him. We will always be dependent on Him for our existence—and He will supply it abundantly.

It is a clean life; it is a refreshing life...a life that is deeply satisfying. The tree illustrates that with its abundance of fruit and medicinal leaves.

Now, you wonder, 'Why the nations would need to be healed?' We're told in verse 3 that, 'the curse has been removed'. There will be no more sickness in this world to come. But that's the point...the leaves are a reminder of that very thing—that there is constant, eternal health; and the fruit is a reminder that we will always be satisfied... *be* 'without want'. There is an abundance of all of that; the environment will be perfect; rich! It will be abundant in all things good and glorious because God is faithful and will always provide—never failing, only increase in all of these great blessings.

But again, **He** is the greatest feature of this future city; His presence there, His throne—and the Lamb will be in it. John says in verse 3, "And His bond-servants will serve Him."

The world to come will be a place of fellowship with God and a place of activity. I can't tell you the kinds of activity that we will engage in, but certainly fellowship with the Lord God, (which is an infinite blessing), and the activity will characterize our existence there. It won't be a place of idle pleasure but a place of activity, worship, and service. What that service might be confounds the mind, but in verse 5 John did state that we, "will reign forever and ever." So, we know that will be part of our existence there, 'reigning forever and ever'. We will be kings and priests for all eternity.

In the Millennium, we will reign over the regenerated earth...and I sought to explain and emphasize that when Christ comes, things will change. He will not reign over a world that looks like this, as beautiful as it may be. It will be regenerated into something we cannot even imagine...That's the Millennium.

But in 'the new heaven and the new earth', we will reign over the renovated **universe**! The cosmos will melt with intense heat...like coal that becomes a diamond under heat and pressure. This present cosmos will be transformed and filled with worlds...worlds unknown.

Now that may be speculation, but I don't think it exaggerates the future. In fact, it understates the possibilities of what will be an eternal existence of great activity, and productivity, and without fatigue...we'll never grow tired.

At the end of Isaiah 40 there is the promise that,
"...those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength;
They will mount up *with* wings like eagles,
They will run and not get tired..."

Isaiah 40:31

That will be our experience.

We will be in a state of constant activity and constant rest, being refreshed by our service and invigorated by our worship. We will live by the ever-flowing 'river of life' and in the glow of God's glory. He will constantly infuse us with life and energy, He will always be in our midst and supplying us. We'll have our life from Him for all eternity.

And John writes in verse 4, "...they will see His face...", the face of the Lamb. Now, that's the greatest blessing of this chapter...we will see Christ's face!

Moses, the great lawgiver, was not allowed to see the face of God. The LORD said, 'No man can see My face and live', (*Exo 33:20*), so he was only permitted to see His back as He passed by. When Isaiah was given a vision of God in the temple in Isaiah chapter 6, (*vs1*), he said he saw, "the train of His robe filling the temple". I take it that that's all that he saw, just the hem of His garment, as it were...and the sight was overwhelming. So...what must it be to see God Himself!

Well, we will look into the very face of God, the face of the Lamb, Jesus Christ—and that will have a transforming effect upon us. John speaks of that in 1 John chapter 3, verse 2, that when He appears, when He comes again into this world, "...we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is."

That will happen initially when He returns, but it will continue throughout our communion with Him—throughout all eternity! We will be constantly changing into His image, and growing, and becoming glorious.

That's the sense of the next blessing, that, "His name *will be* on their foreheads." (*vs4b*). We will be 'stamped' with the character of Christ and increasingly reflect His likeness forever.

That's what exposure to Christ produces. That's what Paul describes in 2 Corinthians chapter 3, verse 18, of, "...being transformed into the same image from glory to glory..." That's our present experience; as we know Him, we become like Him. And we will know Him intimately in eternity. We will know Him 'face to face'. That is the greatest blessing described here.

But I confess that the greatness of it is beyond me. It's almost an intellectual thing. I know that's the greatest blessing, but to sense it, to have it really grip one's heart is difficult. But I think of what the Lord said to His disciples in John 15, (*vs13-14*),

" 'Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends.' "

Friends share with one another. They share their deepest thoughts...and that's what Christ will do with us. He will share His mind with us...an infinite mind. And He will share that with us continually.

And He will do things like unlock the mysteries of the universe for us. And He will be with us, we will know Him in an ever-growing, personal way...This One who loved us from all eternity, laid down His life for us, and, 'snatched us like brands from the burning'.

You'll remember the words of Robert Murray M'Cheyne;

"...When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unsinning heart,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe."

Oh, it's only when we get there and begin to experience this, that we'll really begin to understand this—and we'll never stop learning for it will be an understanding that expands forever and ever...fully, but always expanding.

As I said, I really can't grasp the greatness of it, but that's the essence of heaven and that's the essence of the world to come. That's the essence of the Millennial Kingdom, and it's the greatness of the essence of this 'City of God'.

We will be among multitudes of friends. —Multitudes! And I believe all of them will be the best of friends, without jealousy and rivalry...pure friendship.

But, the best friend will be the Lord Jesus Christ, the Almighty.

One day, Aristotle was walking around in the Lyceum, his academy, (or his school) in Athens...and that's how he taught. He was the first of the *peripatetic* teachers...those who taught while they walked around, 'walked about'.

So, he was walking with his students when he said that, "Friendship is a single soul dwelling in two bodies." That's pretty good.

We will all have a single soul in that sense with our Lord because we will be one with Him in our thinking and in our affections—and we will be completely united in love with others...with all others. No rivalry, no jealousy...Only joy. One soul in all these bodies, we'll be completely united. That's a pretty good way of looking at friendship.

But then, Aristotle went on to say, "Without friends no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods." (*That's not bad for a pagan.*) This gets to the point here:

'The essence of heaven and the world to come, the essence of The City of God'...what a contrast that is to 'the city of man', which is divided, angry, and has made a ruin of it by its sin.

God's city is pure and glorious.

But it's far more than precious stones. At the center of it all is the throne of God ...is the Person of our Lord. Without our Triune God, there would be no life. This is the goal of our pilgrimage. As I said; 'The City of God' **and** 'The God of the City'! That's our great hope. It's what we are to be living for.

So I ask you, 'Are you living for it?'

Are you like Abraham? In Hebrews 11, it is stated that, 'He journeyed through this world as a pilgrim, "living in tents", never building a city, never building a house, because, "he was looking for the city which has foundations", eternal foundations' (Heb 11:8-10).

Are you looking for that city?

Or are you happy with this one? Probably not with the heat and the traffic...but there's so much of it that is attractive. But whatever it offers, it's not permanent. Really, it's only for a moment...we're for a moment. We, "are just a vapor", James said. (Jas 4:14).

All of this, that we might see and be attracted to, is like 'a painted harlot'...It's a slum in comparison.

Don't settle for that. I tell you that...(and I have to tell that to myself).

Bunyan told the story of two boys, (I think I may have referred to this not long ago, but it's a good story). One got his presents before the other, and he laughed at the boy without the presents. But that boy was waiting for the best. And soon, the first boy's treasures were all used up...broken, of no use—gone, he had nothing.

The second boy waited for his gifts, which were better. The best gifts...the forever gifts.

The best is yet to come—and that's the best way to live. Great and glorious changes are coming. A new heaven and a new earth and a new Jerusalem, 'The City of God.

But the changes are already beginning for the believer in Jesus Christ.

We have a new heart.

We have a new life.

We have a new relationship with the Lord God through the person of Jesus Christ. We become "a new creature" in Him. (2Cor 5:17). And the changes are already beginning—and they're great changes.

William Wilberforce, the evangelical Christian, (who, through many years of effort in Parliament, put an end to slavery in England), described his conversion as, "The Great Change."

That's what it is...and a change that never stops.

Through faith, you're in Christ.

You are forgiven forever,

accepted by God as righteous

and are being transformed,

and you will be transformed forever and ever,

"from glory to glory"!

That's your future if you're a believer in Jesus Christ.

If not, may God draw you to Himself and bring you to Him through faith in Christ...that's all.

It's not our works; it's not ceremonies that saves us. It's the person of Christ. And we come to Him and are joined to Him through faith...and faith alone.

May God help you to believe if you've not.

And you who have, this is your hope...reflect on it...it's glorious! This world is but for a moment.—This...is eternity.

(Closing prayer) Father, we celebrate the fact that our souls have been purchased by Your Son's blood. That's Your gift to us...a gift that goes back to Your eternal purpose for all eternity.

We thank You for that...and we'll spend eternity marveling over that.

Help us to marvel over it now.

It should have a great, profound effect upon our hearts. —I pray it will.

And now,

The LORD bless you and keep you;

The LORD make His face shine on you,

And be gracious to you;

The LORD lift up His countenance on you,

And give you peace.

In Christ's name. Amen.

(End of Audio)