

ETERNITY

REVELATION 21-22

The following are resource questions that you can use with your Care Group for discussion. They are based on the sermon preached on Sunday, February 27, 2011, by Rev (Dr) Arnold Wong at the Grace Baptist Church, Singapore. The sermon is available online at <http://www.gracebap.org.sg/worship/seriesX.html>.

February 27, 2011

BEAUTY BEYOND IMAGINATION

The best words to describe the concluding chapters in Revelation are “beyond imagination”. John manages to put in writing what writing is hard pressed to contain. The final presentation of the eternal state of the blessed – the “beatific vision,” to use the old phrase, focuses on perfect access to God and Christ. Fellowship will be unhindered – neither by sin nor by the limits imposed by living in a fallen world. All marks of the Fall (cf. Genesis 3) will be erased forever.

THE SPLENDOUR OF HEAVEN

Heaven will be a glorious, splendid place because of what is and what is not there. There are eleven things that won't be there: sea, sin, death, mourning, crying, pain, night, temple, curse, sun and moon. The main thing that will be there is the glory of God (Revelation 21:11, 23). Heaven will be ablazed with God's radiance. The dazzling brilliance of the Lord will shine and glimmer in the city like a diamond.

THE SIGHT OF HEAVEN

Heaven is pictured as a huge city called New Jerusalem. It will come down out of heaven to sit on the new earth as the capital city of the new heaven and new earth.

- The wall – 216 feet thick and 1,500 miles high (seven million sq feet).
- The Gates – each of heaven's twelve gates are each made of a single pearl. Every gate is guarded by an angel (there is no mention of Peter at the pearly gates). Each gate is inscribed with one of the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- The Foundation – each of the twelve foundation stones are fashioned from a different precious stone, each inscribed with one of the names of the twelve apostles.
- The Street – there is only one street in heaven (Main Street). It is made of gold so pure it is like transparent glass. The street reveals that heaven is a place of movement and travel.
- The River – a river literally runs through it, bringing eternal refreshment.
- The Throne – God is seated on His throne as the monarch of the universe.
- The Tree – Man was banned from the tree of life (Genesis 3), but access to the tree is restored in the heavenly paradise.

THE SIZE OF HEAVEN

- The size of the heavenly city is 1,500 miles on each side. To give you a sense of scale, the moon is 2,160 miles in diameter. So the city is like an enormous floating continent as big as the moon coming down to settle on the new earth.
- The shape of the city is a perfect cube. The city contains 2.25 million square miles – or 3,375,000,000 cubic miles – of space. It has enough room to accommodate 100,000 billion people!

Principle: *Being heavenly minded is really the only thing that will make us of earthly good* (C.S. Lewis)

Thinking of heaven has at least five practical effects on our lives here on earth: Focusing on heaven:

- *restores* our hope in times of suffering (Romans 8:18).
- *reassures* us that God is on the throne (Revelation 4:1-3).
- *reminds* us that this world is not all there is (Philippians 3:20).
- *refocuses* us on the nature of true treasure (Matthew 6:19-21).
- *re-ignites* our fervour to serve the Lord (Isaiah 6:1-8).

Implications: Are we doing all that we can, the best that we can, to live out our Christian life on earth?

