

JCI # 140 “Is Your Hope Showing?”

1 Peter 1:3-5 Revelation 21-22

1 Peter 3:15 “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who ***asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.***”

Peter tells us that the believer’s hope is a powerful tool in instigating conversations that lead quickly to the gospel. It’s a magnet drawing people who want to know why you have such hope in a hopeless world of death, despair and deception. Is your hope showing?

The believer has this hope because it is secured and reserved for us in the gospel. Our hope is our inheritance that will soon be realized in its fullness. We will inherit glory face to face with Christ forever in endless joy and “all things made new.”

1Peter 1:3-5 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into ***an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade-- kept in heaven for you***, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

The clearest and fullest picture of what this glorious inheritance is, the essence of our hope, can be found in Revelation 21-22. Let’s take it step by step and walk with John into our reserved, secured, incorruptible, enduring inheritance.

The Bible in one word is: RESTORATION. All that sin ruined, Christ restores forever.

CREATION

The story of God begins with CREATION: perfect, sinless, harmonious, glorious. Man is God’s image bearer, given dominion over the creation and charged to obey God in work and worship, as detailed in Genesis chapters 1 and 2.

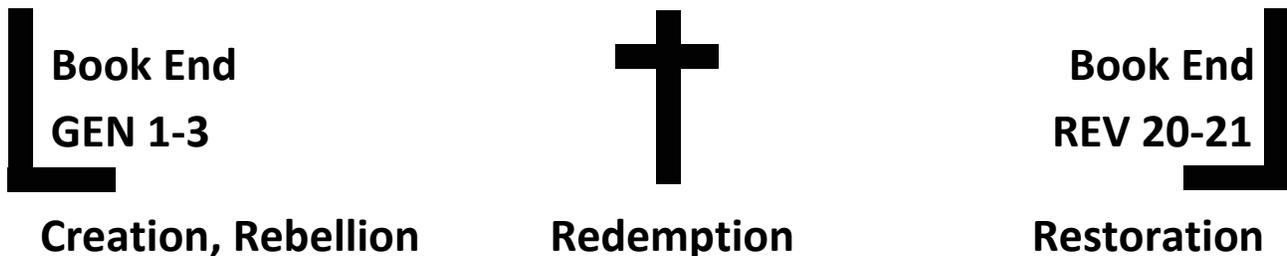
REBELLION

The second movement of the story is REBELLION: We see the fall of Satan, his lie to man, and man’s rebellion against God. The consequence of exchanging God’s truth for the lie, this rebellion of sin, is found in the detailed description in Genesis chapter 3. It includes shame, fear, blame shifting, pain, tears, sorrow, frustration, exhausting life-long labor ending in death, and separation from God’s presence and the tree of life in Eden.

RESTORATION

The third and final movement of the story is RESTORATION. It begins in Genesis 3 with the promise of the Seed of the Woman who will crush the head of the Serpent while having His own heel crushed in accomplishing our deliverance. Here we see the first forecast of Christ and the cross. The cross is the center of the story, and Revelation 20-22 is the fulfillment of all the promises of restoration in the destruction of Satan and all his rebellious followers in the lake of fire, followed by the “all things new” of the final restoration of man to God in face to face fellowship forever.

The Bible is a single story with an overarching theme, a central event, and two bookends. The overarching theme is restoration, the central event is redemption accomplished at the cross, and the two bookends that initiate and consummate the story are found in the first three chapters and the last three chapters of the Bible.



While we still live in the “old order of things” in a world ruined by sin and cursed with its consequences, we are looking ahead to the end of the story. We look not at the loss of all things in the destruction of the entire creation, but at the restoration of all things in a new creation, a new city, and a glorious and eternal “all things new” inheritance purchased by Christ’s blood, prepared by His resurrection and ascension, preserved by His promise, and guaranteed by His Spirit. What we are about to survey is not potential, but decreed; not optional, but definite; not possible, but actual; not too good to be true, good beyond measure and true beyond contradiction. Let’s see this “inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, fading not away, reserved in heaven for us.”

Restored Creation: New Heavens & Earth - immediately complete in one eternal day, not progressive over 6 days; not out of water - no oceans in this new creation, as the old world had seas used to destroy the world in judgment. Rev 21:1

Restored City: New Jerusalem - the old Jerusalem was built up by man, became the city of God’s presence and name, but was defiled by sin and destroyed in judgment. The New

Jerusalem is made by God not man, comes down out of heaven not built up from earth, and is the perfectly pure place of God's name and presence and glory forever. Rev 21:2

Restored Presence: God is now, at last and forever, dwelling with His redeemed people. What sin ruined in Eden resulting in separation, and alienation, grace has restored in face to face reconciliation, with the drying of every tear, and the removal of death, mourning, crying and pain. Rev 21:3-5

Restored Satisfaction: Sin resulted in sweat, thirst, frustration and eventual death. Now we inherit the river of the water of life, eternal quenching of every thirst created by our rebellion in Eden. Rev 21:6-7

Restored Peace: Only the redeemed are in the New Jerusalem. All those who lived and died in rebellion and enmity with the Seed of the Woman are banished to the lake of fire. The New Creation and the New City are inhabited only by those made new in Christ. The old order of things. and those who followed that old way, have inherited that old lake of fire forevermore. Rev 21:8

Restored Israel: The New Jerusalem has twelve gates named for the 12 tribes of Israel, reminding us of the 12 tribes positioned around the tabernacle in Numbers 2. The tribes are now represented in the city, no separation from God's presence by the courtyard and the veils, but invitation and full access into the presence of God for all. Rev 21:9-13

Restored Nations: The foundations are named for the 12 apostles who were sent to all nations. Those of every nation now redeemed are one with the redeemed of Israel in one glorious dwelling place of God and man, reconciled forever with each other and with their God. As the nations were divided at Babel by rebellion, now they are united in Christ in the New City of God. Rev 21:14

Restored Sanctuary: The New Jerusalem is described as a 1,400 mile cube. The cubic nature of the city (same dimensions long, wide and high) take us immediately to the description of the tabernacles most holy place, the holy of holies, the place of God's presence. As it is obvious the New Jerusalem is the dwelling place of God's manifest presence, so it is a holy of holies vast beyond imagination. Note also the angel used "man's measurements" so that we understand this is real, solid, and actual in its immensity. (Or should we say: "Immense-City"?!) Rev 21:15-21

Restored Worship: The New Jerusalem does not have a separate temple like the old city. The temple allowed for God's presence among a sinful people, with lines of division forbidding passage. These locations separated Gentiles from Jews, then Jews from Priests, and then Priests from the High Priest, and God from His people. All that is gone! There is no temple for God's presence with sanctified separation. The Lord God and the Lamb are its temple! The place has been replaced with the restored Presence! All is reconciled. Worship is unified, personal, intimate, continual, and universal. Rev 21:22

Restored Illumination: The old creation with its limited lights for the day and night (sun, moon, lamps) has been replaced with the continual, uninterrupted, never changing glory of God's presence Himself. The lights have been replaced with the restored Presence of the Creator and Redeemer, Father and Son. Because this glory is unending and un-ebbing, there is no night there! Rev 21:23

Restored Image Bearers: Sin ruined man's role as image bearer of God. Man lost his dominion, his royal position, and his glorious true representation as God's image on earth. That image was continually ruined as man continued to rebel leading to the division of worship (Cain offering unacceptable sacrifice) the division of family (Cain killing Abel) and the division of nations (Babel). But now, the image is restored, the royal position of dominion is restored, and the nations are finally and truly united in the worship of their One True God and Savior, reigning with Him forever. Rev 21:24-27; 22:3-5

Restored Eden: The description of the New Jerusalem now turns us back to Eden with the mention of ever open gates into the Presence of God. This then leads us to the river of the water of life (as Eden had a river), the tree of life, healing of nations, and the curse is forever removed. Rev 22:1-3

Restored Harmony: God's throne is in the city, and His servants serve Him with delight, and devotion, marked with His name and beholding His face. No more rebellion. Everyone bows the knee, bears the Name, serves the King, sees His face, reigns with 22:3-4

Restored Continuity: No more night that hides, confuses or darkens the vision of our Savior's face. The joys and blessings of our inheritance are unending. It is one eternal, unending, unceasing, uninterrupted face to face delight with our God in His unveiled glory! 22:5

O beloved, all this is yours in Christ. Can you hide your hope? Does not your heart thrill to the thought of what shall soon be yours, not just by foretaste, but in its fullness? May our light

shine before men that God may get glory as our words and deeds confirm His gospel in our witness to a world lost in darkness, alienation, hopelessness and despair.

SELF CHECK:

- 1) Is my hope showing? Does my face and words indicate an eager anticipation of the future I have in Christ?
- 2) When was the last time anyone asked me about my faith because of my hope in Christ?
- 3) Does my secure, eternal inheritance remove fear and anxiety about my earthly future?

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

2Cor 4:18 Phil 3:20 Titus 2:13 Heb 9:28 Heb 11:10 Heb 11:14 Heb 11:26 Heb 13:14
1Pet 1:13 2Pet 3:13 2Pet 3:12 2Pet 3:14 Rev 1:7

“O God of our salvation, Redeemer, Restorer, Savior, Conquering King, I worship you today and long to worship you before Thy face one day soon. Fill my heart with an ever increasing longing for that day when you make ALL THINGS NEW for all those whose names are in Thy book of Life. You are Lamb. You are Light, You are Life. You are Lord. You are all. I ask this in Thy saving, sanctifying, redeeming and restoring name, Amen.”

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.

Living with leaving in view.... Jn 9:4 Ron & Val

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable,
changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible
with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows,
spending our time on eternity,
owning nothing yet possessing everything
that matters and lasts.
We are Pilgrims in Paradox.
Welcome to THE JOURNEY