

Glimpses of Glory

Class #4

... no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him ...
1 Corinthians 2.9

... the new heavens and the new earth are the inheritance of the children. The universe is not important in itself. It's important as the playground of the children of God — and as the temple and the farm and the craft shop. God doesn't design his children for the universe. He designs the universe for his children. This was true from the beginning and it is true in the end, and it is especially true for his incarnate Son, the God-man Jesus Christ. All things were made for him.
Michael Reeves, "The Gospel in the New Heaven and the New Earth"

I. A Question to Answer

"What will life in the new earth be like?"

A. Free from the presence and effect of form of sin and decay.

*"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth,
and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.*

Isaiah 65.17

... according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

2 Peter 3.13

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more ... He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

Revelation 21. 1, 4

B. The whole creation will be fitted by God as a suitable dwelling for the glorified family of God.

*... the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption
and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*

Romans 8. 21

C. There will be continuity as well as discontinuity.

³⁷ And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain ... ⁴² So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body ... ⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed...

1 Corinthians 15. 37, 42-44, 50-51

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

1 John 3.2

See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.⁴¹ And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?”⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish,⁴³ and he took it and ate before them.

Luke 24. 39-43

D. Our great hope is not a new heaven and a new earth.

Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—¹⁰ that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,¹¹ that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Philippians 3. 8-11

The ultimate good of the gospel is not a redeemed body. The ultimate good of the gospel is not forgiveness, or redemption, or propitiation, or justification. These are all means to an end. The ultimate good of the gospel that makes the gospel good news, and without which none of these other gifts would be good news, is God himself — beheld in the glory of his crucified and risen Son, and enjoyed because of his infinite beauty, and treasured because of his infinite worth, and reflected because we have been conformed to the image of his Son.

John Piper, God is the Gospel

II. A Passage to Consider

¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,¹⁷ and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Romans 8. 16-25