

## **12 - God Dwelling with His People (Revelation 21-22)**

W. H. Auden said, "Nobody is ever sent to hell; he or she insists on going there." Could the same be said of heaven? Far from being "pie in the sky by and by" or a hedonistic longing for pleasure, John's vision of God dwelling with his people is the consummation of faith. Creation is renewed. Evil is finally excluded. The face of God is seen. But John's vision is, at the same time, unsettling to the normal view held by Christians about "last things." It goes not only beyond our imagination but even beyond our faith.

1. What do you think about when you hear the word heaven?

2. Read Rev. 21:1-8. What aspects of the "old order" must be eliminated before God can fully dwell with his people (Rev. 21:1-5)?

3. What appeals to you about John's description of our final dwelling place (Rev. 21:1-8)?

4. Rev. 21:7 states: "He who overcomes will inherit all this." What have you learned in Revelation about being an overcomer?

5. Read Rev. 21:9-27. What in the passage suggests that the new Jerusalem is nothing other than the church in its final, consummated life (Rev. 21:9-10)?

6. Why do you think John gives such a detailed description of the splendor of the city (Rev. 21:11-21)?

7. Why do you think a city (rather than a glorious garden like Eden) is used to describe our final home?

8. In Rev. 15:5 John saw the temple in heaven. In the new Jerusalem no temple is needed (Rev. 21:22). What has happened to make such a special sacred place unnecessary?

9. Read Rev. 22:1-21. Taken together, Rev. 21 and Rev. 22 describe a place of exquisite beauty. Yet what statements indicate that the real significance of the city lies in something else?

10. What are the requirements for entering the city (Rev. 21:6-7, 27; Rev. 22:12, 14)?

11. Why must these requirements be met during the times of testing we experience in this life?

12. As you review what you have learned in Revelation, what new insight do you have into the early Christian prayer "Come, Lord Jesus!"?