

Revelation 21: 1-8; "Behold I Make All Things New." A Communion Sermon for the New Year, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on January 3rd, 2010, in the Morning Worship Service.

Seeing that this is the first Sunday of the New Year of 2010, I thought that it would be fitting to preach to another sermon on the subject of the passing of time. Another 365 days have passed away and will never return to us again. And you and I are closer yet to the regions of eternity where our state before God will be fixed forever! What lies ahead for you will be determined by whether or not you have been made new in your heart by the Lord Jesus Christ to love God and to keep His commandments. What lies ahead for each one who believes in the Lord Jesus, will be a New Heavens and New Earth in which righteousness dwells,. What lies ahead, for those who reject Him and neglect so great a salvation, is a lake of fire and brimstone which is the second death. What lies ahead is really quite astounding - for certain things and people are going to pass away forever and certain things and people are going to be made new to all eternity. Christ will make all sinful things and all sinful people in this world to pass away into a place by themselves. And Christ will cause all thirsting things and believing things and people to made new and to endure forever. This is why He died, and this is why He rose from the dead. We will use these truths to remember our Lord by, when we sit down at His table in a few minutes. Christ is the central meaning of all of life and He will, when the Father sends Him back again a second time, bring our great salvation to its climax. We shall be made New. These things that we will speak of will come about in their time, for God has clearly promised them in His Word. They will come about and come to pass because of the greatness and the power and the purpose of God in Christ being completely fulfilled. These good things which Christ will bring to pass for His people will make each person who has ever believed in Christ to rejoice everlastingly, and we shall be made completely happy in the most holy sense of that word. So before we come down to sit at His table, let us open up this blessed and solemn truth by asking ourselves 3 questions this morning. 1st - What are the things which will pass away and where will they go? Secondly - What are the things to be made new and where will they be? And 3rdly - How can I be made new and know that I have been made new?

1st of all - What are the things that will pass away and where will they go?

The first thing that will pass away, as we have it here mentioned, is the First Heaven and the First Earth. That is; the present physical creation; the whole universe as it was created by God in the beginning shall have an end. And God Himself shall perform this mighty and awesome work. He shall not annihilate the heavens and the earth, but rather He shall purge and purify them of all sinful influence and elements. The whole fabric of the present physical universe is to pass away and be changed. We should know and understand that in the

beginning, God created the present heavens and earth, but that something has come in to it, to ruin and mar this first creation. And that something is sin; the sin of Adam and Eve in eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That one sin was transmitted to the nature and to the hearts of every man descended from Adam. It affects all of us here this morning. But in the Beginning God's work of creating was like all the work that He does. It was perfect. Turn with me to Genesis Chapter 1, verse 1. "In the Beginning God created the heavens and the earth." "The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep." "And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters." Now look at verse 6. "Then God said, 'Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.'" "Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so." "And God called the firmament Heaven." "So the evening and the morning were the second day." And the last part of verse 10 says that, "God saw that it was good." This is how the Lord God formed the physical heavens and earth. When the word "heaven" is capitalized in the 8th verse, I personally think that it is a mistake. (The NAS has correctly not capitalized it) I do not believe that we ought to be thinking of this as the heaven of heavens where God Himself dwells. That is another dimension altogether and should not be confused with the physical heavens that He created.

No, I want you to see this morning that God created the physical heavens and earth, and man as the center piece of it. But because of Adam's sin, sin entered not only his and Eve's hearts to cause the fall of man from his original righteousness, but that all the creation fell with him. And because the creation fell with Adam; because of his sin, we live in a fallen and dying world. This is the world which is passing away and the lusts thereof. This is the world which will finally pass away forever when our Lord Jesus returns. Turn with me to Romans Chapter 8, verse 18. "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God." "For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." "For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs until now." "And not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body." You see the redemption of our body is a very real part of our eternal salvation. When we believe in the Lord Jesus, we are saved as a whole person, but the accomplishment of that whole salvation of our whole person takes place in certain and definite stages. First we are born again, when our hearts are changed by grace by the Spirit's working and power. Our spirit is regenerated and given life in accordance with God's eternal purpose. We are raised from our spiritual death

in sins. The old things of our love of sin have passed away; Behold, all things are become new. We believe and we are justified. We are declared righteous in the sight of a holy God. We are clothed with the garments of salvation and we rejoice greatly in the finished work of Jesus Christ in His perfect life and sacrificial death.

But our body will, after a time, still grow old and die. It will pass away. It will die and will fall into the earth in burial or cremation or some other way of destruction, and eventually it will become dust again. But rejoice dear believer! You who believe in Jesus are buried with Him into death. You are planted in the likeness of His death. And even as He died physically, so you too must die physically. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. But the death that Jesus died, spiritually, He died to sin once for all. (Romans 6: 10) And so He conquered sin and death and rose from the dead physically. Because of His death, we shall never die spiritually; we who believe in Jesus. But we shall die physically because Adam's sin was connected with his physically eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. His was a physical eating which brought eventual death to his physical body. It was his eating, and our being his descendants, who would have done the same thing had we been there in his place, that brought about death to all men. In the day that Adam and Eve ate of this physical fruit, they died spiritually. And after 900 and some years, then, they died physically. But because of the promise of God and His mercy in Christ, they did not die eternally physically. And because of His mercy they were born again spiritually. They died in faith in the promise of Christ. And they are in Heaven now with Christ, awaiting the same Day of Christ's return which we await; the Day when all things sinful shall pass away. Because of Christ, we shall eventually conquer even physical death itself, when we will rise again at the last Day. We groan now; we who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, but we groan in the sure and certain hope of the Resurrection from the dead. Both we and this fallen world shall be purged, refined, changed and transformed in the New Heavens and New Earth. It will be the time of the restoration of all things. (Acts 3: 21) All that is related to sin and death will, on that great Day, pass away forever for the believer. This is what we celebrate as we come to the Lord's table today. This is what we look forward to. Because of Christ, all that is sinful, all that belongs to the old life of sin has begun to pass away in our conversion, and it will forever be left behind at His Second Coming.

Turn with me over to 2 Peter 3: 9-14. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up." "Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?" "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for New Heavens and a New Earth in which righteousness dwells." Oh dear Christian, will you not determine

before God in your heart that this year of 2010 you will not live the life of a worldling? Will you not resolve; that as you come to the Lord's table; that you will strive to be holy as you look forward to the day of your meeting your Lord face to face? Indeed, as we think about verse 8, it ought to cause us to greatly desire to repent of every known sin. That verse plainly states that those who are fearful and cowardly, those who are unbelieving and abominable and murderers, those who are immoral persons and sorcerers, those who are idolaters and liars; their part will be in the lake of fire. They will pass away eternally and perish forever in the lake of fire. But for those who know the Lord, He will wipe away every tear. There will be no more death, no more sorrow, no more crying, nor pain, for the former things will all have passed away. What a dramatic contrast this is! What manner of persons ought each of us to be, seeing that all of what this world is now, is destined to pass away?

You must remember too, that there will be no sea in this New Heavens and New earth. The sea will pass away. In the Beginning, it says in Genesis 1: 10, "And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas." If this removal of the sea in Revelation 21 is to be taken literally and physically, there will no longer be anything which separates the land masses on the recreated physical earth, and yet if I am not mistaken, the earth will be filled with rivers and fountains of water even as the garden of Eden was in the Beginning. All will be green and lush in the physical environment. There will be nothing that will separate God from men and nothing to separate a righteous man from other righteous men as the oceans and seas presently do. Spiritually speaking, there will be no more persecutors, no more of men killing each other to get their own way, no more people whose passions and rages control them. It is the only the wicked which are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt," it says in Isaiah 57: 20. But in that day, after the wicked are sent away to hell, there will be perfect peace beginning then, and lasting forever in the New Heavens and New Earth.

Then Secondly - We want to ask - What are the things to be made new and where will they be?

We have already seen the need of a new creation because of sin's marring and polluting effect upon the creation and our lives. You and I have been marred by sin, and because of that we must be made new by Christ or perish forever. God created you to live forever, and you shall live forever in the best of places if there is a change in your heart made by the grace of Christ. That grace will justify you, but it will also purge and purify you. This happens with every believer and this is also what will also happen with the physical creation. I want you to see and to understand that God created the heavens and the earth to endure forever. The creation bears the effects of Adam's sin and the collective sins of all mankind, but God has plans to refine her and to take all of her impurities away. The earth, He has made to be established forever. He will establish the earth forever through Jesus Christ our Lord. You find this confirmed in Psalm 78, verses 65-72, if you

will turn over there with me there. The context of these verses is God's judgments upon Israel for their sin of idolatry, and His intention was to establish through David and His descendant, the Lord Jesus Christ, an eternal kingdom. After talking about the judgments that God had brought upon Israel, giving His glory into the enemy's hand, and delivering His strength into captivity, in verse 61, he says in verse 65, "Then the Lord awoke as from sleep, like a mighty man who shouts because of wine." "And He beat back His enemies; He put them to a perpetual reproach." "Moreover He rejected the tent of Joseph, and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim, but chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion which He loved, and He built His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth which He has established forever." "He also chose David His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; from following the ewes that had young He brought him, to shepherd Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance." "So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands." You see; what God is saying here is that it was His purpose to have a people for His own possession who would not turn back from following Him to follow other gods. And He knew that He could not have such a people as this, unless He could raise up a Savior for Himself who would "build His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth which God had established forever." David would do this in an earthly sense, through His son Solomon. David was from the tribe of Judah and he purposed to build the temple, but could not go on to actually build it, because he was a man of war and bloodshed. Solomon would build the temple because he was a man of peace and great wisdom. But the Lord Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of both of them as David and Solomon were types of Him. The Lord Jesus fought the battles of the Lord at the cross. He conquered our greatest enemies through the shedding of His own precious blood. And after conquering these spiritual enemies of Satan, sin, and death; God raised Him from the dead. Now He is "building His sanctuary as the heights". He will make His Church spiritually to be a New Heavens and New earth, which will endure forever. He is bringing about a New Heavens and Earth in the building and establishing of the New Testament Church, where every believer will most certainly be saved from their sins and their heart will not turn away from following Him. The Lord Jesus Christ will build His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth which God has established forever.

It is also God's purpose that the earth be established forever; not in its present form as groaning under the burden of man's sin, but rather set free to experience the joyful reality of holy people living upon it everywhere. A New Heavens and a New Earth will one day appear after the last judgment, and we who believe will be able to clearly recognize it as a place where righteousness dwells. This will be the Day of the physical regeneration of the heavens and the earth. It will be the Day when the bodies of the saints will all be made new. And you and I need to know today that we have both a solemn and joyful responsibility to live in relation to that Day. If you have been made new in your spirit, your life should really reflect that change. You see; if you have believed in Jesus, you are one of God's saints.

And if you are being honest with yourself and with the truth of the Word of God; you will recognize that there are still the remnants of the sin which are still dwelling within you. You groan over this wretched condition; you mourn over it; you are burdened by this body of death and corruption that you still find within yourself. But you believe and you know that Christ is stronger than all of this. His resurrection power can make you more than a conqueror through Him who loved you. You believe with all your heart that someday you will be made completely new. But you also know what your responsibility is. It is that you should be learning to put off the old things of sinful attitudes and practices, and to put on the new things of Christ's attitudes and actions. If you will remember that your physical body will be made over into a new and glorious body; that it will be made like unto Christ's glorious body, and reunited to your spirit which will have already been made perfect, it will help you to live godly now. Your desire is to taste of these new things now. You want to experience the new things of Christ's grace and truth, more and more. You know that when you someday receive your new body, that you as the son or daughter of God shall rejoice greatly, and everlastingly, over the redemption of your body.

So, let me ask you then; why should you present your body to sin any longer? Why will you go on letting sin have dominion over any area of your life? You have been set free from sin by Christ. Will you not now present your body to do righteous deeds? You will if you are wise. You are a new creature, a new creation in Christ. You and I, as the saints of God, should be learning to work and wait for Christ. We should be, every day, working to not let sin reign in our mortal bodies. We work in relation to our faith; we should be waiting patiently for the things which God will reveal to us and in us, in regard to our salvation. We should be eager for them, but we should also realize that we have spiritual work to do in the meantime. We work in doing deeds of kindness and thoughtfulness in relation to other people. We share the gospel with our deeds. If we deeply appreciate the work that God has done for us in regeneration, and what He is doing for us in our sanctification, then we become less selfish in our view of life. God will help us, and He will give us what is lastingly good if we live in this way. This is living the life of perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. We have been raised to newness of life if we have believed in Jesus. We are being sanctified by the Spirit's working in our hearts. And God is perfectly faithful in His supplying us with grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. The question is; will you, in this New Year, be renewed in the spirit of your mind? Will you ignore all the propaganda of the world which says that following Christ is not important? Will you instead live your life according to the Word of God? Will you resist the schemes of the Devil which are designed to distract you and keep you from a pure devotion to Jesus Christ? Will you put on the New Man which is created according to God in true righteousness and holiness? Will you not realize that what you will do in this regard, with the rest of your time here upon the earth, will determine the degree of glory which will be yours, as a reward, in your resurrection from the dead? All of God's dear saints

will have glory. All will shine as stars in the brightness of the firmament. But some will shine brighter than others. Star will differ from star in glory. Daniel chapter 12, verse 3 says, "Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. Ask yourself as we come down to take the Lord's Supper; does my life shine like this? Am I turning increasingly to righteousness and turning others to righteousness as well? If we patiently wait we shall indeed rejoice in the reality of being made perfectly holy and perfectly happy. So come down to the front now and let us have dealings with our God.

3rdly - How do I know that I have been made new in my heart and spirit? And how do I know that I am being made new day by day as a Christian?

I believe that the way that we know, first of all, is by the fact that we have placed our faith in Jesus and we see Him making the changes in our life to bring us to be like Him. "Behold, I make all things new," Jesus says. These words are faithful and true to the one who knows that they could not, and cannot change their own heart. You who believe know this, and that is why you come to this table now. It is only Christ who could have taken away your sins; it is only Christ who could have changed your heart and make it new. You looked to Him and you found life. You looked to Him by faith and you found you were reconciled to God through Him. You now look to Him day by day and you realize that you are being re-made. You are being made new. The Father now sees you in Him. "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new." "Now all these things are from God...." You know that you are being made new day by day as a Christian who you have a thirst for Christ which brings you back to Him time and time again, every day. "I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts." Do you have this thirst to meet with Christ here at the table today? This coming to His table is not a ritual to Him. He desires to meet with you in your heart right now. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for Him and for righteousness.

And this is another way that you will know that you are being made new day by day. You are one who is trying to overcome. Verse 7 says, "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son." You know that you are being made new day by day when you have this great desire to overcome the world, the sinful tendencies of your flesh, and the schemes of the Devil to get you to, in some way, dishonor your God. A Christian is not one who rationalizes his or her lack of faith, or lack of obedience to God's word with the words, "That is just the way that I am." No, No! You are an overcomer. You are resolved that by the grace of God, which has come to you through the Lord Jesus Christ living for you and dying for you; that you will become a righteous person, a godly person, and one who is conquering their weaknesses and remaining sinfulness in your heart. You are resolved by the grace of Jesus Christ that even though you know that Satan is prowling around like a roaring lion seeking whom

he may devour that you will resist him, steadfast in your faith. You are resolved, by the grace of Jesus Christ that you will not be overcome by the philosophies, the pull, and the boastful pride of people around you who are trying to get you to live more for the things of the world than for God; you will overcome those repeated assaults to your be spiritually minded. This table is where you will have dealings with God and with Christ over these holy things. The Lord will be looking to have fellowship with you in your heart. May you make His heart glad today, and may He make your heart glad, even now, with His presence and wisdom and power coming to your soul in an increased measure as you partake of this, His Supper.