

Revelation 21:1-6

¹Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, because the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. And the sea no longer existed. ²And I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

³And from the throne I heard a loud voice that said, "Look! God's dwelling is with people. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them, and he will be their God. ⁴He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain, because the former things have passed away."

⁵The one who was seated on the throne said to me, "Look, I am making everything new!" He also said, "Write, for these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶And he said to me:

It is done.

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

To anyone who is thirsty,

I will give freely from the spring of the water of life.

Everything New

I.

In the course of your life, how many things have you broken? Undoubtedly there are some memorable ones: perhaps a tool you threw down in disgust when a project wasn't going quite right; something delicate that you were just trying to reposition, but your hand slipped and it shattered; a dozen eggs that you just dropped because you didn't want to make more trips as you carried groceries into the house.

Remember when you were little and received a prized new toy for Christmas? Before the day was even over the toy was broken.

Objects are not the only things to get broken. Sometimes people who you once considered to be good friends are no longer friends at all. Statistically, half or more marriages end in divorce; what initially seemed destined to be a lifelong love ends in bitter disappointment.

Perhaps you have had contracts that have been broken. A job opportunity that you began in good faith and great anticipation quickly turns out to be a dead-end. When buying or selling your home or car, everything seemed to be going well, but then the other side broke the contract.

Imagine how God must have felt when his perfect creation was broken by sin. One little violation of his single command to Adam and Eve created an avalanche of changes to the world. Adam and Eve had to be evicted from the Garden of Eden so they would not eat from the Tree of Life and live forever in the world that was permanently altered by sin. Thorns and thistles grew to make the growing and harvesting of food more difficult. Pain and sickness became a seemingly-natural part of life.

The damage to God's world go on and on and on. The whole Old Testament is peppered with the damages of sin. A few weeks ago we spoke about Noah and the worldwide flood; God had determined it to be necessary to destroy most of the world to keep his promise of the Savior intact. The history of the people of Israel, the people God chose to be the ancestors of Jesus, is filled with disobedience to God.

Sin does not end at the conclusion of the Old Testament. Peter denied Jesus. Saul persecuted Christians until Jesus confronted him on the road to Damascus. Christians lied about how much they were donating to the Lord from the sale of their property.

The list from both Testaments of the Bible and ever since is endless. Sin permeates human existence. Sin permeates the world. Sin broke God's creation.

When things get broken in my house I might try to fix them. Sometimes that works out ok. Most of the time the broken thing is never quite the same as it once was. The fix might be satisfactory to get by, but that often means that eventually—inevitably—the broken and repaired item will need to be replaced.

II.

Jesus, seated on the throne of heaven in John’s vision in Revelation, says: “Look, I am making everything new!” (Revelation 21:5, EHV).

God is an expert at restoration. He is not in the shop of an antique store carefully crafting replacement parts and refinishing furniture items to restore them to their original glory. God is the One who made all that exists in the first place. He did it, as the Latin theological term states, “ex nihilo,” which means, “out of nothing.” There was no substance that existed before God began his work of creation; there was no blob out there somewhere in the great beyond that he molded and shaped until it was our world. There was nothing other than God himself. Then, he created out of nothing. “Let there be,” and there was.

This is the God who says he is making everything new.

It starts with our new home. John reports in his vision: “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, because the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. And the sea no longer existed” (Revelation 21:1, EHV). The effects of sin have damaged this world beyond all recognition from what God originally created. The One who created will re-create.

Peter describes the process this way in one of his letters: “On that day the heavens will pass away with a roar, the elements will be dissolved as they burn with great heat, and the earth and what was done on it will be burned up...¹² That day will cause the heavens to be set on fire and destroyed, and the elements to melt as they burn with great heat.¹³ But according to his promise we look forward to new heavens and a new earth” (2 Peter 3:10, 12-13, EHV).

I have never moved in to a brand new house. Perhaps some of you have. Everything was nice and bright and clean and new. There is a certain smell of newness. Perhaps its something like that new-car smell.

Through his inspired writers God promises that what is flawed by sin will be completely eradicated as he makes everything new again. The details he doesn’t give us, but our new home might be a lot like the original Eden. Best of all, it will *stay* new. There will never be any needed repairs. Nothing will break or wear out.

III.

Everything new is more than the place where we will exist. “And I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Revelation 21:2, EHV). The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, is the Holy Christian Church—all believers of every time and place. You and I are a part of the bride of Christ. Everything new means that we will be prepared to be the perfect bride of Christ as he carries us over the threshold of our new home. Our bodies as well as our souls will be rejuvenated, restored, and renewed.

“And from the throne I heard a loud voice that said, ‘Look! God’s dwelling is with people. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them, and he will be their God’” (Revelation 21:3, EHV). The broken and battered relationships of this world will be replaced by our perfect relationship with God. Everything new again reminds us of the Garden of Eden where God walked and talked with our first parents. His dwelling with us up close and personal won’t be some temporary thing, but will last forever.

“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain, because the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:4, EHV). The most glowing terms available to human language can’t possibly explain the glories of the perfection of the new heavens and the new earth, so John describes it using negatives. Everything new means all the old problems of life will be gone.

John pictures God as a parent or grandparent lovingly wiping away the tears streaming down

a child's face. Death and sorrow and crying and pain are facts of life in a world plagued by sin. The only way John can describe the perfection of the new heavens and the new earth is the complete absence of all those facts of life. Just as we describe people "passing away" from this life, so John describes all these things that are part of the current order of things as the former things that will have passed away.

IV.

"The one who was seated on the throne said to me, 'Look, I am making everything new!' He also said, 'Write, for these words are trustworthy and true'" (Revelation 21:5, EHV). Some of what the Lord Jesus tells us through John's vision is hard to believe. Perhaps better stated it is *impossible* to believe. We cannot possibly imagine the wonders and glories of the "everything new" our God will make for us.

That's why he told John: "write this down." These are promises of God—the same God who had the power to create with just his divine word. Every one of his promises have proven to be trustworthy. Everything he has promised to do in the past he has done. Though this still lies in our future, faithful Christians believe that he will do exactly what he has promised.

"And he said to me: It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To anyone who is thirsty, I will give freely from the spring of the water of life" (Revelation 21:6, EHV).

Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Jesus is first and last. He was there at the beginning and he will be there at the end of time. Jesus *is* the beginning and the end.

"It is done." Jesus reminds us of his words from the cross. The purchase of our "everything new" home was costly. Peter described it this way: "You know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, not with things that pass away, such as silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like a lamb without blemish or spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19, EHV). It cost our Lord Jesus everything to purchase our new home. He gave up heaven itself. He was willing to have his eternal and perfect relationship with the Heavenly Father broken as he hung on the cross forsaken by God. He emptied himself to become a servant so that we might inherit God's kingdom and live and rule with him forever in glory. It all came to completion when Jesus announced from the cross: "It is finished." His promise of "everything new" is just as sure and certain as our salvation. It is the same God who has promised it.

"I will give freely from the spring of the water of life." That free gift of the salvation Jesus won for us is a gift from God that lasts forever. We did not earn or deserve it; Jesus *gave* it to us. It will never break. Unlike this present world, it will never pass away.

It is a humbling, awe-inspiring thought that our Lord Jesus did all this for us. Even now God has begun his work of making everything new. Paul says: "So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away. The new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17, EHV). As a believer, your old self has already passed away. The new has come. You are a new creation.

Our lives in this world are filled with all kinds of broken things. From relationships to contracts to tools and precious items, things get broken. We have varying degrees of success when we try to mend them. As far as what is broken in us, only God can fix it. Only God can carry out this work in us. God can mend what is broken and make it even better than it was before. Only God can make everything new. Amen.