

## Sermon for Easter 5 (Series C)

**Text: Revelation 21:1-5**

**Preached on 05-27-2007**

### **Introduction:**

Remember when you either built or purchased your first home? Everything was new and exciting. You put all kinds of work into it to make it as homey as possible. Maybe you painted a few rooms, put in some laminate flooring, or landscaped the backyard. No matter how much work you put into a home, however, at some point, as time goes on, most people outgrow their first home. Many decide to build a new home to really enjoy their retirement years. They call it their dream home. Whether you are building your first home, your retirement dream home, or any home in between, what does every new home start with? The first thing you need are some blueprints. Blueprints give us an idea of what the final structure of that home will look like.

In the same way, the book of Revelation gives us some blueprints of our future home. The Holy Spirit moved the Apostle John to draw up these heavenly blueprints at a time when he and his fellow believers were losing their homes due to all the persecution that was going on. No matter how bad things got, however, the blueprints they received from the Risen Lord gave them, and us, an idea of how beautiful and peaceful their future home would be. Looking over the blueprints of the new heaven and the new earth, our Dream Home,

***Series Theme: We Sing Our Alleluias to the Resurrected Lord!***

Today we sing our Alleluias because...

**Theme: The Resurrected Lord is Making Everything New!**

**Part I: A new home for us to live in**

**Part II: A new relationship for us to marvel in**

### **Part I: A new home for us to live in**

John looked and saw, **“A new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away” (v. 1)**. From these words we know that our present home will be destroyed. Peter confessed the same when he said, **“The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare... But in keeping with His promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the HOME of righteousness” (2 Peter 3:10, 13)**.

With the old heaven and the old earth laid bare, the Resurrected Lord will provide a new heaven and a new earth, a new HOME, for us to live in. John even saw us coming into it. He said, **“I saw the Holy City, the new**

**Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God” (v. 2).** Remember the, **“Great multitude” (Revelation 7:9)** that John saw standing before the throne in Heaven, singing their Alleluias to the Resurrected Lord? That’s what this, **“Holy City” (v. 2)** was. It wasn’t a literal city. Rather, it represented the Holy Christian Church, the camp of God’s true believers from every age all over the world. These believers were, **“Beautifully dressed” (v. 2)** in, **“White robes...washed in the blood of the Lamb” (Revelation 7:9, 14).** We were first clothed with those white robes in Holy Baptism! That was the day we were made, **“Holy and blameless” (Ephesians 5:27)** in God’s sight, **“Beautifully dressed” (v. 2)** and prepared to be taken to our new home!

**Application:**

Here in this world, our present home, we see the devastating effects sin has on everything God has made. Jesus spoke of: Wars and rumors of wars; earthquakes, famines, and other natural disasters; false teachers and teachings; persecution and an increase of wickedness (**Matthew 24:4-14**). Even though Jesus predicted these things over two-thousand years ago, we see them all happening today. The experts are once again forecasting a horrific hurricane season. We’ve already seen a series of tornadoes devastate homes and lives this Spring. Who’s at fault? We are! Because of our (mankind’s) disobedience, the world lost its perfection and has been, **“Groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time” (Romans 8:22).** Adam and Eve were barred from their first home; cut off from the tree of life; leaving them, and us, destined for a home of everlasting agony in Hell’s, **“Fiery lake of burning sulfur” (Revelation 21:8).**

BUT Jesus rescued us from that fate! He lived and breathed nothing but holiness, producing so much of it that there’s more than enough to cover our every unholy thought, word, and deed. Even in death Jesus thought only of making an all-sufficient payment for sin. He lived and died and now lives again to make us, **“Holy and blameless” (Ephesians 5:27)** in God’s sight. Being beautifully dressed in robes of righteousness, dripping with Jesus’ pure, precious blood, we can now face our Last Day with fresh confidence, knowing that we will be, **“Caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air...to be with the Lord forever” (1 Thessalonians 4:17)** in our new home.

**Transition:**

John’s present home was an isolated, lonely island. Thankfully, it was only a temporary home for him. Because the Resurrected Lord allowed

John to see his present home pass away, he was reminded of where his true home was. In addition to seeing the new home he would one day live in, John also saw...

## **Part II: A new relationship for us to marvel in**

Upon our arrival at our new home, we will hear some pretty amazing words. A loud voice from the throne will say, **“Now the dwelling of God is with men, and He will live with them” (v. 3)**. The word for “dwelling” could be better translated “tent” or “tabernacle.” We might think, for example, of the large tent, called the tabernacle, that God had the Israelites carry with them throughout their desert wanderings. Whenever the cloud they were following stopped, they had to set up camp. Getting the tabernacle up was a job and a half. When completed, the glory of the LORD descended on it, filling the Most Holy Place. The tabernacle, then, was where God lived with His people in the Old Testament.

Sounds nice, doesn't it? Not entirely! Yes, God could be found in the Most Holy Place, but only the High Priest was allowed to enter it. And even then he was required to carry with him the blood of animal sacrifices. Why couldn't anyone else approach God? Well some thought they could. Remember Korah, Dathan, and Abiram from the Old Testament? They were the ones who opposed Moses, claiming they were “holy enough” to be in God's presence. When they actually found themselves standing in His presence, however, **“The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them...and all their (earthly) possessions” (Numbers 16:32)**.

### **Application:**

Here in this world, our present home, the LORD demands 100% sin-lessness in order to reside in His presence. He says, **“Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy” (Leviticus 19:2)**. Jesus concurred with His Father's requirement when He said, **“Do this (love God and your neighbor perfectly 100% of the time) and you will live” (Luke 10:28)**. Of course, we can't do it! None of us can. Sin separates us from the Holy God. And Scripture says that, **“ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23)**. So I guess that we'll just have to try harder, right? Maybe we're only this high on God's ladder of perfection now, but if we just put in a little more time and effort, we can make it to the top. Unfortunately, just when we think we've done enough, some sin comes along and knocks us down a couple of notches. Sin spoils everything! It keeps us from loving our neighbor as ourselves, ruining

every relationship we've ever had. It prevents us from keeping God number one in our lives, ruining our relationship with Him as well.

BUT Jesus bridged the gap for us! He lived a perfect, holy life in our place. He died to make payment for our unholy lives, thereby crediting His righteousness to our account. So the relationship that was broken way back in the Garden; the image that was lost in the Fall (**Genesis 3**), HAS BEEN restored. Our sins ARE forgiven. Heaven IS our home. Once we are brought into it, God will pitch His "tent" to live with us (**v. 3**). Only this time, there will be nothing temporary about the Lord's stay with us. We will reside in God's presence, forever marveling in our new relationship with Him.

**Conclusion:**

No More Tears! That's what the bottle said anyway. The one next to it made a similar claim, boasting to be Tear Free. That's quite a promise! Guess where I saw it? On a bottle of baby shampoo! If only it were true! If only there really were a magic formula that took away all the pain, hurt, and disappointment that we experience in this world! I would actually be able to buy the island John was on when he gave us this blueprint of a new heaven and a new earth. Unfortunately, I don't see myself retiring to an island paradise anytime soon. Because such a Tear Free product doesn't exist!

Or does it? In all reality our LORD makes the same claim that baby shampoos make. He promises to, "**Wipe every tear from our eyes**" (**v. 4**). As long as we remain in this world, there will always be crying and sadness. When this world comes to an end, however, one thing that will be gone is our tears. Why will there be No More Tears in the new heaven and the new earth? Because everything that threatens our happiness; everything that brings tragedy and devastation on this world, making it a temporary home for us; everything that brings tears to our eyes, will be no more. John said, "**There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away**" (**v. 4**). For those who are left with any doubt or uncertainty about this, Jesus Himself promised, "**These words are trustworthy and true**" (**v. 5**). No doubt about it! The Resurrected Lord is making (1) a new home for us to live in and (2) a new relationship for us to marvel in. Either way, *The Resurrected Lord is Making Everything New!* Now that is something to celebrate! That gives us something to sing about! *We Sing Our Alleluias to the Resurrected Lord!* Amen!