

5th Sunday of Easter
May 15, 2022
“Everything new!”
(Revelation 21:5)
By Rev. Ed Weber

“Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, today’s text for this 4th Sunday of Easter is from our Epistle reading Revelation 21:5.

“Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”

Here ends our text.

What’s new in your life? That’s a question we sometimes ask each other. And the reply is very often “Same old, same old”.

Of course, we like “the new”. We strive after new, are quick to talk about anything new, and let others know if there is something new in our lives.

So our new news that we share might include: New shoes, new clothes, new hairstyle, new job, new car, new home, new TV, new phone, new computer, new hip, new knee, new dog (my sister shared photos of her new dog yesterday), new cat, new school (my niece is going to be an Aggie), new teachers, new restaurant to eat at (Mercedes is getting a few new ones, a Sonic at the old 10/10 store, and the other I learned from my barber is the one with the cow saying “eat mor chikin”. Maybe they’ll teach that cow to spell “More chicken” someday.

Yes, we can keep adding to the list of what’s new – new tractor, new golf clubs, new movie, new roof, new boyfriend or girlfriend, new baby, new sports team, new password, new interest rates, new president...well maybe in two years,

The thing about “new” is that it never stays “new”. The shine wears off. Things wear out and need to be replaced. Texas stadium, shiny and new in 1971, “with a hole in the roof so God could watch His favorite team” got imploded in 2008. 40-year shelf life. Things like cassette and floppy discs become obsolete and collect dust.

Man's best efforts to make things new again always fail. But he keeps trying. He cannot make himself new again and will himself return to the dust from which he was created. For he strove after what was forbidden by God but what seemed new and good to eat in the garden of Eden.

And since then, we know that all creation groans because of sin.

“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 together until now.” (Romans 8:21-22)

God's demolition of the earth and all that is in it, and all of man's works that he strove after will be absolutely destroyed. So Peter tells of what God will do on the last day.

“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” (2 Peter 3:10)

Five chapters before our text in chapter 16, the judgements of God are described against sinful mankind as 7 bowls of plagues that are poured out. And yet, there were some that did not repent and give God glory.

But, Peter reminds you and me believers in Christ, that we should always be repentant and conduct our lives with godliness as we await the final day. Because, once and for all God will destroy all that is evil and make new forever a new heavens and earth.

11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 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? 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” (2 Peter 3:11-13)

Yes, it is God Himself who speaks from His throne in Revelation and repeats what He has said throughout the Old and New Testaments – He will make all things new!

All things means the world itself will be even better than when God first created it. And, Christ's bride, the holy Christian Church, the New Jerusalem will be glorified beyond what we can begin to imagine.

Yes, even now God has renewed our souls. We are new creations in Christ as we know from 2 Corinthians 5:17.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

And we know that our new life, our regeneration, is a gift from God given to us in our baptisms as Titus 3 tells us.

“not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” (Titus 3:5-7)

God makes us heirs! Heirs of all that He will make new!

And to keep us strong in this faith until that day when He creates the new heavens and earth, He has given us His gift of the New Testament in Christ's blood. Jesus gives to us this day His very body and blood in, with and under the bread and the wine.

Yes, Jesus, our Good Shepherd, abides with us through His Word and Sacraments. And we have communion with God through faith given to us by the Holy Spirit. But even this communion will be made new on the last day. For all that is evil in us and corrupt, all that causes tears of sadness, all that keeps us from standing in the very presence of God will be removed and we will be made new!

And so verse 3 of this 21st chapter of Revelation describes this new intimate relationship.

“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.”

It will no longer be a long-distance relationship where we see dimly. But God promises that God will dwell WITH His people. God Himself will be WITH them and be their God. And in the very presence of God, there can be no sin so that...

“God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” (Revelation 21:4)

Christ’s death and resurrection has made this future, this new future possible for all who would repent and believe in Him. Christ finished His work on the cross of paying for the sins of all people so that a new heavens and earth could be created for His New Jerusalem, His glorified bride, you and me.

It is finished Jesus the Lamb of God said on the cross. And the Father says so again from His throne in verse 6.

“And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.”

The Alpha and Omega says it’s done. He says He will freely give to all who thirst the water of life. Eternal life with God!

Why would anyone reject this and spend an eternity apart from God in torment? Why would anyone rather store up earthly treasures that grow old and reject God’s commands. But, many will and God will not allow anything corrupt in His new heaven and earth as He says in verse 8.

“But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

The second death is eternal torment with the devil in the lake of fire for all unbelievers.

Yes, God’s saints on earth die the first death. But it has lost its sting. So we are comforted by these words in Revelation 14.

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ”

“Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.” (Revelation 14:12-13)

Their death is a blessed death in the Lord for they are washed by His blood. So Psalm 116:15 tells us, **“Precious in the sight of the Lord Is the death of His saints.”**

Yes! **“He who overcomes shall inherit all things.”** God promises in Revelation 2:10, **“Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”**

All things new! All things inherited! **“I will be his God and he shall be My son.”**
v.7

In God’s new heavens and earth He gives everything to His sons and daughters!
How can this all be possible?

“Write, for these words are true and faithful,” God Himself says so from His throne. Amen.

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your heart and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)