

5th Sunday of Easter
“The Big Beautiful Truth declared to you by the Holy Spirit!”
Revelation 21:1-5
May 18, 2025
Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for this 5th Sunday of Easter Sunday is
from Revelation 21:1-5

“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “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. 4 And 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.”

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.”

So far the text:

Maybe you’ve noticed that during this Eastertide leading up to the Ascension and Pentecost, we’ve had some readings from the Book of Revelation for our Epistle readings. We’re in the 3rd year of the three-year lectionary series, series C, and these readings especially lead us to see what God promises for His people in the future.

From the throne, God speaks. And He calls out for our immediate attention. “Behold”, He says. And what a sight to behold! For God shows us what is coming in our future...all things new. A new order...for the former things...the former order has passed away.

It is so wonderful that it must be written down and preserved for all to know, to ponder and to be strengthened. **“Write, for these words are true and faithful.”**

There is nothing of bigger importance than what John is told to write. There is nothing more beautiful than the future of which John is told to describe. There is nothing more true and faithful, for these words come from God Himself who cannot lie. This is... simply put... the Big, Beautiful Truth declared by God for you, the bride of Christ, the new Jerusalem.

All that we have been hearing in Revelation these past Sundays, and also what we will hear in the next two Sundays, is the glorious result of the work of the Bridegroom for His Church. This is what we see now through the empty tomb!

All the sorrow of Jesus' passion, crucifixion, and death of which Jesus foretells to His disciples will be turned to joy after the little while has ended. The tears which Mary Magdalene cried when she believed that the Lord's dead body was stolen, were turned to joy when she hugged the Jesus' resurrected and glorified body. He is alive and has conquered death!

This is the new song of which we heard in Revelation 5 two Sundays ago. This is the big beautiful truth of the Gospel!

**“You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals;
For You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings
and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”**

Even now, with all the sorrows of this earth as it is presently...and in the new heavens and earth that are coming, where there will be no more tears. For we heard last Sunday in chapter 7 of Revelation this big, beautiful truth:

“These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. 16 They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Yes, the Good Shepherd, who laid down His life for the sheep, the Lamb who was slain, will dwell in the very presence of His people. And there will only be pure joy!

Today's reading from Revelation repeats these words that there will be no more tears. The tribulations of this world, our little while will end and there shall be no more death, sorrow or crying.

Even as we await this glorious new heavens and earth, this new order of things to come, God is with us through His Word and Sacraments, Immanuel, God with us. This is the big, beautiful truth that is ours especially now. For we cling to God's Word in this world where there is so much evil, in our own hearts and in the world around us, and where the devil works hard to destroy all.

In this present earth, there are enemies of Christ and therefore of us also. They are listed in our reading from Revelation.

“the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars...”

But in the new heavens and earth, none are present. Why? Revelation tells us that they

“shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

This is the big, beautiful truth that gives us much comfort! The Holy Spirit is the antithesis of the lies of the devil and all his followers. For the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son speak of one accord and always tell the truth. In our Gospel from John 16, He is called the Spirit of truth. It is God's very nature to speak only the truth and His Word cannot be broken. And that is great comfort for us to have such a solid truth to stand on a world filled with deception.

It is a great comfort to hear God's Word tell us that the Holy Spirit will guide us in all truth and make known and declare what the truths that lie in the future.

The Holy Spirit guides us to remember that in our baptism our sins have been washed away, we have been given a new spirit, and a new robe of Christ's righteousness covers us.

“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

The Holy Spirit guides us to eat of the green pastures of the Lord's Supper to receive Christ's body and blood for our forgiveness. Yes, God dwells with us sinners through His Word and Sacraments to daily restore us from all the sins we have committed. This is our big, beautiful present truth which the Holy Spirit graciously gives us. This is the truth that the Gentiles in Joppa also heard from Peter that God loves all people!

“God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.” Acts 11:18

And the Holy Spirit of truth guides and comforts us to know this beautiful verse from **Romans 8:18**

“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.”

And John tells us in his first epistle these big, beautiful words.

“2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

Our congress is busy working through what President Trump has called the “Big, Beautiful Bill” which he hopes will begin the golden age of prosperity for America.

Some are for it. Some are against it. Tonight it will be voted on in the House. It's written by fallible people like you and me. We pray that God would give our leaders good wisdom to do what is best for our prosperity in this present time. We know that God gives us our daily bread and is with us at all times...during whatever bill comes and goes and changes in our country.

For He has given us the unchangeable truth of His love for us in Christ who has turned the sorrow of death and the grave into the joy of the resurrection and eternal life in a new heavens and new earth!

What does God say to you and me today?

“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. 7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.”

It's done! Christ has accomplished our salvation. That's big! The Alpha and Omega has spoken. And He offers this gift of salvation to all people. All who thirst and are parched because of sin are offered the fountain of water of life. And you will thirst no more! You shall be God's son or daughter now and forever, inheriting all things from God! Wow! That's God's Big Beautiful truth for you! Amen

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