

ENDINGS

4. Redemption

Start off with feedback from Sunday's message. What did those that were there - or those that have caught up online - take away from it? What encouraged them, what informed them and what challenged them?

Read Revelation 21

Then I saw 'a new heaven and a new earth,'^{1a} for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ²I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

- How easy or difficult have you found the book of Revelation in the past (if you've looked at it)? Does understanding a few of the 'figures of speech' make it easier to understand?
- **New Earth.** God's not going to reject the Earth, He's going to renew it. How does this change the way we think about this present life? Are Christians sometimes in danger of caring less for this world and its challenges because they're expecting to be taken out of it to live in heaven? Why is this kind of 'escape pod' thinking unhelpful?
- What do you think an earth with 'no more sea' will look like?
- **New Heaven.** How does the image of God's dwelling place in Revelation impact you? How do you feel about the Biblical progression of temple, to Jesus, to vast heavenly city?
- v8, v27. In the midst of all this promise, there's still the sobering reality of judgement for those who refuse God's loving offer. How do these verses fit with what we learnt last time round about judgement and God's consuming fire?
- The point of thinking about God's future plans is to help us know how to live right now. What difference does all this focus on the life to come, heaven coming to earth and judgement, make to your faith for now? What does it motivate you to do? What hope does it give you in hard times?
- How can we work towards the future coming of God's Kingdom on earth now?

Big Idea: 'One day God will make all things new. Right now our job is to invite all people to come and enjoy this new life eternal.'

Pray together in small groups about the things we've learnt and studied. Pray for friends that don't know Jesus and haven't submitted their lives to him. Pray for effectiveness in being part of a bride that bids people, 'Come!'