

Revelation 21:1-8

“REAL Happily Ever After!”

Scripture: Revelation 21:1-8

Memory Verse: Revelation 21:4: *“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.”*

Lesson Focus: These verses give us a picture of what heaven will actually be like. We will contrast it with the silly ideas of heaven that we see in pop culture, but also stress that it is God’s REAL happily-ever-after and not a fairy tale. As we also look at the reality of hell, we will challenge the kids to repent and believe in the gospel!

Activities and Crafts: New Heaven and Earth Coloring Picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Activity for 1st/2nd Grade: Together Forever with God Craft

Starter Activity: Kids Ideas of Heaven

People have a lot of different ideas of what they think heaven is like. In cartoons and movies we usually see silly ideas about heaven being a **boring** place where we sit on clouds and play harps. * If that is what heaven is really going to be like, no one would actually want to be there! *

I’d like to hear what YOU think heaven is going to be like! * (**Teachers:** Consider bringing in a ball or a balloon or something to pass around and have kids take turns sharing what they think *)

Thank you all for sharing your ideas! * Some of these were fun ideas, but it is very important that we stick to what God has told us about heaven and the afterlife.

Q: Where do we go to learn what heaven is actually going to be like?

A: That’s right, the Bible!

We are in one of the last chapters of Revelation and of the whole Bible today. All throughout this study of Revelation *, we have called this book a “*Show & Tell*” book. God has been SHOWING John the disciple things that will happen in the future so that he can then TELL believers like you and me!

Well, what we read today is John’s very last “*Show & Tell*” session for us. And it might be the very best one because he is going to “*Show & Tell*” us what heaven and eternal life is actually going to be like.

And what we are going to see is REAL “happily ever after”. Let’s take a look!

Bible Study:

Revelation 21:1: The first thing John describes is a new heaven and new earth. The first one, the world we are living in today, is done. * It is going to be replaced with a new and perfect world created by God, the setting for this REAL happily-ever-after. *

This is exactly what God had promised before! **Read 2 Peter 3:13.** Righteousness means EVERYTHING good/wonderful and NOTHING bad/sad!

Q: Who was finally defeated and crushed in our study last week? A: Satan, the enemy of God and all of God's people! All sin, evil, and everything wrong has now been defeated and destroyed! And you can't have REAL happily-ever-after with any of that around!

Revelation 21:2: John describes this New Jerusalem which appears to "come down" out of heaven to be the capital city on this new and perfect earth. Bible experts think this is the place where people who die in faith go now. * And then when God creates the new earth, all believers will come down with Him to live on this new earth forever!

But guess what! That means that believers will have new and resurrected bodies with which to live, explore, and dwell on this new earth!

Q: How many of you like to explore? * A: Well, it seems that there will be a whole new earth, beautiful and mysterious, for us to explore and learn about! And what kind of body will we have you may ask? **Read Philippians 3:20-21.** Our current flawed bodies will be **transformed** into a perfect body a lot like what Jesus had when He rose from the dead. *

I often wonder what our resurrected bodies will be like. Will we be old/young? Can we fly/float? The Bible doesn't give us detail. It just tells us that Jesus's resurrected body is the prototype or example. * You will still be you, just a whole lot better "you"!

Revelation 21:3: This is what God has been working to bring about from the very beginning: A REAL happily-ever-after, where people, no longer ruined by sin, love Him and are with Him forever. *

Q: How many of you have things, maybe pets or stuffed animals, that you like to snuggle? * (**Teachers:** Consider bringing in something you like to snuggle from home!) Well, I think it wouldn't be a stretch to consider heaven being a place where we are "snuggly" with God, our Maker, forever!

Revelation 21:4: This wonderful verse tells us of several "NO MOREs" of the new heavens and earth. Let's read this again and listen carefully to what God says there will be "no more" of. (**Teachers:** Consider writing "NO MORE" on the whiteboard and then have the kids help you list them underneath as you slowly re-read the verse)

Wow! No more sadness! No more dying! No more pain! No more COVID! No more hurt feelings! No more being alone! One famous author described it as "*Everything sad is going to come untrue!*" Sign me up for that!

Revelation 21:5: John is reminded this is “*Show & Tell*”! He needs to keep writing so people can know! I wonder if he is just so stunned in astonishment at the beauty and greatness of this new eternal home awaiting him and all believers that he stopped to gaze at it all. * God nudged him and reminded him he is being shown this so that can tell us!

But notice that God says that these words are FAITHFUL and TRUE. You know what that means? This is REAL happily-ever-after. This is NOT make-believe or a fairy tale. * A lot of grown-ups today think this is just a fantasy. Don’t let that happen to you as you grow up! As you get older, hold onto your child-like faith/trust in God that Jesus wants everyone to have! (see **Mark 10:15**) *

Revelation 21:6: God says it is all done! All of His promises He made throughout the Bible have been fulfilled and we’ve come to the end of the story! Yet we also have an echo of what God has done throughout the Bible: Invite people to turn away from their sin, admit their need for Him, and come to Him. *

Q: How do you know that you are thirsty? A: Your body aches. It needs that water! In the same way, God designed us with a thirst and yearning in our hearts that only He can satisfy. Nothing in this world will satisfy this longing. Only He will! *

Revelation 21:7: God promises those who overcome will inherit all of the blessings of this new heaven and new earth, including being “snuggly” with Him forever!

Q: What does it mean to overcome? A: To conquer and gain victory over sin and the devil. We’ve heard this many times throughout this book...so how do we overcome?

Read 1 John 5:5. By faith! By believing/trusting/following Jesus, you WILL overcome.

Now it would be really easy to just end our lesson right here on v. 7. But that doesn’t tell the whole story. All of the wonderful REAL happily-ever-after things we have read about are not experienced by everyone, but only believers. What about unbelievers?

Revelation 21:8: They will have their part in the lake of fire (hell) forever. You know what else we see in movies and cartoons a lot? That hell is a place where people have fun and get to do whatever they want.

Q: But again, where do we go to learn what hell is really going to be like? * A: The Bible! It is NOT a place of fun. It is a place of punishment where everyone will get what they deserve for their sin and rebellion against God.

Key Point: Now we’ve come to the end of the story and we see the two places that everyone will go to after they die. Which place do you think YOU deserve to go to? * If we are honest, we will realize that what we deserve is the lake of fire. Why? Because we have sinned. Verse 8 describes each of us, more or less (i.e. have you ever told a lie?).

That is why we need Jesus! He alone washes our sin away so that we can enter His REAL happily-ever-after. *

Believers: Be excited about this future place. Continue to walk with Jesus EVERY DAY!

Unbelievers: Will you turn from your sin and believe in Jesus today? *

Classroom Time Afterwards: Consider going deeper in discussion with your kids by looking at the thief on the cross. Study **Luke 23:39-43** as a group. First set the stage for them. Jesus is dying on the cross and there are two convicted criminals on each side of Jesus.

Luke 23:39: Notice that the first criminal is mocking Jesus. He is only thinking about himself.

Luke 23:40-41: The second criminal, however, begins to believe in Jesus and defends Him. This is what happens when we believe in Jesus. We will honor Him!

Luke 23:42: The second criminal then comes to Jesus asking for forgiveness and grace.

- Q: Now does this criminal deserve forgiveness and grace?
- A: NO! He is guilty of heinous crimes and deserves punishment.

Luke 23:43: What? Wow! Notice what Jesus did not say:

- “Sorry, your sin is too great.”
- OR “As if! How could a sinner like you expect to be part of My kingdom?”

Jesus welcomed him into Paradise! Into His REAL happily-ever-after. Why? Because of grace. This criminal believed in Jesus Christ and received His grace. You can too! Any of you, like this criminal, want to receive Jesus Christ’s forgiveness today?

ABCs of salvation:

- Admit that you are a sinner and have broken God’s law (1 John 1:8)
- Believe that Jesus Christ took your sins upon Himself when he died on the cross and that He has taken your punishment upon Himself (John 3:16, Romans 5:8)
- Confess your sin and that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9-10)

Teachers: If any of your kids respond to this gospel call, please be sure to pray with them and talk about it with their parents afterwards.

Bring It Home

Download at: <https://rmcalvary.org/volunteering/childrens-ministry/family-resources/>

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Teachers/Parents: We began our lesson by deconstructing a lot of the silly ideas we see about heaven and the afterlife in pop culture. Have you ever thought heaven was just a place where you sit on a cloud and polish your halo? In our lesson we stressed the importance of letting the Bible teach us what heaven will actually be like. What are some ideas that you have for heaven? Are they biblical or just your ideas?

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Someone once said that, *“The way you live now is completely controlled by what you believe about the future.”* Do you agree with that? Discuss how what you truly believe about eternity affects your goals, loves, and motivation in this life.
- 2) In **Revelation 21:1**, John describes this new heaven and new earth. Read **2 Peter 3:13**. What will reign on this new heaven and earth?
- 3) **Read Revelation 21:3**. In class we taught the kids that the best part of heaven is that we will be “snuggly” with God forever, so to speak. There will no longer be any reason to hide from Him. What are some things that you like to “snuggle”?
- 4) In class we called **Revelation 21:4**, our memory verse, the verse of “NO MOREs”. What “NO MORE” in this verse is the most exciting for you to think about as you imagine what eternal life will be like?
- 5) In **Revelation 21:5**, how did Jesus describe the description of heaven? This means that it is REAL happily-ever-after and NOT a fantasy!
- 6) Read **Revelation 21:8**. In class we also deconstructed silly ideas from the world on what hell is going to be. Why is it important to know what the Bible teaches about hell?
- 7) Which place do you think you deserve to go to? Heaven or hell? Why? **Read Ephesians 2:8-9**.