

Place: Lurgan Baptist 28:3:2017

## THE FINAL FOCUS

Reading: Revelation 21:1-8

### 4. ON THE DESTINATION OF THE REDEEMED

In one of the eastern cities of the United States of America there was a railway engineer who had been on the railroad for many years. One day he was addressing a crowd of men who worked for him and he said, “ *Men I can't begin to tell you what Jesus Christ has meant to me. Years ago every night when I would finish my run I would pull open the whistle and let out a blast as we came round the curve. I would look up to a small hill where there stood a little white cottage, and there would be a little old man and a little woman standing in the doorway. I would lean out of the cab window and we would wave at each other. And as my engine would go shooting into a tunnel the old couple would turn and go back inside and the little old woman would say to the little old man, ‘ Thank God, father Bennie is safe home tonight.’* ”

*But at last the day came when we took mother out and laid her away. Then each night as I came around the curve and blew the whistle the little old man would be at the door. I would wave to him and he would wave to me. Then as my train shot through the tunnel he would turn and go slowly back into the cottage and say, ‘ Thank God, Bennie is safe home tonight.’* By and by the time came when we carried father out, too. Now men, when I finish

my run, although I pull open the whistle and let out a blast, there are no dear ones to welcome me home. But when my work on earth is done, when the last run has been made and I have pulled the throttle and the whistle for the last time, as I draw near Heaven's gate, I know I shall see that same little old couple waiting there for me. And as I go sweeping through the gate I will see my dear old mother turn to my dear old father and hear her say, ‘ *Thank God, father, Bennie is safe home at last. Home.* What does that word mean to you ? For me, it is synonymous with love, acceptance, comfort and security. Home is a place where my needs are met. Home is a place where I can take my burdens and lay them down. Home is home because the one we love best is there. Now while I praise God for my ‘ *earthly,*’ home I am aware that even now that I am not really ‘ *home,*’ yet because of Christ's promise to me, “ *In my Father's house are many mansions if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also.* ” ( Jn 14:2-3 )

I wonder has your entire life been a series of struggles ? Have you been more sick than well ? More defeated than successful ? More sad than happy ? Do you feel defeated that because aftertime a lifetime of struggle, all you have to look forward to is death and a cold grave ? My .... look up. The Lord Jesus is preparing a heavenly home that ‘ *eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither hath entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*’ ( 1 Cor 2:9 ) Now we can this heavenly home ‘ *heaven.*’ Now immediately we mention

the word heaven we are met with a barrage of objections. For example, Dr. Alfred White-head said, “ *As for the Christian theology, can you imagine anything more appallingly idiotic than the Christian idea of heaven ?*” The modernist does not believe in a literal heaven or hell, but limits them both to this earth. In other words, life’s good experiences are “ *heaven,*” and its bad moments “ *hell.*” Now without him being aware of it his Bible-denying philosophy does contain a very potent truth. The facts are that this world is indeed the only hell the believer will experience, and the only heaven the unbeliever shall ever know. My .... make no mistake about it. Heaven is real. Christ said so. Heaven is populated by real people, entered by real gates, travelled by real streets. It is a real place where God lives. It is the real place from which Christ came into this world. And it is the real place to which Christ returned at His ascension. **Really.** Interestingly, enough the Bible teaches that there are three heavens. Paul tells us that he was caught up into the “ *third heaven.*” ( 2 Cor 12:2 ) A third heaven, implies quite logically that there must be a first and second heaven.

### **(1) THE FIRST HEAVEN IS THE AERIAL HEAVENS:**

This refers to the lower atmosphere that immediately surrounds the planet earth. It is the lower strata where clouds form, birds fly and airplanes travel. Jeremiah could say, “ *I beheld, and lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled.*” Isaiah says “ *For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven.*”( Jer 4:25 Is 55:10 )

### **(2) THE SECOND HEAVEN IS THE STELLAR HEAVENS:**

The home of the sun, moon and stars. Do you recall God's Word to Abram, “ *Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them.*” ( Gen 15:5 Is 13:10 )

### **(3) THE THIRD HEAVEN IS THE ETERNAL HEAVEN:**

The place where God lives, the highest heaven of all. This is the divine dwelling place on high. Solomon speaking to God in prayer said, “ *Hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place.*” ( 1 Kings 8:30 22:19 ) The psalmist speaking of God says, “ *For He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary, from heaven did the Lord behold the earth.*” ( Ps 102:19 ) This is where heaven is .... **up.** Scripture refers to heaven more than five hundred times and the word heaven, is found more frequently in Revelation than any other New Testament book. Indeed Revelation alone mentions heaven about fifty times. Here in these closing chapters the apostle John is given a guided tour through heaven. Now while there are differences among premillennial scholars concerning events in these last two chapters of the Book of Revelation, I think we can safely say this. That these saints in this city are in their eternal state and that this city enjoys its eternal glory. Here is brought before us our eternal home. Four things seem to flow out of these closing chapters.

## (1) A PLACE THAT IS INCONEIVABLE 22:1-27

Christ did not say that he was going to prepare ‘*a state of mind.*’ When Christ told His disciples that He was going to prepare a place for them He was referring to this city. Now think about this. If Christ created this world in only six days how awesome and stunning must this city be if He has been working on it for two thousand years. Now God has prepared this city to become the new capital of the eternal state. Is this not what Abraham looked for? Abraham never built a house out of stone, brick or mortar. He lived in tents ‘*for he looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God.*’ ( Heb 10:16 ) What Abraham anticipated, John actually saw. How does John see this city? Well, do you see here,

### (a) *The DESCENT of the New Jerusalem: 22:1-8*

John sees a sight that must have startled him like something out of a Star Wars film. He says in ( 21:2 ) “*And I John ....*,” What does John see? The holy city, the new Jerusalem, descending coming down out of heaven. But you say, is the Lord married to a city? No, allow me to illustrate. You see, when you talk of a city, you speak of the place or the people. For example I might say to you, ‘*Belfast is a beautiful city.*’ But I might also say, ‘*Belfast is a friendly city.*’ The first time I am talking about the place, the second time I am talking about the people. Is this not what the Lord is doing here? From the viewpoint of ***the place*** this is a literal city with actual walls and gates and streets and buildings, rivers and trees ( 21:9-21 ) My .... God has prepared this city to become the new capital

of the eternal state. This is Heaven’s capital. ( 21:16 ) But from the viewpoint of ***the people***, the new Jerusalem is the Lamb’s wife. ( 21:9-10 ) Can you imagine a holy city? A community where no one lied, no shady business deals were ever discussed, no unclean films or pictures were seen. You see here is a community that is blessed by,

### **The Presence of God:**

Look at ( 21:3 ) Look at ( 21:3) The word translated “*tabernacle*,” ( skene ) literally means, “*the place where God dwells.*” The Bible gives an interesting record of the dwelling places of God. Do you recall God tabernacled with Adam and Eve in the garden in close intimate fellowship? ( Gen 2:16 ) Then, God tabernacled with the patriarchs. He spoke directly to Abraham as a man would talk to his friend. ( James 2:23 ) Then the Lord tabernacled, with Israel in the wilderness where He appeared as a pillar of fire by night and as a cloud by day. ( Exod 13:21 ) My .... God dwelt with Israel in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple. ( Ex 25:22 ) Then the Lord Jesus, came to earth and “*tabernacle*,” among us. ( Jn 1:14 ) Today, God does not live in man-made temples ( Acts 7:48-50) but in the bodies of His people and in the church ( 1 Cor 6:19 Eph 2:21 )

But in the eternal state, God will move into this city and live with all believers in intimate, continuous fellowship. Isn’tt ( 21:3 ) so emphatic, “*And God Himself ....*,” This is not merely His representative or delegate, but God Himself. “*I beseech Thee*,” begs Moses “*shew me Thy glory.*” ( Ex 33:18 ) “*O God*,” says the psalmist, “*early*

*will I seek Thee, to see Thy power and Thy glory.”*  
( Ps 63:1-2 ) I tell you heaven will be peopled with millions of bright presence's, but all eyes will be fastened on and fascinated by the King in His beauty.

*Father of Jesus, love's reward  
What rapture will it be  
Prostrate before Thy Throne to lie  
And gaze and gaze on Thee*

But this community will be blessed,

### **The Absence of Grief:**

“ *And God shall wipe away .... passed away.*” ( 21:4 )  
There will be no more funerals, no more graves, no more hospitals, no more broken homes, no more broken hearts. There will be no graves on the hillside of glory. No obituary columns. No funeral processions over the streets of gold. Do you see what John says in ( 21:27 ) ? My .... In the New Jerusalem there will be no abortion clinics: no divorce courts: no brothels: there will be no pornography: no dial a porn: no teenage suicide: no aids: no cancer: no rape: no missing children: no gay rights marches: no drug problems: no murders. There will be no tears, no suffering, no separation, no starvation. There will be no accidents, no emergency departments, no doctors, no nurses and hallelujah no dentists. There will be no heart monitors, no stents, no false teachers, no false teeth, no locks and no traffic wardens. What is it that you cry over now ? Disappointment. Grief. Pain. Sorrow. Loneliness. There won't be any of those things in heaven.

*There's no disappointment in heaven  
No weariness, sorrow or pain  
No hearts that are bleeding and broken  
No song with a minor refrain  
The clouds of our earthly horizon  
Shall never appear in the sky  
But all will be sunshine and gladness  
With never a sob nor a sigh.*

*(b) The DESCRIPTION of the New Jerusalem:  
21:9-27*

I mean how does one describe the glory of heaven ? Do you see how **Glorious** this City will be ? For It will be a city ‘ *having the glory of God.*’ ( 21:11 ) Bible scholars often speak of the Shekinah glory a word that does not occur in the Bible but is used by some Jews and Christians to describe the ‘ *the visible presence of Jehovah.*’ John Walvoord says ‘ *As the glory of God is the sum of His infinite perfections in their manifestations, so the New Jerusalem reflects all that God is.*’ Do you see how **Grand** this City will be ? John talks about the Shape of this City: ( 21:16 ) The Size of this City: ( 21:16 ) and the Specifications of this City: he mentions the Wall: ( 21:12 ) the Gates: ( 21:21 ) and the Street: ( 21:21 ) Did you ever notice the Material of the Gates ? Look at ( 21:21 ) Now gates are entrance places and exit points apparently allowing travel in and out of the New Jerusalem. Will believers be able to travel in and out of the New Jerusalem ? Will we be able to journey to the outer confines of God's universe to minister and serve Him ?

One thing is sure in our glorified bodies will we have unlimited capacities to travel. ( Jn 20:19 ) And as we exit and enter the city it will be through the gates, which are made of pearl. ‘ *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls each individual gate was of one pearl.* ’ ( 21:21 ) Why did God choose pearl ? Perhaps, because the beauty of a pearl comes from the pain of an oyster. It is beauty born out of pain. You see a pearl is formed when a tiny grain of sand gets inside an oysters shell, causing the oyster to become irritated and uncomfortable. And the oyster relieves its pain by covering the irritating grain of sand with a soft, lustrous solution that hardens into a beautiful growing pearl. My .... what a picture of our salvation ! ***We have come into the place of God's blessing out of the pain of Christ at the Cross.*** But that's not all. I mean, are those pearls not a reminder that every time we enter our heavenly home, we enter only because of the suffering of our Blessed Lord ? Does those pearly gates not reflect the cross of Christ ? Will they not be a continual reminder to us that the beauty of our home is only because of Calvary ? (1)

## **(2) A PERFECTION THAT IS INDISPUTABLE 22:1-5**

You see, Heaven is a *perfect* place, created by a *perfect* God, indwelt by *perfect* people, who offer *perfect* worship to Him ! Heaven is the most perfect place we'll ever experience. Now in ( 22:1-5 ) we move inside the city, the New Jerusalem, to discover that is like a beautiful garden, reminiscent of the Garden of Eden. J. Vernon McGee says this, “ *Up to this chapter, the New Jerusalem seems to be*

*all mineral and no vegetable. Its appearance is as the dazzling display of a fabulous jewellery store, but there is no soft grass to sit upon, no green trees to enjoy, and no water to drink or food to eat. However, here introduced are the elements which add a rich softness to this city of elaborate beauty.*” My .... this is (2) for notice that in this city there will be,

### **(a) PERFECT SATISFACTION:**

What are we going to see when we walk down the main street of heaven ? Well, John speaks about *The RIVER of Life* ( 22:1 ) Here is a crystal-clear stream gushing out of God's throne ( 3:21 ) and flowing down the middle of the street of gold, the central thoroughfare in Heaven where everyone travels. My .... is this not a *literal* river flowing through a *literal* city occupied by *literal* people in a *literal* place called Heaven ? This could well be the river of which the psalmist speaks when he says, “ *There is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.*” ( Ps 46:4 ) Stephen Lawson, says, “ *here is a real river representing the inexhaustible grace of God forever flowing into our lives in Heaven. Here is the fullness of God's undiminished goodness, unlimited blessing, and His unfathomable provisions pouring into our lives and flooding our hearts.*”

John speaks about *The TREE of Life*: ( 22:2 ) which raises the question, will there be sickness in heaven ? For ( 22:2 ) says “ *the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*” The word for “ *healing,*” is an interesting word ( *therapeian* ) from which we get the English word

*therapeutic* meaning health-giving. This healing does not mean there will be illness in the New Jerusalem. There will be no disease because there will be no sin. Rather it means that the tree of life will produce all sorts of blessedness, fulfilment, satisfaction and enjoyment. The river and the tree tell us there will be (a)

**(b) PERFECT RESTORATION:**

“ *And there shall be no more curse.* ” ( 22:3 ) The curse on humanity and the earth as a result of Adam and Eve’s disobedience ( Gen 3:16-19 ) will be totally finished. God will never have to judge sin again, since it will never exist in the new heaven and the new earth. A Philadelphia law firm sent flowers to an associate in Baltimore upon the opening of his new offices. Through some mix-up, the ribbon that bedecked the flowers read “ *Deepest Sympathy.* ” When the florist was informed of his mistake, he let out a cry of alarm, “ *good gracious,* ” he exclaimed, “ *then the flowers that went to the funeral said, Congratulations on your new location.* ” My .... Heaven will be a wonderful new location. For there will be (a) (b)

**(c) PERFECT ADMINISTRATION:**

“ *But the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it.* ” ( 22:3 ) Heaven will be governed, not by a democracy or monarchy, but by a theocracy, the government of God. In Heaven, the throne of God the Father and Christ will be in the midst of it, signifying the completeness and universality of God’s reign. They will reign without any competition. No more will Satan, demons, evil men,

tyrants, dictators, or self-serving politicians dominate the nations. God and Jesus Christ alone will rule. The psalmist says, “ *The Lord sits as King forever.* ”

( Ps 29:10 ) And God’s reign will be unending, unhindered, and unrivalled. But what will we do in heaven for all eternity ? Certainly, we shall praise the Lord but we shall also serve Him. There will be,

**(d) PERFECT OCCUPATION:**

“ *And His servants shall serve Him.* ” ( 22:3 ) Do you know what George Bernard Shaw said about heaven ? He said that Heaven is an “ *inane, dull, useless, miserable place.* ” Have you ever pictured heaven as a boring place ? My .... you couldn’t be more wrong. What is that causes boredom ? Selfishness. The feeling of “ *I want to be pandered to, I, I, I,* ” But in Heaven there will be no selfishness. There will be continual service. John uses the future tense meaning we “ *shall keep on serving Him forever and ever.* ” How ? With glorified bodies, sinless hearts and perfect skills. What will our bodies be like in heaven ? Well, the prototype of the resurrection body is seen in the body of the Lord Jesus after He rose from the dead.

Think about Christ’s resurrection body. He could walk through walls, ( Jn 20:19 ) travel through space, ( Acts 1:9 ) mysteriously appear ( Lk 24:31 ) and suddenly disappear. He could talk, walk, sit, and eat. ( Lk 24:16 ) My .... there are many things that we don’t know about the resurrection body but we know this that, “ *we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile*

*body, that it may fashioned like unto His glorious body.”*  
( Phil 3:21 ) Do you ever grow tired in your service ? Do you ever mess up in seeking to do the work of the Lord ? How different it will be in glory, this will be perfect service in a perfect environment. (a) (b) (c) (d)

**(e) PERFECT ILLUMINATION:**

Look if will at ( 22:5 ) Eternity will be the dawning of a new day that will never die. God will snuff out the sun. And the Glory of God and Christ will light up the universe. ( 21:23 ) Do you know what the Roman Catholic Church don't like about this verse ? There will be no candles there. Hallelujah. For has pagan, popish Rome not built a whole system around candles ? My .... are you beginning to see what a *perfect place* this is ? Finally,

**(f) PERFECT EXULTATION:**

“ *And they shall reign for ever and ever.*” ( 22:5 ) Who are “ *they,*” ( plural ) who reign forever ? My .... it is a joint reign between God, the Lamb, and His servants. As glorified saints we will reign eternally with God and Christ, world without end. God's people will reign *under* God, *with* God, and *for* God ! ( Gen 1:28 Ps 8:6 ) What honour. What grace. What privilege. (1) (2)

**(3) A PERSON WHO IS INCOMPARABLE 22:4**

Samuel Rutherford said “ *I would rather have Christ without Heaven, than Heaven without Christ.*” Fortunately, the option is impossible, for Christ *is* Heaven,

and Heaven *is* Christ. Indeed the central person of the Book of Revelation is not John but the Lord Jesus. But, Christ is not only the centrepiece of the Book, Christ is the centrepiece of Heaven. All Heaven revolves around Him. ( 5:6 ) Someone has said,

*The Light of Heaven is the Face of Jesus*  
*The Joy of Heaven is the Presence of Jesus*  
*The Melody of Heaven is the name of Jesus*  
*The Harmony of Heaven is the Praise of Jesus*  
*The Theme of Heaven is the Work of Jesus*  
*The Employment of Heaven is the Service of Jesus*  
*The Fullness of Heaven is Jesus Himself*

I want you to note that this *Person in Heaven:*

**(a) IS DESCRIBED FOR US:**

Look at the titles that are given to Him in this chapter.

1. Can you see HIS HUMANITY:

For in ( 22:16 ) He says “ *I Jesus,*” This was His earthly name. ( Lk 1:31 ) Now there is a growing tendency today to address the Lord as “ *Jesus.*” But my .... respect and deepest reverence are due to Him. To His disciples He said, “ *Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am.*” ( Jn 13:13 )

2. Can you see HIS ETERNALITY:

For He says “ *I am the root of David.*” (22:16 ) For He

who came *after* David as the offspring of David was also *before* David as the root.

### 3. Can you see HIS ROYALTY:

“*I am the offspring of David.*” Do you recall the question of the wise men, “*Where is He that is born King of the Jews ?*”

### 4. Can you see HIS IMMUTABILITY:

Look if you will at ( 22:13 ) By saying, “*I am the first,*” Christ lays claim to eternal pre-existence. By saying, “*I am the last,*” He is eternally immutable. He is the same “*yesterday today and forever.*”

### 5. Can you see HIS RELIABILITY !

For He says “*I am the bright and morning star.*” ( 22:16 ) The “*morning star,*” announces dawn's soon arrival and there is nothing as sure as the morning star. One of these days the clouds will burst and the Saviour will come for His church as “*the morning star.*” I wonder do you need to take a fresh look at your Saviour this .... ? Do you need to turn “*your eyes on Jesus .... face.*” (a)

### **(b) IS DISCLOSED TO US:**

Now we see Him by faith, one day we shall see Him by sight.

### 1. WE SHALL BEHOLD HIM !

“*And they shall see His face,*” ( 22:4 ) Is this not the crowning joy of Heaven ? Theologians call this “*the beatific vision.*” In Heaven, we will actually see the glorified Christ. Presently we walk by faith, and God is veiled to our mortal eyes. Peter says, “*Whom having not seen ye love.*” ( 1 Pet 1:8 ) R.C. Sproul has said, “*There is no more difficult problem that attends the life of faith than that we are called to serve and worship God who is utterly invisible to us. As long as we are tainted by sin, we cannot see God. Presently, we cannot look upon a holy God and live.*” My .... God is now invisible to us. God said to Moses, “*There shall no man see Me and live.*” ( Ex 33:20 ) Do you recall what Paul says about the Lord ? “*Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto.*” ( 1 Tim 6:16 ) Likewise John said, “*No man hath seen God at any time.*” ( 1 Jn 4:12 ) But in Heaven we will see our God.

Was this not Job's hope ? He says “*though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.*” ( Job 19:26-27 ) Was this not the hope of the Psalmist ? “*As for me I will behold Thy face in righteousness.*” ( Ps 17:15 Matt 5:8 1 Cor 13:12 ) We will actually see the Glorified Christ. John says, “*We shall see Him as He is.*” ( 1 Jn 3:2 ) We will see Him, personally, intimately, directly, forever. “*Face to face with Christ my Saviour,*”

### 2. WE SHALL BELONG TO HIM:

“*And his name shall be in their foreheads.*” ( 22:4 ) Do you know what that indicates ? Ownership. My .... we belong to Him now, we will belong to Him then, we shall

belong to Him forever.

**His for ever only His  
Who the Lord and me shall part ?  
Ah, with what a rest of bliss  
Christ can fill the loving heart  
Heaven and earth may fade and flee  
Firstborn light in gloom decline  
But while God and I shall be  
I am His and He is mine**

But here's the question. Are you ready for heaven ? Are you prepared to go to Heaven ? Where do you stand *spiritually* ? Look at these closing verses and notice,

#### **(4) A PREPARATION THAT IS INEVITABLE 22:6-21**

You see Heaven is more than an a *Destination* it is a *Motivation*. Stephen Lawson in his book ' *Heaven help Us,*' tells us that John gives us five keys to prepare us to live with God forever. What are these five key elements ? Well John tells us we're to,

##### **(a) OBEY WHOLEHEARTEDLY: 22:6-7**

Do you believe that Jesus Christ is coming back today ? Quickly, imminently, shortly ? He says ' *Behold I come quickly,*' it means ' *I am coming now.*' Do you believe that ? If you do, you will obey God's Word. " *Blessed is that keepeth the sayings of this prophecy of this book,*" not only refers to Revelation specifically but to the entire Bible generally. It's not the person who shouts the loudest

or jumps the highest about the Second Coming. But the Christian who obeys God's Word. Do you know something ? God inspired Revelation for one purpose, to reveal the glory of His Son and call believers to live godly, obedient lives in the light of His soon return. (a)

##### **(b) WORSHIP SINCERELY: 22:8-9**

If we are to ready for Heaven, a spirit of worship must fill our hearts each and every day. Heaven must inflame our worship of Christ today. Look at ( 22:8-9 ) My .... when you have listened this message on heaven what will be your focus ? Will you set it aside and again become preoccupied with your circumstances ? Will you allow business obligations, family responsibilities, church activities to crowd out Christ from being worshipped, adored and loved ? (a) (b)

##### **(c) TRUST EXCLUSIVELY: 22:10-17**

It seems that John turns from addressing believers ( 22:6-9 ) to addressing unbelievers ( 22:10-17 ) issuing one last call to them to believe in our Lord Jesus Christ. My .... this decision to believe on Christ must be done *now* because " *the time is at hand.*" ( 22:10 ) " *Jesus is Coming .... the time is near.*" Have you washed your robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb ? ( 22:14 ) Are you in Christ ? Are you in ? Are you getting others in ? A mother was dying in one of the Eastern cities in the States. She had a family and knew this would be a burden for her husband. Before her death, the children were brought to her one by one. She kissed each of them and

told them how much she loved them. At last the baby was taken from her arms for the mother was near to the valley of the shadow. With her last words, she whispered to her husband, ‘ *My darling please bring this children home with you when you come.*’ Are you seeking to bring your family with you to glory ? ‘ *For how shall I go up to my father if the lad be not with me ?*’ ( Gen 44:34 )

**(d) LIVE WISELY: 22:18-19**

For it’s a dangerous thing to tamper with the Word of God. In ( 22:18 ) we are looking at Romanism for they add to the Book, in ( 22:19 ) we are looking at Modernism for they take from the Book. My ..... do you have a reverence for this Book ? As a believer are you all packed up and ready for Heaven ? Do you believe that Christ is returning soon and that eternity is ready to break upon us ? Are you (a) (b) (c) (d) and

**(e) ANTICIPATE CONTINUALLY: 22:20-21**

Christ says for the third time in these closing verses that He is coming immediately. “ *Surely I come quickly.*” ( 22:20 ) The word “ *quickly,*” ( tachy ) means immediately, rapidly, imminently, swiftly. In other words, His coming is very, very, soon. He is already on the way. Are we living every moment of every day as if Christ were coming now ? That’s how to be ready for Heaven ! Are you ready ? Do you need to witness someone ? Do it now. Do you need to be reconciled to someone ? Do it now. Do you need pay your debts ? Do it now. **The Final Focus. Here is our destination. Heaven.**

You talk about a happy ending. A little boy named Jonathan had been promised a new puppy for his sixth birthday. He was taken to the local pound and there were so many dogs and puppies that he had a hard time choosing which one he wanted. Finally, he picked up one of the shaggiest pups in the lot that was standing wagging his tail furiously. His mum asked ‘ **Why that one ?**’ He replied, ‘ **I want the one with the happy ending.**’ You talk about a happy ending. Oh when my train rounds into Grand Central Station in glory. I think my Dad will be there. How much I owe to him. How he prayed for me when I was in ‘ *the far country,*’ I can see him yet, as I came in late on a Saturday night a man on his knees before God pleading with God for his wayward son. I think he will say to me ‘ *how do you get along ?*’ I think I’ll say, ‘ *Pretty well and I owe a lot to you,*’ and together we will gaze on the face of our beloved Saviour.

And then I am looking forward to meeting Tilly my mother in law again. And I’ll say ‘ **Tilly didn’t I tell you, didn’t I tell you, it would be joy and unspeakable and full of glory.**’ And then I’ll see brother Stephen and he’ll say ‘ **Denis do you hear the choir up there ? Why there is no-one out of tune.**’ Will we know our loved ones in glory ? Of course we will. George Whitefield said ‘ **will we greater fools in heaven than we are on earth.**’ Paul says ‘ *For now we see through a glass darkly but then face to face.*’ ( 1 Cor 13:12 ) ‘ *And friends will be there I have loved long ago,*’ What a way to finish these studies. What a way to finish this session. What a way to conclude 19 years of Tuesday night Bible Class Ministry among you. Thank you for being part of it. It’s been a heavy

responsibility, a big burden but a wonderful privilege. Any blessing received its down to Him. The One of whom says ‘ *And they shall see his face,*’ ( 22:4 ) **We will behold Him.** Actually, visually, personally. William Montague Dyke was stricken with blindness at the age of ten. Despite this handicap, this remarkable young man distinguished himself from his peers in more ways than one. William was a very intelligent, witty, and handsome young man who excelled in the classroom. Because of his academic achievements he won a scholarship to a prestigious graduate school in England. There William met the beautiful daughter of a British Admiral. A courtship soon began and flamed into a romance. Though having never seen her, William fell in love with inner beauty. The two became engaged.

Shortly, before the wedding, at the insistence of the Admiral, William agreed to submit to newly discovered eye surgery for his blindness. With no assurance that the surgery would restore his sight, the doctors cut optic tissue and bandaged William's eyes. He was then confined to bed with his eyes tightly covered until the time of the wedding. Hoping against hope that the surgery would be a success, William wanted the first sight to be his bride's face coming down the aisle. After years of darkness, he requested that the gauze be removed from his eyes, just when the bride made her way down the centre aisle ! As the ceremony began, William was escorted to the front of the church by his father, who served as his best man. His eyes were still fully bandaged. The dramatic moment was now here, and every eye in the church was on William. The organ signalled for his Bride to come down the aisle,

and as she proceeded on the arm of her father, William's father began unwrapping the strips of gauze, still not knowing if the operation would be a success. *As his wife to be stood at the front of the church in all her glory, the last strip of gauze was unwrapped.* And William's eyelids opened. Light flooded into his heart. Slowly, he focused ahead, and then looked intently into the radiant face of his precious bride, for the very first time he could see. Tears burst from his now healed eyes. He beheld her beauty. Overcome with emotion, he whispered, “ *You are more beautiful than I ever imagined.*” Let me assure you, we will experience a scene much like that one day in Heaven. The Bible says, “ *We shall see Him as He is.*” ( 1 Jn 3:2 ) What a sight. We will see Jesus Christ in all His glory.

Like William Montague Dyke, our blinded eyes will be opened and for the very first time we shall “ *see His face.*” ( 22:3 ) We will see His nail-pierced hands and feet. We will gaze upon His wounded side. We will understand more fully the great price He paid on the Cross for us. And we will surely say to Him, “ *Lord Jesus, you're more beautiful than I ever imagined You to be.*” My .... can you imagine that day ? Heaven's Throne Room will be packed with the Redeemed from all the ages. The anticipation will be unequalled. In that moment the sun will be extinguished. And Jesus Christ will walk onto the centre stage of all the universe. Then believers, young and old will *behold Him in all His Glory.* Forever and ever. **This will be Heavens crowning joy.**

**We shall behold Him  
Yes, we shall behold Him  
Face to face in all of His Glory  
We shall behold Him  
Yes, we shall behold Him  
Face to face our Saviour and Lord**

This was Denis Lyle's last Bible Class in Lurgan Baptist Church after nineteen years. 28/3/2017