

COOLUM OR CHRIST? **(Revelation 21:1-22:5 August 3, 2003)**

Over the past few weeks I have been thinking back over the questions about heaven various people have asked me in the ten years I have pastored this church.

- Will I still be married to my wife in heaven?
- Will my children know me?
- Will my baby be in heaven?
- Will there really be no sea in heaven because I love the sea and the beach?
- What will we eat at the marriage supper of the Lamb?
- Will we know each other in heaven?
- Will we feel any protective pain in heaven?
- Will we feel sorry over lost loved ones?
- Will I still have my eighty-year old body in heaven?
- Will we get bored in heaven?

And it struck me that by their very nature these questions *profoundly* misunderstand the nature of our eternal bliss.

Let me give you two pictures of eternity.

The Coolum picture of heaven.

You are lazing on the white sandy beaches of Coolum – but you can never get sunburned or drown. You are in a twenty-year old body – perfectly fit – not an ounce of fat. Your family and close friends – all those who mean the most to you – are with you. Lunch is lobster mornay, French fries and more French fries. Dessert is flourless chocolate cake with chocolate sauce and whipped cream. And hallelujah – no one counts calories or cholesterol in heaven.

After lunch – there is a round of golf, a spa and a Swedish massage.

There is never pain or disease or aging – let alone death.

Heaven is the best of this life.

That is the first picture. The second picture of heaven is the Christ picture. You are before the throne of the Lamb – worshipping Him forever.

My question to you is this – which picture better lines up with your view of eternity?

And maybe more importantly, which picture would you *rather* lined up with your view of eternity? Would you rather have Coolum or Christ?

Because we are by our very nature creatures of this world – I suspect that many of us answered like this. Theologically I know the worship of Christ is what we will be doing – but boy – the Coolum option sounded pretty good.

Today, I aim to show you that if you were able to choose and you chose the Coolum option – you would short change yourself in every respect. The reality is that heaven is more glorious than we can even imagine.

I want to show you that the Christ option – eternity in His presence – is in fact bliss and pleasure beyond anything we are capable of imagining.

But this is hard for us to get our heads around. If I asked you what the greatest pleasures you have ever experienced were – I would expect to get answers like marriage, children, some culinary delights, sexual intimacy, sunsets over the ocean, winning the grand final and running on the beach with the fit body of a twenty-year old.

So when our thoughts turn to heaven it is natural to think of heaven in terms of an unending series of the best aspects of this world.

However, I would put it to you that this picture of heaven fits better with Islam and other pagan religions.

The Koran, the sacred book of Islam describes heaven as a lush green garden of sensual delights where fair-skinned, black eyed maidens recline on green pillows and luxurious carpets awaiting the faithful where they will provide them with eternal and unbridled sexual pleasure. Heaven is pictured as a lush garden with every food, every pleasure, every desire being met.

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that eternity is just like Eden. This is what their website says of heaven:

The whole earth will eventually be brought to a gardenlike paradise state. ... There will be every reason to be happy in the Paradise earth. Never again will people hunger for lack of food. ... In God's new world, no longer will people be crammed into huge apartment buildings or run-down slums. ... In time, God's Kingdom will even restore the peaceful relations that existed in the garden of Eden between animals, and between animals and humans.

They go on to describe people living lives, building houses, growing crops, marrying and having children – the stuff of life.

But, I want to say this. The Bible *never* paints heaven merely in terms of the best of this life.

Instead it consistently paints heaven as so much better than anything in this life that *any* comparison with this life actually devalues the true glory of heaven.

This morning my goals are simple. *First*, I hope to show you that the glories of eternity are far beyond even the most wonderful aspects of this life.

But *second*, I want to show you that the ways we are created to find joy and satisfaction eternally are actually the same areas we should look for true joy and satisfaction now.

We are nearing the end of the book of Revelation. Chapter 20 ended at the very sunset of this old creation. Christ has returned and defeated the beasts and Satan. He had banished every sinner to the lake of fire for all eternity. Heaven and earth have fled from Him. Now we come to the dawn of eternity.

And as we turn to chapters 21 and 22, two facets of eternity are described.

First, in chapter 21 verses 1-8 we look at *the new heaven and the new earth*. These verses tell us what eternity is like. These verses are the clearest picture we have of heaven.

Then in chapter 21 verse 9 through to chapter 22 verse 5, the focus shifts to one aspect of the new heaven and new earth – the new Jerusalem. Those verses tell us what we will be like in eternity. Those verses tell us what we will be like when Christ has finished His task of redeeming us.

And what incredible descriptions these are.

So turn with me to Revelation 21:1.

The New Heaven and New Earth – verses 1-8.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away.

After introducing this new heaven and new earth, John describes what eternity is like. He says that it is:

- a. A *Holy place* v.1
- b. For *Holy people* v. 2
- c. Enjoying a *Holy God* v. 3
- d. With *Holy consequences* v. 4
- e. As our *Holy inheritance* vv. 5-8

Basically, heaven is described in terms of what is **not** there – sin and its consequences – and what **is** there – holy men and the Lord Himself.

Don't miss this. The *only* comparison in these verses to this life is in terms of what is **not** found in heaven.

Notice that there is nothing here about human relationships, worldly pleasures, food, intimacy, recreation or anything else.

The Lord in His wisdom has chosen to draw back the curtains and give us a glimpse of eternity. But how do you describe something that is eternal and perfect to beings that live in time and are far from perfect?

The closest we can come this side of eternity to knowing what awaits us is to know that heaven is a place without sin and with Christ.

And here is what we have to grasp. The final reality of no sin and Christ is a joy, a wonder, a pleasure, an encounter beyond the greatest pleasures of this world.

This full experience of Christ can only be had in a new heaven – a creation without sin – and by new men – those recreated without sin.

For some Christians, perhaps for some of you, this description of heaven might be a letdown. I did an internet search on heaven and was staggered to find that most Christians seem to picture eternity somewhat like the Jehovah's Witnesses.

They imagine themselves partaking in the best of this world for all eternity. Golf instead of work, desserts without weight gain or cholesterol, love without hatred. Every guy looks like Brad Pitt and every girl looks like Buffy.

They seem to think of heaven as living on the beaches of Coolum with your loved ones feasting on your favourite foods doing your favourite recreations.

And as you will see next week, some picture heaven in such earthly terms that they view our eternal home as a huge cube where we all get seventy-five acres or so on which to live.

What a pathetic view of eternity!

What John is doing is to show us is that this is far too *low* an expectation of heaven. Heaven is beyond the best we could ever imagine.

Nothing from this world – not even the best things – not even marriage – what is possibly the greatest earthly delight – not even this is in heaven. Nothing positive of this world is glorious enough to survive into eternity.

Simply put – whatever you imagine as the greatest glories of this life – a sandy coral reef, a buffet feast, Bach playing, your wife and kids there – the reality is that heaven is so far beyond these pleasures that even these wonderful things don't exist in eternity. They are not good enough.

The new heaven and the new earth go beyond the limits of this heaven and earth. And what is there is better.

Notice that the first heaven and first earth had to pass away. They were marred by the sin of man. When man fell – his fall marred the first heaven and first earth. As Paul put it in Romans 8:20-21, because of man's sin:

The creation was subjected to futility, ... [until the time] that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption.

God will not dwell with man in a marred creation. And thus the old heaven and earth are done away with and a new heaven and new earth are created.

What does it mean that there is a new heaven and earth? Are we to imagine a new universe with suns and planets? Are we to imagine a world with grass and trees and animals?

Is this a world like the first world – a world like Eden before the fall? Is heaven merely a restoration back to Eden?

While we aren't given complete details, it seems to me that heaven is described here in terms that show that eternity is **beyond** even the glories of Eden.

In Eden – Adam could sin. In heaven there can never be sin.

In Eden – God walked with Adam at times. In heaven we will dwell with and enjoy God without ceasing.

Eden was temporal and physical. Heaven is outside of time and space.

Heaven is even beyond Eden.

In these verses, we find *five descriptions* of the glory of eternity.

The *first* description of the glory of eternity is that it is a *Holy Place*.

What makes this heaven and earth **new** in the first place is that:

There is no longer any sea.

Don't be mistaken. This does not mean that the new earth is a world without seas and oceans – just dry land mass.

This is not a comment on heavenly hydrology. This is a comment on sin.

Remember that throughout this book – the sea is constantly used as a term for the sin and chaos of this fallen world.

Back in Revelation 4 there was a sea that separated God from the created order. Here there is no sea. As we will see in verse 3 – now God can unite with and dwell unhindered with His redeemed creation.

What makes this heaven and earth new is that there is no sin. No rebellion, no opposition to God and no effects of sin.

Heaven is a place of absolute holiness.

What does this mean?

There is no Satan to tempt. No men who are capable of falling. This heaven and earth cannot be corrupted.

There is no longer any sea.

This leads us to the *second* description of the glory of eternity. It is for a *Holy People*.

Verse 2:

And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

Into the midst of this new and perfect creation comes a **holy** city – the new Jerusalem.

During the exile, the Jews longed for the day they could return to the land and rebuild Jerusalem – a new Jerusalem. And so in the Old Testament and in particular in Jewish Apocalyptic – the new Jerusalem became the ultimate hope of the place where the people of God would dwell forever.

This is picked up in the New Testament – Galatians speaks of the Jerusalem above. Hebrews speaks of the heavenly Jerusalem – the true Jerusalem – the place where God is.

Notice that this new Jerusalem descends to the new heaven and new earth.

Don't get the symbolism wrong here. You are not to imagine a world and in one part of a world a city descends – and that is heaven.

No what you are to understand is that this city is *the bride – the people of God – a **holy people who now come to live in a holy place***.

As we have seen many times in apocalyptic literature – the one image can bear several meanings. Here, this new Jerusalem goes beyond merely a description of the place we will dwell. It actually becomes a description of us – what we will be in eternity.

Let me put it this way. Is the new Jerusalem meant to represent the **place** where the redeemed dwell forever *or* is it a description of the redeemed **people** themselves?

It seems that to some degree, it is both. The very fact that this is a city – Jerusalem – conveys the idea of a place in which to dwell eternally.

However, notice the end of verse 2 – the city is **the bride prepared for her husband**. And in next week's passage, when the text narrows down to look at the new Jerusalem – the emphasis is very much on what the redeemed saints – the bride of Christ – will become. What God will make us into so that we are fit for eternity.

So this city is in some sense meant to convey an idea of our heavenly home **and** those who inhabit this heavenly home. Apocalyptic literature lets you do that.

We have seen this type of thing already with Babylon.

Babylon was *both* the harlot seduced by the worldly city *and* the seducing worldly city itself.

However, here in these verses, the emphasis is clearly on us as the **holy people**. There is almost no emphasis on the place – the emphasis is on the people.

The new Jerusalem is the bride – redeemed mankind adorned with holiness for our husband – the Lamb.

In that day we will be a holy city:

Made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

Only holy people can dwell in the new heaven and new earth. This is pointed out in verse 8 and again in verse 27.

What this means is that finally we will be what we were created and called to be. God created us to be holy. God called us to be holy.

And at that time, the blood of the Lamb will have washed us clean in every sense. Today, as we sit here we are declared righteous – and we bear the promise that He will make us righteous. In that day we will finally be righteous. We will be a *holy people*.

We will bear His holiness and His righteousness. We will be holy as He is holy. And then, we will be fit for eternity.

The new Jerusalem comes out of heaven from God. It is God Himself who readied us for eternity and made us holy – this is not due to anything we have done.

Holy! I can barely imagine the glory of this time.

In the words of the old African American spiritual “Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!”

Free from our sin.

A holy people. I long for that day with all my heart.

As much as I long for the beatific vision of Christ – I long just as much for the day when my sin is ended.

Of everything that causes me pain and grief and tears here in this life – my sin is at the top of the list. I weep over those times when I sin. Those times when my sin overcomes me.

Times when I let Christ down. Times when my sin causes pain to others.

But the day is coming when there will be no sea. No Satan. No beasts. No sinful men. No fallen creation. And no sin within Craig Lloyd.

“Free at last! free at last! Thank God Almighty, I will be free at last!”

No more thoughts of anger, greed, lust and envy. Not to even struggle in the least with the flesh.

What is lazing by the sea at Coolum compared to being holy. I tell you brethren – no earthly pleasure can compare to this coming reality.

Then and only then can we reach the *third* description of the glory of eternity. It is enjoying a *Holy God*.

Verse 3:

And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them.”

Why did the Lord use the imagery of a bride in verse 2? Because in this world – the greatest relationship, the closest intimacy anyone can enjoy is that of husband and wife. In the consummation of marriage they become one flesh.

This picture of the closest earthly union is used to describe our ultimate relationship – the one to which our lives lead – a full and unfettered union with Christ Himself.

This chapter describes the consummation – the marriage supper – the time when we will unite fully with the Lord who loved us and died for us.

But this final consummation with Christ is only possible in a holy place and with a holy people.

If you want to sum up the true glory of heaven – here it is. Heaven is dwelling with a *Holy God* – forever.

Psalms 16:11 says this:

In Your presence is fullness of joy;
In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

The Westminster Confession in the Shorter Catechism puts it well. The chief end of man is to ***glorify God and enjoy Him forever***.

And it is in the consummation that we finally glorify Him perfectly and enjoy Him fully.

Our problem is that we are so earthly that when we think of heaven and the glories of heaven, our hearts naturally think of human relationships in heaven.

Heaven will be wonderful – I will see my husband again. I will see my kids again. Boy do I have some questions for Paul and Luther.

But let us never forget that while there are some passages that may bear on the concept of the relationships of the saints in glory – the overwhelming force of the Scriptures points to our final, full relationship with Christ.

And I have to say that it does concern me that so often Christians fail to grasp what is the true glory of eternity.

So often we talk of death like this. I will die and then I will wake on the other side. Yes, Christ will be there. *But so will my loved ones!*

They will be there with outstretched arms to greet me. I can't wait to see them. And then we will walk through the green fields of glory talking and catching up.

Maybe. Maybe this type of scenario will occur. We aren't given full details.

But it seems to me that the passages that point to us retaining some individual identity in heaven all deal with the period *before* the final consummation – *before* our final union with Christ.

Scripture seems to teach that our final union with Christ will be so complete that **He** becomes the focus of eternity. And if we have any relationship with other saints it is because they too are in union with Christ.

I personally doubt we will have individual identities in eternity. I think our identity will be Christ.

But I am speculating again. What is clear. What Scripture is insistent on. Is that heaven was **not** created so you could see your beloved grandfather again. Heaven exists so that God might receive the eternal worship due His name as a holy people unite with a holy God in a holy place.

The **true** glory of eternity is God Himself.

All of history is merely leading up to this time. Once God walked with man in the garden – but sin ended that. From that time on – God has dwelt among men in a mediated form.

But in Leviticus 26:11-12 God made this promise:

I **will** make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you. I **will** also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.

But in a fallen world filled with fallen men – the full realisation of this promise had to wait. God could only dwell among us in a mediated form.

He dwelt in the Shekinah glory and in the ark of the covenant inside the holy of holiness within the tabernacle and Temple.

And in the fullness of time the Lord dwelt or tabernacled among men when He veiled His glory and took on human flesh.

After Pentecost, He dwelt or tabernacled within men in the form of His Holy Spirit.

But the promise permeates Scripture that a day will come when God would tabernacle or dwell among us in the full blaze of His glory.

And here is the final realisation of that promise. In a holy place, a holy people can dwell with a holy God.

Then all the mediated forms of relationship will be unnecessary. God in His full glory will dwell among men.

And of everything I say this morning – here is the most important truth for you to grasp. Our union with Christ will result in unending joy beyond our ability to comprehend.

If you are a child of God, then you have experienced a taste of the glories of the age to come. The power of God. The love of God. Times where you have been reading the word, or hearing the word preached with power, or seen God work in your life – times where you have tasted and seen that the Lord is good.

You may have been in prayer. You may have sinned and been overwhelmed by the grace of God. You may have been meditating on the wonders of the cross. But you have seen and tasted a glimpse of the power of the age to come.

And have you not wondered at those times, what it will be like to bask in the unshielded glory of God – not in part but in full – not momentarily but for all eternity?

This is heaven. This is eternity. This is our blessed future.

We were created in such a manner that the greatest joy, the most incredibly glorious experience possible for man is to know God. In this life our sin has meant we could only know a sliver of that glory.

Moses could see the back of God. The High Priest could enter the holy of holies once a year. The disciples beheld the glory of God veiled in the flesh of Christ. You and I know the mediated glory of the indwelling Spirit of God.

But even though we cannot know the full glory of God, the small part we can know is still the greatest joy possible in this life. Better than money or sex or kids or fame.

Paul knows this. In Ephesians 3:17-19 he prays that:

Christ might dwell in our hearts through faith; and that we, being rooted and grounded in love, might be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that we might be filled up to all the fullness of God.

To know the love of God as we become filled with the fullness of God. That is the closest we can come to heaven on earth.

But, even this is just a taste of eternity. *Nothing* can compare to that day. The day when we achieve the end for which we were created – to know God. To dwell with God. To experience God. To enjoy Him forever.

This is heaven.

This is joy and power and glory and wonder beyond anything we can possibly imagine.

Eagles were meant to soar. Sharks were meant to glide through the sea. We were meant to live in His glory. It is where we will find completion.

Nothing can compare to this glory. A world without sin. Us without sin. In fellowship with the glory of a holy God.

We move now to the *fourth* description of the glory of eternity. It has *Holy Consequences*.

Verse 4:

And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.

Just read this verse over a few times. It makes your heart long for the day.

The pain of this world comes from the consequences of the fall. Tears result from death, mourning, crying, pain – and all these are a part of the first heaven and earth.

When our Lord created this world – He looked and it was good. No sin and no consequences of sin. But from the moment Adam rebelled against God – we experienced the bitter fruits of sin.

What are the bitterest moments of my life?

The death of loved ones. Watching a loved one in pain. Experiencing my body fall to bits in this decaying world. Seeing the hurt my sin inflicts on others.

At times the grief is almost too much to bear.

You have been there. You have wept over loss, over pain. You have wept when loved ones have died. You have wept when friends have suffered from painful illness. You have wept when you have watched sin shatter marriages and churches and friendships.

But in eternity – it is a holy place, with Holy people, where a holy God dwells. There is no sin – so there are no consequences of sin.

In fact there are only holy consequences. No tears. No pain. No death.

Try and get your mind around this. There is nothing to fear. No cause for anxiety. No concern about tomorrow.

Nothing that could cause us pain or grief or loss. Nothing that could cause us to shed a tear.

Who cares a fig about what we will eat or what we will live in? Who cares if there is golf or surfing?

There are no tears. They belong to this world – the world that has passed away.

Finally, we come to the *fifth* description of the glory of eternity. It is our *Holy Inheritance*.

This Holy Inheritance is ours because of what Christ has done.

Look at verses 5-8:

And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.”

Here is a truth to help you sleep easy at night.

This new heavens and new earth **will** come. It is not a hope. It is not a possible future. It is already reality. Because the Lord does it.

It is not reliant on us. It is dependent entirely on the finished work of Christ. He is making all things new.

And He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.”

This is like saying – chisel these words into stone – they **will** come to pass. Nothing or no one in this heaven or earth – can stop the reality of eternity.

Brothers and sisters – if you are in Christ – you **will** live in eternity. It is certain because God who is faithful and true has promised it.

Then He said to me, “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.”

You and I live in time. You and I can make no promises about tomorrow.

But God exists outside of time. The new heaven and the new earth are already realities for Him.

He is the Alpha and the Omega – the beginning and the end. Creation, the fall, the exile, Christ, the church, the millennium, eternity – they are already a reality to One who is eternal.

It is done.

Look at this. I am making all things new – write this down – these words are faithful and true – it is done.

What is yet future to us is finished before God.

Nothing can stop it. Nothing can separate us from our destiny of eternal bliss in His presence.

And look at the end of verse 6. The basis of eternity is not anything we have done, will do or could do. It is what Christ has done. We will enter eternity purely because it is a gift from Him:

“I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.”

You cannot earn heaven, buy heaven, merit heaven. You can only receive it as a free gift.

It is not our works or deeds – it is a gift given without cost – to those who ask in faith – to those who trusted that God would save them.

We drink of the spring of life – and will never thirst again. He gives us eternal life – heaven itself. Verse 7:

“He who overcomes will inherit these things.”

Overcomers. This takes us back to the letters to the seven churches. You become an overcomer **not** by deeds – but by trusting God and clinging to God. By persevering and not falling away. And if you are an overcomer, you **will inherit** these things. This is our *holy inheritance*.

And then comes what has to be one of the most incredible statements in Scripture:

“And I will be his God and he will be My son.”

My son. These are words that originally referred to Israel. But Israel failed and Christ came as the true Son.

At His baptism – the heavens opened and God said – This is My beloved Son.

Christ was God’s Son in many ways. Sons were like their fathers. Jesus perfectly reflected the holiness and glory of God the Father. If you saw Christ, you saw God.

But Christ was also the Son in that through His death and resurrection He was shown to be the promised divine Davidic King who sits at the right hand of the Father.

Christ is the only true Son of God.

In fact that author of Hebrews points out that *only* Christ is called My Son in the true sense. Not even an angel has that title.

But here in eternity – we will be so closely aligned with Christ, at the marriage supper where we become one with Christ, we will fully bear His righteousness and holiness and we will truly become – sons of God.

We will fully reflect God. And as a son, there are incredible privileges. Hebrews 1:2 says that Christ is the Son who is the *heir of all things*. And as those in Christ – as overcomers – we will inherit eternity – we will share the inheritance of the Son. We will share in the very privileges of Christ.

I thought about another whole sermon to digress and unpack this idea of being an overcomer, of being heirs with Christ, of being sons of God.

But let me simply say again – We will share in the very privileges that belong to Christ as the faithful Son, who is holy, who died and rose, who is seated at the right hand of God, who is heir of all eternity.

Our adoption is complete – we are sons. Not because of our righteousness or our worthiness or our deeds – but because of His righteousness and His worthiness and His deeds.

It is not that we become God – but that we become so united with Christ that we share His very privileges.

Wow! Let that stir your heart for a time.

But this privilege is not for all. Some did not trust in the redeeming work of Christ. They are not overcomers, they are not sons – they will not inherit eternity. Look at verse 8:

“But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

Who among us has not been hewn from cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and been a murderer, at least in the sense of being angry, and immoral and a sorcerer, at least of sorts, and an idolater and a liar?

This is us! This is all in Adam!

The difference is what we saw in chapter 20.

The lost were judged according to their deeds. They stood on their righteousness and fell far, far short of the glory of God. They were shown for what they were – cowards, unbelievers, abominable, murderers, immoral, sorcerers, idolaters and liars. ***And such will not inherit the kingdom of heaven.***

None of these are renewed. None are holy. None can enter the new heaven and new earth.

All of these are in the lake of fire – the second death – suffering the agonies of the damned.

The point is not – yeah us – bad luck them.

The point is that we are in eternity because our names were in the Lamb's book of life. Because the Lamb was slain and purchased us with His blood. We have a holy inheritance **entirely** due to grace.

Eternity is:

- a. A *Holy place* v.1
- b. For *Holy people* v. 2
- c. Enjoying a *Holy God* v. 3
- d. With *Holy consequences* v. 4
- e. As our *Holy inheritance* vv. 5-8

Eternal worship. Eternal bliss. Eternal joy.

In Your presence is fullness of joy;
In Your right hand there are pleasures forever. Psalm 16:11.

Brethren, the idea of these verses is not to describe the décor, cuisine and recreations of heaven.

It is not even simply to tell us that the true glories of heaven surpass any décor, cuisine or recreations we could possibly imagine.

It is to show us that heaven is our perfect union with Christ. Heaven is finally being what we were created to be – holy beings worshipping and united with Almighty God. Heaven is as much beyond this world as Christ is beyond us.

And heaven awaits us.

Why did the Lord give us this glimpse of glory?

Certainly He did so to encourage us along the way – to be an overcomer – to persevere – to not give up – to cling to Christ until this life is done and He takes us to eternity.

But there is another reason for this. If the greatest glories of eternity are holiness – being without sin *and* having a perfect relationship with Christ. If these are the greatest sources of joy and bliss and wonder available to man.

Then should not this be where we look for joy and bliss and wonder now?

We were created to find joy in holiness and Christ. And the joys of holiness and Christ will satisfy where the pleasures of this world cannot.

Yes we are fallen. Yes this is a fallen world. So we cannot know the final wonder of these joys in this life.

But we can begin to experience heaven.

Holiness and a relationship with Christ are where true blessings are found. Come to Christ and find life and find it abundantly.

You want joy and satisfaction. The world cries out find it in things, find it in sex, find it in self.

Eternity cries out – find it in holiness – find it in Christ.

Listen to Jeremiah 2:13:

My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me,
The fountain of living waters,
To hew for themselves cisterns,
Broken cisterns
That can hold no water.

The Lord created us to find our fulfilment in holiness and in Christ. The fountain of living waters.

But if we settle for the meagre crumbs of the pleasures of this life – then we are seeking to quench their parched throats from broken cisterns.

Brothers and sisters – know this truth in your life – joy is found in holiness and Christ. Strive for holiness and seek to deepen and develop and mature your relationship with Christ.

Joy even here on earth is not Coolum.

Joy here on earth is being so in love with Christ – we actually get to taste eternity.