

Praise: Start your time in worship together as a family by following the order of service posted by Westview.

Pray: Intentionally invite Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and insight to both what you need to learn about the book of Revelation, as well as what the Lord is saying to you personally!

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qpnlrq2bKo>

Read: Revelation 21: 1-8

- **First, describe what's happening in the first two verses.**
 - Help students see that this is John describing something amazing. Something so amazing that the words of a 1st Century guy simply can't do it full justice. We're left wondering exactly what this looked like, and exactly what's going on. But there is one important thing to consider.
 - **What is the main thing happening here?**
 - **Answer:** There is a new heaven and a new earth. The old way of doing things will one day go away.
- verses 3-4 are short but amazingly powerful. Explain that they communicate the importance of what's happening. Ask something like:
- **Verse 3 says something pretty profound. What is it?**
 - **Answer:** God will be with humans. He will literally be with us, in the same place.
 - **How is this different than how things are now?**
 - **Answer:** While we have the Spirit dwelling in us, and we can pray to God, and sense His presence, there is a certain level of disconnect in how we experience God. Being able to physically be with Him in the same location is a game-changer.
 - **Think back to your Bible. Where else do you see God dwelling alongside humans in relationship with them?**
 - **Answer:** In Eden.
 - **What happened to the relationship God and humans had in Eden?**
 - **Answer:** Sin destroyed it. Human's sin caused God to drive them out of the Garden.
 - **So, in what ways is the new heaven and new earth restoring God's original intent for His relationship with humankind?**
 - **Answer:** God will one day restore the nature of His relationship with us. We will no longer be separated. We will be with Him in perfect harmony.

NEXT, draw students' attention to verses 5-8. Lead them in a discussion using something similar to the following questions:

- **How does Jesus describe Himself in verse 6? Knowing what you know about the story of the Bible, why is this such a cool statement to make?**
 - **Answer:** The Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. It's a powerful statement because we know that Jesus was with God in the creation of all things (John 1, Colossians 1). Jesus is the plumb line that runs through the Bible. He is the narrative connection from Genesis to Revelation. And we see it here.
- **What happens in verse 7 and 8? What is Jesus talking about?**
 - **Answer:** He is comparing the fate of those who have come to a saving faith in Him and those who have denied or rejected Him.
- **How does this make you feel? What emotions or questions does this raise?**
 - Answers will vary.

Anytime we see Jesus talking about judgment, and especially when we see the kind of descriptive language Jesus uses here, we can have mixed emotions. Students especially can feel uncomfortable about the language of judgment and eternal separation from God.

FINALLY, as you begin to transition into the Story, make sure students understand that the heart of this passage is the new order of things that Jesus will one day usher in. Help them see that the damaging effects of sin will be done away with. Harmony between God and humankind will be restored. And it's all because God has the power and the motivation to do so.

FIRST, instruct students to turn to **2 Corinthians 5:17** and read it together. Then discuss the difference between the old creation that were our lives before Christ, and the new creation that results from coming to a saving faith in Jesus. Ask:

- **What are some things in nature (animals, plants) that become new creations?**
 - Answers will vary. Think: butterflies, frogs, etc.
- **How are these things different than what they were before?**
 - Answers will vary. The goal is to get students thinking about transformation.
- **What kind of new creation is Paul talking about here? Are you literally a different "thing" than you were before?**
 - **Answer:** This is a trick question in a way. Some students will say "no." Before you become a Christian, they may say, and after you become a Christian you're essentially still the same person. While this may be true in regards to biology, in regards to spirituality, we're 100% new creations. We have gone from dead in our sins to alive in Christ. We have new identities, new futures, and a new purpose.

NEXT, connect the passage to the passage in Revelation. Say something like:

- **Paul uses "new creation" to describe the new creation of a person when he or she comes to faith in Christ. But this concept connects to the new creation of the Earth that God will create. Name some aspects again of that "new creation" in Revelation that we talked about a few minutes ago.**
- **What are some similarities between an individual's new creation in Christ and the new creation in Revelation?**
 - Answers will vary. But the point is that all things are completely new. There will be a new system, a new reality, a new order. The old will be gone.

FINALLY, The coolness of the "new creation" at the end of the world is something that we can't even fully comprehend! That's why so many people focus on it, have crazy theories like "zombie apocalypses," and get so easily confused. But here's the cool thing: The newness that happens inside of you, once you are in Christ, is also something that is incomprehensible. The ways that frogs and butterflies change resemble the way that we change: we become completely different. Everything is made new in Christ. That's sort of the business God is in!