

THINGS TO STOP AND START

Stop Criticizing Earth and Start Contemplating Heaven

John 14:1–3; Revelation 21:1–7

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

STUDY



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Do you take time to reflect on the wonder of heaven? Do you think about eternity with God, relief from pain and suffering, and the complete and total banishment of death and sin? Do thoughts of heaven influence your earthly days?

There is more to live for than the here and now, thank God. John 14:1–3 and Revelation 21:1–7 remind us that we are not home yet, but some day God will make His home with us, and we will commune with Him, see Him, and know Him in a way that we can only dream about now.

Jesus promised to prepare a place for us and to come back to get us and take us there. In the time in between, we trust His timing and anticipate the joy to come.



DIGGING DEEPER

Chuck Swindoll suggested in this sermon that we take a good look at the passage in Revelation 21:9–22:5 to discover details of what is in store for us in heaven. Let's take some time to study the passage in depth.

Using Revelation 21:9–22:5, apply the four primary ways of beginning to make sense of the passage—*observation, interpretation, correlation, and application*—in the searching the Scriptures process. Take some time first, however, to read any material you find in your commentaries, Bible dictionaries, and online tools that covers this section of Revelation. *Pray* for the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Pause . . . take a few minutes to do two things prior to beginning your study. First, reflect on what you already know and even feel about the passage you are about to study. Recall some past lessons or sermons on this passage and how those impacted you. Second, bow in prayer and ask the Lord to guide you in your study. Ask specifically that He reveal insights you have not discovered previously and how they may apply to your or someone else's experience.

Quotable

*The Lord has given
us just enough
revelation about
heaven to whet
our appetites—to
make us aware
of the remarkable
difference between
where we are and
where we will be.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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Observation: What Do You See?

Use the space below to record your findings as you look closely at the text. Remember: Look for repeated words, commands, questions, emphatic statements, and images or figures of speech. Your notes can be specific and detailed as you examine the passage.

Revelation 21:9–21

Revelation 21:22–22:5



Observation Tip

A pen or pencil and a journal will *revolutionize* your Bible study. There's just not room enough in your Bible's margins for all the richness that you can observe when you study the Word. Taking notes is essential because 1) it helps to cement your comprehension of a passage, 2) you can look back at your notes later, add to them, and reflect on them, and 3) you can draw! For example, in Revelation 21:15–17, you may want to draw a sketch of the dimensions of the New Jerusalem. In the process of observing the text, you can create diagrams, charts, and brainstorm bubbles. You are not limited to just words on a page.



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Here's an example of a simple way to observe contrasts. We'll contrast the earth and heaven.

The World of Woe, Earth	Our Glorious Destination, Heaven
Depravity	Joy
Sin on parade	Sinlessness
Darkness and shadows	Light
Deformity, death, disabilities	Life without fear
Resistance to the gospel/rejection of Christ	Worship of the living Christ
Sadness and suffering	Protection and perfection

Interpretation: What Does It Mean?

Revelation 21:9–22:5

What does the ornate attention to detail of the city say about its Architect?

There is no temple in the city (21:22). Why is that important?

What is the significance of light and open gates (21:25)?



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The angel shows John a river with water of life and trees of life. Where else in the Bible do we find these features? Why are these symbols noteworthy here?

Correlation: How Does It Compare?

Read the following passages, and write a note or two on how they help confirm the meaning of Revelation 21:9–22:5.

1 Corinthians 2:9–12

1 Corinthians 15:50–58

Colossians 3:1–2

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18



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1 Peter 1:8

Application: What Difference Does It Make?

There are three applications that Chuck Swindoll gleaned from John 14:1–3 and Revelation 21:1–7:

- *Any place God plans to be, you should want to go.*
- *Anything God removes (pain, sorrow, death, suffering, fear, shadows, night), you don't need.*
- *Any time God makes an offer, you're wise to accept it.*

In the space below, write out a few specific personalized responses to what you have studied in Revelation 21:9–22:5.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, help me to reflect on Your eternal glory. The world is broken, and I long for the day when You make all things new. To be in Your presence—what an unspeakable joy that will be! Maranatha. In Jesus' name, amen.



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Tools for Digging Deeper



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CD series



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without Guilt**
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For the 2017 broadcast, this Searching the Scriptures study was developed by the Pastoral Ministries Department in collaboration with Mark Tobey, based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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