

The Eternal Glory of Christ's Bride

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Date: 13 March 2022

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[0 : 00] encourage our hope and our faith. This we pray in Christ's name, amen. Please be seated. So there are many pictures of the church, metaphors, technically.

Actually, metaphor is a comparison of two things. Instead of using the word like or as, it's just a picture.

So the church has several of those metaphors or pictures. So what are some of the things that the church is called, likened to, compared to?

A bride. The church is a bride. Okay, we're like a bride. And each metaphor, each picture has a Christ counterpart.

So we are the bride and he is the husband. So we are also the body of Christ. So if we are the body, his members, he is the head, right?

[1 : 15] So he also talked to us about being branches on a vine. He is the vine. He is the source. We are branches attached to him.

Gives us that picture of how we bear fruit. How do we bear fruit? Not apart from him, but drawing upon him, right? So he's the vine. We are the branches. What's another?

Cornerstone. Cornerstone. We're a building. He's a cornerstone, right? We are the living stones being put together into a building, which he also describes as a temple, ultimately.

Right? So we're a body. We're a building. We're a vine and branches. We are a family with a father in heaven.

Any others you think of? Oh, there's one. We're not as fond of this one. He is a shepherd and we are sheep.

[2 : 22] We're sheep, right? Temple bride husband. So a lot of pictures, body, branches, family, sheep, temple, bride.

In Revelation 21, he repeats the one we've heard before in the scriptures, bride. Now he adds another one, a holy city.

We're also a holy city. He puts these two together here in chapter 21. And again, I ask, is he a bride or a city?

Is the church a bride or a city? Yes. Is the bride a city? Yes. Is the city a bride? Yes. So when we come to 21, we saw that earlier, right? Verse 21, 2, I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God prepared as a bride.

So it's a city like a bride and it's a bride like a city. So this is what we're given. Now, so how are we to understand this?

[3 : 28] Now, I want to remind you that we've seen this pattern before in the book of Revelation. Remember chapter 5, when they have the scroll and nobody can be found who's worthy to open the scroll, right?

Nobody can open the scroll. Nobody's found anywhere. And then, remember, John is just despairing and one of the elders says, don't worry, there is someone who is worthy to open the scrolls.

It's the lion of Judah. So he hears the lion of Judah. And then he turns to see this lion and what does he see?

A lamb. So he hears one thing but sees another thing. Same thing happened in chapter 7. He hears about this sealed group of people, 144,000 people, 12,000 from each of the tribes of Israel.

They are sealed. That's what he hears. What he sees in the same chapter is what? A multitude. That's key. You can't even count them.

[4 : 39] And they're not from tribes but they're from every tribe, every nation, every language, every people. So he hears one thing, sees another. So is Jesus a lion or a lamb?

Yes. Yes. Is the church 144,000 numbered, sealed, or are the innumerable multitude from everywhere? Yes.

Yeah. So is the bride a person or a place? Okay.

See? Glad you got that because it took me a while. So we saw in the first eight verses the bride's new home, right?

Verse 1 talks about it's a new creation. Verse 2, it's a new city. And it's not so much describing the place as the environment of the place. What is heaven, what's our new home going to be like?

[5 : 40] What can we expect it to be like? It's not, he's not so much painting a picture of, you know, what it looks like but what it will be like for us. And what he describes in verse 3, the dwelling place of God is with man.

He will dwell with them. He will be his people. God himself will be their God and wipe away every tear and death will be no more. Neither shall there be mourning, crying, or pain. He describes an experience.

He describes a security. He describes a fellowship with God. God now dwelling with man. So he dwells with us by spirit now, correct?

In fact, when we are saved, God sends his Holy Spirit to us and he dwells with us. Jesus said, I will never leave you or forsake you, right? Because I will send another to you. He will be with you.

He will be in you. He will never leave you. So we already have God dwelling, but this goes to another level. It's in our new home. It's not just, oh, he's in me in spirit.

[6 : 43] It's we're with him. We're going to see Jesus face to face. Do we get to see the Father?

Yeah, he talks about, you know, now we see darkly, right?

As through a glass darkly, then we will see face to face. So it's another, so it's that that he's describing. It's this unbroken, unhindered fellowship with God.

No more crying, no more pain, no more sin, no more of these things that hinder my fellowship with God. I worship him, and then I get tired.

I want to worship, but I get tired. I need to sleep. I have pain. Oh, who am I telling you? We have things that hinder us.

And so it's like, I think the older you get, the more pain you get, and all that kind of stuff. The more limited you are, the more you're like, I cannot wait for that new body.

[7 : 49] I cannot wait for no more hindrance. You know? So that's the picture. And then he talks about a satisfying life in those opening verses.

Verse 5 and following, he talks about everything's new. He talks about a thirsty person. Whoever's thirsty, I'll give to him the spring of the water of life without payment. He talks about this thirsty, this overflowing supply of abundant life with the Father, a satisfying life.

The thirsty. Thirsty. Thirsty means, right, needy. You know you're needy. You yearn for what's true. He talks about the thirst will be quenched overwhelmingly, and then it's not just the person who's needy and thirsty, but it's this person also becomes a conqueror.

A needy person who can't help themselves, right, becomes a conqueror. Conqueror. Because to the conqueror, he will give all the blessings.

So am I a thirsty person, or am I a needy person, or am I a conqueror? Am I a lion or a lamb? Yeah.

[9 : 02] Start as a lamb. And through his strength, we become conquerors. Not of everything. A conqueror simply means that I still fight sin.

That's what it means. I'm gradually overcoming sin. I'm always repenting. That's what it means. A conqueror in chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation, remember the churches?

To the one who conquers. To each church, that's it. To the one who conquers. To the one who conquers what? Well, for the church of Ephesus, it was losing their first love, so it meant repenting of that.

So conquering simply usually meant something along the lines of repenting, being steadfast, coming back to the Lord, coming back to what I've lost.

Or the last church lay to see the self-sufficient church. We don't need anything. We got everything we need. We're good. And he says, no, you need to repent. You don't know what.

[10 : 00] You don't even know and appreciate what you don't have. So anyway, that's a conqueror.

So now we come to the bride's new adornment. We have her home. Now we have a new adornment.

We're shown the beauty of the bride, and we're shown the beauty of the bride by using another picture of a building. Maybe John just don't want to talk about the bride, you know, talk about how the bride is built.

You're not supposed to do that, right? Sorry, bad joke. So the bride's new adornment.

So I think he can describe more. See, James is already going there, aren't you? Yeah, I know. You knew better. Okay. I saw Jenny laughing.

So what is this? Why is the bride of Christ described as the holy city, Jerusalem? Why didn't you just describe the bride? He says we've seen the bride, and now he's going to describe a city with walls and gates and foundations and streets, all of that.

[11 : 12] So why? So I think it's to better articulate some factors about the bride. Because by using the pictures of the structure of the wall and the foundations and the gates and streets, we get a fuller picture.

So there's two descriptions here. I think we could break it down into two parts, because every week we break it into two, don't we? That's just what we do. When I was a young pastor, it was always three parts.

I was Trinitarian. Now I'm a dualist. So now it's just, no, I'm not. I keep trying to make it shorter. And I'll cut that point out.

The sermon will be shorter, right? It doesn't work. I'll get down to one point, and it'll take forever, right? Someday, when I'm mature enough, I'll figure out how to do this.

Two descriptions. Verses 9 to 17 talk. Focus on the presence of God, which brings security to the people. And then verses 18 to 27 focuses more than on the beauty of the bride, the beauty of the city, the splendor, radiance of her glory, which inspires praise.

[12 : 26] Because people come to this beautiful place to bring their honor and praise to God. So by describing the bride as a city, first of all, it shows God's presence securing his holy people.

It shows God's presence securing his holy people. I know that's a mouthful, but it's kind of, I'm trying to get all this into the statement. First we see her portrait, verse 9, where he says, I'll show you the bride.

He is then catapulted, not catapulted, carried away, right? This is kind of visionary language. He's carried away in the spirit to a great high mountain.

Not a literal mountain, but he's carried away where he can see what is going to be shown to him. He's going to see this vision. And so he thinks he's seeing the bride, but he's actually seeing the holy city.

So the bride is a city, just like the bride is also a body and a temple and a building and a vine and a branch and all those kind of things.

[13 : 33] So how does she appear? Here's the striking part, verse 11. She has the glory of God. She has the glory of God.

She possesses the glory of God. She's not just reflecting. She now has God's glory. And he's going to try to describe this glory in human terms, but, you know, with all these jewels and all this gold and silver and shiny and radiance.

But I don't think it can capture it all because we're kind of going, huh? So, but he's talking about glory. How do you describe glory, right?

It's brightness. It's shining. It's magnificent, right? He talked about the glory of God that settled on the tabernacle, right?

And they're trying to describe that. It's kind of like, what is it? It's intangible, but it's brilliant and magnificent. This is the bride now.

[14 : 41] Her glory is described at verse 11 as its radiance. Literally, her radiance is like a most rare jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal.

Well, is it jasper or is it clear as crystal? What's that? So, radiance, brilliance, the light, the glory, the light, the brilliant light coming off of her, this church, this city is like a most rare jewel.

And he's going to describe a lot of jewels here later. Twelve of them. Jasper being one of them.

He's fully reflecting God. Now, when he uses this phrase, jasper, if you go back to chapter 4, when John first gets, is taken, carried away in the spirit to heaven.

He's there in heaven. He sees the throne. And the first thing he describes about the throne is the one sitting on the throne is like jasper. And now he's describing the bride of Christ the same way.

The city is like jasper, just like God himself is like jasper. What's jasper?

[16:08] I'll get into that in a moment. It's kind of hard to nail down. Depends on which website you got to. I Google an image. You Google an image?

Yeah, yeah. I have to see what it looks like. So, it depends on which Google you did. If you Google or goggle, you know, you get different pictures. Yeah, we'll get to that in a moment.

So, now he describes the parts. So, okay, she's glorious. She's a holy city. Secondly, she's got parts. She has walls with gates and a wall with foundation.

He describes the wall in verse 12 that has these 12 gates, which, by the way, also had 12 angels, which also had names of the 12 tribes.

So, we have a Jewish connection. We have an Israelite connection to this city. 12 gates, 12 tribes. Then we have 12 foundations that have the 12 names of the 12 apostles.

[17:09] So, you have a Israel tribes connection and a New Testament connection. You got Jew and Gentile.

Just like in chapter 7, 144,000 from the tribes of Israel. Remember, we looked at the tribes of Israel there and there was a little bit of a problem? Remember, because one of the original tribes is gone and then Joseph gets two tribes and then the order is totally upside down.

Because all the concubine and ones who are supposed to be at the bottom are now at the top in Revelation. So, what's going on? Something's different. But anyway, still tribes of Israel.

And then in chapter 7, you also had the multitude that's every nation. So, we got both again here.

Now, my question is, okay, what's the point? Why are the tribes of Israel the gates and the apostles of the Lamb the foundation?

Well, isn't it the other way? Shouldn't Israel be the foundation? Shouldn't the gospel be the entrance? But he puts Israel as the 12 gates.

[18:21] So, you enter through the gate. The way you get into the city. The way you get into the church. The way you get into the building of God. The way you enter the temple of the Holy Spirit is through Israel.

Why? Because that's where the Messiah came from. That's where all the promises started. Way back with Abraham. Through the one descendant of Abraham, I will bless all the families of the earth.

That's plan A. Plan A. Repeated to Isaac. Repeated to Jacob. Right? That's the plan. That's the plan. So, that's how we enter.

We enter through. And then, so what is the foundation? So, the foundation of the walls is the apostles of the land. Why are they the foundation?

The church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. Christ himself being the cornerstone. Again, it's a building.

[19:32] Christ is the cornerstone that sets the measurement, the plumb line for all the rest of everything else. We don't get off center. You got an apostle who's not in line with Jesus.

He's not an apostle. You got a prophet who's not in line with Jesus. He's not a prophet. He's the cornerstone. If I look down the building, as we're building up the building, if I'm not in line with the cornerstone, then I'm not legit.

Right? I have to line up with that cornerstone. That gives us the right foundation. So, the apostles as the foundation means what?

What did the apostles bring us? They brought us the truth. Now, their truth was based in the Old Testament, came out of that. But it was clarified in Jesus Christ.

Now, it is the gospel. Now, the gospel was always there. It was always God, man, a coming Savior, and faith.

[20:37] It was always that. We knew who God was. We knew that we had failed as men. We knew there was a coming one, but we didn't know exactly how he's coming. Right?

So, that gets clarified. No, he came to die. Old Testament did tell us that, but we usually missed it. And we knew faith was always important, but we thought it was all about obedience.

No. No. It's about faith. Because the faithful one will follow. So, okay. So, we see the parts, the 12 gates, 12 foundations, and then we see this measuring thing.

Why is he measuring? Well, to measure in the Old Testament is to identify what belongs to God.

So, he's measuring. We saw it back in chapter 11 when the angel was told to measure, right, the holy city.

But then he was told to leave out the outer court because that's going to get trampled. And by not measuring the outer court, that meant the outer court was subject to get trampled. And the outer court was, we applied that to those who are still on earth.

[21 : 45] Right? The temple itself is now in heaven. The outer court, that's us. We still get to get trampled. We're spiritually safe, but not physically safe.

Right? So, measuring is saying this is who's secure. God is defining who's secure. You know, the 144,000 are sealed. Right? We're safe spiritually and eternally, but we still, like our Lord, can be persecuted.

And suffer in this world. Okay? So, protection. So, this is identifying the ultimate city, though, in heaven. And it's totally, the whole city is secure. Whole city is at peace, free from harm.

That's interesting, you know. Why does a heavenly city where we're safe with God need walls?

That's kind of interesting. But here's the other thing.

Here's the other thing that doesn't make sense. So, how big is this city? Right? 12,000 stadia. How big is this stadia? I don't know. 607 feet. Okay?

[22 : 52] It's a furlong. Right? You know, furlong's all right. No? Okay. So, it's 607 feet. So, 12,000 times 607 is what?

I don't know. I don't know. But it comes out to almost 1,400 miles. Okay? If we're being literal. So, this city is 1380, technically.

It's 1,380 miles wide. 1,380 miles long. And 1,380 miles high.

That's... She's a big bride. Sorry. That's probably why I'm describing her as a city.

You know, it's like, if I say that about a bride, so we'll call her a city. She's really big. 1,400 high.

[23 : 54] Can you see that? That's getting into the flight of satellites. 1,400 miles. Right? Denver's only one mile high.

Right? Add another 1,379 miles on top of that. So, we're not talking about high mountain. We're talking about... Out of this world.

Out of this world. And then it's wide. So, it's a cube. It's a perfect cube. And you know the only other thing that's a cube in Scripture? Anybody know?

That God had designed to be the width and the length and the height all exactly the same. Think temple.

The Holy of Holies. The temple was not a cube, but the Holy of Holies was a perfect cube. What was the Holy of Holies? What was in there?

[24 : 53] God's presence. The ark. The ark. The ark. The ark. Right? Mercy seat. Cherubim. The throne of God. Isn't that what we've been talking about in Revelation? Cherubim.

Throne of God. Presence of God. Now the city has become the presence of God. And the bride is in the city.

We are in the Holy of Holies. Did I tell you about my experience going to the Holy of Holies when I was in Israel? 1995? Didn't I? Yeah. Yeah?

My hair stood up more like than it is now? Because you can go into the dome of the rock. You know, in Israel, on the holy mountain, on the holy place is that Muslim dome, right?

And at that time, in 95, I could go in. They let you go in. You just take your shoes off. Put a coffee filter on your head and you go on in. I mean, you show respect for the building.

[25 : 51] And in the middle of the building, it's cut out. You can look upon what was the Holy of Holies. Now they claim that's the holy place where Mohammed, I think, right, met God or something like that.

And you can see his fingerprints. I'm probably messing that up. Sorry. But what I knew you could see because they had allowed the archaeologists to get in there and take measurements, take pictures.

I'd already known this, that in that, what you can see in there is the Holy of Holies. And what you actually see is really rugged rock. It's like, that's the Holy of Holies?

But there's one rectangle that is perfectly level. And it's the exact size of the ark. And the other thing they discovered that they didn't know, it was sitting in the wrong direction.

So they're like, oh, it's got to be sitting this way because when you walk in the Holy of Holies, you see, you know, like in the pictures, right, you see the cherubim. But no, it's this way. So you see it from the side. It's like, what's that about?

[26 : 55] We got to take the poles out. Just a practical thing, apparently. Everybody's drawing pictures, but then you actually see the mountain. It's like, oh, it's this way. Why is it that way?

Ah, the poles. But you could, I mean, you're looking down and you're seeing that and the hair just starts, you just realize we're actually in the area of the Holy of Holies.

Where one high priest a year dared to go with bells on and a rope, right? In case he's not clean. I ain't going to get him.

I'm not, you go get him. I'm not getting him. All right? So they tie a rope so they can drag him out. So there's a real place like that. But compared to what this is, that's a tiny little plot of land where God chose to dwell with his holy presence, right?

And now it's going to be with us. It's just hard to grasp, isn't it?

[28 : 07] So the city's huge. And 12, right? It's a multiple of 12. So 12 is the numbers mean something in Revelation.

Numbers count, right? Seven always means the same kind of thing, right? It means that that's a representative of completion, like seven days of a week. It's a full week. So 12 is the same.

12 is the same kind of idea. 12, that's why there were 12 tribes. That's why Jesus picked 12 disciples. That's why there's 12 apostles. 12 means full, complete, represents the whole.

So 12,000 stadia, 12,000, just means it's perfect. It's the complete. That's what it means.

I don't think it's literal. Okay? Because then he tells us about the walls. Now, 12, so 1,380 miles high.

[29 : 09] How high is 144 cubits? Anybody know? Cubit is 18 inches. Right? It's supposed to be basically.

And mine actually is 18 inches. So I actually have angel measurement right here. You know? Which by saying it's also angel measurement, he's probably saying, don't take it literal.

Because nobody's measured an angel. Some of them are huge. Right, so it's... So 144 cubits equals...

Anyone? Anyone again? No, no. 216 feet. So I want you to stand back and look at this city. 1,400 miles high.

And then you see 216 high wall. Is there a little disconnection there? A little disproportionate?

[30 : 11] I tried to draw it in the classroom. I drew a really big 1,400-mile city. And then I just drew a tiny little line down at the bottom. There's the wall. It's probably too big.

It's smaller than that. It's 200 feet versus what? 72 million feet or whatever it is. Whatever. 14 miles. 1,400 miles.

So what? But again, 144 is a multiple of... Ding, ding, ding. 12. 12.

12 again. 12 again. 12 is perfect. You have 24 elders. What is that? That's a multiple of two 12s.

Those 24 elders in heaven are probably representative of the 12 tribes and the 12 apostles.

That would be the easiest. You want to read the scholars and get into lots of other... But to me, it's like... I think it's pretty simple. Probably just representing, you know, all of God's people.

[31 : 15] So here it is again. So it's perfect. Perfectly high. Perfect height to the wall. I mean, 260 feet. That's a pretty high wall. But... And again, like I asked before, why does heaven have a wall?

Why are there gates? Is there a problem with the neighbors? You know, is there going to be a threat somewhere? And then we talk about the wall. Well, the wall is clear.

So it's not like it's hiding anything. The wall is clear. Well, whatever that clear crystal-like glass means.

Okay. So, sorry. I just find this fascinating. So, Paul teaches us back in Ephesians 2 that the church is a house.

He describes the church as a house, as a building, as a temple. But he also describes this, what this new city is picturing, this coming together of two peoples.

[32 : 17] This ancient tribe of Israel people who are very specific and uninclusive.

And then this whole other kind of people that are now meshed with these people that are inclusive.

So, remember what he says in Ephesians 2? He says, Now, in Christ Jesus, you, talking to Gentiles, us kind of folks, you who were once far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Because he is our peace. He who made both, talking about two kinds of people. He made both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances.

What is it that kept the Jews out of the temple? Excuse me. The Gentiles out of the temple. Remember the temple had barriers, right? You have the Holy of Holies, right? There's a veil in front of that.

[33 : 17] Only one person gets to go in there once a year. And he better be ready. Right? And then you have the outer court, right? Where you got the lampstand and the bread and the incense and the priests went in there daily.

They did their work. But they didn't go any further than that. And by the way, unless you're a priest, you don't go in there. Then you have the outer court, right? The outer court for the men of Israel. And then you have another court for the women of Israel. So if you're a woman Israelite, you can only go so far. Then if you're a Gentile, okay.

Let's build a wall here. They literally had a wall in Jerusalem. Gentiles. And then a death warning. No trespassing. You will be, you know, we'll make you a sacrifice or something like that.

You stay out there if you're a Gentile. It's as close as you get to the presence of God. And that, so he's taken all that away now. In Christ, that already happened.

[34 : 21] He took out the, the, the dividing wall of hostility. He took out the law. He didn't take out the law, but he fulfilled the law.

So that now we can come and create in himself one new man in a place of two. Jew and Gentile. Now it's just one. Now it's not about Jew and Gentile. Now it's just one. So making peace and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross.

Thereby killing the hostility. He came and he preached peace to you who are far off. You Gentiles. And peace to those of you who were near. You Jews. Because you're closer. You already got a lot of this stuff.

For through him we both have access in one spirit to the Father. So then you. Who are we now? You are no longer strangers and aliens. You are now fellow citizens. You are fellow citizens. With the saints. And members of the household of God. Built on the foundation of the apostles. There it is. Christ himself being the cornerstone.

[35 : 27] In whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple. Notice it goes from a house to a building to a temple. In him you also are being built together as a dwelling place of God for the spirit.

So the temple. Right? The building. Is a picture of what we're like with God. We're like the rocks being fitted together.

And I love this rock wall because not all the rocks are the same size. Because God fits us where we fit. Some of us are more ragged than others.

And some of us are bigger than others. And some of us are streamlined. And I'm not. But that's, you know, you get to be part. But Christ is the cornerstone.

So we don't build our own building. We line up with him. So. Now.

[36 : 32] Second part. How are we doing? We. Does any of this make sense? We're okay? Okay. Good. Because I'm confused. So.

No. I had trouble going to sleep last night because I'm still thinking about this. What? What? What? There's walls. There's gates. But he doesn't describe anything in the city.

He describes the walls and the gates. He's just describing the outside. Yes. How high? How big? But he doesn't describe anything in there. In fact, he says there's no temple. There's no structure inside.

I'm thinking what? What's going on? What? What is he showing us? What? What is this about? So one, it's about God's presence because God's now dwelling with us and he's now given us his glory.

Right? We're secure in there. There's a picture of security in there. Not that there's any threat, but I think that that's why the wall doesn't have to be that big.

[37 : 32] It's not a threat, but it does tell us we're protected. We're now safe. Okay? Because the gates are open. It's not like we need to worry about it. Okay. So secondly, described as a city, I think it shows the bride's manifold glory that inspires praise.

We're going to see, now he's going to talk about, he's talked about the foundations and the gates, but now he's going to talk about what they're made of. And by talking about the material that they're made of, he shows her manifold glory.

He's already said she has the glory of God, but now he's going to describe it in all these multicolored jewel stuff. I mean, it's just, just. And it inspires praise because everyone that comes in brings glory to God and brings honor to God.

So it inspires praise. So what are the materials? So verse 18 to 20, we see the foundation, well, we see the wall, but then we see the foundation that is adorned with 12 kinds of precious stones.

These stones reflect the many varied glory. The colors. Now, you can look them up. I looked up all of them, and I contrasted with other sites and all this kind of, I went to the rock site.

[38 : 56] You know, you got to go to the rock site. You can't go to Wikipedia. You got to go to the rock site because they're going to know what the rocks are. And there is a place like that. It's like, cool.

But even they can't tell you, they can't show you one picture of a jasper. So the colors. So here's what I tell you. Here's the colors. It's all kinds of reds.

All kinds of blues. There's bright blues and there's light blues. There's greens. There's the emerald green. There's the shiny, or the really, what do you call it, John?

The bright green. And then there's the kind of more, not bright. I'm sorry. That's a good word. And then there's one that's almost orange.

And then you go to violet. Oh, violet. The amethyst. And then there's various of yellows. And then don't forget there's gold. Right?

[39 : 54] And then there's the pearly gates. I finally connected that, by the way. Remember, it's always called the pearly gates. And then I read this and go, oh, that's where they get that. Pearly gates.

Streets of gold, pearly gates. That's where they got that. Okay. I just thought it was gates of pearl. No, pearly gates. Oh, okay. You could do that. Big, giant pearl.

What ocean is that coming out of? I want to see that clam. Yeah? It's clam, right? Oyster. Oyster. Okay. Yeah. Shellfish. Giant.

Did I tell you the Greek word behind pearl? Margarita. I don't know why that's interesting. I just thought it was interesting. Are margaritas that color?

No. No? Okay. It's been a long time. I can't. I can't tell you because it's been a long time. I don't remember. So, okay. And streets of gold.

[40 : 55] So, I think just getting the impression, I mean, when I was painting with John, my dear brother, you know I love color. I love color.

I just put as much color and even fake it sometimes. You know, it's like, got to get some red in there. I know it's not in the picture, but put the red in there. Just love color.

I love seeing the sunrise and the sunset, right? Because God displays these just incredible colors. You see a rainbow. Every once in a while, we see a rainbow that's just really bright.

Or a double, you know? And you got to stop and look because it's like, ooh. And to me, I'm thinking, that's kind of what's going on here. Because God's going to be shining the light and it's going to reflect off all these jewels, all these colors.

And I can't imagine what the color play is going to be like. It's just going to be, whew. I think that's what John's trying to describe.

[41 : 56] Right? So, what are these? So, if the foundations are the apostles and the gates are the tribes, where are we in all of this?

So, embedded on the foundation are these jewels, right? And you remember that Paul talked about precious jewels in another place. He talked about it in reference to reward.

He said in 1 Corinthians 3, he said, If anyone builds on the foundation, he means Christ. If you build on the foundation, you're saved in Christ, so I have a foundation.

If you build on that foundation, what do I build on the rock? Jesus talked about building on my word. So, whatever you build on the rock, build with what?

Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble. Each one's work will become manifest, for the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire. And the fire will test the sort of work which one has done.

[43 : 01] So, if your work is wood, hay, stubble, how are you going to do in that fire tub? Well, if it's stubble, if it's hay, it goes pretty fast. Wood, it might take a little longer, but it's still going to burn.

But then you get to the precious stones, silver, and gold, what happens? Well, they are going to melt a little bit. But they're still being something left. Interesting. He says precious stones are part of

our work.

If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. And I think that's the picture in this holy city. The precious stones are how we reflect there by the work that we've done.

Not the wood, hay, stubble kind of work where I do it at my own strength. And I do it because I have to. Do it because it's my duty. Do it because I should do it. But it's going to be the gold, silver, precious stone, which is the work that I do by going, okay, God, I do not do this.

Please do it through me. I'm abiding in the vine. Right? I don't produce fruit. I bear fruit because I'm drawing from him.

[44 : 11] Not by myself. I just thought that was interesting. I think that's a sight. So there's the foundation.

Then there's the focus. In verse 22 and 23, he mentions some things that are not there. There's no temple there. Why is there no temple? There's no temple structure anymore. Because God himself, the Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple.

We're with him. We're in the Holy of Holies. With God, we have a direct, immediate access. So remember, the temple, that whole temple's gone with all the walls and all the barriers.

There's no more walls and barriers. We have direct access. We have direct access right now in prayer to the Father. Don't we? I come in Jesus' name. Not my name.

I come in Jesus' name. I have direct access. I know he's not on hold. I know. I got it. But imagine that on a whole other level of, I just talked to him.

[45 : 17] That's shit. Right? No barriers, no buffers. And then verse 23 says we don't need the light bearers anymore. We don't need the sun and the moon. This is a whole new creation.

Apparently, there won't be a sun and the moon in the new creation. Because in the old creation, they were simply light bearers. They weren't the lights. Do you remember in Genesis 1? What's the first thing God created on day one?

God said, let there be light. And there was light. Do you know what day he created the sun and the moon? Day four. There was already light before there was a sun and moon.

So it's not about me, the sun, and the moon. Already light. God is the light. And Christ is the lamp. Which I think means, remember Jesus said, I am the light.

And if I am the light of the world. And if we follow him, we walk in him, we have no darkness. I think take that to another level. Right? In heaven where we're walking literally in his light.

[46 : 20] We will see everything clearly. Our walk won't have any misunderstanding. We see vaguely now. Right? We see some things. We can see. He doesn't give us all the details.

We see some things. We know he's in control. But I don't know how he's in control of this thing right now I'm going through. But I know he's in control. Right? So then I will see clearly.

No misunderstanding. No darkness. No my own problematic reading into something. Right? I mean, can you imagine that?

And who is there? Verse 24 to 27. Who's there? Well, there's Gentiles there. That's the word nations. Verse 24. By its light the nations walk. The Gentiles walk by its light.

By her light actually. The Gentiles walk and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. Kings of the earth. Aren't those the bad guys? Haven't we been reading all along in Revelation?

[47 : 20] Right? The kings of the earth. Those are part of the beast thing. Right? Well, no. Because if you go by verse 27 that says only people. Right? No unclean. No. Only people who are in the book.

Then these kings of the nations who are coming in. They're good kings. They're saved kings. They're redeemed kings. They're not perfect.

But they were godly kings who tried to honor God in the way they led and ruled. And need more of those, huh? And they bring their glory into.

Not their glory as a, ooh, Olivia, I want to show off my. No. They bring glory to God into her. Glory to the Lamb and to God. Verse 25.

The gates are open. Gates are never shut. It's interesting. The gates are never shut by day. But of course there's no night. I go, okay.

[48 : 17] What's he saying? The gates are open by day, but then there's no night. Dave is laughing with me. I was like, all right. So can you just say the gates are always open?

Well, he wants us to know there's no night. There's just day. None of this daylight savings, by the way, you have to go through. That'll be great. Of course there's no night.

What if I need to take a nap? I won't need to take a nap. If I'm tired, I'll never be tired. I can't even fathom that. So who can enter?

Verse 27. Not the unclean. Not the detestable. Not the false. Well, those three terms describe me. I'm an unclean person.

I can be detestable. I can be false. So does that rule me out? So it's not, it's not.

[49 : 25] But only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. So how do I know if I got written in the Lamb's Book of Life? How do I know that? Because that was written a long time ago.

Right? I don't get to. How do I know if I'm in that book? Hmm? Holy Spirit?

Absolutely. But some people can be self-deluded. I think that was the purpose for verse 8. You know, there are Christians who think they're in. And verse 8 back there said, hey, by the way, the cowardly, the faithless.

You don't stand up for Christ? Ever? You don't trust him in your life?

I think that's verse 8 is a warning, right? Make sure. How do I make sure about my faith? Well, do I see God's fruit coming out of my life?

[50 : 27] Not, I do not ask, am I doing stuff to produce for God? That's the wrong question.

Because yeah, I can do that for a while. But do I see God showing love through me?

Patience? Kindness? Goodness? Ever? Am I fighting sin?

Who's a conqueror, right? So am I fighting sin? If I'm not fighting sin, then I need to be worried. I could go for a period of not fighting sin.

I could be like David, can't I? I mean, I don't know how David did that for a while. But he just, the men have been studying that. We've been trying to, how'd this righteous man get to this point?

Went quick. Went quick and it went bad. Really fast. I can do that too. I can, I mean, if he does it, and he's a man after God's heart, if he can do that, I certainly can do that.

[51 : 37] A few idle minutes over here, or a few idle hours over here, yeah, I could go there real quick. But am I repenting of that? See, David ultimately repented, right?

He had to be dragged in, but he did repent. And when he repented, we see Psalm 51 and Psalm 32, man, he repented. He didn't leave anything at me.

He wasn't dishonest about anything. Do I go there when I fight? Fight him. That's a mark of a believer. I fall seven times, but I give back up.

How do I know I'm in the Lamb's Book of Life? Is there a fruit? Is there life? Is there change? Is my heart changed? Are my values changed? Are my, you know, has God changed me?

Not have I changed me. Has God changed me? That's, we pray a prayer, right? I was taught all growing up, we pray a prayer. Just pray a prayer, Jesus will save you.

[52 : 43] Great, then how many hundreds of times it didn't work for me? I kind of stopped, sorry, stopped counting on my prayer saving me or my walking the aisle saving me.

It didn't, because it didn't work, because I did it all. And I think God did that to me to show, you ain't saving you, I'm saving you. All of a sudden I was changed.

All of a sudden I wanted to do what was right. All of a sudden I wanted, I used to hate his commandments, and then I wanted to do his commandments. Not because they gave me pleasure, but because I knew it would give him pleasure.

That's what you look for. Is there a change like that? Not what are you doing, but what has God done in you? Those are the kind of people that are in the Lamb's book.

Are you the thirsty one, right? Thirsty one. You know you're absolutely, apart from God, you're totally broken apart from him. Okay. So the bride described as a city, we see it again in 1 Peter 2.

[53 : 50] Peter says, when you come to him, talking about Jesus, when you come to him, he is a living stone, rejected by men, but in the sight of God, choice and precious. Jesus is a precious stone.

You yourselves, like precious living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

So Peter 2, like Paul, Peter 2 pictures the church is like living stones, and we relate to the big living stone, the cornerstone, right?

We are like him. Why are we like a city? Because he's like him. And then he quotes scripture. He says, Behold, I'm laying inside a stone, a cornerstone, chosen and precious, and whoever believes

in him will not be put to shame.

So the honor is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, the stone goes both ways. He's a stone of salvation, but he's also a stone of stumbling. The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone, a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.

[55 : 00] Why do they stumble? They stumble because they disobey the word as they were destined to do. But you, you are a chosen race. You are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession.

For what purpose? That you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. We are already experiencing that light.

Once you were not a people, but now you are a people of God. You had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. So the church is a bride who's like a city.

We're already pictured that way. And what we get in heaven is gonna be just the full completion of what we're already in process. We're already being built up as a spiritual temple with precious stones.

God builds his church upon a rock. It is a precious cornerstone that some stumble and reject, but some believe in him.

[56 : 02] That same cornerstone saves some others stumble and are offended by that very same stone. Why?

Why do they stumble over him? I think because they're convinced they don't need him. I don't need a savior. I can save myself.

I'm good. God helps those who help themselves, right? So, as long as I help myself, I'm good. I don't think Ben Franklin meant it that way.

But, those who think they're okay, they do not need a savior from sin, they can trust in themselves, they can create their own gods, they reject this stone.

They reject this rock. I don't need him. I'm fine. Yet, those who see their true condition, who see themselves as broken, thirsty, sinful, rebels against a merciful and kind creator who gave them life and gifts and daily breath.

[57 : 18] Those people who see that put their trust in Jesus, who died in their place, paid their debt, washed them clean and then gave them eternal life. These believers are now also sheep who've returned to their shepherd.

They are a body who are united to their head. They are a branch clinging to the vine. They are a family who looks and prays to their father.

Father, they are a temple of the Holy Spirit. They are a bride of the Lamb and they are a holy city who dwell eternally with their God.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word. There's so much there, Lord. There's so much there. And we tend to read into it.

We tend to put our own pictures into it. And so, Father, help us to just stand back and see the big picture and grasp what you're saying about the bride, what you're saying about us, what you're saying about heaven, what you're saying about eternal life.

[58 : 27] That we will be safe. We will have glory that's inconceivable. We will have undistracted and unhindered relation with you in direct access.

We will be unhindered by our present circumstances. Lord, we will be inconceivably beautiful. You will take us who are so imperfect, so flawed, so unclean, so false in many of our ways, so detestable in comparison to your glory.

And you will make us pure. Thank you. Thank you.

May we get a deeper understanding of that in our heart and soul that we might cling to that in days we struggle. We have a living hope and we thank you in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen.