

## All Things New

### Introduction:

I heard several people over the past weeks announce that they find the Book of Revelation weird, strange, or confusing. So, they stay away from it, and that is unfortunate. For there in the pages of John's letter (yes, Revelation a letter) is revealed hope. Giving encouragement is the purpose of apocalyptic literature. We hear and read apocalypse in Daniel, a bit in Isaiah (see Isa 65:17 and 25:8), chapters 24 and 25 of Matthew's Gospel, and of course Revelation. As you read the text from Revelation and Matthew you will hear words of warning but hope and encouragement triumph.

Jesus' words about the end times come as his disciples ponder the Temple. In the verses we read Jesus reminds us of two truths. First, some will come in Jesus' name falsely claiming to be the Christ. Expect this first truth so that you are not fooled. Second, do not be alarmed. Even in the midst of wars, natural disasters, and even famine, Jesus is Lord, and you are safe.

The same theme of comfort is heard at the end of Revelation. The promise of God is Jesus is making everything new. God's original plan to be among humankind is fulfilled. This vision of a new heaven and a new earth is so glorious as there is no death, no mourning, and even the tears of the past are dried by the very hand of God. Our readings not only calm fear and give hope, they also encourage us to live faithfully to our God, while giving witness to Jesus and serving our neighbor.

### Read Your Bible

- Revelation 21:1-8
- Matthew 24:4-8

### **Apply God's Word to Your Life:**

1. Have you taken time to study Revelation?
2. If you did, what did you learn? If not, what has prevented you?
3. Have you experienced someone claiming to be Jesus?
4. How can Jesus' words in v. 6-8 help your anxiousness?
5. Describe what Revelation 21:3 would be like to experience?
6. From which difficult occasion would you most want God to wipe away your tears?
7. Imagine what water from the spring in 21:6 tastes like. Describe it.
8. How can you talk about Jesus to give another person hope?

### **Reflecting on the text:**

1. What have you learned about God?
2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

### **Pray**

Come Lord Jesus! With joy we anticipate your return when all things are made new. Keep us close to this promise and faithful toward you so we may inherit all that you have promised. Jesus, help us to share this good news with friends, neighbors, and the whole world so that your kingdom will be filled with your sons and daughters. Amen.