

**Preaching Christ....  
...by the power of the Holy Spirit  
...and the authority of the Word of God**

**Date:** 10 December 2023  
**Services:** *Across the Diocese*  
**Series:** On that day  
**Title:** We will see you  
**Passage:** Revelation 22:1-5

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- On that day, we will see You  
Shining brighter than the sun  
On that day, we will know You  
As we lift our voice as one  
'Til that day, we will praise You  
For Your never-ending grace  
And we will keep on singing on that glorious day. ///
- On that day – **we will SEE you!** //
- Shining brighter than the sun! ///
- Have you ever stopped to contemplate what that will be like.... ?
- To see Jesus face to face...
- To see in his face his **love**, his **compassion**, his **grace**...?? ///
- But I feel we've jumped ahead and that some background would be helpful...
- So here's where we are heading today!
- Two simple points...
  1. **See him and die!**
  2. **See him and live!**

**1. See him and die**

- Many people say – and you've probably **heard** it said – 'I'd believe in God if he would just **turn up** and **show himself!**'
- People **think** they'd like to see God!
- But right throughout the Bible we see that's it is actually **terrifying** to see God!!
- Do you remember the vision the prophet Isaiah saw in Isaiah **Chapter 6**?
- That is a **humbling reminder**, that in fact we'd surely rather **not** see God.
- For it would be... **terrifying**.
- Isaiah 6:1 *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the **train** of his **robe** filled the **temple**.* //
- **Enthroned** – high and lifted up. This is no little **equal God**.
- **He** is in **charge**. We are **not**.

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- This is a God who is **better, bigger, higher**, more **exalted**.
- we don't meet God as an **equal**
- He is **far above** and exalted **above** us. //
- Now the temple in Jerusalem in 740BC was a magnificent building. Huge foundations. Magnificent timber work.
- And yet in this **vision** he has, it says the train or hem of God's garment completely fills the temple.
- The hem of my trousers is about 2 centimetres. Yet in this vision, the hem of God's garment **fills the temple**. We're meant to get a sense from this vision, just how enormous God is!
- You don't have a nice warm **glowing experience** when you first meet this God.
- **You fall on your knees trembling**. //
- **And the seraphs – these angelic figures – do you recall what they are crying out...? Not LOVE LOVE LOVE. No, they are calling HOLY HOLY HOLY ///**
- It's the song sung to God and to Jesus the Lamb in the book of **Revelation...**
- It means that God is like nothing like us – he's **separate from – different** to us...
- God is unlike **you** and unlike **me**... he's in a completely **different category**.
- He doesn't **think** like you, **act** like you, **do things** like you. He is completely '**other**'. ///
- And suddenly Isaiah cries out in despair. /
- Isaiah 66 - *"Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty."*
- He says '**I am ruined!**'
- The word means '**unpicked**' – like when unpick a garment and pull it apart into its various little bits of shapes of fabric.
- He's saying 'my whole being is being torn to pieces because I am an unclean man'.
- He **sees** God and becomes immediately aware of his **sin and corruption**....
- The understanding was – right back to Moses... that you **couldn't** see God and **live**.
- With your **stain** and **rebellion** – your **uncleanness** – your **UNholiness**.... you **cannot** be in the same **place** as **God**.
- And Isaiah figures he has no right to **live**.
- Brothers and sisters – this the **terrifying holiness of God**. //
- We are all so **casual** about sin and our own state before God aren't we?
- People think they're going to rock up to God and say 'G'day mate' ...
- No friends – this is the **reality**... **this** is what God is like. And if he were to turn **up**, we'd just want him to go **away**. /
- **His holiness would be unbearable**. //
- Yet what we go on to see in Isaiah's vision, is God's amazing **grace!**
- something **extraordinary** happens... a **beautiful** thing happens.
- One of the seraphs comes right up to Isaiah with a coal and burns his lips - not to **kill** him but to

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transform him.

- And the seraph says to him (v7), *'see this has touched your lips, your guilt is taken away and your sin is atoned for.'*
- And it's one of those difficult things to get our heads around with Christianity... /// that is, that God is saying that **sin is so much more frighteningly serious** than we know or are willing to admit... but **God loves to deal with it – atone for it – take it away – forgive it!**
- What we see clearly in Isaiah is **this wonderful liberal, lavish, free grace...** which says to Isaiah... you're **forgiven...** God will **take away** your sin... ! //
- Like the **tax collector** in Jesus' story who simply said 'have mercy on me a sinner' and went home right with God.
- and the **son** who admitted he admitted his unworthiness to his father and was welcomed **home** with a **party**
- and the **woman** who aware she had been forgiven much poured perfume over Jesus' feet.
- Or the **woman caught in adultery** to whom Jesus says 'go and sin no more'...
- Like the **millions of people** in the last 2000 years have come to realise on the one hand the **horror** of their **sin** but on the other the **beauty** of **forgiveness...** which comes through Jesus' **death and resurrection** ///
- So now with that background, we can turn to our **extraordinary** and **wonderful advent hope:**

## 2. See him and live

- Now look with me at Revelation 22
- The passage is full of imagery of course... but I want you to notice the **life** in the heavenly city of Jerusalem – (a far cry from that earthly city right now...)
- Have a look with me from 22:1 - *Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb<sup>2</sup> down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life...*
- The **river** of the **water** of life... and the **tree** of **life**
- What had Jesus promised those who came to him? John 4:13 - *whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life?*
- Here is the absolute **fulfillment** of that promise... there's **rivers** of **living water** here!
- And do you remember when Adam and Eve were put **out** of the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3:24? *After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.*
- Access to the tree of life – **cut off!**
- What do we **see here in Rev 22?**
- That the curse has been **reversed...** there's a tree on **each side** of the **river...** there's no longer any **curse** on **humankind..** and what is more, we are told that the **leaves** of the **tree** are for the **healing** of the **nations...** that is, the **pain** and **suffering** of **humanity** throughout **history** will be **no more!!**
- Let's pick up the passage again from v3 - *No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. <sup>4</sup> They will see his face...*

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- We his **servants...** will **serve** or **worship** the **Lamb of God** – **Jesus the lamb of God** who has taken away the curse of our **sin...** and then do you see? – **we shall see his face!!! //**
- **We shall his face...** and **yet:** we'll have no **fear!!**
- We won't be thinking we are about to lose our **life** because we've seen his **face...**
- we won't be thinking like Isaiah did that seeing his face will be our **undoing!!**
- We will see his face and **live...** because our **unholiness** has been **taken away** – our sin **atoned** for – **and** we will be **perfectly renewed** in the **image of God!!**
- Can you **imagine...??**
- centuries of fearing that you could never see God's face and live... The full **glory** of God **never** available to **sinful humankind...**
- But **on that day** – **we shall see his face!! ///**
- We will see...  
His **beauty**  
His **glory**  
His **majesty**  
We shall in his face his **love**, his **mercy**, his **compassion...**  
We shall see his **understanding...** his **kindness...**  
We will see **Jesus!**  
Our **Saviour**; our **rescuer**; the one who **died** and rose **again**  
We shall see our **Lord...** the **king of Kings...** the **Lord of Lords...** who has triumphed over the **evil one...** and whose reign of **righteousness** will **never end...!**

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- Brothers and sisters – you may be sitting there this morning saying “Mark – so what?”
  - How is this going to change **tomorrow...?**
  - You wouldn't **believe** my life now – I'm hard pressed financially, I live with unbearable pain, there are family members from whom I'm estranged; the kids are driving me crazy and the holidays have barely begun; I need a job; have you seen my medical bills...? I can't even begin to think about Christmas...!
  - ...and you're telling me about something in the distant future about seeing Jesus' **face? //**
  - **I hear you...!**
  - So what difference **does** this make?
  - three things – all begin with P – I hope you might remember them...
  - **Perspective...** Advent is about lifting our eyes from **ourselves**, our **circumstances...** from the **muck** of this **world...** to the **return** of **Jesus** and the **world to come**
  - Sometimes when we are in the thick of things, it's hard to have perspective...
  - ... I love going up Mt Panorama – because you see the lie of the land... how the pieces fit together. There's perspective...
  - **Advent** is meant to give us **perspective...** yes – this **world** and our **life now** is full of **challenges...** and not for a moment do I want to **trivialise** those... but there is a world to **come** which will be absolutely

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**glorious...** and we still stand on that great **day** in the **glory** and **wonder** of the **new creation** and see Jesus **face to face... //**

- And with that perspective – we see what really matters – our **relationship** with **Jesus** – our **forgiveness...** among all our needs – our **GREATEST** need has **already been met //** by Jesus!
- **So – perspective; then:**
- **Perseverance –**  
...the **perspective**, helps us to **persevere...** Paul calls all that we're going through now '**light and momentary troubles**'... and **gaining** that perspective, **helps** us keep **going...** because something **better** is coming... and what we face now really is **short** and **temporary...**
- when you're putting in a long hard day at work or on the land or whatever it is – you're helped to persevere, knowing the end is in sight...
- friends - the **end** is in **sight...** it may only be **moments** away – when **we shall see his face...!**
- **Perspective, perseverance... and:**
- **Presence –**  
...because **that same Jesus** upon whom we look forward to **gazing...** is actually **present** with us **now** in our **struggles...** by his **Spirit** – dwelling **within!!**
- And his **presence...** **calms** us, **guides** us, **empowers** us, **strengthens** us... //
- So **cling** to his **presence...** **run** to **him** – find **refuge** in **him...**
- And amidst the challenges of today or **tomorrow...** or the coming weeks or the new year... take time out to **joyfully anticipate** all that it will mean when one day we will Jesus.... and live!

