

“All Things New”

By Kirk Orelup

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Good morning. This is the third part, on—first it was all about oneness, that's a little odd. That's just a joke—three of us. You see a thread, there's a thread running between all of us, it's going to be this one verse, I think you'll recognize, when we get to it. Anyway, as I prepared this message, I prepared, “What should I—what message would God have me to deliver to the church?” And that was my first question; it was a simple answer, and, so, I began compiling my thoughts and so forth, putting my notes together, and so on, and started printing outlines... Sixteen pages later, I said, “Okay, God, how would You want me to deliver this message?” and, when I got that answer, it became simple, all over again, and left me with only one question, “Is it fifteen minutes or less?” We'll find out; I really don't know, myself. So, if you feel I'm going a little bit long, just give the universal sign, which looks like this (yawning, stretching his arms, and then looking at his watch), and I'll get the picture, and I'll respond accordingly. That said, I'll dismiss the formalities, and I will get started.

All things new: The verse—to begin with, Parrish and Andy assigned verses to each of us to get started. All things new, it comes from:

Revelation 21:5** And he that sat upon the throne said, **Behold, I make all things new.** And he said unto me, **Write: for these words are true and faithful.

The Apostle John is writing about a New Heaven, and a New Earth. The old Earth has been corrupted by Adam, the New Earth will be redeemed by God, and transformed, where He will dwell with His people as they are in their transformed bodies. But, in saying He will make all things new, He is also speaking of something more. Before we can be transformed bodies in a transformed Earth, something else must be transformed. Without it, we will neither see the New Earth, nor our new bodies. And, since our bodies and our New Earth are both dwelling-places, what better way to describe this to you than by talking about, well, real estate. This is how, delivering the message. You may be surprised at how biblical this concept actually is.

Have you ever owned a home before? Anybody? some of you have. Have you ever rented? Many of you have. Have you ever made a down-payment on anything? Have you ever paid off a debt in installments? Then you're going to know what I'm talking about. Okay. These experiences tend to be common to everybody, and, not surprisingly, God tends to speak to us in things that we can relate to in life, and, even in the language of real estate, so, Mike, you're in a good profession, now.

Recently, Jason and Ashley began a transformation in their lives, from living in an apartment, to living in a new home that they purchased. However, they did not move into their new home right away. Moving takes time, if you've ever experienced it, it is a gradual, even painful process, at times. And, that, no doubt, still is in progress, since furniture will need to be arranged, and re-arranged, and maybe re-arranged again, and boxes will need to be unpacked, and new furniture may even be brought in. So, all these things are still important. Also, the process of buying this home started a long time ago. Not just the move, but the process of buying it; they first had to find a home suitable to them that was at the sale price that they were willing to buy. They had to negotiate the final terms of the sale, put it in writing, sign the contract. All this before they could move one single item into the new home. Beside all this, they had to prepare to move; storing, packing, discarding, cleaning, et cetera.

Likewise, when we talk about the Rapture, we think about the transformation to come, on that great and final day when Christ calls us to our new home. But, the process actually begins long before

that actual move-in date. In general, it began the day Christ rose from the dead and gave us victory over sin and death. In our own lives, it begins the day we accept Christ and get baptized in Jesus' name. That's what others have mentioned. But, let me explain further. Have you ever heard the expression, "God is in the details?" You know, some people say it, "The devil is in the details." If I look back into what the origin was, I'm pretty sure it was God is in the details, because if Adam had asked about the details, he never would have been deceived by the devil. Anyway, I'm thinking, who changed this saying from God is in the details to the devil is in the details; I'm going to have to conclude it was the devil. So, I strongly believe that it was. So, anyway, the fact is, our society is tempted to dumb down Christianity so much, that they make false beliefs, and they're making their way into the church. So, we're going to look into further details; as we do, we're going to find God in them. Most of us already know that as long as we are in the flesh, we are subject to sin, and the price of sin is death, so, in the Old Testament, the Israelites had to pay, basically, an annual fee; an animal a year toward their debt of sin, because they couldn't afford the full cost incurred by the sin. Just like buying a home.

When Nubia and I bought our own home, we could not afford to buy it outright; we couldn't pay the full price all at once, but we could afford to make payments, so, if we keep paying our monthly payments, we will own our home in the year 2040. Now, 2040 sounds like the setting of a sci-fi movie. If the legendary astronaut Buzz Aldrin is correct, then by the 2040, we will have established Martian colonies. So, by the time I pay off my home, all my neighbors will be moving to Mars, but, what will I care? I'll be seventy-three anyway, so, you know. The word, 'mortgage,' actually means, death-note. That's where it comes from. So, you pay on this payment, and you pay it, not until you die, you pay it until the death of the note. So, when the note has been paid, the debt is dead. Okay?

So, in this sense, let's say we have this debt of sin is like a mortgage, except we could never pay it off. It's not that we would pay and it would end, we'll never pay it off, because, as long as we're paying on it, that means we're still alive, and, if we're still alive, we keep sinning, and, if we keep sinning, we keep adding to the debt, and, so, we never can catch up to the debt. So, who's going to pay off this debt for us? Of course, we know that, in the end, Christ is who paid off that debt for us. And, so, to fully understand what this means, we're going to go back to that house metaphor: Before we could go buy our home with one payment, the bank had to pay the seller for the home. All right? Let's say I wanted to buy Parrish's house; I can't afford to give him lump money all at once, and that's what he demands, but, Pete, there, is the bank, and he agrees to give Parrish the money, and, then, I will pay him in installments. Okay? So, freeing us from the debt of the seller, but endebting us into the bank in the form of a mortgage. We really wanted to get the house, so we had to come to an agreement of the terms, Nubia and I, we signed the contract. Our signatures are the final act of agreement, once our names went on the paper, we became obligated to the terms. From that point on, we were able to move into the house, and we can stay there, as long as we continue to make payments on the house, for that price we pay. We can keep it solvent. When it comes to salvation, some people miss this very point. They think that, because Christ died for them, they have no more debt to anyone. They think, "Christ died, took away the sins; now I can just go live however I want to live." But that really isn't the thing, because, if you understand, how we look in real life, it never happens that way. Somebody's got to pay for your house, and then you're going to pay them; you owe them. So, if I owed Parrish for the house, because I wanted to buy his house, I couldn't do it, the bank did it, now, who do I owe? I owe the bank. Okay, Christ died for my sins, I don't have to pay the Law anymore, I don't have to pay sin, I don't have to die, the death that I paid before, under the Law, so, who do I owe? I owe Christ, yeah.

Now, there are those people who sing the praises of God, and they sing the praises of God all the time. They think that because Christ died for them, they have no more debt anymore; this is entirely not true, okay? Some of these people haven't even signed the contract, which we know is baptism; they haven't fulfilled their obligations to it, either. Just because Grace is a free gift, doesn't mean it is a free ride. When we accept the terms of Christ's contract with us, if you sign that new covenant, by being

baptized into His death, we become indebted to Him, for the full price, a life for a life. So, just as we owe the bank our money, we owe our life to Christ, therefore, to get that resurrected body, we must pay our life to Christ. It's not a debt of works, but it is gratitude. And this kind of brings us to the All Things New title. There is an old title, but there is a reborn title, which is the simple of this message, which is, If You Want to Be in the Resurrection, You First Have to Die."

So, do you recall the movie, "Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves?" Kevin Costner is Robin Hood, Morgan Freeman is Azeem, the Moor. And, they are in a prison in Jerusalem, and Kevin Costner frees the Moor while he escapes, and, so the Moor says, "Because you have spared my life, now my life is committed to you." It's the same concept, right? He didn't do it out of a sense of—I guess you would say—obligation, in the sense that he was bound to; the Robin Hood character was like, "Really? You're doing this?" But, the Azeem character felt it out of his own sense of obligation, because of gratitude.

So, how do you suppose the bank would feel if we started making payments to the previous owner, in stead of the bank? Now the bank has redeemed me from my debt, but I'm giving my money back to Parrish, anyway. How is the bank going to feel? They're going to foreclose on my house, and they're going to kick me out of my house, okay? I won't be there anymore, because the bank owns the house; I really don't own it yet. I'm in it, but I don't own it, okay?

So, we are owned by Christ, who purchased us with His own blood, according to His Grace, we are His servants, we owe our lives to Him. And, the love Christ compels us to serve. So, Romans six, which was mentioned before, we mentioned that it begins, that we should not continue in sin that Grace may abound, and it says, we who were baptized were baptized into His death, and it goes on to include, in nineteen to twenty-two, and I might skip around a little bit, okay? It says:

Romans 6:19-22 *I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

It's confirming everything that we're saying is really the truth. It's not works, but, yes, we do have to give our lives to Christ. This has everything to do with, "all things become new," because, in order to be transformed, you must first die. We know that a seed has to die before it can become a tree. A caterpillar has to die before it can become a butterfly. Remember Gideon? He had to break the vessels before the light could be shown through. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, so, we, too, begin our transformation into a new image when we die; not when take our final breath on Earth, but, when we die to self so that we can live in Christ. If we wait until our final breath to begin our transformation, we've waited too long. The transformation has to begin now.

Now, there are those who talk about how hard it is to live this resurrected life in Christ, and complain about all the hardships, and what they have to endure. They complain about all the temptations that they face, and all the things that plague them. But, it's not so hard to overcome your temptations, and your trials in your flesh, if you're already dead. If you're having a difficult time living for Christ, it's because you're not dead! You must understand, Christ didn't die for you to be you, He died for you to be Him. This is the transformation from the dust of the Earth, into a living soul in the image of God; He breathed into man that breath of life. Every trial is an opportunity to die for those who died for you. Every temptation is a chance to yield your members as servants to Christ, not to sin. Every persecution is a moment to witness to others the greatness of Christ's love for you. And, in this, death is a beautiful thing. Without death, there can be no resurrection. Without death, nothing is new. This is one of the greatest blessings of Easter, that so many people overlook; the blessing is, that Christ

gave us the ability to die. And I know we look about it, and we think, “He died, and we're going to come to this resurrection,” we can't skip over, in waiting for this resurrection, He gave us the ability to die. Without death, there could be no freedom from sin, there can be no resurrection, of course, we can never be made free. So, it is only after we die that we truly live.

Romans 6:4 *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

So, it's talking about newness of life, he's not talking about something that happened after He calls us home. When Jesus resurrected, He didn't just rise from the dead, ascend into the sky, and shout down, “I'll see y'all when you get here!” He stayed on the Earth for forty days. He walked among us. While He was there, things were different: Mary saw Him, and didn't recognize Him. The disciples on the road to Emmaus saw Him; they didn't recognize Him. The men that were fishing, when He was on the shore, in Galilee, they didn't recognize Him. See, there was something different about Him, and it shows us that, after a resurrection in Christ, that there's a transformation, even while we're on the Earth. Okay, so only after walking the Earth for forty days did He ascend. From then on, we knew Him after the flesh no more. Similarly we are not to be known after the flesh any more. Just as we that have Christ after the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 5:16-17 *Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

He's talking about this change in the flesh, from the old to the new, that we're not known after the flesh, now we're known after the Spirit of God. So, what does our new life in Christ look like? It looks like Christ. If we want to be called Christians, then, we shouldn't be walking around calling ourselves Christians, but we let other people determine whether or not we are Christians. If they don't see Christ in us, if they don't see something particular in us, then we may be dead. So many people try to affect life in Christ by following all the do's and don't's, but this only leads to self-righteousness. I make my mortgage payments every month; I do it if I have to, but, the love of God, and the love of Christ, constrains us, as Paul put it in the verse we mentioned at earlier. To continue paying the debt of the Law would make Christ's payments all for nothing, which is that verse, Galatians two, twenty, and we'll go on to twenty-one:

Galatians 2:20-21 *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*

Now, I'm currently paying thirty years, a thirty year mortgage for a house that will decay, and does decay, every day, little by little. In fact, the other day, a squirrel ate a four by four inch piece of my vinyl siding off; I don't know why. So, as homeowners, we don't have any guarantee that our home will still be standing by the time we get to pay it off. Sorry, tot ell you, Jason. To assure you of this, Christ paid us an earnest, another term, which is actually is used in real estate, but it's used in the Bible. And, we often miss what it means, because we also know it to mean, a desire. In this passage, it was used to—it's going to use the word twice. It's going to use the word earnest, as a desire, and it's going to use it in a different form, which is this real estate term. Okay? So, what is an earnest? To assure us—well, let me tell you this: Christ promised us an eternal home in the Heavens, where we would be with Him in

eternal bodies for all eternity, to assure us of this, He paid us this earnest. So, if you've ever paid a down-payment on something, and then pay it off in installments, the down-payment was the earnest. All right, so, when you're buying a home, they ask you for the earnest, which is the down-payment on the house. It's your guarantee that you're going to buy the house. You don't just take the house and not give them anything; they want something from you to say that, now you're committed to this, because, \$20,000 later, we know you're not just going to walk away from this, we expect you to make these payments, and that's the earnest. So, earnest is the money given to the seller by the buyer as a guarantee of the full payment to come. It's a token or a pledge, and it actually is a Biblical term. So, when Christ ascended into Heaven, He left us His Spirit, which was a guarantee that He would give us the fullness of the gift, later to come. Okay, so you talk about the Rapture. And, it is because we have the earnest of the Spirit that we know that we will experience the Rapture on the final day. It is the earnest of the Spirit that allows us to overcome sin and to live for Christ, by Grace through faith. So, it's because we have this earnest, that we're able to do the things that we do. So, it's not by the Law, but by life in Christ. So, Paul explains this, using this metaphor, requiring a home. Notice how many times he mentions, 'home,' or 'tabernacle,' in Second Corinthians five, one through eight. Now, home is more of a permanent home, whereas tabernacle is talking about the temporary home.

2 Corinthians 5:1-8 *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. [okay, there's your word] Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

If we have this earnest of the Spirit, we should desire to be absent from the body. We should be desiring to be dead to ourselves and be alive in Christ. Our earthly tabernacle is a temporary dwelling-place; we long for the Rapture during our lifetime, but, if our body dies before that, as this verse is saying, if our body dies before that, if it's dissolved, or destroyed, we have a house not made with hands eternal in the Heavens. Without Christ, if this body that clothes our soul dies, we have nothing; we are naked, as Adam was naked when he hid himself in the garden. God put the desire in every man to be clothed, therefore, everyone, in the whole world, they're always striving to find a fig-leaf or two to hide their sins, but only God can clothe us. So, the whole world longs for transformation, because they know there is more to life than who we are and what we have. But, the transformation can only begin when we go to the only Way. Okay? We may come from different directions, different origins, but we all have to get to Christ, and, from Christ to Heaven is one way. He is the way there. Now, we may come from a different place, but people say that differently, they say, "Oh, we're all from different places." Yeah, but we have to get to Christ. Once we're at the same departure point, it's only one way. Okay, so, the transformation only begins when we live to Christ, and when we die to self. This, church, is the heart of the resurrection: The burning desire to put off our tabernacle so that we can be clothed upon by God. To die to self, to live for God, to be made alive by the power of God within us, proclaiming the power of God to the world by the manifestation of His Spirit through us. To have life, not like those dying people around us. But, to have life more abundantly, full of the love of Christ, the peace that surpasses all understanding in the hope of His resurrection. To shed off the old self, the old man, so that we can be transformed into the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. To put on that new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him, Who shall change our vile body, that it

may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, to be resurrected daily, so that all things become new, on that great and glorious day when He calls us to His eternal home, in the Heavens, at the Rapture.