

## Teen Devotion

Year C – Sixth Sunday of Easter

Victorious



**One truth shared:** Easter joy reigns supreme over our present circumstances in life.

*The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass.*

*I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

**Revelation 21:21-27**

### Joy Marches Victorious Over Circumstance

Have you ever tried to picture heaven? If you can color or draw or paint, do you know how you would depict it?

Perhaps it's because of the majesty of our eternal home or because our current circumstance is anything but "heavenly," but sinful human beings often find it difficult to picture or describe what heaven will exactly be like.

That struggle, though, does not mean our anticipation of being united with our God isn't the excited hope of every Christian. That's especially true when the apostle John paints such an amazing picture of what it will be like in the last book of the Bible, Revelation.

Each person reading this devotion has different strengths and weaknesses. We have different likes and dislikes. One's life might be filled with joy right now and another's a day-to-day struggle just to get by. Whatever situation you find yourself in, these words written by John through inspiration of the Holy Spirit are for you.

And why is that? Because no matter what you have going on in life, your eternal home is in the heaven described here through faith in Christ. The One who suffered and died made that possible for you. The One who burst forth from the tomb proving his sacrifice was sufficient for the Father to call us his own has made this our reality by grace alone.

Easter joy reigns supreme over our present circumstances in life. Don't take my word for it, though. Listen to Jesus, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). None of us will ever live a trouble-free life. All of us will suffer setback and sadness. Jesus says so. But he also continues, "But take heart! I have overcome the world."

We live in a world of darkness, my dear friends. But this world does not define us. In fact, this world cannot even steal the joy we have Jesus. The joy we have, the purpose we live with, the confidence that drives us is not based on our current circumstance. No, it is found today and always with the certain hope that while we live on earth, our home is in heaven—for all eternity!

**Prayer:** Thank you, Jesus, that despite whatever I have going on in life, you are there. In good times and in bad, your love for me reigns supreme and your victory over death and the devil is mine as well. Grant me strength today and always to do your will for my life, finding my strength in you and the desire to serve you alone. Amen.

## Foundations Teen Facilitators Guide

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**Starting the Discussion:** *This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

Let's test your artistic skills. Use the paper, crayons, and markers provided to use the next three minutes to draw what you picture heaven will be like. (Take some time to share drawings with group.)

**Connecting:** *This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.*

We speak about heaven often in our worship services and Bible studies. Why can it be so difficult, then, to actually picture and describe what our heavenly home will be like?

**Digging In:** *Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- We don't really need to get caught up in every detail of heaven from this section. But what details do you find amazing after reading v. 21?
- Let's talk about what is told us about "the Lord God almighty and the Lamb" in verses 22-23. What does each title contribute to your joy? According to these verses, who is welcome into this heavenly city? How does that truth affect the way we live and how generously we share the gospel with others?
- Reread verse 27. In what ways does our heavenly home differ from our lives on this earth?
- One take away from our devotion today is that "Easter joy reigns supreme over our present circumstances in life." How would you put that into your own words?

**Conclusion:** *Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the "connecting question" above.*

**Agree/Disagree:** It's okay for God's people on earth to not know exactly what heaven will be like. Why did you answer as you did?