

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Quincy, IL  
Rev. Martin Eden

Easter 6  
Saturday, May 21, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday, May 22, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.

# **“The Old Has Gone, the New Has Come”**

Revelation 21:9-14, 21-27

Christ is risen!! He is risen indeed!! Alleluia!

Last week, we focused our attention on the first seven verses of Revelation chapter 21, and specifically the statement: “He who was seated on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’”

The focus last week was how we have been made new in Christ. “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has gone; the new has come,” as St. Paul says. The saints in heaven, we are told, sing unendingly their new song in eternity where God makes all things new. In the resurrection, there will be a new earth under a new heaven. We will live in a new Holy City – a new Jerusalem.

This week, we read on in Revelation 21 and see a description of the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. And the focus of this image is the foundation of the church triumphant being the confession of faith of the 12 apostles, just as Jesus told Peter when Peter confessed, “You are the Christ, the

Son of the Living God.” And Jesus said to him, “You are Peter (Petros in Greek means rock or stone); Jesus says, You are Peter, and on this rock (on this confession of faith) I will build My church.”

Both the church on earth and the church triumphant are built upon the confession of faith of the apostles (the confession of faith that we still share), and Christ, the Lamb is at the center of His church on earth and at the center of the New Jerusalem.

Like I said last week, life in the church on earth is not merely sitting around, waiting for this life to end, so that we can be made new. “If anyone is in Christ, he *is* a new creation. The old *has* gone; the new *has* come.”

I said last week that we celebrate the forgiveness of sin which allows us to begin each day as a new person clothed in the righteousness of Christ and the faith of our Baptism. We celebrate what our future holds for us by recognizing the newness of this day because of the faith created in our Baptism. We celebrate with the saints in heaven gathered around the throne of God, the cloud of witnesses that surround us as we gather at the Lamb’s High Feast – as Christ is the center of God’s church on earth built upon the confession of the apostle’s, just as the Lamb who is at the center of the church triumphant is seen at the center of the New Jerusalem here in John’s Revelation.

So we read this in Revelation 21 and ask the very Lutheran question: “What does this mean?” Whenever we ask that question, all of us who went through Confirmation class have our minds immediately drawn to Luther’s Small Catechism. So Monday morning, I go to print off the portion of the Catechism for the bulletin so that Gretchen can get that taken care of, and there are the words from Luther and Paul describing in two sentences what I have been rambling about for two weeks in regard to what this new baptismal life in Christ means for you and looks like today.

Luther asks: What does such baptizing with water indicate?

It indicates that the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

And then Luther asks: *Where is this written?*

Luther writes in the Catechism: St. Paul writes in Romans chapter six: “We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” [Rom. 6:4]

Every day we rise up as a baptized child of God as if our Old Adam drowned and died in the waters of Baptism this very morning. And just as the crucifixion

and resurrection of Jesus has not diminished in value or efficacy for you over the years – you are just as forgiven of your sins as anyone standing at the foot of the cross; you are just as assured of the resurrection of the body and life everlasting as anyone who peaked into the empty tomb on Easter morning.

Likewise, you are just as washed clean of your sin today as you were the day you got wet, as you were washed in the water and the Word. And we are called to remember our Baptism and daily come before our Lord with contrite hearts (in sorrow for our sin) and repent – seeking His grace. We return to our Lord again and again confessing “I am a poor miserable sinner.” We are, in the words of Kierkegaard, as I mentioned last week, “scheming swindlers” in regard to our thoughts, words, and deeds.

But our sin was “buried with Christ in Baptism.” The Lamb who is at the center of the church on earth and the center the New Jerusalem is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

We are in Christ. We are a new creation. The old has gone. The new has come. Amen.

Christ is risen!! He is risen indeed!! Alleluia!