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| **The Great Hope of Mankind**  *Promise: in Christ we will share in a resurrection like His…* Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 148; Revelation 21:1-7; John 16:31-35 (Fifth Sunday of Easter), 5/18/25)  *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.* – v. 1  **Lead In –** If you were asked, “What is the hope of the Christian Faith?” How would you answer? Would you say, “life after death?” You wouldn’t be wrong with that answer. But you could do better. You could give a more complete and distinctively Christian answer, one that better reflects what our Lord Jesus accomplished by His death and resurrection. This would be the one we confess every Sunday in the Creed. The hope we believe and confess is the resurrection of the body from the dead to life everlasting. And contemplating this great hope is most beneficial.   1. **The Second Reading Affirms the Goodness of Creation**    1. Raised bodily to live in a new heaven and earth…    2. Inheriting the earth the meek are not missing out…    3. Creation corrupted by sin will be restored… 2. **What Do We Know of Our Future Existence?**    1. Beyond our imagination, but helpful to use imagination!    2. Symbolic and imaginative language used in the Bible…    3. Pie in the sky does not usually distract, but helps us… 3. **So, What Does the Revelation Reading Reveal?**    1. The divorce between heaven and earth is over…    2. The saints come down from heaven…    3. Most importantly we will see and dwell with our Lord…   **Final Word –** Friends, we live by hope. It helps to drive our lives. It pulls us through. It puts a spring in our step. But beware of putting you hope in transitory things. This world is passing away. When it is all boiled down, there is really only one true hope for mankind. And the assurance and path for that hope is Jesus’ death and resurrection. For only in Christ is there rescue from sin, death, and the devil. And only in Christ is there restoration to live with God in the paradise of a new restored creation. Our Lord has extended that hope to you. Receive it. Hold on to it. It is indeed the great hope of mankind!  **Ge 1:31** And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.  **Mt 5:3-5** “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”  **Ro 8:19-21** For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. 20For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope 21that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. | **Revelation 21:1-7 ESV**  *The New Heaven and the New Earth*  1Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”  5And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” 6And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. 7The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”  **1Co 2:9-10** But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— 10these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.  **Re 21:21** And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.  **Is 11:6-9** The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. 7The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. 9They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.  **Ph 3:20** But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.  **1Jn 3:2-3** Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 3And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.  **1Jn 2:17** And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever |