



Not Just a Pretty Picture

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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 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. 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. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Revelation 22:1-5

A long time ago, there was a man named John who loved Jesus with all his heart. John couldn't stop talking about how amazing Jesus was! He told people, "Every one of us breaks God's laws, but Jesus took away our sins so we could live with him forever in heaven!"

John was so excited about this good news that he had to tell everyone he met. He wanted everyone to know Jesus, too.

But not everyone liked that. One day, some soldiers showed up. They told John, "Stop talking about Jesus!" They wanted people to worship their leader—the emperor—instead of God. When John refused, they arrested him and sent him away to a lonely island called Patmos. There were no friends, no family—just rocks, wind, and waves.

It seemed like John's story was over. He must have felt sad and hopeless.

But then—God did something incredible. God gave John a vision—like a movie playing right in his mind.

In this vision, John saw:

God sitting on his throne, shining brighter than the sun.

A river sparkling like crystal, flowing right from God's throne.

The Tree of Life, growing strong with fruit for everyone.

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A city so bright there was no night at all—because God himself was the light.

People from every place and time serving God with smiles and songs.

And John heard this promise: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit “will reign forever and ever.” This wasn’t just a pretty dream. God showed John heaven to fill him with hope while he was stuck on that island.

God wanted John (and us!) to know:

Even when life feels scary, lonely, or unfair—God always wins.

And because Jesus died and rose again, we’ll win with him!

Someday, we’ll see everything John saw:

No more tears.

No more sickness.

No more sin.

Only joy, light, and love that never ends.

Heaven is where our God, who has all the power in the universe, will make all things perfect for eternity.

When you have a bad day—when friends are mean, when you’re sick, or when you’re scared—remember: God loves you so much that he just has to have you in heaven with him forever. He’s already preparing your place in that bright, perfect city. You can be sure that someday, you will be standing before God’s throne in that perfect city where it is never night. There, you will live with him forever.

And just like John, you can hold on to hope—because God always keeps his promises.

Questions to Consider

- Why does God want you in heaven someday? (Hint: You are his child, and he wants to be with you forever!)
- What’s the coolest thing you can imagine about heaven? (The river? The city? No more night? Something else?)
- Have you ever had news so exciting you just had to tell someone? How is that like what John did when he shared about Jesus?
- John’s life looked hopeless on the island, but God gave him hope. What’s something that gives you hope when life feels hard?
- You probably won’t get sent to an island for believing in Jesus, but what other tough things might happen when you talk about your faith? (Maybe friends don’t understand, or someone teases you.)
- The message of Revelation is “God Always Wins.” What other stories in the Bible show that God wins—no matter what? (Noah? David and Goliath? The cross? Easter morning?)