



the Source

Let anyone who is thirsty come to me...

Maybe poor Horton in *Seussical*, pining for Solla Sollew, could find solace with the hobos of the old classic folk song, *Big Rock Candy Mountain*...the slaves singing spirituals...or the apostle John having a revelation. All are yearning for a better world.

At various times, we all share that yearning. Do you want to know what troubles your friend? Ask them what they think heaven will be like. Consider their answer to be a Rorschach test disclosing what really troubles them. Horton yearns for a place where all will be well, where skies are blue and breezes are warm. The apostle John sees it as a place where all will be made new. The American slaves yearned to be carried away home in a chariot accompanied by bands of angels.

The hobos in the song, *Big Rock Candy Mountain*, saw it as a place where handouts grow on bushes, where there are cigarette trees, fountains running with lemonade, cops that have wooden legs and dogs with rubber teeth; a place with little streams of alcohol, jails made of tin, a place where *they hung the jerk that invented work*, and much more.

I am partial C.S. Lewis' image in *The Last Battle* from his *Chronicles of Narnia*. He sees earth as a shadow with the perfect models found in eternity. He sees beautiful meadows that are bigger on the inside than on the outside, a never ending chain of meadows. The Bible doesn't tell us much about heaven, though Lewis' depiction is closer to this passage in Revelation which implies eternity will be played out on a newly created earth.

I believe such an existence will be sans most everything we label technology which is there to help deal with "the curse," to outsmart the "jerk who invented work," or to protect our stuff; none of which will be important any longer. The main character in Solla Sollew hopes for a place "where people are kind." And, in John's revelation it is a place for God and his people.

Joe Grove, First Church member

Consider the Source Revelation 21:1-7

A Family Affair

Together, read Revelation 21:1-7. The description in Revelation is a beautiful vision, but should we just sit back and wait for it? If we are sitting on the sidelines it is hard to follow the path God has for us. Sometimes we are led to go in a different direction.

The two characters in the Dr. Seuss story, *The Zax*, are great examples of being stuck. Neither Zax moves, they face each other as the world moves on around them. They are not willing to take a different path in order to move forward. While the Zax are in their stand off, neither are pursuing God's plan for them. They know where they want to go, but they aren't doing anything to get there.

When you talk to God do you listen for the direction He wants you to go? Trying something new can lead to good things, and we can continue to grow closer in our relationship with God.

Together think of something new to try at church. If you are a 3rd to 5th grader, will you join J-Team this year? How about attending Family Movie Night with your church family or leading the prayer in Sunday School?

Dear Lord, please remind us how to keep looking forward while listening and watching for the direction you send us. Amen.

— Tammy Parks, Elementary Coordinator

Monday: Revelation 21:1

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

- What would you like to see in this new earth? What would you leave out?

Tuesday: Revelation 21:2

I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. Obviously, there is a lot of symbolism to play with here.

- What should a bride and a church have in common?
- What might there be about a church that would correspond with bridal clothing?

Wednesday: Revelation 21:3

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God." The voice said that God's dwelling place will be among the people.

- How does that differ from what we think of God right now?
- Do you think you will be comfortable sharing living space with God? Why or why not?

Thursday: Revelation 21:4

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.

- Have you ever tried to comprehend a life that doesn't end?
- How does the idea affect you? It says no more death, crying or pain.
- But, surely these things have played some kind of role in our existence. What role?

Friday: Revelation 21:6

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 water without cost from the spring of the water of life."

These words bring memories of the Samaritan woman at the well and of Christ on the cross.

- In this case, what is finished?
- What was finished at the cross?
- What does the reference to Alpha and Omega tell us about God?
- Is this the same promise he made to the woman at the well? What is this water?