

A Wonderful Great Place

Ps 36:7-8

7 How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

*8 They shall be **abundantly satisfied** with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them **drink of the river of thy pleasures**.*

*John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have **life**, and that they might have it **more abundantly**.*

*2 Chron 2:9 Even to prepare me timber in abundance: for **the house** which I am about to build **shall be wonderful great**.*

I. Introduction

1. Can you recall from your memory, maybe it was a vacation, that was a time that was peaceful, restful, and joyful?
2. Perhaps you were surrounded by people you love and people who loved you sharing time, having clean fun, enjoying happy moments together, and maybe sharing some great meals together.
3. Even rethinking some of the details of that memory brings back some of those peaceful, restful, and joyful feelings making you wish you could go back and do it all again.
4. What a great place it was.
5. And a wonderful thing about the gift of memory is that you can recall those thoughts and the experience at any time and re-live it again even during times when things are not going so great.
6. In fact, you can have the great time in the middle of an awful time because of that gift of memory.
7. But thinking of that great place makes me think of something the Word of God calls a Wonderful Great Place.
8. And the beautiful thing about this Wonderful Great place, is that once we have experienced it, it can be more than just a past memory past, but can be a companion to us every day of our life.
9. You see, those passages we just read describe a place and a way of life that God intends for us to live in that Wonderful Great Place.
10. It almost sounds like a dream or a fairy tale: we shall be abundantly satisfied, we shall drink of the river of thy pleasures, we shall have life more abundantly, and shall dwell in a wonderful great house.
11. That is what God intends for a life lived for Him. But the key to that life is that it is life from Him that flows from within.
12. Even when life on the outside is not abundantly satisfying, pleasing, or great, there are benefits of the Wonderful Great Place that follow us regardless of our environment.
13. I want to talk about five of these benefits of the Wonderful Great Place this morning:
 - a. Peace with God

- b. No Condemnation
 - c. Joy at all times
 - d. Lasting Pleasures
 - e. A great future
- II. Peace with God
1. This is a wonderful great place because we can have peace with God.
 2. When creation is a peace with the Creator that is the best sort of peace that can exist in this world.
 3. Peace with God is the first benefit of The Best Life
 4. When Jesus is at the center of your life, he brings balance.
 5. Illustration of a disk with hole in center and hole off center.
 6. Jesus paid an expensive, very costly price to bring about peace with God:
Col 1:19-20
19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;
20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.
 7. When we lived in sin, we had a wall of separation between God and us.
 8. We were kept from enjoying His presence both in this life and in the life to come
 9. So Jesus paid the costly price of giving His blood on the cross.
 10. When His blood dripped out of His veins and onto the cross and onto the ground beneath the cross, He fulfilled John the Baptists' words:
John 1:29 Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.
 11. When we repent and forsake our sins, and are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, the blood of Jesus that He gave on the cross, covers our sins.
 12. So, going down in the waters of baptism will take away our sins allowing us to have peace with God.
 13. But don't forget that peace with God was not cheap, but was paid for by the very blood of God in flesh.
 14. So the peace with God we are speaking of, comes through God's blood and through the Holy Ghost coming inside of us:
*Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and **peace**, and joy **in the Holy Ghost**.*
 15. God intends to rule our life with peace:
*Col 3:15 And let the **peace of God rule in your hearts**, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.*
 16. Because God intends to rule your life by peace, if you are suddenly lacking peace, it is likely that God is intending to guide you in a different direction.
Phil 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
 17. The Living Bible: *Phil 4:7 If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is **far more wonderful** than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus.*

18. Peace with God is Wonderful Great!
19. This kind of peace is even more amazing in the times we live in. We can even have peace with people who we once were at war with.
*Eph 2:14 For he is **our peace**, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;*
20. If there is anything that Jesus wants to leave with you this morning, it is His peace—different from the world:
*John 14:27 **Peace I leave with you**, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*
21. When you are at peace with God, you do not have to live in fear.

III. No condemnation

1. This is a Wonderful Great Place because (1) we can have peace with God.
2. This is also a Wonderful Great Place because (2) we can live without condemnation.
3. Condemnation is the blame or strong disapproval we feel for doing something wrong.
4. When we live in God's world yet choose to rebel against Him and disobey Him, we **will feel** condemnation on our life because of that choice.
5. If you disobey God, there is a voice that speaks clearly in our heart and conscience, "that is wrong."
6. Jesus gave this reason for why people live with condemnation:
*John 3:19 And this is the **condemnation**, that light is come into the world, and **men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.***
7. When people choose to do evil, they are saying by their choice, "I love darkness and evil more than God's light."
8. That is where condemnation comes from. God does not bring that condemnation; our deeds bring that condemnation:
John 3:17-18
17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.
18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
9. However, when we to come into Jesus' house, His Wonderful Great Place, there He takes our condemnation.
10. What should have been our condemnation, Jesus took. He carried my condemnation, my blame, my shame, and nailed it to the cross.
11. I do NOT have to live with guilt stalking me all my life through.
12. I am not condemned. My hands are clean.
13. I have been made clean by the blood of the Lamb.
Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

IV. Joy at all times

1. This is a Wonderful Great Place because (1) we can live at peace with God and (2) we can live without condemnation.

2. (3) When Jesus comes into your world, with Him comes joy. That is where the song, Joy to the World comes from:
Luke 2:10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
3. And that is not just a song for Christmas, that is a song for every day. Especially OUR DAY! Joy to the Word, the Lord is Come.
4. Especially in times of violence, injustice, and anger, joy can flow like a fountain from this Wonderful Great Place.
5. To prove that point further, the verse we began with that described the Wonderful Great place, it was talking about the temple that Solomon built to God. And after it was dedicated in Jerusalem, this is what followed:
*2 Chron 7:10 And on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, **glad and merry in heart** for the goodness that the LORD had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people.*
6. When the assembly spent time in the Wonderful Great Place, they received joy there, and because it was so abundant, they were able to take a to-go order of joy with them to share with others.
7. Notice how widespread and inclusive God's joy was intended to be as it spread from His Wonderful Great Place:
*Deut 16:11 And **thou shalt rejoice** before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath **chosen to place his name there.***
8. This next passage is so amazing. That Wonderful Great Place, the temple in Jerusalem was burned down by the Babylonians after God's people forsake their God.
9. But something about the joy from that place did not die.
10. When God's people got sick and tired of their backsliding, they decided to return from that captivity. And even though the building had been destroyed by enemies, they still rediscovered the joy of that Wonderful Great Place:
Ezra 6:21-22
21 And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD God of Israel, did eat,
*22 And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the LORD had **made them joyful**, and turned the heart of the **king of Assyria** [peace with former enemies] unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.*
11. And even during times, like our times, of hatred, exclusion, reproach, accusations, Jesus cares enough about you to be a source of joy even in that circumstance:
Luke 6:22-23
22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.
23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

V. Lasting Pleasures

1. This is a Great Wonderful Great Place because we can (1) live at peace with God, (2) we can live without condemnation, (3) we can have joy at all times, and (4) lasting pleasures. *Ps 16:11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*
2. It is important to compare the pleasure of sin with God's provision of pleasure. The pleasure of sin is associated with disobeying God so it is more of an illusion and lasts only for short a season.
Heb 11:24-25
24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;
25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;
3. And Jesus described the temporary pleasures of a fool:
Luke 12:19-20
19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.
20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?
4. But for God's kids who live in His Wonderful Great Place, it means an abundance of satisfaction with pleasures that endure.
*Ps 36:8 They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the **river of thy pleasures.***
5. The river of God's pleasures are not based on what is going on outside, but it is the "fatness of [His] house" that brings about lasting pleasures.

VI. Great future

1. And that leads us to the final point today. This is a Wonderful Great Place because we can (1) live at peace with God, (2) we can live without condemnation, (3) we can have joy at all times, (4) we can have lasting pleasures, and (5) we have a great future.
2. You see, living for God now and continually returning to this Wonderful Great place, assures that we will hear this:
Matt 25:21 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.
3. In fact, that joy of the Lord includes a place called the New Jerusalem. You thought this place was a wonderful place! That place is far greater.
4. Revelation 21 describes this city like no other city you have ever heard of. New Jerusalem is an unbelievably huge golden box-shaped city that is 1500 miles long, 1500 miles wide and 1500 miles tall.
5. We cannot fathom such a thing because it has never existed on earth before.
6. Just the surface of that city is slightly smaller than the land mass of the continent of Australia.
7. But this city is just as tall as it is long and wide. That is 3.3 billion cubic miles.
8. It is beyond imagination to describe what it will be like living in a cube that size.

9. But one thing for sure, Jesus said He was going away so He could prepare a mansion for us there. In fact, there will be many mansions there.
John 14:2-3
2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
10. Revelation 21 provides these details of the city and its gates:
Revelation 21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.
11. The walls:
Revelation 21:18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.
12. The foundations:
Revelation 21:19-20
19 And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;
20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.
13. The environment:
Revelation 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.
14. *Revelation 22:1-2*
1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.
2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

VII. Conclusion

1. We are talking about a Wonderful Great Place that is more than a place. It is a way of life, abundant life, designed for those who enter into His blood family.
2. If you have His blood on you and His Spirit in you, you live in a Wonderful Great Place with benefits:
 - a. Peace with God—purchased by His blood
 - b. No Condemnation—provided by His forgiveness
 - c. Joy at all times—produced by his presence
 - d. Lasting Pleasures—placed by His right hand
 - e. A great future—put together by His own design
3. And this is the Wonderful Great Place we can live with now and look forward to later.
4. Do you need his blood? His forgiveness? His Spirit?