

(1) Why do some people think that a focus on the future of heavenly glory detracts from our being useful and helpful in the present world? Do you agree with them? What are some of the practical benefits that come from focusing on the new heaven and new earth?

(2) How can the New Jerusalem be both a place and a people. Compare Revelation 21:2 with 21:9-10.

(3) We tend to think that heaven will be wonderful because of the absence of pain and death and weeping and perhaps also because of the presence of friends and family and streets of gold on which to walk. But what is the ultimate reason why heaven will be heavenly? See Revelation 21:3.

(4) How does knowing that all pain and sorrow and death and tears will be banished from the new heaven and new earth affect your life now on this present earth? If it doesn't, why not? Does the assurance of this reality in the new earth encourage you to face pain and sadness today? Explain.

(5) Why does John use the word "thirst" in v. 6 rather than simply "believe" or "have faith"? What does the imagery of thirsting communicate that mere believing does not?

(6) Does the reality of v. 8 in any way spoil the happiness of heaven? If we know v. 8 to be true, how will this not undermine our capacity to enjoy God and his presence forever?