

## CHAPTER 10 SUMMARY: “SAINTS AND SINNERS”

*Seek First: How the Kingdom of God Changes Everything*, by Jeremy Treat

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### SAINTS AND SINNERS

- “Every Christian will experience a tension between the old and new self. We are saints made holy by the grace of God and guaranteed a future of glory. Yet our sinful nature still lingers, digging its nails into our soul with feet firmly rooted in the grave.... As we’ve seen, the internal tension takes place within a broader narrative where the kingdom has ‘already’ come but is ‘not yet’ in its fullness.” (pp. 171-172).
- “...by God’s grace we *have been* saved from the penalty of sin, we *are being* saved from the power of sin, and we *will be* saved from the presence of sin.” (p. 172).

### HOPE FOR TOMORROW

“According to the Scriptures, our future hope is the kingdom of God, where the end of the world turns out to be a new beginning.... [Revelation 21:1-5] sets forth a grand vision of eternity, defined by three key features: a renewed creation, a redeemed people, and a reigning king” (p. 173).

#### 1. A Renewed Creation

- “Revelation 21 teaches that salvation is not leaving earth for heaven, it’s the *renewal* of heaven and earth. The reconciling power of God’s grace brings heaven and earth together, as they were meant to be. The new creation is a physical *and* spiritual place where we will eat, play, work, in love, and do so apart from the toil and pain of the sinful world. The Bible is a rescue story, but it’s not about God rescuing sinners *from* a broken creation; it’s about God rescuing sinners *for* a new creation” (p. 174).
- “The new creation will be every thing that Eden was meant to be” (p. 174).

#### 2. A Redeemed People

- “At the heart of the Bible’s vision for the garden city is God’s redeemed people and their relationship with God. In fact, while the features of the New Jerusalem will be mesmerizing—the gold streets, incredible food, and beautiful scenery—they will be nothing compared to the joy of the people for God dwelling in the presence of their king” (p.175).

#### 3. A Reigning King

- “The apex of the kingdom story is the king in all his glory. Jesus is the resurrected and glorified king, enthroned over all and bringing renewal to his creation” (p. 177).
- “...Revelation 5 reminds us that Christ is a different kind of king than this world has ever seen. When John hears of a lion near the throne, he turns to see in its place a slain lamb. He then hears the host of heaven erupt with praise...” (p. 177).
- “The Lion of Judah laid down his life as the Lamb of God. He reigns by self-giving love, and through his sacrificial death he makes a kingdom and restores his people to their place in the kingdom” (p. 177).
- “Jesus is a king of holy love, and while he reigns with mercy, he also rules with justice. So while Christ came in grace, he will return in judgment, a judgment that seeks the peace and justice of his good creation” (p. 177).

## 4. Hope for Tomorrow

- "...the resurrection means that one day Christ will put an end to suffering. The risen and reigning Jesus will wipe away every tear and we will join him in the new creation in the fulness of healing and restoration" (p. 179).

## POWER FOR TODAY

- "In biblical terms we live in "the present evil age" (Gal. 1:4) and in "the age to come" (Luke 18:30) simultaneously. Living in light to the end does not involve elaborate predictions about the exact date of the world's ending or looking for the antichrist; it means living under the gracious reign of God and taking part in the work every renewal he is doing in and through his people" (p. 180).
- "The end-time vision of the kingdom of God has broken into the middle of history through the gospel. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are the turning point of history, with all of the world hinging upon God's grace in Christ. The 'end of the world' therefore began at the crucifixion" (p. 181).
- "But while the cross is the end, it's also the beginning. The crucifixion, with the resurrection, accomplished what is necessary to reverse the curse and renew creation. The resurrection of the Son of God was the dawn of the new creation. As we await the complete renewal of the heavens and earth, everyone who is 'in Christ' is declared to be a 'new creation' (2 Cor. 5:17). The renewal has begun, and the reign of God is spreading, through in a hidden and subversive way" (p. 181).

## WALKING IN THE TENSION

### 1. Expect Victory

- "God's gracious rule has broken into our fallen world and is bringing renewal, redemption, and restoration. We should, therefore, expect to see God's victory in our lives and in the world. Anticipate people who are far from Jesus becoming followers of Jesus. Assume that we will overcome sin in our lives. Look forward to healing of physical ailments. Plan on racial reconciliation happening in our churches. Our king is alive, and he is advancing his mission" (p. 182).

### 2. Don't Be Surprised by Struggle

- "The kingdom has already come, but it is not yet fully realized. We should therefore not be surprised by trials, struggle and opposition.... The story of the kingdom of God teaches us to not be shocked by struggle but to be prepared for it. For we serve a Messiah who brought the kingdom through the cross, and he advances his reign through the church's faithful endurance amid the brokenness of the world" (p. 183).
- "One of the ways we must deal with the struggle is by learning to lament.... Lament is not merely complaining, it is crying out to God from a place of honesty and authenticity.... Until Christ our king returns, the people of God must be a people who know how to lament" (p. 184).
- "If we truly believe what the Bible says about the eternal joy of the kingdom of God, we should be a people who yearn for the return of Christ. Even the greatest joys of this world—loving, laughing, eating, playing—are just an appetizer on the way to the banquet of God's eternal kingdom" (p. 184).
- "To walk in the tension of the already and not yet, we need patient persistence. Patience without persistence turns into complacency. Persistence without patience results in hastiness. Patience and persistence lead to deep and lasting endurance—the kind we need to be faithful to the end" (p. 185).