

“Disenchantment”
Pastor Sam Richards
30 July 2023
Text: Psalm 63

A key to spiritual growth is cultivating disenchantment with the world’s attractions, fascinations and enticements. And what promotes this disenchantment is a growing enchantment with things above, heaven and matters of eternity; spiritual matters involving things beyond temporality, beyond decay and corruption—all the things which are passing away. One dies to the things of this world, to our former life by facing squarely the enslavement and bondage of sin.

It is fascinating to me that, quite apart from my reflections and meditations on this whole disenchantment process, there is a current uproar over the Florida curriculum for teaching black history—some object that this topic is too mature for children of elementary and kindergarten age. And these appear to be the same people pushing critical race theory for all ages, and gender identity (which seems to be a matter of ideology and progressive values) recruiting children as social justice warriors in training before they reach the age of discretion, discernment or maturity necessary to process complex social issues and concerns. Perhaps I am not the only person sensing a critical disjuncture here (children can handle CRT and gender identity but they can’t handle the social travesty of human trafficking more politely known as slavery—and black slavery as if there were no other kind, or nuance to the whole matter of indenture and voluntary slavery. So, given that my topic is spiritual growth and not educational theory, or social history, I wish to point out two things: that both slavery and gender identity are temporal matters and they are part of a corrupt world order that is passing away. And secondly, slavery is not the gravest sin of American history, or of world history for that matter. Cultural apostasy, the turning of the whole nation away from the God of Scripture and from Christian revelation are far greater sins—and those sins are part of an eternal order *that is not passing away!* There are everlasting consequences to the sponsorship and promotion of unholiness and unbelief which some would say has taken hold of our country and may well be driving our country into a ditch from which there is no recovery known to man. Only God can reverse the apparent trajectory of our country. And, as you might have surmised, those who are cultivating a disenchantment with worldliness may be part of that divine recovery. And only those who are un-enthralled with the world (its attractions, fascination and enticements—or, allurements) have the steadiness, the footing, or grounding to even understand what is going on. I have in mind those whose eyes are trained on eternity, on the unseen and are, therefore, less easily misled, distracted and destroyed,

I wish to proceed in a sober and thoughtful manner because we have been so conditioned to react to crises, to an alarming and unending chain of crises (similar to endless war, or an unending crisis mindset) that is employed by “fear” mongers who wish to manage us by panic and by the intentional suppression of certain information, coupled with the promotion of the crisis narrative. I find it ironic to be observing such dynamics because the stereotypical hell-fire and brimstone preaching—which some found terrifying—seemed premised on the theory that people could be “scared into heaven!” I resist spiritual alarmism quite as strongly as I do climate alarmism. It is sobering to consider the “save the world” programs we have subjected ourselves to! For instance, we used to *save the trees by using plastic*. But plastic became a non-biodegradable disaster which has resolved itself into a more moderate use of paper (especially recycled paper)

and more durable, reusable shopping bags! We were told that the world would self-destruct through starvation around 1900. That never happened due to the tree revolution and innovative technologies. Then we were told there were too many people and zero pollution growth was what we had to attain. And that brought labor shortages and the specter of economic collapse. Furthermore, with fewer people coming along, there were less service providers and professionals and tradesmen of every stripe—who was going to care for the naturally occurring aging population? Over-confident social planners and engineers proved rather inadequate and inept to the reality which we face. They were always forgetting some vital factor, and the results were humanly costly.

But what if the focus (saving the world, survival, eternal youth of AI and genetic engineering) is entirely off? What if, and it's a big "if," what if we are too enchanted with the world as it is (or, better, as we imagine it is) to prepares us for the new world that is coming—as prophesied by Scripture and not the goal-setting global Reset elite?? What if seeing God, and being with God is the real purpose for our being, for our existence in this temporary condition which was created to expire, to pass away?

O God, you are my God; Early will I seek You . . . my soul, my flesh, all that I am thirsts and hungers, longs intensely for You. (Psalm 63:1) There are several passages we should ponder that suggest that this—this desire to seek and find, to see God face to face, this ought to be *all our desire!*

Revelation 7:16-17: **They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun [a]beat down on them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the [b]water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.**¹

Revelation 21:4-7

4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.” 5 And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” And He *said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.” 6 Then He said to me, “[a]It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. 7 He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.²

In creation order, the order of this world, hunger, thirst and heat stroke are conditions of life but they are on the slate for abolition! In the world to come, Jesus will be our Shepherd and He will lead us to **the springs of the waters of life**. We won't thirst anymore! We will not suffer from heat stroke because the sun as we know it

¹ Footnotes

a. Revelation 7:16 Lit *fall*

b. Revelation 7:17 Lit *waters*

² Footnotes

a. Revelation 21:6 Lit *They are*

won't be doing the same things anymore. Rev. 21 is even more expansive on our coming consolations; Christ will wipe away our tears of sorrowing. Death will be gone; that will be different so the mourning and crying associated with the separation of death—that whole piece of life as we suffer it will be behind us! Yes, **the first things have passed away. And He who sits upon the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.”** And those new things are more properly our concern! Confirmation and assurance are accomplished in this following directive: **“Write, for these words are faithful and true.”** The words concerning death, dying and passing away are **faithful and true.** For people of faith that is truly great comfort. For those struggling with the senselessness and suddenness of death we are informed that all of that is not the main event. There is more going on here than meets the eye, more than what seems immediately evident, or final or real. And what is that next order of things? **The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end declares: I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.** There it is again, life after this life which some suppose is the only life there is! But that is revealed not to be so! Your thirst in the world to come will be your last thirst! **He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.** (v. 7) That's what's really up, that's our future reality which is why, none of this, none of it, ultimately matters: **overcoming and inheriting** those things matter, those are worthy of pursuit. Let's chase after the things that endure and be done with lesser things.

If it were God's plan that this world survive, be saved as it were, God would probably have told us so. But He didn't. He sent His son to save Adam's lost race—not the ecosphere. What if there are no climatologists in heaven? What if weather as we know it has been cast off and something new has taken its place? That seems likely to me. And what then are we to say about all the anxiety, fear and worry that our “saving the planet” foisted upon us? Did we really think God can't manage the world, the future, everything? He is God, right?

Perhaps the picture presented in Revelation doesn't resonate with you. It does with me, as you can tell. So what about something deeper in our prophetic past? How about Isaiah 35?

Zion's Happy Future

**35:1 The wilderness and the desert will be glad,
And the [a]Arabah will rejoice and blossom;
Like the crocus
2 It will blossom profusely
And rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy.
The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,
The majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They will see the glory of the Lord,
The majesty of our God.
3 Encourage the [b]exhausted, and strengthen the [c]feeble.
4 Say to those with anxious heart,
“Take courage, fear not.
Behold, your God will come *with* vengeance;**

The recompense of God will come,
 But He will save you.”
 5 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened
 And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.
 6 Then the lame will leap like a deer,
 And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy.
 For waters will break forth in the wilderness
 And streams in the [d]Arabah.
 7 The [e]scorched land will become a pool
 And the thirsty ground springs of water;
 In the haunt of jackals, its resting place,
 Grass *becomes* reeds and rushes.
 8 A highway will be there, a roadway,
 And it will be called the Highway of Holiness.
 The unclean will not travel on it,
 But it *will* be for him who walks *that way*,
 And fools will not wander *on it*.
 9 No lion will be there,
 Nor will any vicious beast go up on it;
 [f]These will not be found there.
 But the redeemed will walk *there*,
 10 And the ransomed of the Lord will return
 And come with joyful shouting to Zion,
 With everlasting joy upon their heads.
 They will [g]find gladness and joy,
 And sorrow and sighing will flee away³.

The first and most notable thing about these passages is that our heavenly home is given the name Zion and while the things that clearly happen there are supernatural, the prophet Isaiah uses very natural analogies to paint this picture for us! *It's lively and amazing!* So we have reversals of deserts and wildernesses . . . **like a crocus, blossoming profusely! How vibrant and new**—it is joy and rejoicing personified, quite figurative language. We know it as a new heaven and a new earth because glory and majesty of nature and of God are ascribed to this new place.

3 Encourage the [b]exhausted, and strengthen the [c]feeble.
4 Say to those with anxious heart,
“Take courage, fear not.

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- a. ³ Footnotes
 b. [Isaiah 35:1](#) Or *desert*
 c. [Isaiah 35:3](#) Lit *slack hands*
 d. [Isaiah 35:3](#) Lit *tottering knees*
 e. [Isaiah 35:6](#) Or *desert*
 f. [Isaiah 35:7](#) Or *mirage*
 g. [Isaiah 35:9](#) Lit *It*
 h. [Isaiah 35:10](#) Lit *overtake*

**Behold, your God will come *with* vengeance;
The recompense of God will come,
But He will save you.”**

This is communicating the very same message I sought to convey from Revelation 7 and 21! And we have the same target group, the redeemed of the Lord! They will see the glory, the majesty; they will make the connection! They will be **saved, encouraged and strengthened** in this heavenly Zion. Relocated, beneficiaries of a spiritual reset unlike anything any man could have ever imagined. Yes, Isaiah has the returning exiles most immediately in view; but he is also speaking to us—we are strangers, and pilgrims and exiles here! Heaven is our real, true and final home! A place where justice is triumphant, where rewards are finalized because God is just and avenges all wrong. This world could never attain that. It moved from one oppression to the next, evil oiling up upon evil.

And what will be the signs of this transition? Oh, **the eyes of the blind will be opened . . . and the ears of the deaf unstopped.** (v. 5) Jesus brought the kingdom on earth with power and gave us a foretaste of the coming order in His day! He healed the blind, naturally and spiritually as a foretaste, a sample, a hint of coming attractions. **The lame will leap like a deer.** It sounds as if physical disability will be a thing of the past too, in heaven. **The tongue of the mute will sing for joy**—how sweetly unimaginable in this world; but not the next. Verse 6c marks a recapitulation, Arabah and the desert places being watered, freshened. And we read that the scorching of the earth will stop. **The thirsty ground becomes springs of water!** No longer a haunt of jackals, **grass will become reeds and rushes . . . A highway will be there, the way of Holiness and the unclean shall not travel on it.** (vv. 7-8) Obviously this is a new thing, it doesn't exist in our fading order of reality. **But it will be for him who walks *that way*, And fools will not wander *on it*.** We are left to imagine what kind of traffic will be traveling that road! **No lions . . . no vicious beasts . . . but the redeemed of the Lord,** (v.9) See, we are talking about the same persons, the children of God! The Elect of God, the Church . . . yes, **the ransomed of the Lord will return . . . with joyful shouting and everlasting joy upon their heads . . . gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.** It is written for them and written for us in the parallel universe of their times and our common, perpetual future!

The realization that we were created for permanence, for Zion, the everlasting city **not built with human hands** and yet **perfectly prepared** for beings such as we actually are—who we are after all appearances have faded into reality, and after the spiritual has fully supplanted the natural, physical and biological—raised, transformed, glorified and, yes, actualized in Christ. We shall stand before God, justified, sanctified—**face to face**, no veil, no obscuring clouds of glory—our deepest desire and most compelling passions fulfilled . . . complete, not partial, perfected, having passed beyond all brokenness, all “wounded-ness” behind us—**satisfied and entire, every promise kept and every blessing ours!**

As our enchantment with these things grows, as heaven's reality entices us to live above, forsaking all that used to be so enthralling, "our captivating captivity," **all the fleshpots and leeks and garlic of Egypt** absolutely superseded by the banquet of our eternity inside the holy halls of Christ's eternal palace. What formerly seduced us loses its attractive power. We become more and more disinclined to this world as we elevate what's to come. Heaven's adhesive power superglues us to our Savior, our redeemer God. That is what **my soul follows close, or hard, behind you** actually means. That is what undergirds the **soul thirsting** and **flesh longing** of Psalm 63:1. **Your lovingkindness is better than life** signifies this as well. We live forward, and anticipate the best because that is what we have in Him. Have Christ and you have all this, have not Christ and you shall inherit nothing! You shall everything lack! Every thing present is not so good and all that is to come is awesomely great—**think of these things**.

Spiritual growth is impelled by our enchantment with the right stuff. **The Lord is your keeper, The Lord is your shade at your right hand. Therefore, the sun shall not smite you by day, Nor the moon by night.** (Psalm 121:5-6) We are challenged to **persevere** to give it our very best because the best is what God has in store for us. "Yes, Virginia, the best is yet to come? and disenchantment shall be cancelled.

Amen.