

Biblical Truth #7—When Jesus Returns He Will Restore All Creation

By Jill Nelson

Introduction for Parents:

It's very easy to become absorbed in the bad news that daily surrounds us. With a global information network operating 24/7, we have access to an endless stream of misery around the world right now. We have front-row seats to suffering: infection rates, numbers of dead, job loss data, plagues of locusts, shortages, and more. If we are not careful, we can become so mired in the suffering of this "present time" that we lose perspective on our eternal inheritance.

1 Peter 1:3-5—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

We and our children need to be reminded of this on a daily basis so that we, first and foremost, anchor our hope in Christ alone, and then live with eternity in mind. Christ will return and make all things new for the glory of God and the joy of His people. May we shine that light in this broken and suffering world!

Supplies:

- Gift bag
- [Word Slips \(PDF\)](#)—tear out each slip along the lines
- Heavy objects (e.g., books)—place in the bottom of the gift bag
- [Verse Cards \(PDF\)](#)—cut out and place in the gift bag, and then seal the bag
- The Glory to Be Revealed (PDF)—cut out and attach to the outside of the gift bag
- Optional: Colorful paper or gift wrap—attach the Verse Cards onto the paper before placing them in the gift bag

Pique Their Interest (3-5 minutes):

One by one, ask each family member to imagine and then briefly describe what would be their idea for the "best vacation ever." Younger children could be encouraged to draw a quick picture of this. Ask what they would enjoy most about this vacation. After each person has shared a vacation idea, ask the following kinds of questions:

Are there any circumstances that might make your "best vacation ever" idea not actually happen in the future? (Give concrete examples of this.) Are these the kind of things you can control? Does this make you sad in any way? Why or why not?

But why is it still fun to imagine and dream about the "best vacation ever"?

Conclusion:

All people long for special, happy times—vacations, activities, parties, etc. We look forward to experiencing wonderful things and being “wowed” and amazed. God made us this way. But He knows that a “best ever vacation” of our own planning and making will not make us truly happy forever. This broken world cannot provide us with everlasting joy. He has something much better planned for His people.

Study the Scriptures:

(Read and talk about the following Scriptures. Depending on the age of your children and the time available, you may choose to have children look up one or more of the texts in their Bibles. Make sure to define any unfamiliar words or terms after reading each text.)

Romans 8:18-21—For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

What do these verses say about how the world is now at this present time? (What “sad” words are used to describe the world?) [suffering, subjected to futility, bondage to corruption]

(Place these Word Slips on the table.)

Because of sin, God has placed a curse on this world. That is why there is suffering right now. Can you give a few examples from this week where you have seen this to be true? [Encourage a few responses.]

But these verses also describe something wonderful in the future. There is a glory to be revealed. The creation will be set free from its bondage to the curse and “obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.”

(Tell the children you have a special surprise for them. Leave the room and bring back the gift bag. Set it on the table but do not open it yet. Read the label on the bag: “The glory to be revealed.”)

Can you see what is in the bag? No, it has not been “revealed” yet. But go ahead and lift it up for a moment, what do you notice? [It’s heavy.] Now gather up the “sad” Word Slips and hold them in one hand while you hold the bag in the other. How do the two compare? It is as if the slips of paper have no weight compared to the gift bag. This can help us to better understand the verses we read.

- The present condition of our world is broken, decaying, suffering, and hurting—all creation groans because of sin...like the little slips of paper.
- But God has promised His people that there is a “glory” that is going to be revealed—shown to us—in the future.
- That glory is so wonderful and great that it is not worth comparing to the present condition of our world.

What do you think would be so wonderful and great? What do you think might be in the gift bag?

(Have a child open the bag and remove the Verse Cards. Read the Verse Cards in the following order.)

1 Peter 1:3-5—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

- The glory to be revealed is an inheritance—a treasure passed on to everyone who trusts and loves Jesus. It is a treasure that is “imperishable, undefiled, and unfading,” meaning it will be perfect and last forever.

What are some things you consider “treasured possessions”? What do you treasure about them? But will they last forever? Can they always give you happiness—every single moment—no matter what the circumstance? How is the treasure that God promises millions of times better?

Philippians 3:20-21—But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

- The glory to be revealed is a completely transformed body for everyone who trusts and loves Jesus—a glorious body like Jesus’ own body.
- It will be a perfect *physical* body. No more missing teeth. No more skinned knees. No more tummy aches. No more needing eyeglasses.
- It will be a perfect *spiritual* body. No more sin. No more grumbling and complaining. No more fighting with others. No more envying what someone else has. No being afraid or scared.

Isaiah 11:6-7— The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall

lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

Is this the way animals act now? How would a wolf really treat a lamb right now? How would a leopard treat a goat? Do lions eat straw? Could you safely play with a wild animal?

- In the glory to be revealed, God will set other creatures in His creation free from the curse they are now under. Even the animals will behave in new ways—no more devouring one another or being dangerous.

Revelation 21:1-5a—“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new. Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

- The glory to be revealed is a new heavens and earth prepared by God for His people.

(Explain that you are going to describe some things about this special place God will reveal to His people. At the end of each description, the children should call out the words, “all the time.”)

Everything will be beautiful...all the time.

Everyone will be happy...all the time.

Everything will be peaceful...all the time.

Everything will be perfect...all the time.

Everyone will have everything they need...all the time.

Everyone will be healthy...all the time.

Everything will be interesting and exciting...all the time.

Jesus will be with His people...all the time.

God will be their God...all the time.

God’s people will love, honor, worship, and enjoy God...all the time.

(Have the children think back to their “best vacation ever.” How does the glory to be revealed by God in the future compare to their imagined “best vacation ever”?)

Back when we were sharing our best-ever vacation plans, we realized that our plans might never happen the way we want or expect. There are things outside our control. What about God’s

plans for the future? Are His plans for a glorious new heavens and earth for His people just wishful thinking?

(Read Revelation 21:5 again.)

And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

- God’s Word is trustworthy and true—we can be absolutely sure of it and depend upon it.
- Jesus has promised that He will return and make all things new—there will be no more disease, disasters, suffering, sadness, or death anymore.
- We do not know when the day of His return will be, but for everyone who trusts in Him it will be a day of great joy.
- Jesus will rule over His perfect kingdom forever and ever.
- God’s redeemed people will live in God’s presence, experiencing fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16:11) as we love, honor, praise, and worship Him!

Review:

(Briefly summarize the context and main ideas presented in the seven devotionals.)

At this present time, our world is experiencing a very dangerous and deadly pandemic—a virus is making people sick all around the world. Right now, there is no cure for it. Most people who get sick will get better again, but thousands of people have died. In the past months, there have been many changes in our everyday lives—canceled school, staying at home, not being allowed to go certain places, and more. Even before this happened, there was sickness, sadness, and death in our world. But God is not surprised by all of this. He has given us the Bible so that we will know and trust His truth. The Bible tells us that...

- God is sovereign over all.
- God is good, loving, and right in all He does.
- God has subjected the whole world to a curse because of sin.
- Disease, disasters, and calamities point to our desperate need for Jesus. The gospel is the good news that there is salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus alone.
- For everyone trusting in Jesus, God will be with you and help you in times of suffering.
- God designs all suffering in a Christian’s life to work for our good.
- The brokenness, frustration, and suffering of this present time is only temporary. It will not last.
- Jesus has promised that He will return and make all things new. Everyone who has trusted in Jesus for salvation will live in this renewed and perfect world with Him forever and ever.

Pray Together:

Praise God for the sure promise of the glory that is yet to be revealed. Express longings for Jesus' return. Ask for an eternal perspective on life in this broken world, understanding that our true inheritance is from God and still awaits us. Confess any things of this world that you are prone to treasure more than Christ and His kingdom.

Apply the Truth This Week:

- Look through photos of a previous family vacation. Highlight the fun that was experienced and point out that the renewed earth will be millions of times better. Recall any "bad" things that happened during the vacation. Point out that things like these will not be experienced in the "glory to be revealed" for God's people.
- Use experiences of joy, fun, and excitement this week to talk more about the realities of the new heavens and earth. Point out that living in the "glory to be revealed" will be millions of times better than any of these present experiences.
- Use experiences of pain, sorrow, and frustration this week to talk more about the realities of the new heavens and new earth. Point out that for anyone trusting in Jesus, these experiences are temporary. Recall the weight of the slips of paper compared to the gift bag. How does knowing this help a person endure suffering right now?
- Read portions of Matthew 25:31-46, which talks about Jesus' return and the final judgment of believers and unbelievers. How should we respond to these truths?

Optional Activity Pages:

- ["Jesus' Promise for His Friends—Joy Forever!" \(lower-elementary age\)](#), Lesson 36 from [Jesus, What a Savior!](#)
- ["Promise: Eternal Life" \(elementary\)](#), Lesson 40 from [Faithful to All His Promises](#)

This lesson is part of an eight-part devotional series, which was kicked off with this [post](#).