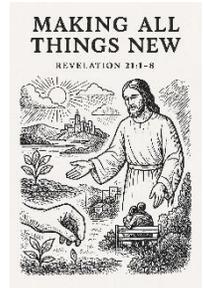


Making All Things New

Revelation 21:1-8 (NRSVue)



On the threshold of 2026, many of us carry both hope and fatigue. You may be eager for a fresh start; others may feel like 2025 took more than it gave.

The Book of Revelation offers us a vision of hope: “...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” (Rev. 21:1). This tells us about the distant future, but it also tells us about God’s renewing work today.

As Christians, we foresee God’s new creation and share in his renewing work today. God’s renewing work doesn’t wait for a far-off day.

Let’s uncover for others God’s transforming work now.

The Vision of Renewal

John’s vision in Revelation is breathtaking. He sees a holy city, the new Jerusalem, descending from heaven, prepared as a bride for her husband. This image speaks of intimacy, beauty, and shared love. God declares, “See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and be their God” (Rev. 21:3).

In these words, we glimpse the heart of renewal. God’s presence is with us. Renewal isn’t about external change; it’s God dwelling with his people. Sorrow, pain, and death will be no more. The most lasting health lies where God is. The greatest restoration is found in God’s presence. We enjoy God being with us. John’s vision declares that the Lord is with us. We’re a restored people.

His vision is of the end of time. We’ll live with God, Christ, and the Spirit forever. But the vision is for now, too. We’re invited to display the hope of God’s future in the

present turmoil. We're called to live today as renewed people, as God's loved people.

Sharing in the Renewal

The revelation to John tells us Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. God declares, "See, I am making all things new" (Rev. 21:5*b*). Notice the present tense—God *is* making, not *will* make. Renewal is ongoing, unfolding even now. It'll be finished in the future, but it's happening now, has been happening throughout the church's history.

In 2026, Christians are called to share in this renewal.

How do we share in it? In several ways. Heal your broken relationships. Forgive others as you've been forgiven. And stand with people on the edges of society. Work for fairness and dignity in the church, neighborhood, county, state, and nation.

You can support God's renewal of the world in other ways. Honor the earth itself as part of God's present and coming creation. Care for it with reverence. Plant a garden next spring—feel the coolness of the soil in your fingers and watch the quiet miracle of food growing before your eyes. In those moments, you'll find yourself in the presence of the Creator.

Show Christ's presence in your life. Become a hopeful person in our sour society. Carry the aroma of a warm, nourishing soup to someone who is suffering. Let your phone call break the silence of a lonely home. Listen patiently to the burdens someone needs to share. These small acts reveal God's renewing work through you.

Every act of kindness, each step toward justice, every prayer takes part in God's renewal work. Don't be a passive spectator. Be a co-worker with Christ.

Living Toward the New Creation

As we approach the new year, Revelation 21 challenges us to live toward God's new creation.

This means your living is hopeful. Trust that God's promises are true, even in your trials. Become an active disciple. Choose daily to follow Christ in word and deed. Build others up through God's love. Comfort the sorrowful and create joy for them to share.

Revelation 21 tells us that those who cling to fear, falsehood, and destruction won't share in the new heaven and new earth. So God's renewing work requires us to be faithful, courageous, and to persevere. We practice renewal because God is renewing us.

For those who overcome, God promises, "I will be their God, and they will be my children" (Rev. 21:7*b*).

This is the greatest gift—belonging to God's family.

Enjoy it and share it during this new year.

When judgment day comes, God will consider you faithful.

Amen