



WEEK  
**FIVE**  
JULY 2023

LARGE GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

## Sermon Outline

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

The Other Side Heaven Revelation 21:3-5a

#### WEEK 5

Key Question: What do you think heaven will be like?

We have John's description of the new heaven and new earth, and those words spark imagination of what life will be like when God once and for all makes everything new again.

We hope that through this lesson, preteens will have renewed hope in their relationship with Jesus. We finish the month and this series in Revelation 21:3-5a, with something John wrote toward the end of his life. John had been exiled to live out his life alone on a remote island for prisoners. While he was there, he had a vision of a future that would be more wonderful than we could ever fully understand.

We know that God is making all things new. And because

Use this page as a guide to create your sermon or feel free to pull from the script.

**Bottom Line:** God will make everything right in the end. Because of kids' developmental stage, it's hard for them to imagine life that lasts forever.

Our prayer is that through this lesson, they'll catch a glimpse of what life can be like when we follow Jesus. Not only is God with us now, but we'll be with God forever.

We may not understand it all, but we can have faith that it will be absolutely amazing as God is making all things new!

**This message should be 15- 20 mins. More time for small group is key.**

#### Landing:

"What do you think heaven will be like? Who will be there? What will it look like? When you think about the glimpse John was given, what do you think it will be like to be a part of that? Before you head out, let's pray and ask God to remind us that there is an incredible future in store, and that we can have hope even in the midst of the challenges we find ourselves in! Let's pray!"

#### BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

#### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God will make everything right in the end.

#### TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

What do you think heaven will be like?

#### MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift." Ephesians 2:8, NIV



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**PRELUDE**      **SOCIAL**      **STORY**      **WORSHIP**      **GROUPS**      **HOME**

25 MINUTES      10 MINUTES

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**The Other Side**  
Heaven  
Revelation 21:3-5a

### TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

What do you think heaven will be like?

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God will make everything right in the end.

### MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

**"God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift."**  
Ephesians 2:8, NIV

### MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Faith—Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see**

### BASIC TRUTH

**I can trust God no matter what.**

## LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

**AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS ENTER.**

**SLIDE: THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**

Host enters . . .

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (30- OR 60-SECOND VERSION)**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME**

## WELCOME

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

## OPENER

**HOST:** "(mock seriousness) Friends, let's have a moment of silence. July . . . is almost over. Which means summer is almost over. Please . . . a moment of reverence, if you will.

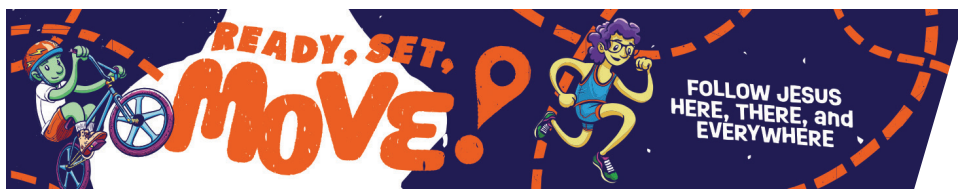
*Take a split second and immediately start talking.*

"Okay, moment's over! It's [Name of Environment], so let's get on with the games, shall we? Are you ready and set to get moving?"

*Choose two volunteers and have them join you near the pool noodle racing lane.*

"Harken back to your early-elementary school days and specifically gym class. Now, when I was a kid, we had these amazing floor scooters, basically just a square with four wheels and you'd sit on it and someone would push you across the floor. Did you ever play with those?"

"So many knuckles were destroyed by those things, I swear.



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10 MINUTES

“Today, we’re paying homage to those forgotten Scooters of Death with what I like to call ‘The Skateboard Slalom’!

**SLIDE: SKATEBOARD SLALOM**

“One person will be laying on their stomach on a skateboard with their legs pointed to the sky. The “driver” will then hold their feet and steer them through the course. The person on the board can lean but can’t touch the ground with any part of their body. If you fall off, touch the ground, or break your face, you have to start over!

“It’s you against the clock. Are you ready? Are you set? Let’s move!

**AUDIO: FUN BACKGROUND MUSIC**

*Make sure the kid on the skateboard wears a safety helmet.*

*Play several rounds with new volunteers. Provide commentary during the race and declare a winner—it’s whichever team has the lowest time.*

*(After the game) “What a blast. Remind me not to let you drive my car. Now let’s stand up and worship together!”*



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10 MINUTES

## WORSHIP

*Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** "I love to sing and worship Jesus with all of you. The love of Jesus changed my life! Let's sing 'Oh, happy day' and remember what Jesus has done for us. Let's celebrate how much He loves us and what He has done in our lives. Come on and sing with me. Here we go!"

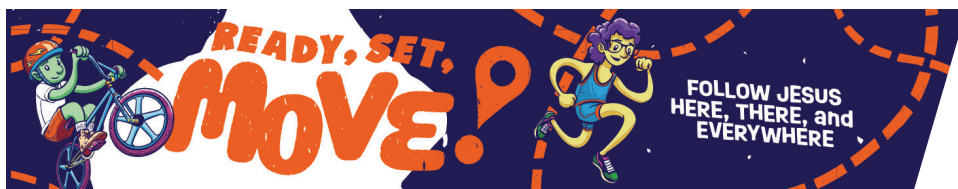
**AUDIO:** "HAPPY DAY - REMIX" / TRACK 1 FROM HAPPY DAY (REMIX) SINGLE  
**OPTIONAL VIDEO:** "HAPPY DAY - REMIX" LIVE LYRICS VIDEO

"Over and over again, our God does amazing things. **[Basic Truth] We can trust God no matter what!** I'm so thankful that we can put our faith in God, through the good times AND the difficult times in life. Let's lift our voices and sing.

**AUDIO:** "OVER AND OVER" / TRACK 8 FROM EVERYTHING TO ME  
**OPTIONAL VIDEO:** "OVER AND OVER" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO

"Check out what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:57: 'But let us give thanks to God! He gives us the victory because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done.' (NIV) We are the children of God. We can have a relationship with God that lasts forever because of what Jesus has done for us. We can know God personally, and LIVE for God each day. Let's put our voices together and worship God now."

**AUDIO:** "WHO YOU SAY I AM" / TRACK 1 FROM WHO YOU SAY I AM SINGLE  
**OPTIONAL VIDEO:** "WHO YOU SAY I AM" LIVE LYRICS VIDEO



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## COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

*Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.*

*A large sheet of butcher paper/craft paper and several markers are preset at the front.*

### INTRODUCTION

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Good morning, friends! It’s hard to believe we’re wrapping up this month today—but we’re going out with an awesome story today. Maybe even the most awesome story ever.

“It’s so big that I need a bit of help from you—because I’m guessing there are a few pretty stellar artists and creatives out there. Throughout our time, I’ll say certain words, or phrases, and then I’ll ask for a few people to come up and draw, write, or create something on this huge paper up here.

“For example, I might say ‘heaven.’ There are a lot of ways that movies, TV shows, books, advertisements, and so on try and show what heaven is like. What about you? When I say ‘heaven,’ what do you think of? If you have an idea, feel free to come up, take a marker and write it, draw it . . . show us what you think!

*Allow several kids to come up and create. Positively affirm each one, and when they’re finished, leave the pictures up on display for the Story.*

“These are really, really creative. Wow. And looking at these drawings and thinking about heaven, it’s pretty easy to start dreaming about what heaven is like, especially when life here on earth can get pretty difficult.

### TENSION

**COMMUNICATOR:** “When life does gets hard, it can be difficult sometimes to have faith. Life is full of ups and downs, good times and bad times, but really, how do we know what it’s going to be like in heaven with Jesus? No one knows what it’s actually like, so how do we know, for sure?

“And while we’re here on earth, how should we live? How can we have hope? What should we be doing with the one amazing life we have?

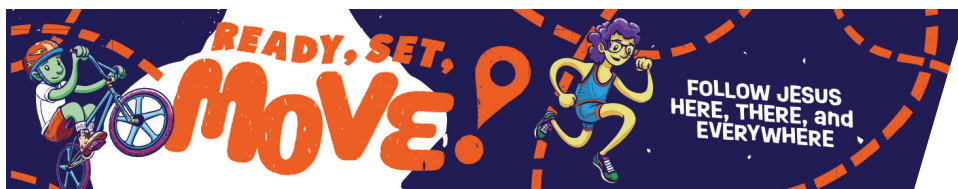
“These are pretty big questions. Maybe even a bit big and a bit deep to be thinking about on a Sunday morning in July. But it’s important since we’re talking about faith and hope, and everything you’re learning and believing all leads to one point—and thankfully we’ve got the Bible as a guide. We’d be totally lost without God’s Word to guide us!

### TRUTH

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Now when I say, ‘Is it all worth it in the end,’ that’s because our Scripture for today gives us a glimpse of the end. But spoiler alert: that end? It’s actually more like a beginning. Just wait—I think you’ll see what I mean!

*Use the God’s Big Story Timeline to recap the following stories.*

“In the beginning, God made an incredible world filled with a beautiful creation—and in that creation God created a perfect garden.



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“Then God created man and woman and put them into this garden to be in charge and care for it all.

“Everything was, like we said, good. SO GOOD that God was right there with the Creation. God was there, right next to the people, with them in the garden. God set them free into this good world with one condition—don’t eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Sadly, they were tempted to go against God’s instructions for them, and the good world was shattered, along with their relationship with each other, creation, and even their relationship with God.

“And as sin was introduced into the world, it spread everywhere . . . affecting everyone and everything ever since.”

“A truly sad moment in the story.

“And yet, God wasn’t done. God wanted to rescue the world, and He chose to do it through a family. God started this family with a man named Abraham (*Abraham on Big Story Timeline*). Abraham’s family grew, and his great-grandson, Joseph (*Joseph on the Timeline*), helped save the family from a famine. Later, when the family had grown into an entire nation, a man named Moses led the entire nation of God’s people (*Moses on the Timeline*) out of slavery in Egypt. God’s people had strong leaders along the way, like David (*David on the Timeline*). A man named Daniel also stood strong for God when God’s people were in captivity (*Daniel on the Timeline*). But most often, throughout God’s story, when God moved toward people, they eventually messed up, fell into sin, moved away from Him again. God’s people may not have been faithful to Him, but He stayed faithful to them.

“Through it all, the highs and the lows, prophets shared with God’s people that God was going to rescue them. And God chose to do it in the most incredible and unexpected way possible. (*Timeline of prophecies of Jesus’ birth.*)

“Do you know how?

*Communicator allows for responses.*

“That’s right—Jesus. God’s very own Son. Through Mary, Jesus was born as a child into our world, was a kid just like you, then grew up into a man. God’s Savior had come! And then in an even more unexpected act, Jesus laid down His life and died on a cross to pay for the sin that went all the way back to the garden. (*Point to drawing*)

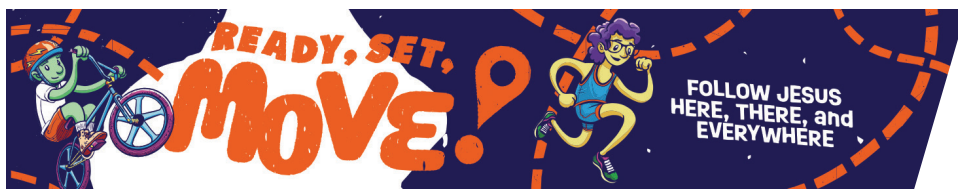
“Jesus died. A truly sad moment in the story.

“And yet, God wasn’t done. After Jesus was laid to rest in a tomb, the most unexpected thing happened. He rose again. From the dead. Even death couldn’t stop Jesus! He had conquered sin and death! He offered the freedom He paid for to anyone who wanted it—He would give anyone who wanted it a new, clean heart. Then He went back to heaven, leaving His Holy Spirit to be with His followers but promising that one day He would return again to fix the whole world.

“When I say ‘world,’ what do you think of? Artists, creatives, show us!

*Allow several kids to come up and create. Positively affirm each one, and when they’re finished, leave the pictures up on display.*

“Excellent job! The world is pretty big, isn’t it?



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"Now even though Jesus' work on the cross defeated sin and death, the world was still broken. People still hurt one another. Pain and disease still wreak havoc. People still die.

"It's the age-old question that keeps popping up. Why, if there is a loving God, and if Jesus is truly real, why do bad things keep happening to good people?

"It's because we still live in a broken world. With broken people. People might've thought that because Jesus paid for sin, things would get better.

"Actually, for some Christians after Jesus left, things started getting worse. The Roman empire was a difficult place to live as a follower of Jesus, and the emperors were less and less welcoming of Christians. Things got really tough. Many were beaten, imprisoned, and accused, and some even lost their lives.

"People thought: *'Is it worth it? Will it get better? Or is this the end?'*

"Enter John. You probably know the name, right? John was a fisherman, a follower of Jesus, and one of the twelve original disciples. What you might not know about him is that, while tradition tells us that all of the other disciples ended up getting killed for their faith, John lived a long life. However, the end of his life was spent imprisoned by the emperor, exiled on an island called Patmos.

"John had been a disciple, then later a church leader—but he would come to the end of his life as an exile. And much like others of his time, he might have been asking, *'Was it worth it? Will it get better? Or is this the end?'*

"And yet, God wasn't done.

"If John had questions, God answered them in a way John probably never imagined. There, on the island of Patmos, Jesus in all His glory appeared to John. And Jesus gave John a message he would not soon forget. He didn't just tell John a message—He showed him the message. It was a staggering, colorful, awe-inspiring, sometimes confusing, collage of what was to come in the future.

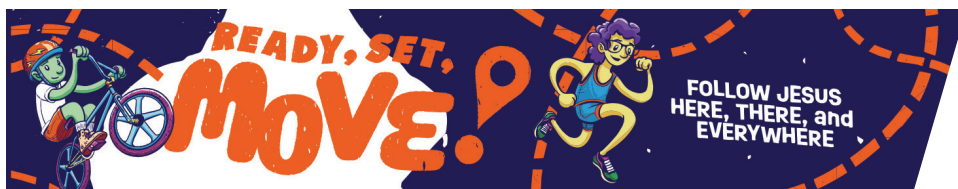
"It was like Jesus pulled back the curtains of the future for John and told him, **'WRITE IT DOWN!'**

"And boy, did John see some things. Incredible things, terrible things, and absolutely breathtaking things. And he wrote it down, and it's here (*hold up Bible*) in this book. John's book is at the very end of the Bible, and it's known as the book of Revelation.

"As it came to the final scene, what John saw was almost too awesome to imagine."

"John saw a vision of heaven. Now . . . (*pointing toward the paper with drawings and writings of what heaven is like*) is this what he saw? Is this what it looked like? We don't know for certain, but we have his description. John saw a new heaven and a new earth . . . with a holy city in the middle of it all. There was a throne, massive and beautiful, a perfect place for the rightful King to finally take His place and rule.

*Open the Bible to Revelation 21:3 (NIV) and read.*



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*"I heard a loud voice from the throne. It said, "Look! God now makes his home with the people. He will live with them. They will be his people. And God himself will be with them and be their God."*

"When I say 'King,' what comes to mind? Grab a marker and show us!"

*Allow several kids to come up and create. Positively affirm each one, and when they're finished, leave the pictures up on display.*

*Then, take out a crown.*

"John heard a voice—the voice of Jesus, the rightful King on the throne declaring that once again, God was moving toward people in the most incredible and unexpected way! God would be making a home with them! One of the most important things for us to know about heaven is that God is there, with His people, ruling as a good and just and rightful King.

"And as God moves in, things will change forever. It's almost too hard to imagine—but try.

*Open the Bible to Revelation 21:4 (NIV) and read.*

*"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death." And there will be no more sadness. There will be no more crying or pain. Things are no longer the way they used to be.'*

*Communicator takes out a box and starts unpacking and explaining items. There are tissues, bandages, ice packs, and an obituary section of the newspaper.*

*"Pain (bandages and ice packs), sadness, the sin . . . gone. Every tear (tissues) . . . wiped away. Death (obituaries) . . . death has died. The old way is gone. What we've been used to is changed.*

*Open the Bible to Revelation 21:5 (NIV) and read.*

*"He who was sitting on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down. You can trust these words. They are true."*

*Take out an old metal toy car.*

"Think of it this way. Pretend this little toy car is a real one. Shiny and new once it's bought, and you can go all over town in it, impressing your friends, revving the motor. It's in tip-top shape, everything is working as it should.

"Over time, though, something starts happening. The car begins to break down. It no longer works the way it should. It's not as shiny, it has some dings and scratches where someone ran a shopping cart into it in the parking lot of Target. The engine doesn't purr like it used to. It needs an oil change. It's just not the same, because it's old and a bit run down. It doesn't function like it was meant to. It has become a far cry from what it once was.

"Friends, it's the same with God's creation. It's the same with us. It started good, really good, in the garden, all sunshine and naming animals and walks with God. But since then? It's been run down. The effects of sin on the world and on us have broken us. This world, although still with many glimpses of beauty, is a far cry of what it once was or what it was meant to be.





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“But John heard the One sitting on the throne say, ‘I can renew the entire thing!’

“And like a master craftsman restoring life back to an old car, God tells us that we won’t believe what this world will look like in the end when He’s done with it!

“Why do you think Jesus allowed John to see these kinds of things? Why do you think He had him write it all down so everyone could read about it even thousands of years later?

*Allow for some answers.*

“I think it’s to give us hope. To strengthen our faith. This picture of the future for His followers is going to be more incredible than they could ever imagine. Even more incredible (*points to paper drawings*) than these amazing drawings. And by understanding this, it would be enough to help them know that, yes . . . it is worth it! It does get better! This is not the end. In fact, there is not a single trial they might face or any suffering they might go through that can stop the incredible future that John saw from happening.

“God will once again be with people. And God will make all things new! That is a promise we can count on.”

## APPLICATION

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Friends, it can get really easy to get overwhelmed by the brokenness we see around us in the world sometimes. Family members get sick. People get hurt or feel lonely. There’s violence and war on the news constantly. There’s just so much that can make us sad.

“But here’s the Good News—you can have hope. Because John was given a picture of the future, we now have been given a look at our future, too. And it is better than we could imagine . . . better than we could ever draw out or attempt to capture. God has not left us alone in this world. God is with us and has a plan to put an end to the pain and make all things new.

**SLIDE: GOD’S BIG STORY TIMELINE**

**SLIDE: WEEK 5 TIMELINE IMAGE**

*If you’re making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today’s timeline image on the clothesline.*

“What will it be like when that happens? It’s hard to say exactly. Sure, we still have a lot of questions. There is a lot we don’t know. But we can focus on what we do know: for those who believe in Jesus, there will be life that lasts forever, no more pain or death. Where we will be fully alive, with God, in a way we can only imagine here on earth.

“And hopefully, donuts.”

## LANDING

**COMMUNICATOR:** “Today as you go to groups, think about this:

**SLIDE: KEY QUESTION**



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**“What do you think heaven will be like?** Who will be there? What will it look like? When you think about the glimpse John was given, what do you think it will be like to be a part of that? Before you head out, let’s pray and ask God to remind us that there is an incredible future in store, and that we can have hope even in the midst of the challenges we find ourselves in! Let’s pray!”

**SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND**

*Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.*

**AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.**

**SLIDE: THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**