

Pastor Brian's  
Midweek Message  
September 14, 2022

**COMFORTING CLOUDS**

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat.  
Revelation 7:16

Most of you know that Kay and I are tennis players. Given that we play three to sometimes four mornings a week, you might call us avid tennis players. If you were ever to watch us play, you would certainly not call us accomplished tennis players. Seriously...do we even look like tennis players?

All that is beside the point. My point today is that tennis is a very difficult and uncomfortable sport to play outdoors in Florida this time of year. Take for example this past Monday. Kay's group began at 9:00am, and mine at 9:30am, with not a cloud in the sky and not a whisper of a breeze. The temperature was already in the mid to upper 80s and headed into the low 90s by the time we were done (I know these things...I'm a better meteorologist than tennis player!) Of course, then there's the humidity. I think we all know about that. By about the end of the 4th game in the 1st set I/we looked like someone had opened a fire hose on us. But, undaunted, we play on.

Today, on the other hand, was a totally different experience. There were showers and thunderstorms offshore this morning, and a veil of clouds was drifting overhead. That kept the sun from beating down upon us, and limited the rise in temperatures, keeping them in the low to mid 80s. The humidity? That was about the same. We were still rather drenched by the 4th game, but it wasn't near as bad as Monday.

Don't get me wrong, I love the abundant sunshine and warmth of SW Florida, especially in comparison to the gloomy cold dampness of 17 falls, winters, and springs in the Pacific Northwest, and 30 more chilly, cloudy, and snowy falls, winters, and springs in Wisconsin.

The Scripture verse above is the fulfillment of a prophecy from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah (49:10) regarding what heaven will be like. That fulfillment is experienced by the Apostle John as he receives an invitation from the Lord to see what heaven is like. In chapter 7 John sees a great multitude of people that was beyond anyone's ability to count. People from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, from all over the world! They were standing before the throne of God and before the Lamb of God, the risen and ascended Christ. They all clothed in white robes and were waving palm branches in their hands as they worship aloud (Rev. 7:9-12)

One of the elders in the crowd asked John if he knew who all these people are. John reflects the question right back at that elder and John learns that these are those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. This is a group that in the future (John was seeing the future) includes all of us! From there we get a vague glimpse of what life in heaven will be all about. "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (rev. 7:15-17)

I like the part about no hunger or thirst for all of us who are forever there, and I couple that with the great feasts that are foretold by the prophets, and the marriage supper of the Lamb in Revelation chapter 19, which has no end. Most of you know I like to eat too. That's pretty obvious. I have to wonder though, if there'll be tennis courts in heaven. If there are, we'll be treated to many mornings like this one where the clouds hold back the blazing sun and limit the scorching heat. Actually, we read in chapter 21 that there won't be a sun or moon, because the glory of God will light up everything. So, I guess we can comfortably play all day!