

What Heaven is Like

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[0:00] There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain.! For the old order of things has passed away. He who was seated on the throne said,! I am making everything new.

Then he said, Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true. He said to me, It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

To him who is thirsty, I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars, their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

This is the second death. One of the seven angels, who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, came and said to me, Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

[1:12] And he carried me away in the spirit to a mountain great and high and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

It had a great high wall with twelve gates and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south, and three on the west. The wall of the city had twelve foundations and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide.

He measured the city with the rod and found it to be twelve thousand stadia in length and as wide and high as it is long. He measured its wall and it was a hundred and forty-four cubits thick by man's measurement, which the angel was using.

[2:28] The wall was made of jasper and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone.

The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelve amethyst.

The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass.

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives its light and the Lamb is its lamp.

The nations will walk by its light and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.

[3:39] The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city.

On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him. They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light, and they will reign forever and ever.

[4:45] The angel said to me, These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord God of the spirits of the prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things that must soon take place.

I'd ask you to turn over in your Bibles with me now to Paul's letter to the Romans in chapter 8. I'll not be having an exposition of Revelation 21 tonight, but we will be referring to it.

But I'd like you to begin with to turn to Romans chapter 8. Heaven is an apparently popular idea among Americans.

When ABC did their special on heaven back in 2005, they took a poll to gather some data to go along with their program. And that poll showed that 89% of Americans believe in heaven.

And that number floating right around 90% is held pretty accurate for about the past 30 years or so. 90% of Americans believe in heaven. Well, that's good.

[5:55] The Bible teaches us that heaven is a real place. And so we should believe in it. And it's good that many people believe in it. But that's about where the good news ends.

Of those that believe in heaven, 85% of them believe that they're going there. And so it's apparently very popular to believe in heaven and to want to go there.

Many people think it's their destiny when they die. That's what's coming. But when you think of what we saw this morning, that there's only one way to heaven.

And that is through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the way and the truth and the life. It's hard to believe that some 80-something percent of Americans are truly on their way to heaven.

Because they're not living like Jesus as their Lord and Savior. But there are many who are one with Christ. Who have put their hope and their trust in Him.

[6:53] And if that's the case, and I trust there are many such here tonight that are hoping and trusting in Christ. If that is true, and we believe that we're on our way to heaven, then why don't we think more about it?

Why don't we talk more about it? Why don't we look forward to it more than we do? Could it be that it's partially at least because we understand so little of it?

Because we know so little of it. Could it be because we're too attached to this earth, to this world, as we talked of last week? Could it be that we're not really sure we want to go there because we don't know what it will be like?

And we're afraid of something different. Afraid of change. I don't pretend to have all the answers regarding heaven. And neither do I think the Scriptures give us all the answers that we might like about heaven.

We noted this last week. Another author said almost the same thing. He said, it's not meant to satisfy our curiosity, but to call us to faith. The Scriptures aren't here for satisfying our curiosity, but to call us to faith.

[8:00] And so that our faith might be built up. And so in this brief look at the biblical teaching on heaven, we want to have our faith strengthened. We've seen what heaven is.

We've seen the only way to get to heaven. And tonight we want to consider something of what heaven is like. Or what it will be like when we get there. And again, I'm going to do my best to stick to what the Scriptures tell us.

And try to avoid speculation. And so, let's see what the Word has to tell us. Heaven is the place where God dwells. It's the place where the angels dwell.

Where Jesus dwells. Where He came from. Where He returned to. And where He's coming from again. And it's the place where God's children dwell. And the only way to get there is through Jesus. But when you do get there, if that's your destination, what will it be like? What will it be like? Four things tonight.

[9:04] Heaven is a physical place. It's a real, physical, tangible place. Secondly, we'll see that heaven is being with Jesus. Thirdly, we'll see that heaven is a place of rest.

And then, fourthly and lastly, we'll see that heaven is a place of activity. Right? Heaven is a physical place. It is being with Jesus. It is a place of rest. And it is a place of activity.

First of all, it's a physical place. And maybe that's common knowledge to you. That it'll be a real, physical, tangible place. But many people have a misconception that heaven is a purely spiritual state of existence.

You remember the 89% of Americans that believe in heaven. When those people were asked, if you believe in heaven, is it a physical place? Only 16% said yes.

The other 78%, and there's some left out there, but 78% of them said no. So many people that believe in heaven don't actually believe it's a real place, a physical place.

[10:08] It's just a spiritual state of existence. That is not the case. Remember last week, we saw that Jesus is there. And He's there in His resurrection body. When Jesus came out of the grave, He had a real body that His disciples could touch and feel and see.

It was a real body that He had. And He went up into heaven with that real body of His. Pastor Bob just quoted John Blanchard saying that when Jesus came to earth, He didn't cease to be truly God. And when He went back to heaven, He didn't cease to be truly man. He still has a body. And so if He's in heaven, then He must be in a real place because He's got a real body. But not only that, this is a good time, I think, to talk for a moment about what happens to us when we die.

When we die, our bodies go into the ground. We get buried in the ground. And our souls go to one of two places. To heaven or to hell. And if you're on your way to glory, your soul goes to heaven and it's in the immediate presence of God.

But then when Jesus comes back, when He comes back, there'll be the resurrection of the dead. And our bodies and souls will be joined again. And there's going to have to be a place for all those thousands and millions of bodies to go to heaven.

[11:26] There's a lot of souls there now. But there's going to have to be a real physical place for all those real physical bodies to go. And so heaven is a real physical place.

And as long as we're talking about resurrection bodies, let's talk about them for a minute. Do you know that your body in heaven, when Christ has come again, will be like Christ's?

Like His resurrection body. You remember Philippians chapter 3 in verse 20, but our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.

But there's more. Verse 21, who by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.

Your body in heaven will be like that of Jesus Christ. He has a glorified resurrection body. And when He comes again, you will too. Now what will those bodies be like?

[12:24] Paul gives us a hint in 1 Corinthians 15. He says, so it will be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown perishable is raised imperishable. It is sown in dishonor.

It is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness. It is raised in power. It is sown in natural body. It is raised a spiritual body. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable and the mortal with immortality.

Our resurrection bodies will be imperishable, indestructible, not susceptible to injury, disease, pain, suffering, annoying flu bugs, debilitating back pain, colds, cancers.

None of those will be able to touch us. It's a body that will be totally free from the effects of the fall. No sin in our bodies.

It will be a glorious body, able to perfectly reflect the glory of God. Not only will our souls be sinless, our bodies will be. They will be glorious. They will be powerful. They will not be raised in weakness like our human bodies.

[13:28] And don't you feel the weakness of your flesh? No more when you're in glory. It will be a body that's raised in power. Fatigue and weakness will not be our lot anymore.

But strength. Spiritual bodies. Not as opposed to physical, but spirit-filled, spirit-controlled, spirit-guided bodies that live for the glory of Christ.

Immortal bodies. The bodies that we have here are subject to death. But the resurrection bodies that we have will not be. They are immortal. They will live forever.

And so heaven is a physical place where we will live forever with glorified, physical resurrection bodies. And surely there is something to which we look forward. Something to anticipate.

How many of our complaints on this earth are related to our physical bodies? The things we feel, the things that weigh us down, the things we can't physically do. Of course we're wrong to be complaining about those things.

[14:30] But in heaven there will be nothing to complain about with respect to our bodies. They will be perfect in every way. But we know that heaven will be a real physical place not just because Jesus is there and not just because our resurrection bodies will be there, but because of the language the scriptures use of the new heavens and the new earth and the renewal of creation.

A lot of times we make a mistake. We think that physical blessings were promised to Israel if they obey. They get the land if they obey. And for us it's spiritual blessings. We get heaven because of Christ's obedience. And we think physical, spiritual. You know what? We do receive spiritual blessings. So did the Israelites receive spiritual blessings. And just as they receive physical blessings, so too will we. What does Jesus say in the Sermon on the Mount? Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. That's what we're standing on. Well, you take away the wood and concrete what's under us. The earth. This physical planet will be our inheritance. Do you believe that?

[15:41] You say, I don't really want the earth. It's been affected by sin. It's dirty. It's polluted. The ground grows thorns and weeds and it's hot too many months of the year and it's too cold too many months of the year.

I don't want the earth. Well, that's why we've turned to Romans chapter 8. It's true that the earth has been affected by the fall, but the coming of Christ will remedy that. Look at Romans chapter 8 beginning in verse 18. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. Before we go any farther, you see how eternal glory to Paul, he says this in 2 Corinthians 2, outweighs any suffering. Momentary light affliction, the eternal weight of glory. Our present sufferings aren't worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. But then he goes on. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

[16:44] For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, and hoped that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the Spirit grown inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoptions as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved, but hope that is seen is no hope at all. For who hopes what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. See how Paul draws a comparison here between the redemption of us, our bodies and souls, and the redemption of the earth? We groan inwardly. We bear the weight of a fallen sinful world in our bodies, but the creation groans too.

All of creation. It's been subject to futility. It's in bondage to decay. We often talk about and think on the redemption of man, but what about the rest of creation?

[18:01] Don't need to redeem it? Can just destroy it? Well, it seems that if that's your view that you're saying there's something that is beyond God.

Man fell into sin and God was able to redeem him, but he's not powerful enough to redeem the earth too. He'll go ahead and let Satan have that victory over the earth. We sing a hymn at Christmas time.

Joy to the world. The Lord has come. And there's a verse that speaks of Jesus coming again and I've forgotten the words now.

For as the curse is found. What's the first part of the verse? No more let sins and sorrows grow and thorns infest the ground. He comes to make his blessings flow as far as the curse is found. Thank you, Mark. No more let sins and sorrows nor thorns infest the ground. That's exactly right. The futility of the earth will not be anymore. It will be redeemed.

[19:03] And so, that hymn that we sing at Christmas time is really in some ways about Jesus' second coming, not his first. Because when he brings blessings, it'll flow as far as the curse is found and you can walk outside and you see the effects of the curse on the earth.

God's going to redeem it. He's not going to leave the earth and say, well forget about that. That's, it's too far gone. No, just as he has seen fit to redeem us, he will redeem the earth. And it will be a radical transformation. Make no mistake, Peter describes it as fire coming and melting the elements with its heat. But fire can be a purifying force. Peter compares it to the flood which purified the earth. It didn't destroy it. The earth was still here after the flood. It'll still be here after the fire purifies it. 2 Peter 3.13 After that, Peter says, but in keeping with his promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

In keeping with what promise, Peter? Well, turn back with me for a moment to Isaiah chapter 65. Isaiah chapter 65. Here's a prophecy and we read of the anticipation of the fulfillment of that prophecy in Revelation 21 that we saw earlier tonight.

[20 : 20] But here's what God promises in Isaiah 65. A promise that Peter says will come true. A promise that John says will come true. Here's the promise. Isaiah 65.17 and following.

Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create.

For I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people. The sound of weeping and crying will be heard in it no more. You hear the echoes of Revelation 21?

Verse 20. Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days or an old man who does not live out his years. He who dies at a hundred will be thought of mere youth. He who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed.

They will build houses and dwell in them. They will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree so will be the days of my people.

[21 : 22] My chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands. They will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortune.

For they will be a people blessed by the Lord. They and their descendants with them. Before they call I will answer. While they are still speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb will feed together and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

But dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain says the Lord. The new heavens and the new earth will be a place of beauty of long life of peace a place without violence.

It has been promised. John has his vision of how it will be fulfilled in Revelation 21. Peter says it will come to pass there will be a new heaven and a new earth. A renewed heaven.

A renewed earth. And heaven in Revelation 21 is pictured as coming down to earth. Revelation 21.3 we read it earlier. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying now the dwelling of God is with men and he will live with them.

[22 : 31] They will be as God and God himself will be with them and be their God. You see our heavenly home will be our earthly home. This earth will be renewed and we will forever be in the presence of God.

Heaven will come down to earth as it says there in Revelation 21 and we will dwell on an earth that we very well may not recognize very well. It will be different. I don't know how different. Don't want to speculate.

But it will be different. It will be renewed. It will be perfect. It will be without flaw. And you can take some of that imagery in Revelation 21 you have to be very careful with Revelation because so much of it is symbolic but it's described in terms of gold and beautiful gems.

It will be a beautiful place. Only the best and the finest it will be perfect. A Dutch theologian says this of the new heavens and new earth all that is true honorable just pure pleasing and commendable in the whole of creation in heaven and on earth is gathered up in the future city of God renewed recreated boosted to its highest glory.

So yes we will inherit the earth. It will look different. It will be glorious. The promised land is much better than just a little piece of land along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea.

[23 : 51] it's the earth. God will renew it. He will not leave it to futility and we will dwell in it for all of eternity in real bodies. So heaven is a physical place.

Don't think of it as a place where you float around in the clouds as just a spirit a soul. When Jesus comes again our souls will be united with our bodies and we will dwell on this renewed earth.

But secondly heaven is being with Jesus. Heaven is being with Jesus. More than describing heaven as a place to which we go the scriptures often speak of it as being with Jesus.

As being with a person. Of course Jesus is in a place so it doesn't mean going to a place but Jesus is the glory of that place. We're in union with Christ while we walk on this earth. That union will be consummated and made perfect when we arrive in glory.

Listen to the testimony of the scriptures. Luke 23 43 Jesus answered him speaking to the thief on the cross I tell you the truth today you will be with me in paradise.

[24:55] John 14 3 from this morning and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come back and take you to be with me so that you may be where I am.

John 17 24 Father I want those you have given me to be with me where I am and to see my glory. 2 Corinthians 5 we are confident I say and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

Paul is talking about that intermediate state before the resurrection of the dead when he says away from the body but at home with the Lord. See how he describes heaven? Being with the Lord. Or Philippians 1 23 and 24 I am torn between the two I desire to depart and be with Christ which is better by far but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

And so heaven is described as being in the presence of Jesus. We'll get to see Jesus face to face his real body our real body and we'll be able to see him.

In other words our faith will be sight. Now in this life Peter says though you have not seen him you love him even though you do not see him now you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy for you are receiving the goal of your faith the salvation of your souls.

[26:16] We don't see Jesus now. That's what heaven will be seeing Jesus. Or 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 7 we live by faith and not by sight. When we get to heaven we will live by sight.

We will see our Lord our risen Lord and Savior. And you know what happens when you see Jesus? 1 John 3 and verse 2 Dear friends Now we are children of God and what we will be has not yet been made known but we know that when he appears we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is.

When we see Jesus as he is we shall be like him. I can't begin to fathom what that will be like. But you know that we are sinful.

Even as redeemed people we still struggle and fight with sin and it burdens us and it weighs us down. But we will be sinless like Jesus.

Jesus never once we spoke of this this morning never once sinned in his thoughts his words and deeds neither will we in glory. Never again will you struggle with keeping a tighter rein on your tongue.

[27:36] Never again will you crave popularity in the favor of men. Never again will an unkind word cross your lips. Never again will you have a lustful thought let alone allow that thought to turn to action.

Never again will you put your own interests before God. Edward Donnelly in his book On Heaven and Hell points out something I had never thought of and that is if you read the Ten Commandments differently they are commandments make no mistake but read them as promises sometime.

You shall have no other gods before me. In Heaven you won't. You'll never again struggle with putting something more importantly than God.

You shall not covet. In Heaven you won't. And so those things will be true of us. Listen to Donnelly's words. Is it not true that for the believer sin is our greatest burden our deepest sorrow?

There is horrible corruption inside the best of us. It is vile. When we think of it we are ashamed and hate ourselves. And he quotes the psalmist here. For my iniquities have gone over my head like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

[28:52] My wounds are foul and festering because of my foolishness. I go mourning all the day long. I groan because of the turmoil of my heart until Heaven. Until that place where there will be no more sin.

Never again will we break any of God's commandments. Never again will we fail our Savior or cause pain to anyone. Never again will we have to beg for forgiveness. God has predestined us to be conformed to the image of His Son and we will be.

Our prayer offered so often and with such anguish here will be fully answered at the last. Deliver us from evil. If you want to learn more of Heaven and of Hell I'd recommend this book.

It's been very helpful to me. Or listen to the words of John Newton. John Newton a self-professed great sinner says this quoting from Romans 7 O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from this body of death?

But we shall not carry this burden beyond the grave. When we see Jesus we will be like Him. No longer with sin. No longer burdened by these things.

[30:01] And if that's the case says John you remember it's John in 1 John 3-2 that said that. He says but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is immediately following that.

In verse 3 He says everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself just as He is pure. If you have this hope of one day seeing Jesus and being like Him then here on this earth you will be striving to be like Him.

You will be making that your aim here and now. Seeking to purify yourself and cleanse yourself from all sin and ungodliness. A true child of God won't be saying well if heaven is holy and I'll be sinless there I need to get all my sinning in now.

No. That's the attitude of one who doesn't know what it is to love the Savior who died for those sins. It's the attitude of one who wouldn't at all be at home in heaven. The attitude of one who's not on the path to heaven but on the path to hell.

And so we need to live heavenly minded lives holy lives lives aiming to be pure as our Savior is pure. And then when we see Him we will be like Him. To be with Jesus will be to be in the light of His glory.

[31:14] To bask in the glory of the light that radiates from Him. Again in Revelation 21 and 22 the city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it for the glory of God gives it light and the Lamb is its lamp.

They will see His face and His name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun for the Lord God will give them light. What a glorious sight that will be.

To live in the light. The glory of our great God and Savior. And we won't need a church there. We won't need a church building because we won't need a temple because the Lamb is the temple. Revelation 21 and 22 I did not see a temple in this city because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The sacrifice has been offered. God's wrath has been satisfied. He is His God and we are His people and we won't have to come to a house of God and gather together to worship because we will be in the presence of God all the time.

Heaven comes down to earth and dwells God dwells among men. So what is heaven like? It's being with Jesus. It's being like Jesus.

[32:23] It's a physical place. It's being with Jesus thirdly tonight. Heaven is a place of rest. Heaven is a place of rest and therefore a place of joy. You know, the Israelites failed to find rest in the promised land.

They didn't keep God's commandments and so they didn't find an eternal rest. We have not yet found that rest. We will find rest when we reach the true promised land. Heaven. Hebrews 4 and verse 9 and following There remains then a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

For anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work just as God did from His. Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

You see, where Israel failed, Jesus succeeded. And He has earned that heavenly rest for us. And that's where we're going. And even though Jesus has earned it for us, we are to be striving to reach it, says the author to the Hebrews, making every effort.

God rested on the seventh day from His work. We rest one day of the week, the first day, from our earthly toil, but in heaven we shall join Him in eternal rest. Rest from what, you say?

[33:34] Well, rest from hunger and thirst and the scorching sun. No longer will the things that weigh us down here, burden us there. Turn over to Revelation chapter 7, please. Revelation gives us glimpses into heaven and John's vision of it.

Revelation 7 beginning in verse 13. Then one of the elders asked me, these in white robes, who are they and where did they come from? I answered, sir, you know.

And he said, these are they who have come out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 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 spread His tent over them. Never again will they hunger. Never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them nor any scorching heat.

For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd. He will lead them to springs of living water and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. It's rest from hunger, from thirst, from the

scorching sun.

[34 : 45] It's rest from pain and suffering. We read in Revelation 21, He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain for the old order of things has passed away.

Can you imagine such a thing? Rest from all suffering. all pain, all death. There will be no suffering, pain, or death and so there will be no occasion for tears or for sorrow, for mourning or for sadness. No watching loved ones suffer in illness and pain. No suffering ourselves. We've already seen it's a rest from our struggle with sin.

Here's the great encouragement, the great thing that we can long for and look forward to and anticipate. Jesus promised, blessed are to those who mourn for they shall be comforted and in heaven that will be eternally true.

Never again can trouble, tribulation, suffering, touch us there. Whatever ailments you are feeling right now, this night, I know that you don't all come here feeling well and always healthy and always great and always strong.

[35 : 58] Whatever ailments you're feeling, whatever ailments your loved ones are suffering right now. No more in glory. No more in heaven. Rest from pain and suffering.

A rest from our labor. A rest from our work. Revelation 14, 13, Then I heard a voice from heaven say, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, and they will rest from their labor for their deeds will follow them.

We'll rest from our tiresome toil and labor, the futility of our tiring labor. Heaven won't be a place of inactivity. More on that in just a moment. But it will be a place of rest.

And if that's the case, if we're free from these things, if we're resting from these things, then it will be a place of joy. A place without suffering or tears. The author to the Hebrews says in chapter 12, verses 22 and 23, But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God.

You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly to the church of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven. Or the psalmist says in Psalm 16:11, You have made known to me the path of life.

[37 : 09] You will fill me with joy in Your presence, with eternal pleasures at Your right hand. And the presence of God is fullness of joy. And so as we rest from our suffering, our labor, our trials, we'll find it a place of joy.

But then lastly tonight, heaven is a place of activity. What will we do in heaven? What will we do? Again, we only know what God's Word makes plain to us, but it's clear that heaven will be, first of all, a place of worship.

We will worship in heaven. Much of what we see in the book of Revelation is worship. Notice just chapter 7, verses 9 and 10. We're here in chapter 7, verse 9.

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands and they cried out in a loud voice, Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.

And we read other places in Revelation of all those gathered in heaven singing God's praises. I had to stop and listen to you all sing tonight. And it did my heart good.

[38 : 27] Come sit up in the front sometime and hear the voices of all the people of God singing. And if just that did my heart good, how many people are there here tonight? A hundred?

A hundred and something people here tonight? You take that and you multiply it. And you multiply it. And you multiply it. And you multiply it until it's like the stars of the heaven or the sand on the seesaw.

That many people and that many voices singing God's praise and glory. And if this does your heart good, imagine what that will do for you. Heaven will be a place of worship.

And as now, all of our life is to be lived in worship to God, so then it will be perfectly. Everything that we will do in this renewed heaven and earth will be an act of worship.

Heaven will be a place where we reign. I'm not going to take time to flesh that out. To be perfectly honest, I don't fully understand what it means that we'll reign with Jesus.

[39 : 27] But we read it there in Revelation chapter 21 that we will reign, or 22 I believe, that we will reign with Him. Heaven will be a place where we serve. I don't fully know what our service will be

either, but listen to Revelation.

You're there in chapter 7. Look at verse 15. 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 spread His tent over them. Or chapter 22 and verse 3. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and the Lamb will be in the city and His servants will serve Him. We will be at God's bidding. We will do His pleasure. Whatever He asks of us, we will do it with a glad, happy heart. Unencumbered by those disobedient hearts that restrain us and hold us back and keep us from obeying with the joy that we ought. We will serve Him. Don't know what exactly He'll want us to do. Certainly worship is part of our service, but we will serve Him and do whatever His bidding is in this renewed earth. [40:27] And finally, heaven will be a place where we fellowship. Where we fellowship with other saints. And I believe that there's scriptural warrants for this.

Jesus often used the imagery of feasting when He spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven. Listen to what He says in Matthew 8 and verse 11. I say to you that many will come from the east and the west and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. His parables portray the Kingdom of Heaven as a wedding feast. But do you see what He says? We will take our place at the feast at the table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. I think that's an indicator that saints will be recognizable for who they are.

We'll get to meet saints that we never met before. We'll get to be with our loved ones. They will be recognizable. Paul gives us that hope as well in 1 Thessalonians 4, 13 and 14.

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep or to grieve like the rest of men who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him.

[41:41] So we don't mourn as those without hope. We mourn as those who anticipate seeing our brothers and sisters in Christ again when we get to Heaven. It will be a place of fellowshiping with those who have died in the Lord.

What about our spouses? There's those troubling words of Jesus. Troubling to some. In Mark 12, verse 25. Well, certainly if this is true that we'll recognize saints that have died in the Lord, we'll recognize our spouses in Heaven and we'll enjoy fellowship with them.

But Jesus says when the dead rise they will neither marry nor be given in marriage. They will be like angels in Heaven. I love my wife. And I want to be married to her forever.

Well, Jesus has something far better. Listen to what Edward Donnelly says again here. And this is as much as I'm going to say. I dare not speculate beyond this.

I have my own thoughts, my own opinions. But let me tell you his words on Jesus' words. There will be no... He's talking about there's no need for marriage in Heaven.

[42:51] There will be no reproduction. The husband will not need a helper nor the wife someone to cherish her protectively. Children will not require parental care. The relationship between Christ and His church will be so obvious as to render unnecessary a human illustration.

We won't need the picture of it anymore to understand the relationship between Jesus and His church. And we won't need it for these other reasons. But we will have fellowship with those that we know and love.

And I can say no more. But what's the conclusion of these things? If these things are true, here's just a very small, a very limited picture of Heaven.

There's more that could be said. But, we've spoken already of the need for holy living in preparation for the holiness of Heaven.

We saw last week of the need to live heavenly-minded lives. Surely that's an implication of these truths. We should be living now like we will anticipate living in glory. Seeking to be like our Savior.

[43:58] I think Heaven should be a greater motivation to us. I think it should stir us up. I think it should be an encouragement to us when we're discouraged. When you're laid low with sickness and with illness, you can say, one day this will be no more.

One day I'll have a body that can't get sick. Just like Jesus' body. There's great comfort there.

There's great encouragement there. As you watch loved ones suffer, loved ones in the Lord, you can have confidence that one day they will no longer suffer.

There's great comfort there. There's something to live for. There's something to aim for. And so, think more about Heaven. Anticipate it more. Let it affect the way you live more. And make sure you're on the way to Heaven.

There's only one way. Remember this morning, Jesus said, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. And so come and trust in Jesus tonight. Because the alternative is as unspeakably horrible as Heaven is unspeakably beautiful and glorious. As great as Heaven is, so terrible will be the torments of hell. And the alternative to Heaven is not something that you want to tempt and say, well, I'll take my chances with it.

[45:18] No. No. No. No. No. No. That's the sort of attitude that's frightening. That's dangerous. You run to Christ tonight and you find your comfort and your hope and your trust in Him.

And as we noted this morning, these blessings are not to be kept to ourselves. Let's share the truth of the Gospel with others that they might enjoy the glory of Heaven forever as well. And imagine, hear the words of Edward Donnelly again, imagine, you've expended effort and energy on this earth to tell other people about Jesus.

Imagine what it will be like if you see one of those people in Heaven. He says, how will we feel when we meet in glory those whom our witness has helped to bring there? Will we regret then the pains we took?

The energy we expended? The disappointments we suffered? Will it mean, you moms listen, what will it mean to Christian mothers who gave their lives to nurture their children for the Lord?

They were unappreciated in this world, pitied by society as unproductive drudges, but imagine their joy when their children gather around them in Heaven and they can say, here I am and the children whom God has given me.

[46:30] What better way to lay up treasure for yourselves in Heaven than telling the Gospel to the lost? Let's be heavenly minded. Let's point others on the way to glory.

Let's live like we're on the way to glory. And if you're not on the way, come and trust in Jesus and find in Him a sure Savior. Well, take your hymnals, please, and turn with me to hymn 599.

A beautiful hymn that anticipates when we will see Christ face to face. We are the bride. Christ is the bridegroom. And we get to Heaven.

And we won't be so taken up with our new bodies, I don't think. I think the hymn writer is exactly right. It's one of the things we might most look forward to now. One of the things we're excited about.

Bodies that don't suffer. But remember, Heaven exists for God's glory. Primarily. Secondly for our good. And so when we get to Heaven, I don't think we're going to be so consumed with our bodies.

[47:27] The bride eyes not her garment, but her dear bridegroom's face. We'll be taken up with views of our Savior and glory. I will not gaze at glory, but on my King of grace.

Not at the crown He gifteth, but on His pierced hand. The Lamb is all the glory of Emmanuel's land. Our Father, we thank You that You have promised us that one day You will take us home to be with You.

Forever in Your presence. What a blessed thing to be in Emmanuel's land. God with us. To be in the presence of Christ. Christ. In His glory.

To gaze upon His face and so to be like Him. To be done with our struggle with sin. To be done with our weak, frail, physical bodies. We do look forward to the glory of Heaven.

Help us to look forward to it more. Give us grace to tell others how they might find their way there through Christ. And we thank You most of all for Jesus who is our hope. Who is our salvation.

[48:26] Who is the way to Heaven. Who is the very glory of Heaven itself. We thank You for Him. For what He has done with us. We thank You that He wants us to be with Him in glory.

And we thank You that for those who are in Christ we can confidently say we will be with Him in glory. We pray that You would extend that confidence to those here tonight that do not yet know the Savior.

Grant them to run to Christ and to find there a sure refuge a sure shelter to find there salvation for their souls to find there an eternity of glory being with Christ.

Give us grace in the week to come in the many weeks to come whatever You give us here on this earth to live heavenly minded lives to seek to be holy even as our Savior is holy and so to bring honor and glory to Your name we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. May God Himself the God of peace sanctify You through and through. May Your whole spirit soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[49:32] The one who calls You is faithful and He will do it. Amen. Amen.