

Worship In Heaven

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- [0:00] If you have your Bibles, please turn in them to the book of Revelation.! Remember in these afternoon services we've been talking about heaven.
! And the goal is not simply to learn more about it. The goal is to live better Christian lives here.
I remember a year or so ago when we began this series, I used the illustration of that one lady who was doing the long-distance swim from the Catalina Islands to, I think, the California coast.
And it was a foggy day. She couldn't see the shore. She was swimming and swimming and swimming. And she didn't know how close she was to the shore. And she wanted to give up and her crew kept on cheering her on.
And she kept swimming. And then finally it just got to her and she quit. And when she quit, they pulled her out of the water and they realized, or she realized, she was only 100 yards away.
[1:15] She couldn't see the shore and so she gave up. And so that's what these afternoons are about. It's about seeing the shore where we are going. And the reason is it keeps us swimming.
It keeps us swimming here. It keeps us swimming better. So we're talking about heaven. I think some people secretly dread that heaven is going to be one eternally long church service.
I think Christians secretly dread that that's what it's going to be. So is heaven one eternally long church service? Well, to answer that question, I guess I'm not sure, as I begin, I'm not honestly sure where that idea comes from.
I'm not sure where at all that idea comes from. It's interesting that at the end of Revelation, Revelation chapter 21 and 22, that's kind of we're going to be looking through this passage, where we see the eternal state.
Not all of Revelation is about what the very last place, the last heaven that we're going to. But Revelation 21 and chapter 22 definitely are.
[2:33] And it's interesting that in the eternal state that we, as we see it in Revelation 21 and 22, one thing that is not explicitly mentioned is public worship. There's no description of any sort of church service.
And that, if you read Revelation in its entirety, that's very surprising, because Revelation is full of worship. It's full of corporate public worship settings. It's full of descriptions of angels and other creatures worshiping.
And in one major sense, Revelation, when you boil it all down, it comes to this question, who will be worshiped? Who's going to be worshiped?
At one point, John tries to worship an angel. And the angel says, no, don't do that. Worship God. Now, there's that tension there. Even John is tempted to worship the creation instead of the creator.

And that's not just something that John does in this book. The world in Revelation worships the beast. They worship Rome and its might and its strength. They worship the glory of Rome that brings them wealth.

[3 : 43] The longest lament, the longest sorrow in all of Revelation is when the wealth of Rome dries up. And everyone is poor.

And then all sorts of people are crying. It's because they worship the money. But all along the way, there are scenes of worship of God. And so, in some ways, Revelation is about this worship war that is going on in our world and in our hearts.

In the world and in my heart. And in that war, there are still insurgents fighting in my heart.

Saying, worship the created instead of the creator. But Revelation shows us that in the end, that worship war is going to be over. It's going to be done.

There's no more insurgents. There's no more rebellion. There's no more other side. God alone will be worshipped. Now, that being said, it certainly doesn't seem that heaven is going to be this one long, eternal church service.

[4 : 55] Where we're all sort of in a building. And we're doing sort of what we're doing here. There is definitely going to be public worship. And in Revelation 22, it says, His servants will serve him.

That's a worship word. They'll worship him. And his name will be on their foreheads. That's a picture of them being, us being priests. So we're going to be priests. We're going to worship God.

But there's also a new heaven and a new earth to reign over. They will reign with him forever. And so there's a lot more than public worship. Will there be public worship?

I certainly hope so. And I think definitely we could say yes. But is that all that heaven is? No. Well, that's what we want to talk about this afternoon.

And very briefly is, what is worship going to be like in heaven? What is worship going to be like in heaven? Because we know what worship is like here.

[5 : 56] We experience that all throughout our lives. We worship God with incomplete knowledge. We don't know him like we should know him.

And so we worship out of this incomplete knowledge. We worship with sin in our hearts. With trouble on our minds. With lingering doubts.

But what will worship be like in heaven? What will worship be like in heaven? That's what I want to mull over and meditate on this afternoon. What's it going to be like?

Well, just three points. The first is, worship will be comprehensive. Comprehensive. That's a big word. What I mean is, it's going to saturate everything we do.

It's going to be, in one sense, everything that we do will be worship. It will saturate all of your life. You won't constantly be at a church service, but you will constantly be worshiping God.

[6 : 59] And worship is something that we do outside of the context of church, isn't it? So, we don't have to do it here. You can be out in your yard.

And the grass is so green, isn't it? My yard is so green. And I look at that grass, and you're seeing the flowers starting to come up. And what do you do? You say, thank you, God.

This is beautiful. This is wonderful. And you're worshiping God. For flowers so bright, and grass so green. Worshiping God out in the middle of your yard.

Whenever I go to the library to study, there's one particular spot that I want. It's definitely, it's out of the way. No one hardly ever goes back there. Get some peace and quiet. And I turn around, I turn the corner to see that spot.

To see if someone's stolen it from me. Or if it's empty again. And when it's empty, I say, thank you. Every time.

[7 : 59] Because I've been disappointed before. I have to go somewhere else. But I say, thank you, God. Now that's worship, isn't it? Right there in the middle of the library, all by myself, I'm having this heart-to-heart with God.

I'm lifting my heart to him and saying, thank you. You're the Lord that sovereignly controls who comes to the library. And what time they come and where they sit.

And Lord, you've opened the way so I can sit where I want to sit. Thank you, God. And so that's worship here. We do it on and off, don't we? It's on and off.

We have run-ins with God, so to speak. We're in his presence. We're with him. We acknowledge him. We glorify him. But if we're honest, we miss so much, don't we? So much of our life is ice skating through it.

And we don't see God in our experiences. We don't see his hand at work. We don't acknowledge him. We don't thank him. We are like one of those nine lepers that receive a blessing from Jesus.

[9 : 02] And then we don't come back and say thank you. But in heaven, in heaven, we won't miss a thing. We won't miss a thing.

Worship is going to be comprehensive. Everywhere we go, everything we do, we'll be with him. And we'll be interacting with him.

We will be worshiping him. His blessing and his presence will be everywhere. Everywhere. So look at Revelation chapter 21, verse 22.

I did not see a temple in the city because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. They are the temple.

And we're always going to be in the temple. We're always going to be in the place of worship. Heaven in its totality is the place of worship. And then it goes on in verse 23.

[10 : 01] The city does not even need the sun or the moon to shine on it for the glory of God gives it light. And I don't think we're supposed to take that literally like there's not going to be a sun in heaven.

What it is saying is that God everywhere is shining in heaven. And you can't go outside and not see the sunlight. And you won't be able to walk anywhere in heaven without seeing God and his glory.

The Lamb is its lamp. And the nations will walk by its light. They'll live by its light. They'll live in him. They'll see him.

Everywhere you go, everything you do, it will be with God. That's what heaven is going to be like. No more missing him. You'll see him. You'll be with him.

In God's presence. With God's smile. With God's blessing. And so heaven, this is what we're looking forward to. Is this one long, uninterrupted praise conversation with God.

[11 : 01] This one long, uninterrupted adoration of God. You won't miss him anymore. You'll see his glory.

You'll see his sparkling presence. You'll know him. You'll worship him. He'll give. And we'll glorify him. He'll show us himself.

And we will fall down right where we are with cheerful adoration. Praise will be as natural as breathing. Now, if you think about it.

If that's what heaven is going to be. Where it's this one long, uninterrupted conversation. Praise conversation with God. Then it means that heaven is going to be going from joy to joy.

From delight to delight. From pleasure to pleasure. Because isn't God something that. Isn't worshiping God something that we do out of delight and pleasure? So I see the green grass.

[12:01] I delight in it. I worship him. I see the beautiful flowers. And I delight and worship him. I see his hand at work in where I get to sit in the library. And I'm delighted.

And so I worship him. And in heaven then. If we're seeing him everywhere. And we're seeing him involved in all of our lives. And we're seeing his glory. And it thrills our hearts.

Heaven is going to be going from joy to joy. From one wave of delight to another wave of delight. And we'll have to have new bodies.

Because these old bodies won't be able to handle that kind of joy. That kind of glory. It would be like putting new wine into old wineskins. And when Jesus says you put new wine into old wineskins.

And the old wineskins can't control the power of it. And it just breaks them. That's what. If we had these little bodies up there. It's too much joy.

[13:01] And so we'll have bodies. That are able to handle. The ceaseless. Glory and presence of God. And so worship in heaven will be comprehensive.

And I think that's a good thing. It is a good thing. Second. In heaven. God alone will be worshipped. God alone will be worshipped.

No created person. No created thing. Will be worshipped in heaven. So think about it. What gets worshipped here? What kind of things?

What kind of people get worshipped here? Well. Certainly unworthy things. Not necessarily even bad things. In and of themselves. But unworthy things.

Things that don't deserve praise. So we worship people in our culture. And every culture is different. But in our culture we worship people for how high they can jump.

[13:58] If they are tall people. And they can jump kind of high. And they can put a large orange ball inside of a steel hoop. Wow. Wow. Let's worship them.

And so we'll sing. And I'm going to show my age here. And we'll sing. I want to be like Mike. And sometimes I dream that he is me. I want to be like Mike.

We worship people if they are really big. And they can tackle other full grown men who are carrying oblong leather balls. And we'll cheer.

For that great glory. We'll cheer their name. We'll wear their names upon us. We'll give our money to see them. We worship the rich. Even if they've been handed their wealth.

They might have been born on third base. But we worship them like they hit a home run. Unworthy things. That's what I'm talking about. I was just reading an article about how Steph Curry.

[14:59] The Golden State Warriors basketball player. And just how amazing he was a couple of games ago. When he came back from his injury. And he set the record for the most points in overtime. And people were commenting.

I always love to read the comments. Because that's where you get to see people at their worst. And at their best. And what they are. And people are commenting. Not one. Not two. He's a God. He is a God.

Well, I know Steph Curry. I don't know him personally. I'm saying I know Steph Curry is a pretty good guy. And he certainly played basketball well. And I know he's a professing Christian. And when given the interview.

He said I give glory to God. But. Is that all it takes to reach divinity? To score 17 points in overtime? Apparently in our culture.

Unworthy things. But in heaven. Worthy. Is the lamb. Who was slain.

[16:02] To receive power. And wealth. And wisdom. And strength. And honor. And glory. And praise. Who is worthy? The lamb.

Why is the lamb worthy? Not because he can jump kind of high. But the lamb who came from heaven to earth. Who gave his life as a ransom. Not to save one or two people.

But to save a countless host of people. To save a number that no man can count. To. He was slain. To save people from endless fire.

For that. That's something that's worthy of praise. That is worthy of glory. And so he is worthy. But this world is so stupid. And superficial. About the things that we worship. But in heaven.

God will be worshipped alone. There's not going to be this confusion. There's not going to be this downgrade. And this upgrade of people. And this downgrade of worship. The lamb is worshipped.

[17:01] And can't you. I just can't wait for it to be made right. And we won't have to live in a world full of unworthy worship. Because all this glory stealing.

That we see in this world. All this false exaltation. All this glorying and lame things. Lame things will be over. And every heart and every mind. Will say not unto us.

Not unto us be the glory. But to you be the glory. You're worthy our Lord and our God. That's the joy of heaven. Because we won't have to look. At unworthy things getting worshipped.

We'll get to see God being worshipped. And praised. And the worship war will be over. And so there's not going to be any more. Kanye West singing I am God. The time for honoring yourself will be over.

God alone will be glorified. That's the happiness of heaven. That's what we're waiting for. And what's good is that insurgency in my own heart that wants God's place will be forever gone.

[18:10] And I'll be able to fall down with a pure heart. And worship him with all that I am. Well, third.

Worship will be out of a greater knowledge of God. That's a big point. Worship will be out of a greater knowledge of God. What I'm saying is we will know him better.

1 Corinthians 13 says, We see but a poor reflection as in a mirror. Then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part.

Then I shall know fully even as I am fully known. So it's the difference between a long distance relationship and a marriage relationship. The things that you know in a long distance relationship can be true.

We're not saying it's false. They can be true. But they're definitely limited. But when you move in. You live together. You're married. Then you know things that no long distance relationship could ever capture.

[19:11] And that's what heaven is. It's us going from being moved out from a long distance relationship to us moving in. We live in the Father's house. So what you might.

What you know now is true. What you know about God is true. What you worship God for. As you see it in the Bible. That is true. But it's certainly not all there is to know.

I think that's why we aren't more excited about heaven. Because we think that what we know about God is all there is to know. But we don't even know the half of it. Remember the Queen of Sheba heard about Solomon.

She had heard enough to be impressed. She heard and believed enough to pack up her whole party. And she said let's go. We're going to visit this king. We've heard something about him. We want to see what it's like.

And remember what she did after she saw everything. She saw the king. She saw his servants. She saw how they ate. She saw his temple. She said the half of it wasn't told.

- [20 : 14] I heard enough to get me here. But now that I'm here. I know I didn't even know the half of it. And so brothers and sisters. We know something about how great and glorious and good and patient and majestic and mighty God is.

We know something about that. About how wonderful he is. We know enough that we know that he puts everything else to shame. And so we venture on to heaven.

Because we say hey. It's enough to. I'm leaving this world behind. I'm going there. But brothers and sisters. We do see through a glass dimly. What we see is true.

But that is not all there is to see of God's glory. So there to an ocean's fullness. His mercy doth expand. Glory glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land.

And when we get there we will say I simply had no idea. I had no idea. And that glory will break upon our hearts.

- [21 : 18] And that glory will take our breath away. And for endless ages we will say. The half of it wasn't told. The half of it wasn't told. We've known as mercy.

But there is mercy doth to an ocean's fullness. It just is as big as an ocean. It will expand. And we felt his power here. We felt his power in our own hearts.

In our own lives to change us. To come in upon us. And change who we are. But there that experience of his power. And his majesty. And his glory. And the reverence and awe that he is due.

It's not even something we can even come close to imagining here. And so we've experienced his grace and his love. And his love. But we're looking through a glass dimly.

And there the floodgates of heaven will open up. And the ocean of God's love will be poured into our hearts. And then we will finally begin to begin to worship him.

- [22 : 21] Like he deserves. We'll start to worship him as we ought. We've seen his backside. We shall see his face. And then what will we do?

Well, we talked about it last month. We'll laugh. We'll laugh for the joy of it. And we'll sing. And we'll dance. And we'll fall down in ecstasy. And we'll shout for joy.

And we'll lie down in holy silence. Every example of worship in the Bible. How people reacted.

Related to God. It will happen to us. And how happy we will be. And we'll see him. And our hearts will be filled with his beauty. And down we will go.

And that's what we're looking forward to most, isn't it? When we can fall down at his feet. And take off our crowns. And throw him at his feet. And then our voices will all come together.

- [23 : 23] My voice. Your voice. The voices of angels. The voices of the cherubim. The voices of the seraphim. All coming together.

Can you imagine how loud it's going to be? We sing a hymn where it says, The vault of heaven will ring. Be so loud. And you will see the choir of archangels singing with all their hearts.

You will see the seraphim shouting, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. And the amazing thing is, is you will join your voice to theirs. And worship to God.

Well, that's what we're looking forward to. When the lesser things, the unworthy things will fall away. And there will be nothing but glory. God's glory.

And so brothers and sisters, let's keep going. Arm in arm. Hand in hand. Marching on. Singing. Cheering each other on until that day.

[24 : 23] If this is our future, then what a holy and happy band we should be. How we should be encouraging one another. And cheering each other on.

Because we're going there where glory dwells. Well, let's pray. Heavenly Father, we do want to live for the right world. And we don't want to be caught up in unworthy worship.

So please save us from those things. Change our hearts. Give us eyes to see more of your glory. And give us eyes to see the painted glories of this world for the things that they are.

So save us from our idols. Save us from the unworthy things of this world. And help us then to set our hearts upon you.

And to worship you. And to adore you as you ought. Or as we ought. And for some here, they have no taste for glory.

[25 : 26] There's no majesty. There's no joy in the consideration of worshiping God. Oh Lord, change their hearts. Give them new taste buds. To taste the things that are really sweet.

To taste Jesus Christ and his goodness and his mercy. Pray this in his name. Amen. Thank you. Thank you.