

Heavenly Minded

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[0:00] 2 Corinthians 4.16. 1 Corinthians 4.16.

1 Corinthians 5.16.

We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home, in the body, or away from it.

The Lord Jesus is preparing an eternal home for all of his people. And if you were to interrupt a healthy Christian, it would not be a rare thing to find him or her thinking about that.

Their eternal home. What would you think of the guy who loved to go to baseball games and would sit there for eight innings, but then headed home?

[2:17] Never saw a ninth inning in his life. You'd say, you might miss something important. Or the lady that enjoys reading 400 page mystery novels, but she never reads the last chapter.

It could be that you're missing something very important. What are we to think then of Christians trying to live the Christian life without thinking of heaven?

That great last inning. That eternal last chapter of endless bliss. You see, the Christian life really makes no sense at all without the end in view, without heaven in view.

Oh, we talk about forever and forever is a long, long time. It's hard for us to get our minds around eternity. So perhaps an illustration may be of some help.

Let's let's draw a timeline, an eternal timeline. So we start here. And we draw a line. That direction.

[3:32] And we just keep right on going. It's a line that goes on forever. That's the eternal timeline. Really, we would have to draw it that way forever as well, wouldn't we?

Eternity passed. But from your lifetime on, it goes that way forever. Now, let's put your life on that timeline. And let's just assume for illustration's sake that you all are going to live to be the ripe old age of 100.

So how shall we illustrate your hundred years here on this eternal timeline? Do you have your Bibles open just anywhere there?

Look at a period in your Bible. You see one there? That's your life. We'll put it right here at the beginning of the line. That's your hundred years on this timeline.

A dot. How long is eternity? Well, you can get at least 50 dots in an inch. And that means every inch on this timeline. That means every inch on the timeline is 5,000 years.

[4:46] That means every foot on the timeline is 60,000 years. It means that it would take 15 and a half feet to get to a million years on the timeline. So we're not even out through the windows yet.

And we're at a million years. Here's your little lifetime. A dot. And it just keeps on going like that forever and ever. The dot is your life here.

The line. Is eternity. Now, here's the question. Do you see that your lifetime here is really as nothing compared to the eternity that is to follow?

It's really so small, isn't it? Compared to eternity. How often do you think about your spending that eternity?

How often are your thoughts found there on the line compared to how often your thoughts are found on the dot of this life?

[5:55] Sadly, most people focus so much upon the dot that the whole line of eternity rarely crosses their mind. Now, that lost people think no more of eternity is to be expected.

They have nothing good to look forward to. This life. This little dot is as good as it gets for them. There is only hell for the timeline of eternity for them.

So it makes sense that eternity is out of sight, out of mind to the lost person. But that saved people. People who are going to heaven forever.

That they should only occasionally think of the heaven that's awaiting them. Is a strange and a sad thing to behold. It certainly is one of Satan's chief targets and tactics against believers. To keep us so preoccupied and consumed with life on the dot. That we rarely think about the rest of the line of eternity in heaven.

[7:03] And such forgetfulness impoverishes us. It steals joy and peace and a host of other things to us. And glory that could be coming to God.

So my point is this this morning. If there is such a place as the Bible describes as heaven. And if it is forever. I'm going to be there forever.

Then surely that reality ought to often be in my mind and on my thoughts. People on their way to heaven ought to be heavenly minded.

Now according to your Bible. Your glorious future is to influence your present. What's going to happen on the line is to influence life on the dot.

How you think. How you feel. Your attitudes. Your motivations. What you do and don't do. But you see. Heaven will only have that kind of influence upon me.

[8:04] If I'm thinking about it. If I'm thinking about it. So heavenly mindedness is our study this morning. And it's so important that God has commanded it.

In the scriptures. It's a command. A delightful duty this is. But no less a duty. Colossians chapter 3. Verses 1 to 4.

Since then. Speaking to Christians. Since then you have been raised with Christ. Set your hearts on things above. Where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things above. Not on earthly things. For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

And when Christ who is your life appears. Then you also will appear with him in glory. Glory. When Christ returns.

[9:03] You're going to appear with him in glory forever and ever. That's worth thinking about. So set your minds on that. Rather than earthly things.

Oh how earthly things tend to monopolize our thoughts. If you're going to be any different.

Then it will require great self-discipline. The word is set your mind. Set it there. Keep on thinking about things above.

Don't lazily let your mind wander wherever it may please to roam. Throughout the earth. No take it in hand and set it. On heavenly things.

That's what we're being told to do. Tell it where it will go. What it will do. What it will think about.

Now it's no small thing. To lift the mind and heart to heaven.

[10:04] And to keep it there for any length of time. At all. Mental laziness. Must be mortified. Must be trampled on.

To make the mind go down the channels. That you set for it. You know the book of Proverbs speaks about a feast. That goes uneaten. Because the man is too lazy.

To bring his hand from the dish. To his mouth. We say that's lazy. There he is sitting at the table. And he's just so lazy.

He won't do this. But I wonder if we've thought about it spiritually. That there could be this spiritual feast. That is spread for us. And the only thing that keeps us from feasting on it.

Is that we're too lazy to do this. Think about heaven.

[11:01] Meditate on the feast. That will be our experience forever. And ever. So then.

The less we think of heaven. The poorer and weaker we are. The Christian life was never lived well. Without heaven in view. Now I want us to just unpack this morning.

How thoughts of heaven. Are to influence the Christian life here on earth. How does that work? In what ways do thoughts of heaven influence the way we live?

First of all. It gives you comfort in the uncertainties of life. You remember last week. We had for our scripture reading John 14.

Where Jesus is in the upper room with his 12 disciples. And on this night. He has told them that in a very little while. He's going to leave them. And where he goes.

[12:01] They cannot come. He's told Peter. That before the rooster crows. The next morning. He would disown him three times. He's told them that one of them.

Would betray him. And all these things that he's telling them. Leaves them troubled. Their peace is rattled. And their hearts were trembling.

They can't even imagine life without their savior. These were difficult. Hours for the disciples. And when fearful.

And their future doubtful. How does the Lord seek to comfort them? Well you know the passage. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God.

Trust also in me. In my father's house. Are many rooms. If it were not so. I would have told you. I'm going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you.

[12:59] I will come back and take you to be with me. That you also may be where I am. That's how he comforts fearful.

Disciples. Uncertain. Of the future. Though I'm leaving you. And you'll no longer see me. I've not forgotten you. I'm going to prepare a place for you.

Where we can live forever. Together. That is no small comfort. On the dot of life. Jesus.

Is preparing a place for us. Whatever is happening here. Heaven is coming. A man can take a lot in this life. If he knows that heaven is coming.

So I ask you. Is a cloud of uncertainty. Hanging over your future. Leaving you trembling. Leaving your heart troubled. Let your uncertainties.

[14:03] Take your mind away. To your certain. Eternal future. The dot will soon end. Followed by endless bliss.

Of heaven. So that's. One way that. Thoughts of heaven. Are to influence. Us here. They're to calm us. They're to. Give us comfort.

And peace. In life's uncertainties. But secondly. Thoughts of heaven. Give you endurance. In hardship. And joy.

And peace. In trials. Hardship. Troubles. Trials. Of all kinds. And suffering. These are all part and parcel. Of the Christian life.

Here and now. It's the present order of things. But as we're going through these trials. It's thoughts of heaven. That are to breathe something.

[14:55] Of. Joy. And peace. And steadfastness. Right into. Our hearts. And lives. In Romans chapter 5. In verse 2.

Paul says. We rejoice. Rejoice. In hope. Of the glory. Of God. Glory. Is coming. And we rejoice. In the hope. Of it. That certain expectation.

Of good. That God will bring. We rejoice. Not now. In the full. Possession of it. But just in the hope. Of it. Just in the thought. That one day. That will be mine. We rejoice. In that. And this. Happens.

Even in sufferings. He goes on. To say.

Especially. In suffering. Because we know. What suffering. Is producing. And where it is. Leading us. Heaven. And we know.

[15:50] That the hope. Of glory. Does not disappoint us. Because already. He's put his spirit. In our hearts. Shedding abroad. The love of God. He's bringing us. To heaven. So we rejoice.

In the hope. Of the glory of God. We rejoice. Now. In sufferings. We're going to share. In his glory. And so. Paul goes on. To say. In Romans 8. 18. I consider.

That our present. Sufferings. Are not worth. Comparing. To the glories. That will be revealed. In us. Second.

Corinthians. Four. The passage. That was read. For us. Therefore. We do not lose heart. Though. Outwardly. We are wasting away. Yet. Inwardly. We are being renewed. Day. By day. For our light. And momentary. Troubles. Are achieving. For us. In eternal glory. That far outweighs. Them all. So. We fix our eyes. Not on what is seen. But on what is unseen.

[16:45] For what is seen. Is temporary. But what is unseen. Is eternal. Pity the man. Or woman.

Who in suffering. Does not have their eyes fixed. On heaven. Heaven. Your thoughts.

Do not feel. Or your. Your. Your suffering. And your troubles. Do not feel light. Or momentary. In themselves. Your troubles.

In themselves. Are heavy. And enduring. It's only. As you place them. In the scales.

Along with eternal glory. That they will seem light. And momentary. So on the one hand. You've got. Your troubles. And they seem like.

[17:41] They're going on forever. And they're weighing you down. Then you. You place. In the other. Scale. Eternal glory.

And. It immediately. Makes them light. And momentary. Eternal glory. Is a weighty thing. What's coming for you. On the line. Is weighty. And it will make your.

Your. Heavy. Trouble. Seem light. And. And it goes on forever. And it will make your trouble. That keeps on going. Seem momentary. Just. A dot.

On a line. For indeed. That's what it is. That's all it is. So fix your eyes. Your eyes of faith. Like a laser.

On the eternal glories. Of heaven. And you'll not lose heart. In your troubles. Oh. But just let. The eternal glories. Fade from view. And your troubles.

[18 : 37] Will overwhelm you. They will feel like. They're too heavy. To be born. They'll feel like. They're too long. To bear with. And you will lose heart. And maybe give up.

Glories of heaven. Far outweigh them all. And far outlast them all. It was in the midst of Job's. Incredible pain. That he found solace in this.

Here he is on the dot. And he's in incredible pain. And he looks out across the line. And he says. I know that my redeemer lives. And that in the end.

He will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed. Yet in my flesh. I will see God. I myself will see him. With my own eyes.

I and not another. How my heart yearns within me. He's upheld in his suffering. By looking. At the end. When God will appear.

[19 : 42] On earth. In the person of Jesus Christ. And we will see him. With our own eyes. It was the same with our Savior. In his sufferings.

Wasn't it? Oh what sufferings he bore. We're thinking about it tonight. Sufferings like none other. And yet how did he bear. Up under that suffering.

Well he fixed his eyes. On. The joy. That was coming. The joy. Set before him. And. That so energized.

And kept him. That. He endured the cross. And scorned its shame. And sat down at the right hand of God. Forever. Having finished. The suffering work. His father gave him.

To do. Learn from him. How to bear up. Under suffering. With your eye on the joy. Set before you. Hebrews 12. 2. Indeed.

[20 : 37] One of the reasons. God sends us troubles. In this life. Is to wean us. From this earth. And to prepare us. And make us yearn. For heaven. Have you thought about. Your present trouble.

In that light. God is wanting me. To feel homesick. For heaven. And so. When sickness. Invades my body.

And I feel terrible. I'm to think about heaven. And there's no sickness there. There's a body. Like Christ's glorified body.

Waiting for me there. Amen. And when I'm sad. I'm to remember. That gladness and joy. Will overtake me. And sorrow and sighing. Will flee away. And be a thing of the past.

Christ. And when I'm crying. I'm to think of the Lord Jesus. As being the one. Who will wipe away. Every tear from my eye.

[21 : 32] When I see him. And when I'm weary. And frustrated. In my job. I'm to think of heaven. Where work brings. No weariness. And where frustration.

Is given away. Given way. To liberating fruitfulness. And financial problems. Are to point me. To my wealth. And my inheritance. In heaven. And losses here.

To gains there. And my decaying house. To the room. In my father's house. Being prepared for me. So whatever. Interrupts my joy here. I'm to find.

Solace. And joy. And comfort. In what he's preparing. For me. There. What if we improved. Every trouble. And hardship. In this way.

Every time. Trouble. Invaded our lives. It sent us to thinking. About the joys to come. Would our troubles. Not do us. The best good.

[22 : 30] Oh. May the Lord. Help us. To set our minds. On things above. Now sometimes. Suffering. Suffering. Takes the form of persecution. Doesn't it? Thankfully.

It's not so much. In this. Country. That we find. That to be the case. But it is that way. For the people of God. In the world. Today. The suffering. On the dot. Of this life.

Is often. Persecution. For Jesus sake. And so. Jesus says. In Matthew 5. Blessed are those. Who are persecuted. Because of righteousness. For.

Theirs is the kingdom. Of heaven. Are you being persecuted. For your likeness. To Jesus. Living his way. According to his mind.

Then you need to think. About the kingdom of heaven. That is yours. How blessed. You are. To be persecuted. For righteousness. And not to be damned.

[23 : 26] For unrighteousness. Has that set you. To joy. And rejoicing. That you have been. Counted worthy. To suffer. For the kingdom.

Of heaven. For Jesus sake. Do people insult you. Persecute you. And falsely say. All kinds of evil. Against you. Because of me.

Jesus says. Rejoice. And be glad. For great. Is your reward. In heaven. For in the same way. They persecuted. The prophets. Who were before you. Persecution.

Is a call. To heavenly mindedness. It's a call. To concentrated. Thinking. Of your reward. In heaven. It's what's needed. To keep you. From growing weary.

Under persecution. Or what is worse. Growing embittered. Under persecution. Spiteful.

[24 : 19] Under persecution. So in Hebrews chapter 10. We have this scenario. Let's say you're a first century. Jewish Christian.

Born into a Jewish family. With a history. Of Judaism. That goes way back. To Abraham. And then Messiah.

Jesus came. And. You put your trust. In him. Not in your. Relation to Abraham. By the flesh. But in your relationship.

To Jesus. As your only hope. For salvation. You became a Christian. And so. You're now suffering. Persecution. Because of Jesus.

One day. They come knocking. At your door. They take you off. To prison. Tear you out. Of your home. Confiscate your house. And all your property. Take from you. Your hard.

[25 : 16] Earned. Things. Do you know. That. The thought. Of heaven. Can make you joyful. In that moment.

Under those circumstances. It really happened. It happened just that way. Hebrews 10. 30. 32. And following.

You joyfully. Accepted. The confiscation. Of your property. They just came. And confiscated. It took it right out. From under. And you joyfully. Accepted.

It. Because. You knew. That you yourselves. Had better. And lasting. Possessions. Possessions. If they steal. The old clunker.

And you've got. 25. Mercedes. In the back. Barn. You can joyfully. Accept it. Well. Whatever they take.

[26 : 10] If they take it all. You can joyfully. Accept it. Because you know. That you have better. Lasting. Possessions. What are possessions. On the dot.

When I've got them. On the line. And they're much better. Than the. Possessions. Of this world. My best things.

Are yet to come. That thought. Must be permeating us. We must be thinking. About those better. And lasting. Possessions. Let that weigh in.

When you lose. Some of your earthly. Possessions. To a thief. To a storm. To a bad economy. To whatever. My best things.

My lasting. Everlasting. Things. Are yet to come. I wonder. If that thought. Is clear. To others. Who live around you. You know. That family. They're clearly.

[27 : 04] Not living. For earthly things. You know. That woman. She's clearly. Banking on. Better. And lasting. Things. You see.

Worldlings. Reason. You only go around. Once in life. So you got to grab. All you can get. Yeah. Because that's all they got. Is the dot. For their good things. But not so.

The believer. Not so. The believer. Thoughts of heaven. Keep us from living. For this world. From joining the chase. For more things now.

Because we're those. Who are laying up treasures. In heaven. And we're rich. In heavenly things. You know. It could be. That we're just.

Too comfortable. And prosperous. For our own good. I think of the old. Negro spirituals. And forgive me. For saying that word. But I don't know. How else you explain. Those old songs.

[28 : 03] And. They were born. Out of. Hardship. Weren't they? Is it any wonder. That those songs. Have heaven. As their theme. So often. They're singing.

About heaven. Life. Here's hard. And what gives you. Joy. And hardship. Is thinking about. The heaven to come. There's a lesson. For us. In that.

That's what Paul. Is saying. That's what the writer. To the Hebrews. Is saying. That's what Jesus. Is saying. Hardship here. Persecution here.

Is to make us. Think of heaven more. Oh. If we were. Persecuted more. If we were. Suffering more. We'd think of heaven more. May it not. Take that. To turn our hearts. To home.

The young man. Moses. Experienced the power. Of heavenly thoughts. Right here on earth. He. He regarded. Disgrace. For the sake. Of Christ. As of greater.

[29:01] Value. Than. The treasures. Of Egypt. And the pleasures. Of sin. For a season. Because. He was looking. Ahead. To his reward.

And in light. Of the reward. That's coming. Earthly treasures. And sinful pleasures. Don't stand. A chance. So.

He kept looking. At the reward. That was coming. He fixed. His eyes. On heaven. What is powerful. Enough. To make a young man. Choose disgrace.

For Christ. People wrinkling. Up their nose. And laughing. And pointing. A finger. At him. Over the treasures. And pleasures. Of sin. Thoughts of heaven.

They've got that kind of power. In the hands of the spirit. Seeing. By believing. Meditation. What's waiting. For the faithful. So. That's the second point.

[29:54] It's the longest. Of the. Points. This morning. Of how. These. Thoughts of heaven. Give. Endurance. And hardship. And joy.

And peace. In trials. But then. In the third place. Thoughts of heaven. Motivate you. To do battle. With sin. And to pursue.

Holiness. It's a well-known fact. The soldiers. Fight better. With thoughts. Of home.

Soldiers. Have told. How in the midst. Of the horrors. Of the battlefield. They were comforted. With the thoughts. Of home. That there is. A place. On this earth. Where there is peace.

Security. And my loved ones. And thoughts. Of that. Have. Have. Stole. The nerve. Of soldiers. On the battlefield. To fight better. And it's no less.

[30:54] So. In the spiritual warfare. Christian soldiers. Fight better. With their eyes. And their minds. On home. Heaven's better.

And longer lasting. Pleasures. Keep us from caving. Into the temptations. For short-lived. Pleasures of sin. They're not worth trading. We've seen that. So I have to ask you.

Have you brought heaven. Into your battle. With sin. What stubborn sin. Is refusing to let go. In your life. Have you brought all the ammunition. To the fight. I'd encourage you.

To bring heaven in. Thoughts of heaven. See that sin. From the line. Look back on that sin. 5,000 years.

60,000 years. A million years. Out here. Look back on that sin. From that perspective. Dear friends. Now we are the children of God.

[31:51] Right now. 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 will see him. As he is.

And everyone. Not just most. Everyone. Who has this hope. In him. Purifies himself.

This hope of heaven. This hope of seeing Jesus. As he is. And being made like him. Once and for all. As pure as Jesus. Is powerful motivation.

Here and now. To purify ourselves. Just as he is pure. Here. The hope of heaven. Produces the pursuit. Of holiness. Right now. On this life.

On this earth. And so true is this. That. You can measure your hope of heaven. By your pursuit of holiness. How strong is your pursuit of holiness?

[32:55] I don't. Have to know much else. About you. But if you can. Tell me what that is. I can tell you. How strong. Your. Hope of heaven is. How much. You're putting your hope.

And you're anticipating. With eager expectation. That day. When you'll see Jesus. And sin will be a thing. Of the past. Forever. You're not thinking about that.

If you're. If you're lagging. In your pursuit. Of holiness. Everyone. Who has this hope. In him. Purifies himself. Even. As he is. Pure. You see.

Seeing. What we will be. In that day. Gives us. Courage. To know. That we're not fighting. A losing battle. I'm going to win. Jesus has already won.

The decisive battle. He is. He has. Frustrated. Satan. At every temptation. He is putting. Open shame. On the cross. He's won.

[33:52] That victory. Over Satan. And because he won. I too will win. And one day. I'll be as pure. As Jesus is pure. And those search. Be made. You won't find sin.

In me. Jesus will cleanse me. Just that clean. And so I fight. From the high ground. Against my sin. Sin. You. You are so strong.

And you know all my weakness. But I'm going to be like Jesus. I'm. I'm here to resist you. It gives us. Courage. To fight. It gives us. Motivation.

To fight. It stimulates us. Now. In the holy war. With sin. Peter says. As much. He knew what it was. To battle sin. And temptation. He knew what it was.

To fall. He knew what it was. To rise. And this is what he says. In second. Peter three. In keeping with. His promise. We're looking forward. To a new heaven.

[34:44] And a new earth. The home of righteousness. Did you hear that? We are looking forward. That means. We've turned our heads. We have a forward looking posture.

To the Christian life. We're looking forward. To something. A new heavens. A new earth. The home. Where only righteousness. Dwells.

So then dear friends. Since you are. Looking forward. To this. Make every effort. To be found. Spotless. Blameless. And pure. And at peace.

With him. Spotless. Blameless. And at peace. With him. So you can spot those. With eyes of faith. That are looking toward heaven. They're making every effort.

To be found. Spotless. Blameless. And at peace with him. They're confessing their sins. Not wallowing in them. They're repenting of them. Turning from them. Turning to Christ.

[35:41] For pardon. Sin and power. To kill their sins. To be cleansed. From their sins. They're making every effort. To be found spotless. And at peace with him.

They're not. Trying to compromise. With him. They're not. Holding out. And. Any controversies. With God. That would disturb their peace. They're. They're at one.

With God. They're. Whatever sin. Comes between. They vomited out. That they might have. Nothing between. My soul. And the Savior. That sweet peace. Of purity.

Of heart. And conscience. So thoughts of heaven. Are to quicken. Our present pursuits. Of holiness. The apostle Paul.

Experienced. That same. Energizing power. He talks about. The Olympic runner. The marathon runner. What. Puts endurance.

[36:39] Into the legs. Of an Olympic marathon runner. Those last. Five miles. When everything in him. Is screaming. Stop. Give it up.

What keeps him going. Well. The prize. The gold medal. The crown. And in the Olympics. Of long ago. The crown. Was a wreath.

The crown. Was a wreath. Made out of olive branches. Woven into a wreath. And. And there's your gold medal. They'd set that. To twigs. On your head. And boy.

You would do anything. To get that. Those branches. That wreath. That crown. Oh. Oh. There might have been many sticks. In the world. But this was the crown. The Olympic crown.

Paul says. Run in such a way. As to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games. Goes into strict training. Self. Discipline.

[37:39] They do it. To get a crown. That will not last. But we do it. Did you hear that? We do it. We do what? We go into strict training. Self.

Discipline. For what? Not a crown. That will not last. But to get a crown. That will last forever. And if that crown.

Is ever lost sight of. You may not make it. Those last five miles. But when the eternal crown.

The everlasting prize. Is kept before you. Then do we run. Not like a man. Running aimlessly. Then do we fight. Not as a man. Shadow boxing.

Or beating the air. No. Paul says. With the crown. Before me. I beat my body. And I make it. My slave.

[38:34] So that after. I have preached. To others. I myself. Will not be disqualified. From the prize of heaven. I don't let my body.

Tell me what I do. And don't do. I tell it. What it will do. And with who. And where. And when. Lest. I should be. A documus. Reprobate. And lose the prize. It's. It's the thought of the crown. That lasts forever.

Paul says. That puts some strength. In my legs. When I've. When I've said no to sin. 25 times. In a day. And it comes once more. Before me. And I. I can say no again.
And take another step. By faith. What Jesus. Is preparing for me. Weighs in. On the battle.
[39:32] Against sin. And temptation. You've seen how. Thoughts of heaven. Influence life. On the dot. The last one. Thoughts of heaven.

Transform your attitude. Towards death. And dying. Remember Jesus. Words to the. The thief.
Dying on the cross. Beside him. Today. You will be with me. In paradise.
In paradise. And that was enough. To enable that thief. That new believer. To die. As comfortably.
As. Any man. Has ever died. Anywhere. And you know.

If you're. If you're trusted. In Christ. This morning. Those same words. Could. Jesus. Could say.
Those same words. To you. On the day. Of your death. Today. You will be. With me. In paradise.
So think. About paradise. And being with the Lord. If you would have. Comfort. In the day. Of your death. Those Thessalonian. Christians. Were worried. About their. Saved. Lost. Ones. Who had already.

[40:28] Died. And they wondered. If they're going to miss out. On the Lord's return. In glory. And so they're grieving. And Paul writes. To them. And says. No. When the Lord returns. The dead in Christ. Will rise first. And after that. We who are still alive.

And are left. Will be caught up together. With them in the clouds. To meet the Lord. In the air. And so shall we. Ever be. With the Lord. Therefore. Comfort one another. With these words.
Thoughts of heaven. Give us a different view. Of death. And dying. Indeed. Two seconds in heaven. After two seconds in heaven. We will wonder. Why we were so unwilling. To die. To come to a place like this. Why so slow. To let go of that world. For this.

Now in order for the Israelites. To get into the promised land. They had to go through. The Jordan River. At flood stage. But what did God do.

[41:24] When they came to the river. He. He held back the flood water. So that. They didn't harm them. But that they could walk through. On dry land. Into the promised land. Even so.

By dying for our sins. And rising again. Triumphant over them. Our Lord Jesus. Has taken the sting. Out of death. So that it cannot hurt us. And so. The Jordan River.

Sometimes is poetically. Symbolically set. As a picture of death. It cannot hurt us. What is death now? Well. It's but my entrance. Into glory.

It's just. It's just the. The Jordan River. That's. That's not able to hurt me. And. And we go across it. And we. We wake up in heaven. So Isaac Watts. Writes.

There is a land of pure delight. Where saints immortal reign. Oh. But death. Death. Like a narrow sea. A river. Divides. This heavenly land. From ours.

[42:20] So to the Jews. Old Canaan stood. There it was over there. While Jordan rolled between. And so. Timorous mortals. Start. And shrink.

To cross this narrow sea. And linger. Shivering on the brink. And. And fear. To launch away. Oh. Could we make our doubts. Remove. Those gloomy doubts.

That rise. And see the Canaan. That we love. With. With. Unbeclouded eyes. Could we. But climb. Where Moses stood. And. And view the landscape.

Or. Not Jordan's stream. Nor death's cold flood. Should fright us. From the shore. It's thoughts of heaven. And it's viewing heaven.

That changes our attitude. Towards death and dying. We climb Mount Pisgah. In our Bibles. You can get to heaven.

[43:15] By way of your thoughts. By way of faith. Through the word of God. You can go and visit. We can walk through. The promised land. We can take some of the grapes. And figs.

We can see the land. Flowing with milk. And honey. We can walk the streets. Of the new Jerusalem. It's all right here. In our Bibles. Waiting for our meditation. Waiting for us.

To see ourselves. There. On the other side. Sometimes you can. Take virtual tours. Of places you're going to go. On vacation. This is it.

You go into heaven. Here's the virtual tour. Get in your body. Meditate on it. And begin to taste. Now the joys that await. What awaits us.

On the other side. Of the river of death. Is enough to make us. Willing to die. To get there. Samuel Rutherford said. It were a well spent journey. Those seven deaths. Lay between. If I had to die.

[44:09] Seven times. To get there. It'd be worth it. And so Jesus lives. And death is now. But my entrance.

Into glory. For to me. To live is Christ. And to die is gain. To die is to go. To be with Christ. Christ. And as soon as we died. We will at once.

Feel at home. In heaven. You say. I've never been there. John. Won't I feel out of place. And strange. No. It's called home. It's called home. And you will never feel more at home. Than when you're with Jesus.

And the sinless angels. And the spirits of just men. Made perfect. Blessed. Happy are the dead. Who die in the Lord. Well.

How much is heaven. Shaping. And influencing. Your life here. We were never meant. To live the Christian life. Without heaven in view. It was said of the Puritan. Richard Sibbes.

[45:08] That heaven was in him. Before he was in heaven. And that should be true. Of every one of us. Is heaven in you. By way of meditation. Before you even get there. Yourself.

By faith. Wing your flight to heaven. Go there often. In your thoughts. Let the scriptures. Take you there. Linger. There.

Until something. Of the joys. That will be yours. There. Spill over into your. Present. Emotional. State. Now when you're going on a vacation.

Do you. Do you. Do you. Do you not. Anticipate that. Vacation. Or is life. Such a vacation. To you. That it's nothing. Or don't you say. Boy life's tough.

And I'm going on vacation. For two weeks. Don't you start thinking about it. Even. Weeks and months. Before you. You come to that vacation. And do not.

[46:04] The thoughts of that. Create some joy. Ahead of time. So. You're having a bad Monday. And a bad Tuesday. A bad Wednesday. The whole weeks. A bad week.

And you comfort yourself. And you just. You just rejoice. And say. But you know. Come Monday. I'm going to be on my favorite beach. Sipping lemonade. With my best friends. And something of that joy.

Gets you through the bad week. We're going to take a vacation from our problems forever.

Forever and ever. And we're going to be with the one. Who died to bring us there. Forever and ever.

And there's more joy in that. That awaits us. To take us through. Any trial. Difficult. Week. Month. Lifetime.

[47:06] On the dot of this earth. So let us fix our eyes. Not on what is seen. But on what. Is unseen. For what is seen.

Is temporary. But what is unseen. Is eternal. You know. Maybe one of the things. That causes heaven. To seem so distant. Is that we think of it. As something that will happen. In the sweet by and by.

And we think. It's so far off. Christian. You're one breath away. From that life. Splashing into your reality.

You. There. One breath. You're there. And there forever. It's. Not to be thought of. As something. Way far off. Remember the dot.

And the line. What are. What are. Ten years. What are. Fifty years. We'll all be there. In a hundred years. What is that. It's a vapor. It's gone. We'll be there.

[48:03] It's just up around the bend. Brother. We'll soon be in heaven. Sister. Let it. Sit. In your heart.

Like a glowing coal. And warm your heart. Toward that place. And toward the savior. And king. Of that place. It will be worth it all. When we see Jesus.

Life. Trials. Will seem so small. When we see Christ. One glimpse. Of his dear face. All sorrow. Will erase. So bravely. Run the race.

Till we see Christ. Let's pray. Father in heaven. Thank you so much. For not treating us.

As our sins deserve. Or none of us could be. Looking with delight. Upon eternity. Thank you for. Treating Jesus. As. My sins deserved. So that you can treat me.

[48:59] As his righteousness deserves. And so that heaven. Can not just be. I hope so. Place that we hope. We're going to. But it can be. As certain. As this place.

To us. Who are in Christ. And thank you. Father. For. Not just surprising us. In the day of our death. Having us.

Wake up. In this wonderful place. But thank you for. For erecting. Mount Pisces. Throughout your word. Where we can climb. And view the landscape.

Or. And we can see the things. That you have prepared. For us. You've told us enough. To make us pine. And yearn. For heaven. Oh. Help us then. To think more of it.

To think of our Savior. Who is there waiting for us. And of the joys. That will be ours. When we see him. Bring others. To. Want.

[49 : 57] To be there. As well. We ask. For Jesus. Praise. Amen. Amen. Number 603. Our song.

Of conclusion. Do you want to go to heaven? Here's a song. In which we. We cry out. Our desire. Prayer for heaven. O mother. Dear Jerusalem. It's our motherland.

It's where we belong. When shall I come to thee? Let's stand and sing. 603.