

BECOMING THE CHURCH

“Heavenly Bodies” (Next few weeks let other staff/elders preach)

(1 Corinthians 15:35-58; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

One of the most important ministries I have as your pastor, is to teach/remind YOU how to **suffer** well/**die** well for God’s glory and a watching world. **Afghanistan – ministry =running into country; teach Ch. How to suffer well**

- Are you truly Born Again? - Are you walking daily with your Savior? Are you growing in your faith as a Disciple? Are you willing to die for your Lord? (Luke 14:27) “not willing to carry cross & follow me cannot be.
- A. What is Heaven Like? Is it immediate after we die or WAIT? 2 Cor. 5:8 “Absent from the body, present w Lord”
- B. When we consider heaven and our bodies, what can we know about what our bodies will be like? Paul teaches:

READ 1 Corinthians 15:35-58:

³⁵ But someone will say, “How are the dead raised? **And with what kind of body do they come?”** ³⁶ You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies;

-John 12:24 “Truly, truly I say to you, unless a grain (kernel) of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a kernel; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” = After Adam’s Fall from grace, death is the penalty for sin:

= Everything on this earth dies. Today, death is sadly the natural part of this life. But not forever. **Gerbel, goldfish**

A. As Believers, we must learn the lesson that we must all face death one day. We should not fear death =nextsteps

B. As Believers, we must learn Jesus’ lesson: we must be willing to let die many things in this life **BEFORE** we die:

- WE must let our old nature die; our sin nature; our “rights” and demands, our wants & lusts, our flesh **=to live!**

³⁷ and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a [body i.e.] bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else. ³⁸ But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. ³⁹ All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one *flesh* of mankind, another flesh of animals, another flesh of birds, and another of fish. ⁴⁰ There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the *glory of the earthly is another*. The **glory** of a body = the good creation of God. Purposed, Unique, reflects creativity

- God creates both on earth and in heaven: His glory lies everywhere in His Created purpose:

⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. = Each of the celestial bodies is created uniquely and serves with a unique purpose. Sun, Moon, Stars (all in the universe, all celestial, and all very unique & necessary).

⁴² So also is the resurrection of the dead. = so also are resurrected bodies. **A. Glorious. B. Unique. C. Purpose** It is sown \square a perishable *body*, it is raised \square an imperishable *body*; ⁴³ it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴ it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual *body*.

What will our Heavenly (Glorified) Bodies be Like? 1. We make the assumption that our bodies will be like Jesus’ after His resurrection (both physical and Spiritual); **No longer subject to earthly pain, weakness, gravity** - Phil. 3:20-21. **For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body.**”

-Luke 24:39 “See My hands and My feet, that \square it is I Myself; touch Me and see, because a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you *plainly see that I have.*” = on this earth, the glorified body is Physical & Spiritual

WHEN? - After the Rapture, during the Millennial Reign (will we be both in heaven and on earth) w/ Messiah?

2. Our Glorified bodies will resemble Christ’s: (Luke 24:36-43) = Recognizable. Uniquely YOU. Retain our divinely appointed characteristics, qualities, Gifts/Talents/Mind. YOU will be you, just HOLY, Perfected, Christ-like.

3. On this earth, after His resurrection, Jesus ate, slept, was touched, taught, **& he appeared,** (John 20-19-20);

Jesus was no longer bound by time & space. Able to move, fly, appear & disappear. **Acts 8:39 Philip =snatched/rapt**

=Like Angels/Jesus will be able to be transported in & out of Time/Space/Material Objects/Immaterial existence!

4. Our Glorified bodies will be perfect: No disease, ailments, or imperfections. No decay, no corruption
Vs. 42: *It is sown [a]a perishable body, it is raised [a]an imperishable body*; =[Imperishable =no wrinkles, perfect age, no overweight, no weakness, no infirmities, no baldness, no blemishes =perfect body]

5. Our glorified bodies will be just that: Glorious (Union of Soul and Flesh to perfection) – Restored Image of God and will be a body of HONOR (not sinful; not rebellious; no longer slaves to temptation; but w/ Free WILL)
Vs. 43: *it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory*;

6. Our Glorified bodies will be powerful (no limits on our knowledge of God as He allows; our knowing history God's movements in redemptive History) our worship will be pure; our service to God perfect; our love unleashed
Vs. 43: *it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power*;

7. Our Glorified bodies will be adapted to the function which God wants. Our Bodies are made for **WORSHIP & for WORK**:

⁴⁵ So also it is written: "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING [a]PERSON." The last Adam *was* a life-giving spirit.

⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man is from the earth, [a]earthy; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As is the earthy one, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly one, so also are those who are heavenly. ⁴⁹ **Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, [a]we will also bear the image of the heavenly.** ⁵⁰ Now I say this, brothers *and sisters*, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does [a]the perishable inherit [a]the imperishable. Born. Flesh. Die. Spirit. Eternal.

⁵¹ Behold, I am telling you a mystery; we will not all sleep [Die, perish], but we will all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and **we will be changed.**

-**Rapture?** (Church taken up/out of the way before 7 years of tribulation on this earth) or **Second Coming?**

- **READ** 1 Thess. 4:13-18 "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers *and sisters*, about those who are asleep, [have died] so that you will not grieve as indeed the rest *of mankind do*, who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose *from the dead*, so also God will bring **with Him** those who have fallen asleep [died] through Jesus.

¹⁵ For we say this to you **by the word of the Lord**, that we who are alive and *remain until the coming of the Lord* will not precede those who have fallen asleep [died]. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who remain, **will be caught up together with them in the clouds** to meet the Lord **in the air**, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore, comfort one another with these words."

Rapture: 1 Thess. 5:9 God has not destined the Church for wrath; Rev. 3:10 "I will keep you from hour of testing"

⁵³ For this [a]perishable must put on [a]the imperishable, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. ⁵⁴ But when this [a]perishable puts on [a]the imperishable, and this mortal puts on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written: "DEATH HAS BEEN SWALLOWED UP in victory. ⁵⁵ WHERE, O DEATH, IS YOUR VICTORY? WHERE, O DEATH, IS YOUR STING?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law; ⁵⁷ **but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

APPLICATION

So what...?. If you are saved, then you are secure. If you are secure, do NOT fear death. If you have no fear of death, then you will be more usable to accomplish the purposes of God on this earth: THUS . . .

⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brothers *and sisters*, be firm, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not *in vain* in the Lord. =Get Busy about the Worship & Work of the Lord NOW & in preparation for the future!

Community Group Extra Information for Discussion

Heaven: Is it Real? If so, What is Heaven like? (Rev. 21:1-27; 22:1-5)

The Bible declares that there is a Spiritual Reality, a spiritual dimension– invisible to humanity, but no less real= Spiritual Beings: “For our struggle is not against ^{1a}flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.” Ephesians 6:12

“We are to look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Cor. 4:18-19

We are also commanded in Scripture to live by **FAITH** (Faith being defined as: “Now **faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.**” Heb. 11:1) “For it is impossible to please God apart from Faith” Heb.11:6 = “For we are called to live by faith, not by sight.” 2 Cor. 5:7

So, How can we be sure that Heaven is Real?

- 1) **Jesus Promises Us.** If Jesus is real. If He is God. If He has been Resurrected, then He is NOT Lying: “Do not let your heart be troubled; ^{1a}believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also.” John 14:1-3
- 2) **The Bible declares it:** The word “heaven” is found **671X, (276 times)** in the New Testament alone. There are several people in the Bible who have been eye witnesses to the heaven before they died. **Elijah, Enoch, The apostle John, & Paul and of course Jesus – who is God, Creator of Heaven and Earth.**
“Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken *up* from you *into* heaven, will so come back in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11)
- 3) **The Holy Spirit is the Deposit for Heaven** (the Down Payment/**like earnest money**): For ALL Believers -
“For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that which is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” 2 Cor. 5:1-5

So where is Heaven? The word “heaven” (Hebrew: *shamyim*, Greek: *ouranos*) can mean God’s dwelling place. The Bible says: “The LORD has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all” Psalm 103:19

- 1) Heaven may also refer to the endless planets, stars, and galaxies of the universe. The Bible says:

"When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place" Ps. 8:3

2) The Bible also speaks of the atmosphere that surrounds the earth as heaven or heavens (Genesis 1: 7, 8).

We live in a created material world in a physical universe. We are bound by time and space (physical law). God is Creator. He is spirit (Jn. 4:24). God is *not bound* to a physical universe, nor is God bound by time

"But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day." 2 Pet. 3:8

= **Heaven is a spiritual place and can only be experienced in a spiritual capacity (not physical).**

Jesus = "Truly, truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of heaven unless he is born again." Jn.3:3 = New Sp. life

Paul = "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a man was caught up (rapture) to the third heaven. And I know how such a man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows— was caught up into *Paradise* and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak." 2 Cor. 12:2-4

Heaven is where the presence of God dwells. Heaven is not on *this* earth. The eternal heaven will be comprised of not only God's presence in His throne room, but also a NEW earth connected to God's presence.

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!" 1 Ki. 8:27

****READ: Revelation 21:1-27; 22:1-5**

What will Heaven be Like?

1) **We get to be with God** - we were created for this very relationship. God with us.

"Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God." Rev. 21:3

2) **We get to be with all the host of Heaven-Angels, Cherubim, Seraphim guard throne, O.T. saints, family**

"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect." Hebrews 12:23-24, 2 Chronicles 18:18

3) **All things are new** (Rev. 21:5 "Behold I am making all things new")

- New Spiritual Dimension mixed with a New Physical Dimension (a new universe?)
- New Earth, New Capital City (Jerusalem) = "*city of peace.*" New earth=Trees, animals, grass, sky, hills etc

"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Revelation 21:2). =NEW Bride. Beautiful, Spotless, Cleansed

*New Life: "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." 2 Cor. 5:17

*New Names: "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the **name** of My God, and the **name** of the city of My God, the **new** Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My **new name**." Rev. 3:12, 2:17

*New Glorified bodies: **We will have glorified *physical* bodies in heaven**

4) No tears or pain – or remembrance of any sin or bad days (*nothing that will remind us of broken rel.*)

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" Revelation 21:4.

5) Perfect, unselfish love governs all relationships in heaven The Bible says: "He who does not love, does not know God, for God is love" 1 John 4:8. The inhabitants of heaven obey God's cmdmnt of love (Ps.103:19-21).

Common Questions about Heaven:

So what are we going to do? Play the harp all day on clouds? Boring!

- We will worship God: "all flesh shall come to worship before me" (Isaiah 66:22,23). "For only you are holy: for all nations shall come and worship before you" (Revelation 7:14; 15:4; 21:24).
- "Every tongue, tribe, nation gathered in worship around the throne singing Holy, Holy, Holy" Rev.7:15
- = We will worship God through our unique abilities & gifts (Singing, praise, dance, composing music, art, acting, preaching, creating, remembering, reciting, reading, enjoying life in His presence, etc.)
- We will serve God: "And there will no longer be any curse, and the throne of God and the Lamb will be in the city. His servants will (SERVE) & worship him." Rev. 22:3
- We will work: We will rule and administrate: "If we endure with Jesus, we will also reign with Him." 2Tim. 2:12;
- "Or do you not know that the ¹⁴saints will judge the world? Do you not know that we will judge (or rule) the angels?" 1 Cor. 6:2-3
- = Our original charge in Eden was to work the earth, subdue it (oversee it/manage it), name & care for animals, be productive, be fruitful & multiply (Gen. 1:28); In Heaven at last we can fulfill our charge
- We may build: Jesus was a carpenter on the earth-30yrs; He will build us mansions & we may help
- We will learn: "For now **we see in a mirror dimly**, but **then face to face**; now I know **in part**, but **then** I will know fully just as I also have been fully known." 1 Cor. 13:121
- We will explore "We will reign forever." Rev. 22:5 – to Reign is to oversee & know all creation
- We will enjoy each other fully – Heaven is Relational – all related to GOD & then each other

Will we recognize our loved-ones in Heaven? Yes. We will see each other through different (spiritual) eyes "everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die." Jn. 11:26

- We will relate to one another perfectly (no longer as husband & wife), but closely and spiritually. We will see and be perfectly connected to all of our extended family. Lost children, siblings, cousins, & friends. **REUNION**

- "Abraham breathed his last and died in a ^[a]ripe old age, an old man and satisfied *with life*; and he was gathered to his people." Gen. 25:8

Will we eat in Heaven? Yes.

- "I say to you that many will come from east and west, and ^[a]recline *at the table* with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." Mt. 8:11

- "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God" (Revelation 2:7)

- When Jesus went to heaven he told his disciples: "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:29).

- The Bible even refers to heaven as a "country" (Hebrews 11:16). Before sin came into this world, the world was a physical paradise — a beautiful garden full of fruits, trees, and animals.

- The Angel in Heaven speaks of a wedding feast:

"Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Then the angel said to me, 'Write: "Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!"' And he added, 'These are the true words of God.'" (Revelation 19:6-9)

Common Misconceptions about heaven:

- What about Children who have never been baptized? Or professed Faith? Or mentally handicapped? "But Jesus called for them, saying, "Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." Luke 18:16

- What about Suicides? = No biblical evidence that lose salvation. Jn 10:28-29 (No one can pluck out of my hand)

- Do we become angels? NO. "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures, or the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but *are like* angels in heaven." (Matthew 22:29-30)

- Heaven sounds boring. Won't we be bored? **Not if the Bible is True:**

"You will make known to me the path of life. In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever." Ps. 16:11

What will be most surprising about Heaven? That those you thought would be there, aren't:

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*.²² Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many ^[a]miracles?'²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'" Matthew 7:21-23

- That those who you didn't think would be there, are; **and** the greatest wonder of all is that YOU are there.

Most Importantly, we have NO idea just how Good Heaven will be. What God has prepared for us!

“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” 1John 3:2-3

“Things which **eye has not seen** and ear **has not** heard, And *which* have **not** entered the heart of man, All that God **has** prepared for those who love Him.” 1 Cor. 2:9

We were created for Heaven, for eternity: “He has also set eternity in the human heart” Ecl. 3:11

As Believers, the moment we die, we go to be in His presence. (No soul sleep. No more waiting. = JOY w God!!)
“We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away (absent) from the body and at home (present) with the Lord. ⁹So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. ¹⁰For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.” 2 Cor. 5:8-10