

**HEAVEN – Part Three**  
**“What Did Jesus Say?”**  
**Sermon – February 24, 2019**

When we speak of heaven from a Scriptural standpoint we need to understand that Scripture speaks of three heavens. Not three levels of heaven like some cults believe but three distinct places that Scripture refers to as heaven. The Scriptures call the first heaven the “expanse”. This is the firmament or sky that covers the earth. It is where birds fly and where clouds float above the earth.

**GENESIS 1:6-8**

*“Then God said, ‘Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.’ God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. God called the expanse heaven.”*

**GENESIS 1:20**

*“Then God said, ‘Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.’”*

The second heaven is where the stars, the sun, and the moon and all the planets reside. It is the space beyond the earth and it encompasses the entire universe.

**GENESIS 1:14-17**

*“Then God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth’ ...*

*“and it was so, God made the two great lights, the greater to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth.”*

We get the concept of the third heaven from the teaching of Paul where he said:

**2 CORINTHIANS 12:2-4**

*“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 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.”*

This third heaven or Paradise is of course the one that I have been teaching about these past few weeks. It is this Heaven that I want us to continue to gain a better understanding of.

Now, last week we looked at what other people think happens to believers after we die – that either our soul goes into a sleep mode until our resurrection or that we are spend some time in Purgatory attempting to pay our last ounce of repentance before we gain entrance into heaven. We showed how both of these theories were not Biblically correct and that instead of there being any interim place where believers go after death we learned that believers are immediately ushered into the presence of the Lord.

So today and next week I want to look at Heaven itself to see what it will be like. What will we be

doing in Heaven? Will we play harps, will we sing, will we work, will we still be married, and will we recognize people? These are just some of the questions people ask when thinking about what Heaven will be like. The foremost authority on Heaven is Jesus. So it is to Him we look today to determine just exactly what heaven will be like and who resides there. We'll start by looking at His description of Heaven as revealed through His recorded words in Scripture. (We'll look at other Scripture next week, particularly the words of John as recorded in Revelation. But this week we will restrict ourselves to the words of Jesus.)

Surprisingly, when we look at the words of Jesus we find He spoke very little about heaven. He spoke more about how to get there and how to avoid hell than He did what awaits us in Heaven. But if we look at the His words we can get a glimpse of what Heaven will be like, who will be there, and what attributes will be prevalent there. So let's ask a series of questions and see what we can glean from the teachings of Jesus in Scripture.

### #1- WHO DOES JESUS SAY WILL ENTER HEAVEN?

#### MATTHEW 18:3-4

*"Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."*

#### MATTHEW 5:3, 5, 8, 10

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

*"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."*

*"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

- ANSWER: The humble, the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, and those persecuted for Christ will inherit Heaven.

### #2- IS HEAVEN A PHYSICAL PLACE OR AN ETHERAL PLACE?

#### MATTHEW 5:34-35

*"But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet"*

#### MATTHEW 5:16

*"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."*

#### MATTHEW 6:9

*"Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name."*

- ANSWER: Heaven is where God's throne is located. He rules from Heaven. It's an actual place, not a state where bodiless beings float through the clouds. It is a place where God is and where His name is revered.

### #3- IS THERE REBELLION OR SUBMISSION IN HEAVEN?

MATTHEW 6:10

*“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”*

- ANSWER: Heaven is a place where God’s will is done. There is no rebellion or sin in Heaven. What God wills to be done is done.

#4- IS HEAVEN EXPECTING US?

MATTHEW 25:34

*“Then the King (Jesus) will say to those on His right (believers in Christ) ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’ ”*

- ANSWER: Heaven is expecting us. Heaven is a place that has been prepared for believers from the foundation of the world.

#5- HOW DOES JESUS KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT HEAVEN?

JOHN 6:38

*“Jesus said to them, ... ‘I have come down from Heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.’ ”*

JOHN 16:28

*“I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again and going to the Father.”*

- ANSWER: Heaven is where Jesus came from and to where Jesus ascended after His resurrection. He knows from personal experience what Heaven is like.

#6- WHERE IS JESUS NOW AND WHAT IS HE DOING?

JOHN 14:2-3

*“In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you. If 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.”*

- ANSWER: Heaven is where Jesus lives now. He is personally preparing a place for us to dwell in Heaven with Him. Jesus dwells there in His resurrected body proving again that physical substance and not just spirit inhabit Heaven.

#7- DO REWARDS AWAIT US IN HEAVEN?

MATTHEW 5:11-12

*“Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great...”*

MATTHEW 6:19-21

*“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and*

*where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

MATTHEW 25:23

*“Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things: enter into the joy of your master.”*

- ANSWER: Heaven is a place where treasures are stored which will never be taken away from us or destroyed. It is a place of joy and reward; a place where faithful followers can be put in charge of many things.

#8- WHERE DO ANGELS LIVE AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

MATTHEW 18:10

*“See that you do not despise one of the little ones, for I say that their angels in heaven continually see the face of my Father who is in Heaven.”*

MATTHEW 26:53

*“Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?”*

- ANSWER: Angels dwell in Heaven. They continually see the face of the Father and respond to the needs and prayers of God’s people as directed.

#9- WILL WE RETAIN OUR IDENTITY IN HEAVEN?

MARK 12:26-27

*“Have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”*

MATTHEW 18:11

*“I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven.”*

MATTHEW 17:1-4

*“Six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments, became as white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.”*

*“Peter said to Jesus, ‘Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ ”*

- ANSWER: There will be individual identities in Heaven. Those who have believed and died retain their identity and will dwell in Heaven with the Father. Even we who were born after them will recognize them.

#10- IF WE MARRY ON EARTH ARE WE STILL MARRIED IN HEAVEN?

LUKE 20:29-36

*“Now there were seven brothers; and the first took a wife and died childless; and the second and the third married her; and in the same way all seven died, leaving no children. Finally the woman died also. In the resurrection therefore, which one’s wife will she be? For all seven married her...”*

*“Jesus said to them, ‘The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; for They cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.’ ”*

- ANSWER: There will be no human marriage in Heaven. We will not marry or be given in marriage in heaven. Whether we married once or multiple times, we will be no one’s husband or wife in Heaven. Instead, we will be the bride of Christ. Our unity will be with the Father and all believers. We will be like the angels, in fellowship with one another and with God.

#11- DO THINGS HAPPENING ON EARTH AFFECT HEAVEN?

LUKE 15:7

*‘I tell you....there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.’ ”*

- ANSWER: There is joy in Heaven when sinners repent and believe.

#12- IS THERE MORE THAN ONE WAY TO ENTER HEAVEN?

MATTHEW 7:13-14

*“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”*

JOHN 14:6

*“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”*

- ANSWER: No. The only way to enter Heaven is through Jesus Himself. He is the small gate and the narrow path that leads to Heaven.

#13- CAN ANYONE GET INTO HEAVEN?

MATTHEW 7:21

*“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.”*

JOHN 6:40

*“For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”*

MATTHEW 10:32-33

*“Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in Heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.”*

- ANSWER: Not everyone will be allowed to enter Heaven. Only those who believe in Christ, do the will of the Father, and do not deny Christ before men will be allowed entry.

#### #14- IS THERE ANOTHER DESTINATION AFTER DEATH BESIDES HEAVEN?

##### MATTHEW 13:47-50

*“The kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering fish of very kind; and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach and they sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away...”*

*“So it will be at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

##### MATTHEW 25:31-33, 41, 46

*“But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherds separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left...”*

*“Then He will say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels’ ...These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”*

- ANSWER: Yes, but the alternative to Heaven is Hell. A place no one should desire to go.

#### #15- IF DEATH HOLDS FEAR FOR US, WHAT SHOULD WE BE AFRAID OF?

##### MATTHEW 10:28

*“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”*

- ANSWER: For the believer there is no fear in death. The penalty for our sin has been paid and there is no judgment awaiting us. Our soul goes to Heaven. When our earthly body is resurrected our soul will be reunited with our body to live eternally. Not so for the unbeliever. For the unbeliever there is fear of punishment for sin and a destiny of soul and body being destroyed in Hell. While on earth we should have enough fear of what God will do with us after we die that we repent so that we do not experience God’s wrath and suffer the punishment of Hell for eternity.

#### #16- HAS GOD PROVIDED A WAY FOR PEOPLE TO AVOID HELL AND GAIN ENTRANCE TO HEAVEN?

*(To fully answer this question I will have to look beyond the words of Jesus)*

##### JOHN 3:16-17

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to judge (or condemn) the world, but that the world might be saved through Him...”*

1 TIMOTHY 2:4

*“God... desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

EZEKIEL 33:11

*“ ‘As I live!’ declares the Lord God, ‘I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live.’”*

ACTS 17:30-31

*“God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”*

- ANSWER: Yes. God provided His Son to pay for our sins so that we can avoid Hell and be granted entrance to Heaven. God proved the importance of Jesus by raising Him from the dead. God does not desire any to be sent to Hell, nor does He take any pleasure in it. He is calling all men to repent so they may avoid the Day of Judgment that is coming.

We learned a few things about God today and about heaven. We'll look closer at what John and others have to say about Heaven and what awaits us there next week. Today, as we close, I want to summarize what we have learned.

- The humble, the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, and those persecuted for Christ will inherit the earth.
- Heaven is where God's throne is located. He rules from Heaven. It's an actual place, not a state where bodiless beings float through the clouds. It is a place where God is and where His name is revered.
- Heaven is a place where God's will is done. There is no rebellion or sin in Heaven. What God wills to be done is done.
- Heaven is expecting us. It a place that has been prepared for us from the foundation of the world.
- Heaven is where Jesus came from and to where Jesus ascended after His resurrection.
- Heaven is where Jesus lives now. He is personally preparing a place for us to dwell in Heaven with Him.
- Heaven is a place where treasures are stored which will never be taken away from us or destroyed. It is a place of joy and reward; a place where faithful followers can be put in charge of many things.
- Heaven is a place where angels dwell. They continually see the face of the Father and respond to the needs and prayers of God's people as directed.
- There will be individual identities in Heaven. Those who have believed and died retain their identity and will dwell in Heaven with the Father. Even we who were born after them will recognize them.
- There will be no human marriage in Heaven. We will not marry or be given in marriage in heaven. Whether we married once or multiple times, we will be no one's husband or wife in Heaven. Instead, we will be the bride of Christ. Our unity will be with the Father and all believers. We will be like the angels, in fellowship with one another and with God.
- There is joy in Heaven when sinners repent and believe.
- The only way to enter Heaven is through Jesus Himself. He is the small gate and the narrow path that leads to Heaven.

- Not everyone will be allowed to enter Heaven. Only those who believe in Christ, do the will of the Father, and do not deny Christ before men will be allowed entry.
- The only alternative to Heaven is Hell.
- For the believer there is no fear in death. The penalty for our sin has been paid and there is no judgment awaiting us. Our soul goes to Heaven. When our earthly body is resurrected our soul will be reunited with our body to live eternally. Not so for the unbeliever. For the unbeliever there is fear of punishment for sin and a destiny of soul and body being destroyed in Hell. While on earth we should have enough fear of what God will do with us after we die that we repent so that we do not experience God's wrath and suffer the punishment of Hell for eternity.
- God provided His Son to pay for our sins so that we can avoid Hell and be granted entrance to Heaven. God proved the importance of Jesus by raising Him from the dead. God does not desire any to be sent to Hell, nor does He take any pleasure in it. He is calling all men to repent so they may avoid the Day of Judgment that is coming.

I know that using a question and answer format for a sermon can be a little boring; no exciting stories to tell and no application to leave with. But as believers we can rest assured that we have nothing to fear about heaven. So I hope that some of the questions you have had about heaven were answered today and that these answers have brought peace of mind and assured your heart about what awaits you in Heaven.

If you are unsure of your eternal destiny fear may remain in your heart. If that's the case I and many here will be happy to talk with you about how you can eliminate that fear and find the assurance of being accepted into Heaven when you die. Come up and see me after the service and I will be happy to talk with you.

Lord, thank you for salvation. Thank you for the free gift of life that was given to us through the shed blood of Christ. Thank you that what awaits us as believers in Heaven is not judgment but life; that our sins have been paid for; that we are no longer held accountable for the evil we have done because Christ has paid the price for that evil with His own life. Thank you that we have the assurance of salvation here and now while we dwell on earth. We don't have to wait until death to know which place we are assigned. For those who may be unsure I pray you will give them the assurance of what awaits them after death. Gove them either fear that they may repent, or peace that they may rest assured that what awaits them beyond this life is more life, more peace, more joy, more acceptance, and more love. In the name of the One who made it all possible, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

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