



# A PLACE CALLED HEAVEN

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





# A Place Called Heaven

ADRIAN ROGERS

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide this transcript produced from a live sermon preached by Adrian Rogers while serving as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. This transcript is intended for your personal, non-commercial use.

**Note: Though it has been transcribed from a version used for broadcast, it may contain stutters, stammers, and other authentic remarks as would be common in a live setting.**

In order to ensure our ability to be good stewards of Adrian Rogers' messages, Love Worth Finding has reserved all rights to this content.

Except for your personal, non-commercial use and except for brief quotations in printed reviews, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—without the prior permission of the publisher.

Copyright © 2022 Love Worth Finding Ministries, Inc.

Transcripts are used by permission of the Rogers Family Trust.



# A Place Called Heaven

**SERMON REFERENCE:** John 14:1-3

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #2286

Here on earth, we're limited in our knowledge about Heaven. But what the Bible does reveal about a place called Heaven leaves us in breathless wonder.

Heaven is a real place. Heaven is not a condition or state of mind; it is somewhere on God's map, and one day we will be there in a resurrected body.

The saved go to Heaven immediately upon death. 2 Corinthians 5:6-8 says, "So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord."

We will know our loved ones in Heaven, face-to-face, heart-to-heart. In Matthew 8:11, Jesus claims Heaven will feel like a great family reunion. The ones we've read about in the Bible and the ones who served God before us will feel like family, as well.

There will be joyful activity in Heaven. Heaven will not be boring; quite the contrary. Our work in Heaven will be joyful and thrilling, blessed, and beloved.

Heaven is a place of absolute perfection. There will be no more tears, sighing, crying, or pain. Heaven is the presence of all that is good and the absence of all that is bad. Adrian Rogers tells us, "Heaven is all that the loving heart of God would desire. Heaven is all that the incredible mind of God can conceive. And Heaven is all the Almighty Hand of God can create."

Jesus is the crowning glory of Heaven. Jesus said, "I go and prepare a place for you...that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3). The thrill of Heaven is not that we live there... It is that we will live there with Jesus.

Only the redeemed will go to Heaven. We can't trust in honesty, charity, or even religion, itself. We can only trust in Jesus, who died for us and rose again, so that we may see a place called Heaven for ourselves.

## LIFE APPLICATION

Adrian Rogers says, "You have to be Heaven-born to be Heaven-bound." Knowing the only way to the place called Heaven is through salvation in Jesus Christ, are you sure that you are saved? Does your family trust in Jesus Christ?



# A Place Called Heaven

SERMON REFERENCE: John 14:1-3

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2286

- 1) INTRODUCTION
  - a) John 14:1-3
  - b) We are limited in our knowledge of Heaven.
    - i) The Bible tells us more about what will not be in Heaven than what will be there.
    - ii) But the Bible also gives us all we need to know about Heaven.
      - (1) What we do know leaves us in breathless wonder.
  - c) God has purposely kept back from us some things about Heaven.
    - i) 2 Corinthians 12:2-4
    - ii) It is a sacred secret.
      - (1) God has saved something very wonderful for us: the place called Heaven.
  - d) Polling data shows that a majority of Americans believe in Heaven and Hell.
    - i) Data also shows that only a very small percent of people believe that they are going to Hell.
      - (1) An old Gospel song says that everybody talking about Heaven aren't going there.
    - ii) Not everyone talking about Heaven is actually going to Heaven.
  - e) Today's message will present some facts about Heaven.
- 2) HEAVEN IS A REAL PLACE (2 Corinthians 12:2-4)
  - a) Heaven is not a condition or a state of mind.
    - i) Heaven is some place on God's map.
  - b) 2 Corinthians 12:2-4
    - i) The Apostle Paul talked about his journey to Heaven.
    - ii) This passage tells us that we can go to Heaven out of our bodies or in our bodies.
    - iii) Heaven is such a real place that it takes care of a real body.
  - c) 2 Corinthians 12:3-4
    - i) The Apostle Paul said that he was "caught up into Heaven."
    - ii) There is one place on the face of the Earth that is always up, and it is north.
      - (1) North is a fixed position.
  - d) The Bible teaches that Heaven is north.
    - i) Isaiah 14:13-14
      - (1) This passage is referring to the fall of Satan from Heaven.
      - (2) Satan said that he was going above the stars to the place of God.
    - ii) Leviticus 1:11
      - (1) Speaks of killing the sacrifice, "northward toward the Lord."
    - iii) Psalm 75:6-7
      - (1) In this passage, the inference is that promotion comes from God, and God is in the north.



- e) 2 Corinthians 12:2
    - i) Paul said that he was caught up into the third Heaven.
    - ii) There are three Heavens:
      - (1) The atmospheric Heaven
        - (a) Jeremiah 15:3
      - (2) The stellar Heaven
        - (a) Isaiah 13:10
      - (3) Heaven, the abode of God
        - (a) This is a real place.
        - (b) Jesus is there in a body.
          - (i) Someone once said of these three Heavens, “The first we see by day, the second we see by night, and the third we see by faith.”
  - f) Heaven is a real place.
    - i) If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, you will one day go there in a resurrected body and will have to have something to put your resurrected foot on.
- 3) THE SAVED GO TO HEAVEN IMMEDIATELY UPON DEATH (2 Corinthians 5:6-8)
- a) You can go to Heaven in a body or out of the body.
    - i) You can be absent from your body and go to Heaven, or you can go to Heaven in a resurrected body.
  - b) The saints go immediately to Heaven upon death.
    - i) The soul does not sleep in the grave to await the resurrection.
    - ii) The body awaits the resurrection; the spirit goes immediately to be with Jesus.
      - (1) Luke 23:43-46
      - (2) Acts 7:56-59
  - c) There comes a time when we move out of this body and move into a position with our Lord in Heaven.
    - i) Philippians 1:23
- 4) WE WILL KNOW OUR LOVED ONES IN HEAVEN (1 Corinthians 13:12)
- a) We will know them face to face.
  - b) 1 Corinthians 13:12
    - i) “In a glass darkly.”
      - (1) In Bible times, they did not have mirrors as we have today.
      - (2) They would take brass and polish it; it was a burnished brass reflector that they would look into.
        - (a) They could see but could not see clearly.
    - ii) We really do not know one another now.
      - (1) Instead of asking if we will know one another in Heaven, the real question is do we know one another now?
      - (2) 1 Samuel 16:7
        - (a) God doesn’t see as man sees; God looks on the heart.



- c) 2 Samuel 12:16-23
    - i) We go to our loved ones in Heaven.
  - d) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
    - i) The Apostle Paul points out that at the second coming of the Lord Jesus, we will be gathered not only to meet the Lord but also to meet one another.
      - (1) "The dead in Christ shall rise first" refers to the body that's in the grave.
    - ii) 1 Thessalonians 5:15
  - e) When the saints of the Bible died, the Bible says that they went to be with their people.
    - i) Numbers 27:12
      - (1) Moses was gathered to his people.
    - ii) Genesis 25:8
      - (1) Abraham knew that he was going to have a family reunion.
    - iii) Genesis 35:29
      - (1) Isaac was gathered to his people.
    - iv) Genesis 49:33
      - (1) The body is still in the grave, but Jacob is with his people.
    - v) Matthew 8:11
      - (1) Jesus talked about a family reunion in Heaven.
      - (2) We will fellowship in Heaven with others; we will know them.
  - f) Matthew 17:1-13
    - i) We had a preview of Heaven when Jesus was transfigured on the Mount of Transfiguration.
      - (1) Elijah and Moses were there.
      - (2) The disciples had never met Elijah or Moses; they were from a different era.
        - (a) But the disciples recognized both Elijah and Moses.
  - g) We will know one another in Heaven.
- 5) THERE WILL BE JOYFUL ACTIVITY IN HEAVEN
- a) There are some myths about Heaven.
    - i) One of those myths is that we will wear a wooly robe with a halo and sit on a fluffy cloud plucking a harp.
    - ii) Another myth is that Heaven will be boring, and we will have to listen to anthems all day long.
      - (1) There will be music in Heaven, but it won't be boring.
  - b) Heaven is rest, but it's not laziness.
    - i) Adam had work to do before sin came into the Garden, but it wasn't labor.
      - (1) It wasn't by the sweat of his brow.
        - (a) It was to dress the garden and to keep it.
  - c) Luke 19:12-18
    - i) In this passage, our Lord talks about what we will do in Heaven.
    - ii) Jesus is the nobleman in this parable.
    - iii) Our Lord has gone to Heaven, and He has given us certain abilities and has made us



stewards over certain things.

- iv) We are told to occupy until He comes.
  - (1) This does not mean to take up space.
  - (2) An occupation is something we do; we are to get busy.
- v) We will be rewarded according to our labor.
  - (1) We are to serve Him.
- d) We will help our God rule the vast universe.
  - i) 2 Timothy 2:12
  - ii) Revelation 7:15
    - (1) The greatest joy we have is serving the Lord.
    - (2) It is a privilege to serve the Lord.
- e) We will serve God in Heaven, and it will be thrilling and blessed and joyful.

#### 6) HEAVEN IS A PLACE OF ABSOLUTE PERFECTION

- a) In Heaven, there will be no more tears, no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, and no more pain.
  - i) The former things are passed away.
  - ii) Revelation 21:4
- b) Philippians 1:21-23
- c) In Heaven, there will be no more sin, no sorrow, no suffering, no death, no disease, and no doubts.
- d) Heaven is the presence of all that is good and the absence of all that is bad.
- e) Heaven is all that the loving heart of God would desire, all that the incredible mind of God can conceive, and all that the almighty hand of God can create.
  - i) God loves us so much that He gave His Son to die for us.
    - (1) 1 John 4:10
  - ii) Put together, Heaven is God's love, God's mind and God's power.
    - (1) 1 Corinthians 2:9
- f) Philippians 1:23
  - i) The phrase "far better" in the Greek language says "It is far, very much far, much more, better."
    - (1) The author is adding superlatives upon superlatives when talking about going to Heaven.
- g) Even in a world that's marred by sin, we can see God's creative genius and see a glimpse of that glory.
  - i) We see God's creative genius when we look at a mountain range or see a sculpted rose or a rainbow or a glorious sunset or the delicate wing of a butterfly.
  - ii) Heaven will be the consummate work of God's creative genius.
- h) John 14:2
  - i) This is why Heaven will be a place of absolute perfection.
- i) The streets of gold, walls of jasper and gates of gold are symbols of greater glory and greater things.



- i) The eye cannot see nor the ear hear nor can the heart conceive of what Heaven is going to be like.
- 7) JESUS IS THE CROWNING OF HEAVEN (John 14:2-3)
- a) Heaven is not primarily a place, Heaven is also a person.
    - i) John 14:2-3
      - (1) Are you looking forward to being with Jesus?
      - (2) If you're not looking forward to being with Jesus, if you're just waiting for an eternal vacation, then you're not going to Heaven.
    - ii) Heaven is where Jesus is.
  - b) Jesus is what makes Heaven, Heaven.
  - c) John 17:24
    - i) It is alright to pray for the healing of our sick loved ones, but Jesus is also praying that we be with Him.
    - ii) It is not a bad thing when a loved one steps over into the presence of Jesus to behold His glory.
  - d) It will be worth it all when we see Jesus.
- 8) ONLY THE REDEEMED ARE GOING TO HEAVEN (John 3:3)
- a) You must be Heaven-born to be Heaven-bound.
    - i) John 3:3
      - (1) You must be born again.
      - (2) You've had an earthly birth, and you need a heavenly birth.
  - b) Revelation 7:14
    - i) Those in Heaven are those who have been washed by the blood of the Lamb.
      - (1) No church denomination ever got anyone to Heaven.
      - (2) No one ever went to Heaven because they were a church member.
      - (3) No one ever went to Heaven for being a good person.
    - ii) "Have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" means that they have received Christ and His atoning blood for their sin.
  - c) Revelation 21:27
    - i) Being a moral person does not get you into Heaven.
    - ii) Being a humanitarian does not get you into Heaven.
    - iii) Doing good deeds does not get you into Heaven.
    - iv) Being a religious person does not get you into Heaven.
      - (1) Matthew 7:23
    - v) Only those who have been born again by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross of Calvary will enter into Heaven.
- 9) CONCLUSION
- a) Have you trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ?
  - b) Today, tell the Lord Jesus, "Lord, I'm not trusting my honesty, my charity or my religion. Lord





Jesus, thank You for dying for me. I trust you.”

- i) Ask Jesus to come into your life.
- c) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16



# A Place Called Heaven

**SERMON REFERENCE:** John 14:1-3

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #2286

Turn in your Bibles to John chapter 14 verses 1 through 3, the dear Lord Jesus said, “Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am ye may be also.”

I visited Dr. Lee, former pastor of this church, many times at his bedside. Just before he died he lapsed into a coma and had a vision of Heaven. He came back. And this is what he said. He said, “I’ve preached on Heaven many times, but I never did it justice.” Now if there were ever an eloquent and a gifted preacher, it would be Dr. Robert G. Lee. If he had any great sermon, and he had many, his sermon called, “A Place Called Heaven” was a classic, but he said, “I never did it justice.”

Now we’re limited in our knowledge of Heaven. Dr. Lee was limited, I am limited, you are limited. The Bible tells us more about what will not be there than it does about what will be there. But may I say this; that the Bible gives us all that we need to know about Heaven and what we know leaves us in breathless wonder.

Now God has purposely kept back some things about Heaven from us. When the apostle Paul took his sojourn into Heaven, Second Corinthians chapter 12 verses 2 through 4, he went to Heaven, he said, “I don’t know whether I was in my body or out of my body. But I went up, I was caught up into paradise, into the third Heaven.” And he said, “I saw there things, unutterable things, things not lawful to declare.” That is, God said, “This is a sacred secret, Paul, you cannot tell it.” God has saved something very wonderful for us, the place called Heaven.

The Gallop people did a poll. They found, would you believe, that 72% of the American people believe in Heaven. 60% believed in hell. Only 4% thought they were going to hell. They believe, people believe in Heaven, but there’s an old Gospel song that says, “Everybody talkin’ ‘bout Heaven ain’t going there.”

I talked to a man one time, one of the most important figures, I don’t want to tell you his name, but you may figure out who is, he was a former governor of a state, served on the staff of the presidency of the United States and a very important man, was running himself for the presidency of the United States. And I was with Jim Kennedy, Jim Kennedy, that wonderful pastor in Ft. Lauderdale who began Evangelism Explosion.

Jim Kennedy asked this man this question. He said, “Governor, if you were to die and to stand before the Lord and he would ask you this question, ‘Why should I let you into My Heaven?’ What would you say?” I never will forget, it was almost humorous. That man drew himself up, he had that gold silver hair slicked back. He said, “Well,” said, “I hadn’t been all that I ought to be, but I’d tell Him, ‘If you’ve got anybody up there, you ought to let me in.’” So full of self-assurance and pride, but not one word about the grace of God. Not everybody talking about Heaven is going to Heaven.

We’re going to be thinking a little bit about Heaven. I want to give you some facts about Heaven.



Fact number one, Heaven is a real place. A real place. Heaven is not a condition, a state of mind, some will-o-the-wisp. Heaven is some place on God's map.

Now let me give you a Scripture concerning what the apostle Paul said about his journey to Heaven. Second Corinthians 12 verses 2, Paul said, "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body I cannot tell or whether out of the body I cannot tell."

Now Paul is talking about himself. He calls himself, "A man in Christ." Now listen to this, listen carefully. He said, "Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don't know." That's very, very important because that tells us you can go to Heaven out of your body or you can go to Heaven in your body.

Heaven is such a real place, that it takes care of a real body. It is, or yet you can go there in your spirit. So Paul says in Second Corinthians 12 verses 2 through 4, "I don't know whether I was in my body or out of my body. God knoweth. Such a one caught up to the third Heaven. And I knew such a man, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell. God knoweth. How he was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

Now it's very interesting. We say Heaven is a real place. And in the Bible we talk of Heaven as being up. The Apostle Paul said, "I was caught up into Heaven." And so those who are naysayers, those who laugh at us who believe the Bible literally, they say, "Well, you ignoramus, don't you now that the earth is round and Paul is in Palestine, he's pointing to Heaven this way is up, and somebody perhaps in Australia is pointing this way is up, and they're pointing in different directions. Don't you understand that those people in the Bible times thought the earth was flat, but we know it's round? How can Heaven be up if it's in different directions?" Well, I tell you I think that God understands it all.

Let me tell you this, folks, there's one place on the face of the globe that is always up. Did you know what it is? It's north. Now it's not by accident that no matter where you are on planet earth, people say down south, up north. Why? Because north is a fixed position. If you were to take a camera and open the lens of that camera, and put that lens on the North Star and leave the lens open, you would see all of the other stars rotating around that North Star and it would never move. That is a fixed position. I believe the Bible teaches that Heaven is north.

Let me give you some Scriptures. Isaiah 14 verses 13 and 14. This is talking about the fall of Satan from Heaven. "For thou hast said in thine heart, 'I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne,'" now watch this, "'above the stars of God. I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north.'" Satan says, "I'm going above the stars, I'm going to the place of God, I'm going to exalt my throne there in the sides of the north."

In the Bible, when God was telling people how to make a blood sacrifice in the book of Leviticus, Leviticus chapter 1 verse 11, talking about killing the animal and He says this, "And he shall kill it on the side of the altar," now listen to this, "northward toward the Lord." "Northward toward the Lord," Leviticus 1 verse 11.

Listen to this, Psalm 75 verses 6 and 7. God is talking about where promotion comes from, and He says, "For promotion cometh neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south, but



God is the Judge.” What is the inference? Promotion comes from God. Where’s God? In the north.

You see, Paul said, “I was caught up into the third Heaven.” What does he mean by “The third Heaven?” Well, there are three Heavens. In Jeremiah 15:3, the Bible speaks of the fowls of the Heavens, that’s the atmospheric Heaven. And then in Isaiah 13:10 the Bible speaks of the stars of Heaven, that’s the stellar Heaven. And then God speaks of Heaven, which is the abode of God; somewhere a real place that God could’ve gone to in a body. And, by the way, Jesus is there in a body. There’s a Man in the glory. Somebody said of these three Heavens, “The first we see by day, the second we see by night, the third we see by faith.” I love that. The, Heaven is a real place!

Now don’t get the idea it’s some sort of a gaseous, nebulous state of mind or something. No! Heaven is a real place. One day you’ll go there in a resurrected body and you’ll have to have something to put that resurrected foot on. Heaven is a real place; it is somewhere on God’s map.

Second thing I want you to learn; the saved go to Heaven immediately upon death. Listen to this Scripture, Second Corinthians chapter 5 verses 6 through 8. Paul says, “Wherefore, we’re always confident,” boy I love that, so bold, “knowing that while we are at home in the body,” your body is a house, you live in it, “we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord,” that is, His literal presence, “for we walk by faith and not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.” That’s the reason I said, “You can go to Heaven in a body or out of the body.” You can be absent from your body and go to Heaven, or you can go to Heaven in a resurrected body.

The saints go immediately to Heaven upon death. Some people think that the soul sleeps in the grave to await the resurrection. No. The body awaits the resurrection; the spirit goes immediately to be with Jesus. What did Jesus tell that dying thief on the cross? Luke 23 verses 43 to 46, Jesus said, “Today, today you’ll be with Me in paradise.” As Jesus bowed His head and died, He said, “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.”

Acts 7 verses 56 through 59, when Steven, that saint, was stoned and martyred for his faith, he looked up. He said, “I see Heaven, I see Jesus on the right hand of the Father.” And then he prayed, “Father, receive my spirit.”

Not so long ago I was at the deathbed of my darling mother. I wish you could have known my mother. My mother was an incredible individual, as was my dad. But my mother had a great sense of humor, and my mother was full of witticisms and you could never get ahead of her no matter what you’d say she always had a comeback.

I saw my mother there, the last few moments of consciousness, and I saw her as she just turned her eyes and looked upward. I can’t prove it, but I just have a feeling that she was looking into another world. There just comes a time when we move out of this body and we move into a position with our Lord in Heaven. Philippians 1:23, “And so I have a desire to depart and be with Christ,” that’s what the Apostle Paul said.

Now here’s the third thing I want to say about Heaven. Heaven is a real place. The saints go to Heaven immediately when they die. “To be absent from the body is to be present from the Lord.” The third thing about this is a question often asked; will we know our loved ones? We will know our



loved ones! We'll know them face to face.

First Corinthians chapter 13 verse 12, "For now we see them in a glass darkly." What does that mean, "In a glass darkly?" Well, in Bible times they didn't have mirrors like we have with quicksilver on them. They would take brass and they would polish it. Now the translators called it a glass, but it wasn't really even a glass. It was a burnished brass reflector. And they would look in it and you could see, but you could not see as clearly as we see. That's what he meant when, "We see in a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know even as also I am known."

You see, folks, we really don't know one another now. The question is not "Will we know one another in Heaven?" The real question is; do we know one another now? You know when Samuel was going to anoint a king for Israel, God told Samuel in First Samuel 16 verse 7, "Look not on his countenance nor on the height of his stature," talking about Eliab, "for I have refused him. The Lord seeth not as man sees. Man looks on the outward appearance, God looks on the heart." You know, some of these high and mighty people that have all of these beautiful bodies and chiseled features and everything, don't think they're more important. Listen, God looks on the heart. God looks on the heart. God doesn't see as a man sees. Will we know one another in Heaven? Of course we will know one another in Heaven.

I thought about the picture of our little baby Phillip and my heart went to that passage of Scripture where King David had a baby that died and went to Heaven. He had prayed and he asked God, "Lord, please spare the life of the baby," but God did not. Then the Bible says in Second Samuel chapter 12 verses 16 to 23, "Then David rose from the earth and washed and anointed himself and changed his apparel and came into the house of the Lord and worshipped. Then he came to his own house and when he required, they set bread before him and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, 'What thing is this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the child while it was alive, but when the child was dead thou didst rise and eat bread.' And he said, 'While the child was yet alive I fasted and wept, for I said, 'Who can tell, whether God will be gracious to me that the child may live?' But now he is dead,'" listen to this, "'Wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him. He shall not return to me.'" I will go to him.

Now we go to our loved ones in Heaven. The apostle Paul is talking about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, and one of the things that he was telling the church at Thessalonica is, "You can look forward to the Second Coming of Jesus, and our being gathered not only to meet the Lord, but to meet one another." Put this verse down, First Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 16 to 17, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout and with a voice of the archangel and the trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first." That's talking now about the body that's in the grave. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up," now listen to this, "caught up together," that's Paul's emphasis, "caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Again he told them in First Thessalonians chapter 5 and verse 15; it speaks of Jesus who died for us, "That whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him." Now if you think of the saints in the Bible, when they died, how does the Bible talk about the saints dying? It talks about them



going to be with their people.

When Moses died, here's what God said to Moses, "Get thee up into the mountain and die in the mountain and be gathered unto thy people." Now Moses' mother, that mother that made him that little ark. He said, "Moses, go see your Mama. Get up into the mountain; be gathered to your people." Abraham knew that he was going to have a family reunion. Genesis 25 verse 8, "Then Abraham gave up the ghost," that is, he yielded up the spirit, "and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people."

Listen to what the Bible says about Isaac. Genesis 35 verse 29, "And Isaac gave up the ghost and died and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days, and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him." Listen to what the Bible says about Jacob and his family reunion in Heaven. Genesis 49 verse 33, "And when Jacob made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed and yielded up the ghost and was gathered unto his people." Now his body is still somewhere moldering in the grave, but he gathered with his people. He is with his people.

That's what Jesus talked about, a family reunion in Heaven. In Matthew chapter 8 and verse 11 here's what Jesus said, "And I say unto you that many shall come from the east and the west and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven." We're going to fellowship there with these people. We'll know them. In Matthew 17 verses 1 through 13, on the Mount of Transfiguration, when Jesus was transfigured, we just had a preview of Heaven, when He's up there on the Mount of Transfiguration. Elijah was there, Moses was there. The disciples had never met Elijah, they'd never met Moses, they were from a different era, but they recognized Moses, they recognized Elijah. We will know one another in Heaven. Put it down big, plain and straight.

Number four; there will be joyful activity in Heaven. There're some myths about Heaven. One of the myths is that we're going to wear a wooly robe with a halo sitting on a fluffy cloud, pluck a harp. You know, Heaven's going to be so boring, and you know, all day long we'll have to listen to anthems. There'll be music in Heaven, but I'll guarantee you, it won't be boring music. Heaven is rest, but it's not laziness. It's not just lolling around for all eternity. Adam had work to do before sin ever came into the garden, but it wasn't labor, it wasn't by the sweat of his brow, it was to dress the garden the keep it.

Put this verse down, Luke chapter 19 verse 12 through 18. Our Lord is talking about what we're going to do in Heaven. Luke chapter 19 beginning in verse 12, "And He said, 'Therefore, certain nobleman went into a far country.'" This is a parable and Jesus Himself is the nobleman. "'To receive for Himself a kingdom and returned.'" Our Lord has gone to receive a kingdom, He's coming back. "'And He called His servants and delivered unto them ten pounds and said, 'Occupy till I come.' But His citizens hated Him and sent a message after Him, saying, 'We will not have this Man to reign over us.' And it came to pass, that when He was returned, having received the kingdom, He then commanded His servants to be called unto Him to whom He had given the money that He might know how much each man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, 'Lord, Thy pound has gained ten pounds.'" And He said unto him, 'Well done, good servant. Because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, 'Lord, Thy



pound has gained five pounds.' And he said likewise to him, 'Be thou also over five cities.'"

I want to go no deeper into this except to tell you that our Lord has gone to Heaven, He has given to us certain abilities and certain things that we are to be made stewards of. He says, "Occupy till I come." That doesn't mean take up space. An occupation is what you do. He says, "Get busy! And when I come again, I'm going to reward you. And I'm going to reward you according as your labor should be and you're going to serve Me."

You know, we're going to help our God rule the vast universe. Paul said in Second Timothy 2:12, "If we suffer with Him, we'll also reign with Him." Here's a great verse I love from the book of the Revelation, chapter 7 verse 15. The Apostle John had a glimpse into glory, and he saw the servants of God and here's the way he described them, "Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple." "They serve Him day and night." The greatest joy that I have is serving the Lord. What a privilege to serve the Lord. Sometimes I wish I could serve Him better.

I always enjoy music, I love music, and I have a little bit more taste and ability in music than sometimes I let on. What some of you don't know, I can kind of sit at a piano and play by ear. I won't do that in a service, but, I love music. I have difficulty getting it out. I can carry a tune; I just can't unload it. I'm telling you, when we get to Heaven, guess who's going to be leading the choir? It's not Whitmire. Rogers! You know how I know that? Because, "The last will be first." Friend, we're going to serve God in Heaven! It's not going to be boring! It's going to be thrilling, it's going to be blessed, there's going to be joyful activity in Heaven.

Number five; Heaven is going to be a place of absolute perfection. As I said in the introduction to this message, "We know more about what will not be in Heaven than we do to what will be in Heaven." There will be no more tears, no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, no more pain, for the former things are passed away.

That's the reason the Apostle Paul said in Philippians chapter 1 beginning in verse 21 to verse 23, "For to me to live is Christ and to die," listen, "is gain." Then he said, "I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." Gain. No more sin, no sorrow, no suffering, no death, no disease, no doubts. What is Heaven? Heaven is the presence of all that is good. Present, Heaven is the absence of all that is bad.

Let me tell you what Heaven is. Heaven is all that the loving heart of God would desire. Can you imagine someone who loved you so much He gave His Son to die for you? That's love, isn't it? First John 4 verse 10, "Herein is love, not that we love God, but that He loved us and gave His Son." Heaven is all that the loving heart of God would desire. Heaven is all that the incredible mind of God can conceive. And Heaven is all the almighty hand of God can create. Put it together: God's love, God's mind and God's power. And friend, that's Heaven. No wonder Paul said in First Corinthians 2 verse 9, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard nor hath it entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." "I have a desire to depart and be with Christ," he says, "which is far better." Now, I'm not a Greek scholar, I was exposed to Greek, it didn't take, but I'm going to tell you this. The Greek language says, "It is far, very much far, much more better." He's adding superlatives upon superlatives when he's talking about going to Heaven. Heaven is a place of



absolute perfection.

You think of God's creative genius in this world. This world has been marred by sin and yet you go look sometime at a mountain range or sometimes look into the face of a buttercup or see the God that sculpted the rose, or the God that painted the rainbow, a God that gives us these glorious sunsets, the God who crafted the delicate wing of the butterfly. Even in a world that's marred by sin you can see a glimpse of that glory.

But Heaven will be the consummate work of God's creative genius. You will love Heaven. There're many questions that a four-year-old can ask about Heaven none of us can answer, but I'm telling you, friend, that Heaven is a place of absolute perfection. Why? Because Jesus said John 14:2, "I go and prepare a place for you."

Every preacher that preaches on Heaven tells and retells this story of a little girl who was blind and had never seen. But a surgeon believed that he could restore sight or give sight to that child. The parents were willing. They did the surgery. The eyes were bandaged. There came that time when the bandage was to be removed. Would she be able to see? They unwrapped the gauze, took those pads from those precious little eyes, and the doctor said, "Sweetheart, open your eyes." This little girl opened her eyes and blinked. The first thing she saw was the face of that doctor. Then the face of a nurse, then the face of her mother. She saw a tear for the first time in her mother's eye, and she said, "I can see." And she looked around at the things in the room that you and I take for granted. And then she went to the window and looked outside. She didn't see the grass, she saw the green grass. She didn't see the sky, she saw the blue sky. She didn't see the flowers, she saw the multi-colored flowers. She ran back to her mother, squeezed her mother, and said, "Mama, Mama, it's beautiful. Oh, Mama, it's beautiful. Mama, why didn't you tell me it was so beautiful?" That mother, through tears of joy, said, "Sweetheart, I tried to tell you, but you had to see it for yourself." You know, I think when we get to Heaven we'll say something like that to our heavenly Father. "Father, why didn't You tell us that Heaven was so wonderful?" He'll say, "Well, I tried to tell you, I took the things that you value, streets of gold, walls of jasper, gates of gold." Those are just symbols of greater glory, greater things, things that eye cannot see nor ear hear nor heart conceive of what Heaven is going to be like. Heaven, friend, is a place of absolute perfection.

Now here's the next thing about Heaven; Jesus is the crowning glory of Heaven. Heaven to me is not primarily a place, Heaven is a person. Jesus said in John 14 verses 2 and 3, "I go and prepare a place for you," now listen to this, what's the purpose of a place, so we can live there? No, "That where I am there ye may be also." I'm looking forward to being with Jesus, are you?

Listen, if you're not looking forward to being with Jesus, if you're just waiting for an eternal vacation or something like that, you're not going to Heaven. You're not going to Heaven. It's where He is! Do you know what, when I go off on a trip and I come home, what do you think I do, burst through the door and run over and hug the lamp? Good lamp. "There's a nice recliner! Oh, good to have my recliner! Oh, look at our rugs!" No, it's Joyce I want to get in my arms. You see, home to me is Joyce, where she is. And that, that's what makes my home, home. What makes Heaven, Heaven?





J-E-S-U-S. To be with Jesus.

One of the great prayers that Jesus prayed is John 17 verse 24. He is praying, "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me." Do you have a loved one who's sick and are you praying, "God, oh, God, don't let them die!" Well, it's all right to pray that prayer, but I want you to understand there's somebody else who's praying also and it's Jesus. You know what Jesus is praying? "Father, I will they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me, where I am, that they may behold My glory." Look, friend, if your loved one steps over into the face of Jesus to behold his glory, do you think that's bad? No. Listen. To be face to face with Christ my Savior, it will be worth it all when we see Jesus.

I've got to just cut to the last point and, and very quickly. Only the redeemed are going to Heaven. As I said earlier, "You have to be Heaven-born to be Heaven-bound." What do you mean Heaven-born? Well, the Bible says in John 3:3, "When you've been born again," the literal language of that is, "To be born from above." You've had an earthly birth, you need a heavenly birth. And if you're heavenly born you'll be heavenly bound.

Let me give you a couple of Scriptures. I'm coming into the end. Revelation chapter 7 verse 14. John again is in the glory. He sees this great multitude and he asks this question. Revelation 7 verse 14, "And I said unto Him, 'Sir, Thou knowest who are these?' And He said unto me, 'These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'" Those in Heaven are those who have been washed by the blood of the Lamb.

I hear people strut and talk about their denomination. No denomination ever got you to Heaven. "Oh, I'm a dyed-in-the-wool Baptist." Are you a washed-in-the-blood Baptist? "These are they who have made their robes white." "I'm a member of Bellevue." Doesn't say anything about being a member of Bellevue. "I'm a good person." Doesn't say anything about being a good person.

"These are they who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb." What does that mean? It means that you've received Christ, and His atoning blood for your sin. John closes the book of the Revelation, Revelation 21 verse 27, talking about Heaven, "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they that are written in the Lamb's Book of Life."

A man dreamed that he died, and he came to the portals of Heaven, and he knocked on that pearly gate, just a dream, and a voice within said, "Who is it that seeks entrance into Heaven? What is the password?" And the man said, "I'm a moral man." "Well, what is the password into Heaven?" "Honesty." And the voice within said, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity, I never knew you." Another knocked at the portals of Heaven. The voice within said, "Who is it that seeks entrance into Heaven, and what is the password?" This man said, "I am a humanitarian." "What is the password to Heaven?" He said, "Love, charity, good deeds." And the voice from within said, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity. I never knew you." Another knocked. "Who is it that seeks entrance into Heaven and what is the password?" "I am a religious man." "What is the password?" "Religion. Baptism. Church attendance." The voice within said, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity. I never knew you." Finally a fourth man knocked at Heaven's portals. This is all just a dream. But the voice within said,



“Who is it that seeks entrance into Heaven and what is the password?” And the man on the outside said, “I’m a Christian. I’ve given my heart to Christ. I’ve been born again. In my hand no price I bring; simply to Thy cross I cling.” And the voice within said, “Open wide the gates and let him in, ‘For of such is the kingdom of Heaven.’”

Have you ever done that? Have you ever said, “Lord, I’m not trusting my honesty, I’m not trusting my charity, I’m not trusting my religion! Lord Jesus, thank You for dying for me. I trust You.” And you do that, and I promise you on the authority of the Word of God, you’ll be Heaven-born and you’ll be Heaven-bound, and Joyce and I’ll meet you just inside the eastern gate. Let’s pray.

Father God, I pray today that many will say an everlasting, “Yes,” to Christ and be saved. Now, let’s get it settled right now. I want you to pray this prayer after me, “Dear God,” just pray it right now, “Dear God, I’m a sinner, I’m lost, I need to be saved, I want to be saved. Jesus, You died to save me, You promised to save me if I would trust You. I do trust You with all of my heart. Come into my heart, forgive my sin, save me, Jesus. I trust You to do it right now. Thank You for doing it. Lord Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me not to be ashamed of You. You’re now my Lord and my Savior, and I will live for You the rest of my life, not in order to be saved, but because You saved me by Your grace. Out of gratitude, I will live for You, my God. In Your name I pray, Amen.”



PO Box 38300 | Memphis TN 38183-0300 | (901)382-7900