

When We All Get to Heaven

Sermon May 29, 2022

Scripture reading: Micah 4:1-5, Luke 12:35-40 & Revelation 21:10-22:12

Golden Verse: *“Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.”* Revelation 22:12

Today we celebrate Ascension Day, which marks the day the resurrected Jesus returned to Heaven after 40 days back on Earth. According to the first chapter of The Acts of the Apostles, after appearing to the Apostles on various occasions during a period of 40 days, Jesus was taken up in their presence. He was then hidden from them by a cloud, a frequent biblical image signifying the presence of God. This indicated a new relationship between Jesus and His Father and between Jesus and us, His followers, rather than a simple physical relocation from earth to Heaven.

Also, Jesus returned to Heaven, from where He came on Christmas night. Heaven is a place where He creates a place for all of us, and where He will take us after we finish our mission on this earth.

Even Christians often ask: what is Heaven?

The Word of God, the Bible, clearly teaches that, for all who know and love the Lord Jesus, a glorious place of joy and blessings is reserved for Heaven.

Heaven is a wonderful place.

In the Bible, the word Heaven has three meanings.

- Genesis 1:8 calls the region in the clouds this way.
- Then the star world is called Heaven in Genesis 1:17.
- Finally, Heaven is called the abode of God. Paul in 2 Corinthians 12: 2-4 calls this “paradise” or “third Heaven”. Heaven is always referred to as “above”.

We all want to know what Heaven is like. Although there is a lot of mystery around Heaven, the Bible still gives some useful insight into what this place is like. Let’s examine what God’s Word teaches us about Heaven.

There are at least three things we can remind ourselves of Heaven while we live on Earth. As we get tired here on Earth, it can be encouraging to know that our true home is in Heaven.

Jesus spoke clearly about how to look at our lives in the light of eternity. Matthew 6:19-21 says: *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

Heaven is a real place.

Heaven is a destination. It is not a dream or an abstract idea. The Bible describes it as a place where there are homes, rivers, creatures, and even a city.

In Revelation 22:1-5 it says: *“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.”*

This section provides many details about Heaven. Up there, in our new life, we can expect to enjoy God’s creativity. There will be water, fruit, trees, a throne and we will be able to meet our good God.

In John 14:2, Jesus even speaks of a home that God has made for all of us. *“My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?”* We already have there an eternal home in which we will live, a place where all our needs are met and the joy of God is available to us forever.

Heaven is an awesome place.

It is very important to know because when we are thinking about our future, it is comforting to know that we are not ending life, but we will begin a new life in a **new home**.

The Bible tells us that, at the end of our lives, we can come home to Jesus with anticipation. According to Revelation 21:4, *“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”*

God, who created the universe, created for you and me, and for all those who love Him, a beautiful eternal home.

1 Corinthians 2:9 adds: *“However, as it is written: “What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived” - the things God has prepared for those who love Him.”* God’s love is manifested to us in the creation of Heaven.

The throne of God is in Heaven.

One of the most important aspects of Heaven is that we can live there in the presence of God. In the book of Revelation, John, a disciple of Jesus, is raptured to see Heaven. In Revelation 4, he describes the majestic throne of God. This non-worldly scene is just a glimpse of God’s majesty that we will see in Heaven. God not only saves us from sin and death, but takes us home to be with Him forever. He welcomes us into His family because He loves us.

According to Philippians 3: 20-21: *“But our citizenship is in Heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.”*

As we get tired here on Earth, it can be encouraging to know that our true home is in Heaven. We look forward to the day we can meet our Saviour face to face.

What will Heaven be like?

In Romans 6:23 we read: *“For the wages of sin is death, and the gift of God is eternal life in (through) Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Grace is the gift we continually receive because one of the benefits of grace is eternal life.

Heaven is:

- A meeting place where you can be together again with your loved ones who have accepted God's grace.
- The place where we will be rewarded for whom we have become and for the way we have served others on earth.
- The place where we receive a new commission based on our God-given and shaped character. We will have tasks that we will love to do, using the gifts we have received from God.
- A place of relief where we get rid of all our pain and suffering, sadness, sorrow and grief, depression and loneliness.

It will be a wonderful place! God's gift to you and to me.

There is only one pitfall, we have to accept it. If we get a gift but we don't unpack it, the gift is pointless. We need to understand that Jesus Christ makes the gift of grace available to everyone.

Peter Drucker was a famous person. He was the father of American business management. He had a regular column in the Wall Street Journal. He was a great man who wrote dozens of books. Somebody once asked him: "How did you become a Christian?" He replied: "When I first heard about grace, I realized I would never get a better offer than that."

Nor will you get a better offer than God offers you today. Please, open your life to the grace of God through Jesus Christ. This is your only hope. And, talk about it with others. Amen