

“The Essentials Of Our Faith”

Session XL

August 21, 2011

“The Ultimate Issues Of Life: ‘Heaven’ Or ‘Hell’?”

Part One: “Heaven” – The Eternal Destiny Of The Believer!

Introduction:

Robert Lewis, originator and teacher of *Men’s Fraternity*, has said,

*“Life as we know it turns on two world views: 1) **There’s more!** . . . after this life; and, 2) **There’s nothing more!**”*

He further adds:

*“Death as we know it offers four possible outcomes: 1) **It’s over!** 2) **It’s over and everyone will be okay!** 3) **It’s over and I’m good enough for what’s next!** 4) **It’s over and I will need help for what is next!**”*

How do we know what happens when we die? Without God’s help to answer this ultimate question, we are left to mankind’s thoughts and opinions. Historically, these have differed from the atheist on one side to the Bible-believing Christian on the other.

The “atheist” offers the suggestion that since there is no God or spiritual reality, **death** simply brings “non-existence” – we simply cease to exist! There is no “after-life” or eternal existence. There is no “Heaven” or “Hell”. This present human life is all there is!

The modern “universalist” shows the range of opinion by believing in **life** after death and that all mankind is redeemed!

“. . . all men are now saved, though all do not know it. Therefore the job of the preacher and the missionary is to tell people that they are already saved. . . . God’s radical love pursues men until all are saved. . . . (Universalists) appeal to the nature of God as being totally love. How, then, they ask, could such a God condemn anyone either in this life or the life to come?” --Charles Ryrie

The “Bible-believing Christian” contends that every human **lives** after death, but that the redeemed go to “Heaven” and that all others go to “Hell”. Jesus said, *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me,”* John 14:6.

A confident and certain answer about what happens when we die demands **divine revelation**. God must help us! He must reveal to us what we cannot know without His

help. This needed **divine revelation** is the basic claim of the Bible! It claims to be God's revelation of Himself and His provision of answers to the ultimate questions of life. While this claim seems ludicrous to the "modern mind", it is the foundation for what the Christian believes. The question of "Heaven" and "Hell" are prime examples.

A Practical Question: "Why has 'Heaven' lost so much credibility and importance in our generation?"

- 1) The only 'Heaven' most of us know is _____ and _____!
--Like _____ on a _____;
--Like _____ a _____;
--Like _____ in a _____!
- 2) We have become _____ with trying to build a ' _____ ' for ourselves _____! (See I John 2:15-17)
- 3) We have rarely been offered a Biblical _____ of 'Heaven' that is truly compelling and motivating! (See I John 3:1-3)

"HEAVEN": The Believer's Eternal Home!

"The Lord promised to prepare a place for His own. At the Rapture and resurrection of the Church the saints of this age are, after judgment (the Judgment Seat of Christ) and marriage (the Marriage Supper of the Lamb), installed in that prepared place. They are joined by the saints of the Old Testament at the time of their resurrection at the Second Advent (Coming). This dwelling place prepared for the 'Bride', in which Old Testament saints find their place as servants (Rev. 22:3), is moved down into the air to remain over the land of Palestine during the Millennium, during which time the saints exercise their right to reign. These saints are in their eternal state and the city (the New Jerusalem) enjoys its eternal glory. At the expiration of the Millennial Age, during the renovation of the earth, the dwelling place is removed during the conflagration, to find its place after the re-creation as the connecting link between the New Heavens and the New Earth."
--Dwight Pentecost (Things To Come, p. 580)

"... if we look at the Heavenly City itself, it is eternal. ... There are two descents of the city in Rev. 21, one at the beginning of the Millennium (v.10), and the other at the commencement of the eternal state (v.2). ... at the end of the Millennium the Old Heaven and Earth pass away and naturally the city would disappear from the scene of the convulsion. Then, when the New Earth dawns on our view, the Heavenly City again comes down, and takes its place permanently in the New Heavens and Earth."

--William Kelly

I. Heaven is a life of “_____” with Christ!

--“ . . . for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”

(John 14:2-3) **Note:** Heaven is “_____”!

--“For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face . . .” (I Cor.13:12)

--“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 shall see Him just as He is.” (I John 3:2)

--“And they will see His face . . .” (Rev. 22:4)

Caution:

“There is the danger that the redeemed one will become so occupied with the anticipation of his own experience of glory that the supreme glorification of the Godhead will be lost. Our occupation in the eternal state will not be with our own position or glory, but with God Himself. . . . ascribing ‘blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, . . . unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and forever’ (Rev. 5:13).”

--Dwight Pentecost

II. Heaven is a life of “_____”!

--“And I heard a voice from Heaven, saying, write, ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!’ ‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them.’” (Rev. 14:13)

Note: While Heaven is a place of “rest” from labor, this does not imply that the Child of God will be “sitting around” with nothing to do! God is a dynamic “Creator”. It is logical to think that Heaven will be filled with meaningful and creative activity, perhaps involving the unexplored reaches of a renewed universe!

III. Heaven is a life of “Full _____”!

--“ . . . now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.” (I Cor. 13:12)

“As long as we are on earth, we see things dimly and indistinctly, as if we were looking in a blurry mirror. Heaven, by contrast will be like seeing things face to face, i.e., without anything between to obscure the vision. Now our knowledge is partial, but then we shall know just as we also are known – which means more fully. We will never have perfect knowledge, even in Heaven. Only God is omniscient. But our knowledge will be vastly greater than it is now.”

--William MacDonald

Observation:

“The Bible says Heaven is a place of ‘resolution’ – of this life’s loose ends; of this life’s points of confusion.”

--Robert Lewis

--Illustration: C.S. Lewis said that our first thought upon entering Heaven will be,

“_____”!

IV. Heaven is a life of “_____”!

--“*And nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.*” (Rev. 21:27)

--Note: Sin has a “_____” effect on the Christian’s life in this world!

“And if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed [vexed] by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented [vexed] day after day by their lawless deeds).” II Pet. 2:7-8

V. Heaven is a life of “_____”!

--“*And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.*” (Rev. 21:4)

--Note: Robert Lewis states that Heaven is a place of “altered states”:

A. The Redeemed will have new _____!

B. The Redeemed will have new _____!

VI. Heaven is a life of meaningful “_____”!

--“*There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and the Lamb will be in it, and His bondservants will serve Him.*” (Rev. 22:3)

--Note: A “bondservant” voluntarily devoted himself to the personal “service” of his master. The result was “chosen” service from the heart! The end result was fullness of purpose and meaning! With the “curse” on nature and work (Gen. 3:17-19) being removed, all of nature will work in perfect harmony with the will of God!

--Note: Robert Lewis states that Heaven is a place of “action and adventure”!

VII. Heaven is a life of “_____”!

--“*Then He said to me, ‘It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.’*” (Rev. 21:6)

--“*But just as it is written, ‘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.’*” (I Cor. 2:9)

“No redeemed individual could ever fully understand the glory of the prospect set before him. . . . The glory of our expectation is that we shall be transformed into His likeness, being sinless, deathless, and experiencing the perfection of development.”

--Dwight Pentecost

--Note: Robert Lewis states that Heaven is a place of “endless surprises”!

VIII. Heaven is a life of “_____”!

--“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.” (Rom. 8:18)

--“For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison.” (II Cor. 4:17)

--“When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.” (Col. 3:4)

*“When the Church has been joined in marriage to the Bridegroom and is installed in her prepared place she will **never be moved out of it again**. The Church enters into her eternal state at the Rapture. When the Lord returns with His ‘Bride’ to reign (during the Millennium), her dwelling place is not to be left unoccupied for a thousand years. Rather, her place of occupancy is transferred from Heaven to a position over the earth. . . . This dwelling place remains in the air, to cast its light, which is the shining of the effulgence of the Son . . .”* --Dwight Pentecost
“ . . . during the interval between the Marriage of the Lamb, and the New Heaven and New Earth in the eternal state, she (the Church) has a very blessed place in the eyes of God and man. It is the Church’s Millennial display!” --William Kelly

IX. Heaven is a life of “_____”!

--“After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in Heaven, saying, ‘**Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God**’ . . . ‘**Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.**’” (Rev. 19:1, 6)

**“The Bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear Bridegroom’s face;
I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of grace --
Not at the crown He giveth,
But on His pierced hand:
The Lamb is all the glory of Immanuel’s land.”**