“The Reality Of Heaven”, Eternal Realities, Part 3 of 4 – June 2, 2013 at SBC

Colossians 3:1

Last week, we looked at, “The Reality of Hell”, and this week, and next, . . we’re going to look at, “The Reality of Heaven.” The truth is, a lot of times, we’re just not too excited, . . . about Heaven. We’re much more interested, in earth, . . . then, we are, . . . about Heaven. And, really, . . . that’s, too bad!

Because, we’ve been sold, a bill of good, . . . about Heaven. The fact is, the reason, we don’t get excited, about Heaven, . . . is we have a faulty image of it. We don’t realize, how cool, how exciting, how incredible, how so much better, . . . than earth, it’s going to be.

Earth is, an incredible place. We like this place a lot, in spite of the fact, that it’s broken. That nothing actually works, the way, it ought, to work. No relationship, is perfect. Nobody, is perfect. Nothing is perfect, . . on this planet, . . . because sin, has broken the planet. But, this is all we know, so we can’t understand, how cool, . . . Heaven, really is. Most of our ideas, are warped, . . because, they came, from Hollywood.

Heaven’s not, . . going to be all white. You’re not, . . going to have wings. You’re not, . . going to be an angel. You’re not, going to be, . . . a little chubby cherub. You’re not, going to wear a white robe. You’re not, going to, float on clouds. And, you’re not, going to play a harp. Can you think of anything, . . . more boring?

So, we’re going to look at, the real thing. Colossians 3:1 – *“Since you have been raised, to new life with Christ, set your sights, on the realities of Heaven,* [the “realities of Heaven” – not what Hollywood gives you, not the bill of good, that you’ve seen by artists, and what people have tried to think up. Set your sights, on **the realities**, . . . of Heaven] *where Christ sits, at God’s hand, in the place, of honor, and power.”*

So, we’re going to look at, the realities of Heaven, . . . and, specifically, we’re going to look at, these questions: What is Heaven? Where is it? What is Heaven like? \*\* **What is Heaven?** The Bible tells us, 3 things.

**1. It’s where, . . . God lives, . . . and, rules**. In the Bible, it’s called, “the dwelling place of God, . . . the house of God.” It’s called, . . . “the city, of God.” Thirty one times, Jesus calls it, “the kingdom of God”, . . . or, “the kingdom of Heaven.”

It’s where, God not only lives, . . . but, He rules. Psalm 123:1 – *“Lord, I look up to You, up to Heaven, . . . where You rule.”* It’s where, God lives, . . . and, rules.

**2. It is a, . . . real place**. It’s not, . . . a state of mind. It’s not, . . . a state of being. It’s not, some disembodied condition, where you’re going to float around, . . . without a body. It’s not, nirvana. It’s not, nothingness. It’s not, . . . a dream like state. It’s not something, intangible, and ethereal. It’s not, a feeling. It is, . . . a real place.

In fact, the Bible says, that in Heaven, there are streets, there are trees, there is water, there are homes. It is, . . . a physical place. And, you will have, a physical body. It’s not, some kind of, floating around, in outer space.

John 14:2 – *“There are many rooms (*or mansions*), in My Father’s home. I’m going, to prepare a place, for you. If this were not so, I’d tell you, plainly.”* Heaven is, . . . a real place. It’s not, a state of mind.

 Jesus said, in Matthew 6:20 – *“Store up for yourselves, treasures in Heaven, where moths or rust, can’t destroy it, and, where thieves, can’t break in, and steal it.”*

If Heaven, were just, . . a state of mind, of being, consciousness, you couldn’t store anything, up there. But, He says, you can store up, . . treasure, in Heaven. We’re going to come back to that, because He says it, about five times, in the New Testament. But, it’s where God lives, and it’s a real place, and, . . . (this is the cool thing), . . .

**3. Heaven, . . . was designed, . . . for us**. It was designed, . . . for you, and for me. Specifically, designed, . . . for us. This is such, an amazing thing, that God not only, designed the earth for us, so we could live, . . . and, it could sustain life. But, He also, . . . designed heaven, . . . for us. Not for Himself, . . . but, for us.

Matthew 25:34 – *“Come, you who are blessed by My Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom, prepared, for you.”*  Heaven, was prepared, . . . and, it was prepared, for you, . . . from the foundation, of the world.

When God, started thinking up earth, He also, started thinking up Heaven, because we’re not meant to live here. This is not, all there is. There’s more to life, . . than just, here and now. There’s more to life, than, just this life.

You’re going to spend, eighty years, on this planet – maybe a little less, . . maybe, a little more. But, . . that’s it. And, really, that’s a good thing. Because, you don’t want to live, . . in an imperfect place, forever. You want to live, . . . in a perfect place, forever.

So, you’re going to spend, . . . at the most, a hundred years here, on the earth. You’re going to spend trillions, and, trillions and trillions, and gazillions, . . . to infinity, and beyond, . . you’re going to live, in eternity. God says, I designed it, . . . for you.

Friends, this is such, an amazing expression, of the love of God. The Bible tells us, that God created, the entire universe, . . . because, He wanted, a family. He wanted a family, . . . that, would live with Him, forever. He wasn’t, lonely. God has never been lonely, . . . because, God is fulfilled in Himself, . . . and, He’s in relationship to Himself, because, God is love – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So, . . . He wasn’t, lonely.

He said, “I want to express My love, . . . by creating, human beings. I’m going to make them, . . in My image.” We’re not, . . . gods. You’re never, going to be, a god. You’re human. You’re not going to be, a god, in Heaven, and you’re not going to be, an angel, in Heaven. You’re going to be, . . . a human being, in Heaven. But, God said, I wanted to make these, human beings, . . so, that, I could adopt them, . . into My family.

Ephesians 1:5 – *“God’s unchanging plan, has always been, to adopt us, into His own family, by bringing us, to Himself, through Jesus Christ, and this gave Him, great pleasure.”* You were planned, . . . for God’s pleasure. God said, I want you, . . . to be a part, . . . of My family.

There’s a word, . . . for God’s family. 1 Timothy 3:15 – *“God’s family, is the church.”* The church, is the only thing, that’s going to last. One day, this earth, . . . is going to burn up. The only thing, that’s going to last, . . is people, who are part of God’s family, . . who have chosen, to be a part of His family, in faith, and in obedience.

1 Peter 1:4 – *“God has reserved, a priceless inheritance, for His children, and it is kept, in Heaven, for you, pure, and undefiled, beyond the reach, of change, and decay.”*  Heaven is a place, He’s preparing, . . for family.

And, by the way, another analogy, in scripture, . . . the Bible calls, the church, . . .“the bride of Christ.” It’s like, He’s saying, I’m preparing, this place, . . . for My bride. I want, to give her, . . . the best. He says, My family, My bride – this is what, I’m preparing for you, . . . to spend eternity, . . . with Me, . . . forever.

Ephesians 1:10 – *“This is God’s purpose: that when the time is ripe, . . . He will gather us all together, from wherever we are – in Heaven,* [those who have already died], *or on earth,-* [those who haven’t died yet], *to be with Him, in Christ, forever.”*

Notice, it says “forever.” You were made, . . . to last forever. That’s why, you’re made, in God’s image. The implication is, . . . you’re going to last forever, . . . one of, two places – heaven or hell.

As we talked about, last week, . . . you get to choose, . . which door, you’re going to go out – “my” way, . . . or, God’s way. Jesus’ way. Jesus said, . . . *“I am the way.”*

Hebrews 13:14 – *“For this world, is not our home; we are looking forward, to our city, in Heaven, which is yet, to come.”* Once, you’ve become a part, of God’s family, there’s a whole lot more to life, . . . then, just, here and now. Really, this world, . . . is not our home, . . . we’re just, a-passing through! God says, your ultimate home, . . . is in Heaven. It’s a, real place. It’s where God lives, . . . and, it was designed, for us.

**The question, then, is, . . . Where is Heaven?** The answer is, . . . We don’t know. All we know, is this. It’s,

. . out of this world! We know, . . . that. We definitely, know that, it is not, on earth. Heaven, is not a place, on earth, regardless of what, the songs say. Heaven, is not a place, . . . on earth. It is, . . . out of this world.

That’s why the Bible says, in many places, like Psalm 53:2 – *“God looks down from Heaven, at people on earth, to see if there, are any, who are wise, and who worship Him.”* While we don’t know, the location of Heaven –it’s a specific place, . . . but, we don’t know the location – but, we do know, the way. Jesus said, in John 14:6 – *“I am the way.” “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one, comes to the Father, but by Me.”*

Romans 3 – *“God has shown us, a different way, to Heaven. Not, by being good enough, and, trying to keep, His laws. But, by a new way, . . . promised in scriptures, a long time ago.”*  His name, . . is Jesus.

\*\*\*\* So, . . . **what is Heaven like?**

This is the one, we really want to know, the answer to. The Bible says, that Heaven, . . . is a mystery. Part of it is, we just don’t have the mental capacity, to understand other dimensions, when we live, in a three dimensional world. We live on a planet, that rotates around the sun, on a 24 hour rotation, . . . so we have, a concept of time.

Job 11:7-9 – *“Can you understand the mystery, surrounding God almighty? They are higher than the Heavens, and deeper than the grave. So what can you do, when you know so little? And, these mysteries outreach the earth, and the ocean.”*

A few of years ago, . . . our family went to Disney World, for the very first time. People were trying to tell us, what Disney World, was going to be like. What, a waste of time! You can’t, understand Disney World, until, you go. When you get there, you’re going, . . . *Whoa*! (It’s different, . . . than, 25 years ago.)

There are some experiences in life, . . . that, are simply, . . . indescribable. You just can’t, describe them. The feeling we felt, when we saw our children, . . . for the very first time. That, is an indescribable, feeling.

There are some things in life, . . . you simply, have to experience. All the art, and all of the songs, and all of the writing and poetry, . . . and, everything, can’t describe, what Heaven, is really like, because the truth is, there’s really nothing on earth, to compare Heaven to. It’s much greater, more fulfilling, more beautiful, more exciting.

1 Corinthians 2:9 – *“No eye has ever seen, and no ear has heard, and no mind has ever imagined, . . . what God has prepared, for those, . . . who love Him.”*

Many of you, have got a pretty vivid, imagination. We can think up, some pretty big things. Some people, are big dreamers, or visionaries. Some have, a wild imagination. But, God says, “You think of, . . use your imagination, to think of the greatest thing, you think Heaven, could be, . . . and, I can top that.”

So, all we can do, is take the ten, top peek experiences, in our life, throw them all together, and multiply them, by an exponential factor, of a billion, and go, “That must be, what it’s like, . . . to be in, a perfect place.”

\*\* So, . . . we don’t really know, what Heaven’s like. And, even the things, I’m sharing with you, today, . . . are just a pale explanation, . . . of what Heaven’s really like. But, the Bible does give us, some very important information, on Heaven. We’re going to use a lot verses, that are not in your notes, . . . so, jot these scripture references down, . . . and, check them out, later.

\*\*\*\*\* I’m going to give you five things, that will not be in heaven:

(And, then next week, six things, . . . that, will be in heaven. Heaven’s just, too big, to cover, in one week.)

1. The first thing, that’s not going to be in Heaven, . . . is sickness.

1 Corinthians 15:40 – *“Everything in the Heavens, has a body, and so does everything, on earth. But, each one, is very different. These earthly bodies will die, but the bodies that are raised, will live forever. Our ugly, and weak bodies will become, beautiful and strong.”*

Praise God! The Bible says, that there won’t be, . . . any sickness, in Heaven. Why? Because, you’re going to get, a new, perfect body. You will have, a body, in Heaven. When Jesus arose, from the dead, he was in bodily from. He also, sat down, and ate a couple of meals. So, I know we’re going to eat in heaven, . . . because, Jesus did, . . . with His resurrected body.

1 Corinthians 15:45-49 – *“Just as each of us, now has a body like Adam’s, so someday, we shall have a body, like Christ’s.”*  Just like Jesus, . . . we’re going to have a perfect body, . . . and, that means, no sickness.

2. Second, . . . no sadness.

Revelation 21:4 –*“God will wipe away, every tear, from their eyes.”* Did you know that, the Bible says, God has stored up, every tear, in Heaven, . . . that, you’ve ever cried? He’s kept, a record, of it. Your tears, . . . your pain, . . . God knows about. He cares about.

But, when you get to Heaven, there’s going to be, . . . no more sadness. That’s, a good thing. No more, broken hearts. No more, rejection. No more, loneliness. No more, sorrow. No more, sadness. No more, grief. No more, heartache. That, . . . is Heaven.

He will wipe away, every tear, from your eyes. There will never be, a split second, . . . in the billions, and trillions of years, you’ll live, . . . that, you’ll have sadness, . . . or, grief, again. Or, depression.

Those of you, who are right now, going through grief, . . . you’re carrying the grief, for a loved one, or you’ve been going through, a period of depression, . . . one of the things, that does in our life, . . is it just makes Heaven, be a little bit, more close. We want to go to Heaven, . . . when we’re in pain. Why? Because, there is none, there. No pain, whatsoever! Not only, is there no sickness, and no sadness, . . . the Bible says . . .

3. No, . . . suffering.

Revelations 7:16 – *“No more hunger, no more thirst, no more scorching heat.”* When I get to Heaven, my wife and I, won’t have different controls, on the thermostat, any more. Why is that you marry somebody, . . . who’s so much hotter or colder, than you are? I don’t know. But, the truth is, . . . there’s no suffering. Every one of your needs, will be satisfied. Not only that, but no suffering, no sadness, no sickness, . . .

No suffering, . . . whatsoever. No children, . . . who suffer, unfairly, for whatever reason. None of us, . . suffer.

4. No sin.

Jude 24 – *“God will bring you, into His glorious presence, innocent of all sin, and with great joy.”* We talked about this, last week. Heaven is a perfect place, . . . and, I’m not perfect, and neither are you. So, God has to come up, . . . with a solution, because there’s no way, . . . we’re getting in.

I stopped, being perfect many, many, many years ago. And, you did too. All have sinned, all have fallen short. We’ve all, . . . blown it. We’re all, sinners. We’ve all, made mistakes. Nobody lives, . . . a perfect life. Nobody. But, Heaven’s perfect, how can God let imperfect people, into Heaven, without, messing it up?

That’s what, Jesus Christ, came to do. To die on the cross, and pay for all our sins, to wipe it all out, to forgive us, and to make us perfect, inside. So that, when we go into Heaven, He says we will be innocent, of all our sin.

One of the things, that’s going to happen is, when you see Jesus Christ, **face to face**, . . . the Bible says, your character, will be instantly changed, . . . to be like Him. It’s still going to be, the same you. People are going to, recognize you. You’re still, going to have, . . . your personality.

God would not waste, what He’s put into you. God isn’t going to take, what He made you to be, . . . and, then, turn you into a robot, when you get to Heaven. You’ll still, be you. He made you, to be you, and He wants you, to be you, not only in eternity, but, here on earth. But, He says your character, is going to become, . . like Jesus.

I don’t know about you, but I’m looking forward to the moment, that I no longer, have any hang-ups. That I no longer, have any fears. Can you imagine, what it’ll be like, to have no fear, no guilt, no resentment, no worry, no bitterness, no anger, no envy, no jealousy, no loneliness. Perfection! But, you’re still going, . . . to be you. You’ll be, a whole lot more fun, . . . to live with. And, I will too. No sadness, no suffering, no sin, . . . and, . . .

5. No death.

Immortality. Again, Revelation 21:4 – *“There shall be, no more death. No sorrow, no crying and no pain. All of that, will be gone, forever.”* Those of you, who are living, in chronic pain, . . . that’s, good news.

For those of you, who’ve suffered, with that pain, . . . in whatever part of your body, that you’ve suffered with, because, your body, is not perfect. It is broken here, on this planet, . . . God says, when you get there, . . you get, a new body. You get, new emotions. You get, new character. And, . . . there’s no death.

I’m glad, that I don’t have to live for eternity, with my habits, and my hurts, and my hang-ups. God says, I’m going to make it all perfect, . . . and then, they’ll be no death. Those are five things, you won’t find, in Heaven.

 (Next week, . . . six things, that you will find in Heaven. Are you ready? Are you, going to Heaven?)

**“The Reality of Heaven”, Eternal Realities, Part 3 of 4**

Colossians 3:1 – *“Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of Heaven, where Christ sits at God’s right hand in the place of honor and power.”*

**WHAT IS HEAVEN?**

 1. It’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 123:1 – *“Lord, I look up to You, up to heaven, where You rule.”*

 2. It’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 John 14:2 *– “There are many rooms (*or mansions*), in My Father’s home. I’m going, to prepare a place, for you. If this were not so, I’d tell you, plainly.”*

 Matthew 6:20 – “*Store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where moths or rust can’t destroy it, and where thieves can’t break in and steal it.”*

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 Matthew 25:34 – *“Come, you who are blessed by My Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.”*

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Hebrews 13:14 – *“For this world is not our home; we are looking forward to our city in Heaven, which is yet to come.”*

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Psalm 53:2 – *“God looks down from Heaven at people on earth to see if there are any who are wise, any who worship Him.”*

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1 Corinthians 2:9 – *“No eye has ever seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

 ***NOT IN HEAVEN****: No Sickness, . . . No Sadness, . . . No Suffering, . . . No Sin, . . . No Death*