

## INTRODUCTION

1. This morning we are taking another Sunday off from our study of 1 Corinthians not to talk about hell but heaven.
2. For the past two weeks we have considered what the Bible says about that horrible place that awaits all unrepentant sinners.
3. Today I want to talk about that wonderful place that awaits those who have repented and trusted Christ for salvation.
4. Just as hell is eternal, so is heaven.
5. 2 Corinthians 5:1 says, "For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."
6. The word "heaven" appears in NASB 463 times.
7. It appears 582 times in 550 different verses in the KJV.
8. The Hebrew word usually translated "heaven," *shamayim*, is a plural noun form that literally means "the heights."
9. The Greek word translated "heaven" is *ouranos* (the same word that inspired the name of the planet Uranus).
10. It refers to that which is raised up or lofty.
11. Psalm 103:11 says, "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him."
12. Isaiah 57:15 says, "For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite."

13. Both *shamayim* and *ouranos* are used variously in Scripture to refer to three different places. (MacArthur, John. [\*The Glory of Heaven: The Truth about Heaven, Angels, and Eternal Life\*](#). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1996. Print.)
14. There is the atmospheric heaven which blankets the earth.
15. This is the breathable atmosphere which is also known as the sky.
16. There's the planetary heaven where the planets, stars and moon are.
17. Then there's the third heaven where God dwells with his angels and his redeemed saints.
18. Heaven is known by various terms:
19. It's called a "barn" in Matthew 3:12, "His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."
20. It's called "the kingdom of Christ and of God" in Ephesians 5:5, "For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."
21. It's called "the Father's house" in John 14:2, "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you."
22. It's called "a heavenly country" in Hebrews 11:16, "But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them."
23. It's called "a rest" in Hebrews 4:9, "So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God."
24. Finally, it's called "paradise" in Luke 23:43, "And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."
25. Heaven is God's dwelling place and the place where angels and redeemed saints dwell with Him.
26. Matthew 6:9 says God is there when it says, "Our Father who art in heaven."
27. Matthew 24:36 says angels are there when it says, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone."

28. Hebrews 12:23 says the redeemed saints are there when it says, "to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect."
  29. Revelation 14:13 says the Holy Spirit is there when it says, "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."
  30. But most of all our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ is there.
  31. Hebrews 9:24 says, "For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."
  32. Now heaven is a big place.
  33. It's immeasurable.
  34. Jeremiah 31:37 says, "Thus says the LORD, "If the heavens above can be measured And the foundations of the earth searched out below, Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel For all that they have done," declares the LORD."
  35. Matthew 5:34 says that heaven is God's throne and it is eternal like God is (2 Cor.5:1).
  36. "Everything we love, everything we value, everything eternal is in heaven" (MacArthur).
  37. I already mentioned that God is there.
  38. Jesus is there.
  39. The Holy Spirit is there.
  40. Fellow Christians are there
- Hebrews 12:23 says, "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect."
41. Our names are recorded in heaven

Jesus tells the seventy disciples that returned with joy after seeing that even the demons were subject to them, “do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:20).

#### 42. Our inheritance is in heaven

1 Peter 1:3-4 says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.”

#### 43. Our citizenship is in heaven

Paul says in Philippians 3:20 that “Our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

#### 44. Our eternal reward is in heaven

To those who suffer because of their faith in Jesus, He says to you: “Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (Mat.5:12)

#### 45. Our Master is in heaven

Paul said in Ephesians 6:9 to those Christian masters to give up “threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.”

#### 46. Our treasure is in heaven

To His children, Jesus says in Mat.6:19-21, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

#### 47. This far outweighs hell, right?

#### 48. This is part of the Good news.

#### 49. But you cannot start here when witnessing to people.

#### 50. You must start with their sin and the horrible news of hell.

51. There are so many people that believe they're going to heaven when they're not.
52. John Owen said, "The entrance to hell is through the portals or heaven."
53. Another preacher said, "Everybody talking about heaven ain't going to heaven."
54. So we must get this right!
55. We don't want to give someone the false assurance of heaven when the reality is they're not saved and going to that horrible place called hell.
56. The Bible says in Galatians 5:19-21, "(19) Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, (21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."
57. Ephesians 5:5 says, "For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."
58. Revelation 21:8 says, "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."
59. Revelation 22:15 says, "(14) Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. (15) Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying."
60. So everyone talking about heaven is not going there but will be surprised to wake up in hell.
61. That's why we must "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able" (Luke 13:24).
62. Now for those who love God, who have been redeemed by Jesus Christ, the Bible says that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us.
63. Turn in your Bibles to John chapter 14.
64. The disciples were troubled.

65. Jesus had just told them in John 13:33, "Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'"
66. Peter asked in verse 36, "Lord, where are You going?"
67. Jesus responded by saying, "Where I go, you cannot follow Me now, but you will follow Me later."
68. Peter said, "(37) 'Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You.'" (38) Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times."
69. Peter, with the rest of the disciples, were troubled that He was leaving.
70. They had been with Him for 3 1/2 years.
71. They loved Him and His teachings and now He was leaving.
72. But what Jesus said in John 14:1-3 to comfort them should comfort all of us.
73. Let's look at the 6 concise truths He gave them...

## **LESSON**

### **I. Stop Being Troubled (v.1)**

1. The phrase, "Do not let your heart be troubled" is in the present tense which indicates ongoing action and would be better translated "Do not [continue to] let your heart be troubled" or "Stop being troubled"
2. The word for "troubled" is the Greek word *tarasso* (pres.pass.imp.)
  1. It means "to cause inward turmoil, *stir up, disturb, unsettle, throw into confusion*" (Arndt, William et al. [\*A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature\*](#) 2000 : 990. Print.)
  2. It occurs 18 times in the NT and is translated "terrified" in Matthew 14:26 of the disciples when they saw Jesus walking on the sea

3. It's used of Zachariah when he saw the angel and fear gripped him (Luke 1:12)
4. It's used to described Jesus' response to Mary at her weeping over her brother Lazarus' death in John 11:33
5. It's used in John 12:27 for Jesus' response at the thought of going to the cross
6. It's also translated "disturbed" in Acts 15:24

*Other events of that evening in the upper room had added to the emotional turmoil that the disciples felt.*

*They had been shamed by their prideful refusal to wash each other's feet, which prompted Jesus to humbly do what they refused to do (13:3–5).*

*They were dumbfounded to hear Jesus predict that one of them would betray Him (13:21–22) and appalled at the news that their stalwart leader Peter, seemingly the strongest and boldest of them all, would cravenly deny Christ (13:38).*

*They were also no doubt unsettled because they sensed that the Lord Himself was troubled (13:21).*

*MacArthur, John F., Jr. [John 12–21](#). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2008. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.*

This is a command to stop being agitated by all this.

He reminds them to...

## **II. Keep Believing in God (v.1b)**

1. "Believe in God" is either an indicative (fact) or an imperative (command)
2. It is a fact that they believe in God
3. Despite occasional lapses into idolatry, Israel had a heritage of faith and trust in God:
  1. Abraham “believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness” (Gen. 15:6)

2. Moses' charge to the nation, "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!" (Deut. 6:4), captures the essence of Old Testament faith.
  3. David cried, "To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in You I trust" (Ps. 25:1–2; cf. 42:5, 11).
  4. In another psalm he wrote, "But as for me, I trust in You, O Lord, I say, 'You are my God' " (Ps. 31:14)
  5. In a passage especially appropriate for the disciples' situation, David declared confidently, "When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You" (Ps. 56:3; cf. vv. 4, 11)
  6. King Hezekiah was commended because "he trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel; so that after him there was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among those who were before him" (2 Kings 18:5). In short, all "those who know [God's] name will put their trust in [Him]"
4. It is best to take this as an imperative rather than an indicative
  5. The word for believe (*pisteuo*) is also in the present tense
  6. It could be translated "keep on believing"
  7. In the midst of their troubled hearts they are to keep believing in God and...

### III. Keep Believing in Jesus (v.1c)

1. "Believe also in Me" is also a present imperative and best to take it as such
  1. The Lord was not calling the disciples to believe savingly in Him
  2. They had already done so (13:10–11)
  3. The present tense form of the verb *pisteuō* (believe) refers instead to an ongoing trust in Him
  4. Though they genuinely believed in Jesus, the disciples' faith was already beginning to waver
  5. Soon, when He was taken from them and they faced the traumatic events of His betrayal, arrest, trial, and crucifixion, it would reach its lowest point (MacArthur, John F., Jr. [\*John 12–21\*](#). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2008.



Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.)

2. Jesus is urging His followers to continue to believe in the Father and to continue to believe also in Him.” (Morris)
3. He emphasizes that in verses 10-12 where He uses "believe" 3 times in reference to Himself
  1. Believing is taking Jesus at His Word
  2. What He speaks is from the Father (v.10)
  3. The works He did spoke of the Father being in Him (v.11)
  4. Those who believe will do "greater works" not greater in kind but extent (v.12)

*"In all this the disciples must keep on (the imperatives are durative) trusting God and Jesus."*

*Lenski, R. C. H. [The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel](#). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961. Print.*

Now He comforts them with the anticipation of heaven

He says...

#### **IV. Heaven Has Many Dwelling Places (v.2a)**

"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you."

1. The "Father's house" is not a reference to the temple but a reference to heaven
2. "My Father's house" lends to the word "Father" and to "our Father, who art in heaven" a richer meaning
3. He has a house, οἰκία, a home, to which the "household of God" now on earth (Eph. 2:19) and all his children (Gal. 3:26; Rom. 8:14–17) shall be transferred

*All the tenderness and the attractiveness, the restfulness and the happiness that lie in the word "home" are thus in the loftiest degree applied to heaven. With only a stroke or two Jesus draws a picture which fills us pilgrims, who are still far from home, with both heavenly homesickness and the sure hope of soon reaching our home.*

*Lenski, R. C. H. [The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel](#). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961. Print.*

1. Your translation may say "mansions" but it should be rendered "dwelling places"
2. The Greek word translated "mansions" or "dwelling places" is the adjective *mone* and comes from the *meno* which means "to remain," "to stay," "to dwell" and it signifies "a dwelling place"

*D.A. Carson says, "Because the Latin Vulgate rendered it mansions, the AV/KJV, followed by the RV used 'mansions.'*

*However, since heaven is here pictured as the Father's house, it is more natural to think of 'dwelling-places' within a house as rooms (niv) or suites or the like.*

*The only other place the word occurs in the New Testament is in 14:23: 'My Father ... [and I] will come to him and make our home with him'—i.e. the believer, indwelt by the Spirit, thus becomes the 'dwelling-place', and hence the 'home', of the Triune God."*

*Carson, D. A. [The Gospel according to John](#). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991. Print. The Pillar New Testament Commentary.*

Jesus continues by saying, "if it were not so, I would have told you."

*"I have concealed from you no truth.*

*You have been cherishing this hope of a future abode with God. Had it been ill founded I would have told you plainly, as I have told you other things.*

*Had any of you been deceived, as Judas was, I would have made it known to you, as I did to him."*

Barnes, Albert. [Notes on the New Testament: Luke & John](#). Ed. Robert Frew. London: Blackie & Son, 1884–1885. Print.)

Everything Jesus told them was to prepare them for His departure

Therefore, He comforts their troubled hearts with the truth about heaven by saying...

## **V. Heaven is Prepared for You (vv.2b-3)**

Jesus says, "I go to prepare a place for 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."

1. This is one of the passages that refers to the rapture of the saints at the end of the age when Christ returns" (MacArthur, John, Jr., ed. [The MacArthur Study Bible](#). electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997 Print.)
2. Saying "I go" is a reference to His death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven.
3. "I will come again" is a reference to His rapture or return:
  1. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 says, "(51) Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, (52) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed."
  2. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 says, "(13) But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. (14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. (15) For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. (16) For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (17) Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. (18) Therefore comfort one another with these words."

Jesus is saying He is going to prepare a place for you and...

## **VI. You Know the Way (vv.4-6)**

1. He says to all His disciples "You know the way where I am going."
2. Thomas tried to speak for everyone as not knowing where He was going or the way but Jesus makes it clear He is the way in verse 6
3. The way to heaven is through Christ:
  1. He is the "I am" of Exodus 3:14
  2. He is the only way to the Father because He is truth and life and "no one comes to the Father but through Me"
  3. His way is exclusive and narrow
  4. Matthew 7:13-14 says, "(13) "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. (14) For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it."

## **CONCLUSION**

1. Have you come to Jesus?
2. Is He the One you're clinging too?
3. He is the only way to the Father.
4. There are no other ways, just one way.
5. As we said for two weeks now, to reject Jesus is to secure your place in hell
6. But to receive Jesus is to be granted eternal life with Christ
7. Heaven will be a beautiful place beyond our earthly comprehension
8. But in that day we will see "face to face" and "know fully just as [we] also have been fully known" (1 Cor.13:13)
9. What about you?
10. You can come to Jesus right now by turning from your sin and acknowledging that Jesus is the only way to the Father

11. And recognizing Him as the "I AM" and coming to Him as the only One who can grant you forgiveness through His sacrifice on the cross
12. Come to Him now as we pray.
13. Let's pray.