

# Heaven, Pt. 2

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[ 0 : 00 ] And now we'll do a few weeks and see how far this goes. Studying heaven to the best of our ability. I told you it's not an easy study. I don't believe it's a simple thing to just put into words and to try to picture in our minds what this place is.

I told you a few things last Sunday from the Bible kind of against the people that say they've gone to heaven and came back. And God told them to write a book and make money.

And so I gave you some scriptures and some reasons why that's not a leg to stand on there. It's not something we walk by faith, not by sight. And we don't receive the testimony of men regarding those things.

We receive the word of God. It's sufficient. And I told you a few things floating around about heaven from other religions and from other traditions and beliefs. And in the end, there's confusion.

There's diversity of beliefs about this. So where are we going to go to find what it really is, what the truth is? And so we're going to try our best to establish a teaching from the word of God.

[ 1 : 02 ] And so last Sunday morning, we started with this concept of the law of contrast.

Contrasting, maybe before we try to understand what heaven is, it might help us to understand what it is not.

And the reason I said that, I think that's the most relatable thing. Because we know nothing of the heavens, of the spiritual realm. We know only what the word of God gives us by that way.

And what we do know and experience and understand and relate to is this universe, this carnal life on this planet, this physical life. And so if we could contrast some things from what we understand and know and relate to and show you, well, heaven's not going to be like that.

It does give you a little bit of light. And so what I showed you last Sunday was that heaven is a holy place. The Bible says it's a holy place. And I contend that you and I just cannot fathom, we cannot grasp what that means, what that looks like, what that experience is going to be like to be in a holy place.

Because you've never been in one in your life. And even maybe the closest thing on this earth is having a time of fellowship with Jesus Christ on your own where it's sweet, where the word of God is alive to you, where you get something.

[ 2 : 12 ] There's something special in that moment, in that union. Or coming to church and particularly the real good times, the good services, the revival meetings where there's just an extra special something and the air is just clearer.

And the word of God is just alive in front of you. And sometimes there's such a sweet spirit and bond and fellowship in those meetings that it feels like this is a glimpse of heaven.

It feels like that. Just being around God's people. The world is far away from you. The flesh feels far away from you. You're getting the victory and submitting to the Lord. And it feels like that's maybe just a glimpse of that touch of what the holiness of heaven might be like.

But in reality, we can't comprehend that level of holiness. And so the best thing we can do is consider what it's not. And so I gave you some scriptures and showed you that heaven's a place without sin.

And you and I very well know what that's like. It's a place without sinners, borrowing from some scripture here in Revelation 21. And so I think just knowing the absence of those things that bother us in our walk with Christ, the things that hold us back, that's a blessing to consider.

[ 3 : 26 ] Well, I can't necessarily see what it is in front of me, but I know what it's not. I know I'm going to be putting this old man down once and for all. And then on top of that, we looked in Psalm 16 and saw that heaven is a place of perfect life, a place of perfect joy, a place of perfect pleasure.

And in the presence of God is fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore. And while I contend, again, you and I just cannot grasp what that entails and how big that is and how broad that is and how forever that is.

We can't get that here in this earth, in these bodies and in these minds. If you think you have an idea of joy and pure joy and fullness of joy, I think you're not even close.

That's my opinion. But when we study heaven in Revelation 21, we saw in verse 4 that it's a place without death, a place without sorrow, a place without crying, a place without pain.

And so those things we get and we understand. And to think of a life that's absent of all of that forever, well, that sounds pretty good. And even though we can't picture the fullness of joy and the pleasures forevermore, we don't understand what that pleasure would be.

[ 4 : 43 ] We can understand what the pain is. And to be absent from that, I'll take that. And I would say I'm sure most of you would too. So let's go to Revelation 21 and go to the end of the chapter.

We already read this verse last week, but I'll read it again for us. In Revelation 21, and the third thing I want to say by way of contrast is that heaven is a safe place.

And so in verse 27, There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie. That's not coming in.

We flip back to chapter 20 and consider something else, maybe even a little more stronger by way of the safety of heaven. In verse number 10, chapter 20, verse 10, the Bible says, And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The devil is going to be banished. There's a song that we sing, It will be worth it all. I believe it's in this hymnal. It says, The tempter will be banished.

[ 5 : 56 ] We'll lay our burdens down. And in that day and in heaven, you won't have to deal with the devil anymore. In the Bible, he's called the enemy. He's called the tempter. He's called the adversary.

And you won't have to deal with influences, his influence or his kingdom or dominion where influence would draw you away from the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's a safe place. I know you can't picture how holy and pure and righteous and clean and joyful and pleasurable and how great it's going to be.

But if you can imagine a place that's without sin and without sinners and without death and without pain and sorrow and crying, and without the devil to be tempting you and wearing you out, that's a place where I want to be.

It's a place where you and I can let our guards down. Where we can just enjoy what it means to be in the presence of God and rest in his presence.

[ 6 : 52 ] And in this world, you just can't do that. In this world, you can get a walk with Jesus Christ and it can be helpful and good, but at the same time inside of you is a flesh trying to pull you back from doing anything for God.

In that day, all of that's gone. You're going to be surrounded with the presence of God and the holy angels and all of the redeemed that, by the way, have been changed into his likeness.

And so it's a holy place. It's a perfect place. It's a safe place. And I think there's a few more thoughts I can give you here, but I think you get the idea where we're going. Everything in this life that's negative, everything that pulls you back and holds you back and draws you down and hurts will be removed.

And that alone is a good thing. And the curse that was placed on this earth from the very beginning will not be experienced in eternity. Not in heaven, not in God's place.

So there's a few ideas about heaven in the sense of contrasting our lives to the future. Now let's take a look into Revelation chapter 4. Flip back there.

[ 7 : 56 ] Now I want to take a look, a little different angle, on what we can discern from the Bible about heaven. And I'll just call this little section a heavenly experience.

Meaning John, the writer here of Revelation, beheld some things in heaven. He saw some sights and he saw some activities. And again, I'll remind you that this is not an easy study.

And trying to understand heaven and trying to take the scripture and know how literal something is. Or know if this applies to what our eternity is going to be.

Or if this is just a reference to a particular moment in time or something. It gets a little tricky. And I may borrow again from some passages. But it all has to do with God's presence and abiding in the

presence of God.

And so I've already told you that last week. Let's consider some things John wrote down. You're in Revelation chapter 4. Look at verse 1. And there was a rainbow round about the throne in sight. [9:21] Like unto an emerald. Now I find this interesting. And this really just intrigues me to no end. That what John first describes that he sees.

The very first thing he says I see is a throne and somebody on the throne. And then just color, color, color. Everywhere is brilliant color. Everything he sees is just radiating and glowing in glorious light and color.

In chapter 21, I won't go back there. But we read it a while ago. And maybe you can refer to it on your own. And chapter 21 is the city, New Jerusalem, that has all those precious stones and the foundations of it.

And with the lamb lighting the city on the inside, shining forth the glory of God of that city, I can only imagine that this thing is just beaming with glory and color.

And I truly think it's a light show that you and I just cannot comprehend. You're picturing something in your mind and it's not even close. It's something. But this is what John sees.

[10:21] It's a place of color. I might say it's a place of beauty. Later on in chapter 22, it describes a river that flows and it describes trees that are lining in it.

It shows you some kind of what we would call landscaping, some order to this. Some trees bearing fruit in their season. And there's this... We like that stuff down here.

We like to see the gardens that are just manicured perfectly. And to see all these colors blooming at all the same time. It's just a glimpse of what the Lord God has prepared for them that love Him.

And I can't comment more than this. I don't have much more to say about that aspect of heaven. But John, first thing he sees is, whoa, I've got to say something about this. It's this color here and this color there and this brightness.

He likens it to stones, which what else would he liken it to? Something he could see in the natural world. So he likens it to that. And a rainbow round about the throne.

[11:19] You'll see some of the very similar language in Ezekiel. It's either chapter 1 or chapter 10 where Ezekiel gets the vision of the cherubim. And it describes one sitting on the throne.

And it describes color. Just color of amber, like fire. Just that brilliant energy. And it describes the rainbow again round about. And so any vision of heaven is going to have color with it and brilliant bright light.

Look at chapter 4 and a little bit later in this passage. There's something else that we can discern about this heavenly experience. In verse 8 it says, Something else I want to add to this is heaven is a place of worship.

It's a place where God gets worshipped. Man gets worshipped down here. You might even say the devil gets worshipped down here. Something else gets worshipped down here. But up there nothing else is glorying in his presence.

And nor would they be even capable of it in the glorious presence of God in his holiness. It's a place of worship. You're going to understand clearer and better how much, how you were created to do that.

[13:03] To worship him. To ascribe glory to God. To fall down before him. To lift him up and exalt him. Today you get, probably like me, you just get distracted.

Or you get confused and you think, well I should be doing this. Or you plug yourself into work too much. Or you let entertaining things distract you. And you don't, I'm not telling you to crawl around church on your hands and knees.

But I'm telling you, I don't know if we walk in the doors thinking I'm here to worship him. I think there though, you'll get it. You'll get it in its entirety. This is what I, this is why I was created.

To give him glory. And to worship him. It's a place of worship. Look over at chapter 5. Chapter 5, and this continues throughout some of these early chapters.

Verse number 8. John sees this. When he had taken the book, the four beasts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the lamb. Boy, it's just like a knee jerk reaction.

[14:08] Down. Having every one of them harps and golden vials. Or golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sung a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book.

Now earlier it was, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power. And now when there's a situation where they can't find somebody worthy for the book. And they find him to be worthy. They just like break into song and turn it to verse 2.

And say, Thou art worthy to take the book. It's verse 2 of the same song of worshiping God and the Lord Jesus. And to open the seals thereof. For Thou was slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood.

And of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. And hast made us unto our God kings and priests. And we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne.

And the beast and the elders. And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand. And thousands of thousands saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power.

[15:08] And it's not just three things like it was in 4.11. Now it's power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. And every creature which is under heaven, on the earth, under the sea, and all in the sea, and all that are in them heard I saying, Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, under the Lamb forever and ever.

And then the echo of Amen comes out. And God is getting worship. He's getting the worship He deserves. Look over at chapter 7. Revelation 7 and look at verse 9.

John again beholds another scene. And here is again heaven, a place of worship. After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, and clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb.

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped Him, saying, Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honor and power and might be unto our God forever and ever.

Amen. I don't know if that stirs you or if that's just all kind of vague and confusing to you, but at any rate we can agree that heaven is a place of worship, of true and pure and unadulterated worship being given to the Lamb, to the one that sits on the throne.

[16:48] It's a place of worship. If you get a thrill in your heart when you worship God, that thrill is God inside of you, and it's just a foretaste of how it's going to be good, folks.

Don't think it's confusing to be like, Why would we do that all the time? It's going to be so fulfilling to be able to do this, to be able to ascribe the glory and the wisdom and honor to Him, to be able to say it with your mouth amidst the multitude around the throne.

You're going to love it. You're going to want more of it. But somebody's going to be like, Are we done? And somebody will try to start it off again. Let's go for round two. And somebody over there is going to be like, You know how they do it at basketball games or how they do their little cheers. Somebody just randomly threw out. Somebody wants to start it up again. They want to keep it going. There's just something in us that wants to do that stuff. And in heaven, we're going to want to do it, and it'll be the right place to do it.

And so we'll do it together. Come and find me. We'll stand beside each other, and we'll worship God together. Amen. So it's a place of worship. Now flip back to chapter 4.

[17:55] And here's a few others, just another thought here. Because we're dealing with the presence of God. Words can't express this. And the Bible's not.

This is veiled from us. It just truly is. And I don't think we could even understand if the words were put there. I don't know that we could relate. So there's some other things that bring out of this.

In verse 8, we read at the end of the verse that these four beasts, they're crying. They're saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is and is to come.

Now, what I want you to also consider, this is kind of a given, but heaven is a place of the presence of God. It's not just a place. It's like, I'm going to go to Magic Mountain and hang out today.

Now, this is a place where God is. Where His person is. When John gets there, when he's caught up in the Spirit, in verse 2, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

[18:57] And he's in the presence of God, and the things they say to him is, Holy, holy, holy. I've already described it last week a little bit, or tried to, but the holiness of God will be on display.

I wish I could comment on it. I wish I could tell you what that means, and what that's like, and I just can't. It's just left for your imagination, and your own spiritual walk with God, to discern and to consider what that may be.

But the holiness of God will be on full display, because His presence is there. There's something else in chapter 5, in verse 8. Is that the one I wanted?

Before I just fell down. That's not the one I wanted. Well, I wrote the wrong reference, and I wish I could pop it out of here real quick, but I have also written down that the power of God is on display in heaven.

I think that's later. Give me a second.

[ 20 : 11 ] I'll find this. Oh, oh, it's the short chapter. Is it 15?

Yeah, 15-8. I had 5-8. 15-8. That's way better. Look at 15-8. And so this is a scene in heaven. Verse 5, it starts with, After that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle, where the testimony in heaven was opened.

And seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues clothed in pure and white linen, having their breasts girded with golden girdles. One of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, who liveth forever and ever.

And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power. And no man was able to enter into the temple. And so in the presence of God, you'll get to see the glory of God.

You'll get to see the power of God on full display. We could say probably other words like light, the brightness of God, matching the glory of God. But these thoughts, these things are, they're alive.

[ 21 : 16 ] They're like literally, you're in the presence of God. Do you remember what we studied in Exodus when He came down on the mount? Remember what happened to that mount? It shook exceedingly and quaked and there was a tempest and blackness and darkness and a thick cloud.

There was lightnings and thunderings. It was just the atmosphere was totally unstable when the presence of God came down to the mountain. And in heaven, it'll be stable.

It'll be contained perhaps, but understand that in the presence of God, His holiness, His power, His glory, the light of God, all of that, best I can do, it's in there.

You're there. You're feeling it. You're seeing it. You're beholding it. And it's in front of you. Now come back to chapter 7. One more thing I want to say by way of a heavenly experience for the Apostle John.

In chapter 7, and notice in verse 16, I'll start back in 15. You see the throne there. Therefore are they before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple.

[ 22 : 23 ] And He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them or any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them.

And so the thought here is that heaven is going to be a place of satisfaction, a place of complete fulfillment. They're not going to hunger. They're not going to thirst anymore.

They're going to not need anything because the Lamb is going to provide. He's going to feed. He's going to lead them to live. He's going to take care of everything in heaven. I think you probably know that in your mind.

You maybe never put a verse to that or words to that thought. But what do you do in your lives here? You have to work your knuckles to the bone to pay your bills, to pay your rent, to keep things going, to feed the family.

You've got to work. You've got to put your time in, your effort. It's always on your mind. It never just goes away. Like unless somebody in here is just that satisfied and set up.

[ 23 : 28 ] And even if you are, your mind's on your money. I know it is. Because if you got it, you're thinking about it a lot. But if you don't got it, like the rest of us, and you're just going around trying to make ends meet, that is something that consumes a very large part of your life.

And I understand we walk by faith and we trust the Lord for these things, but you still have to write the check and you still have to see that number in the bank account. And this thing does. It takes a lot of your energy.

And it can really take a lot of... It can really wear on you, right? It can really beat you down if things are not working. But that's gone. That's gone in heaven.

That just disappears. The Bible says the eyes of man are never satisfied. That is, until he opens his eyes in heaven. And that day, in that moment, when you behold the glories of God in heaven, the

greed is gone.

The lust for the things of this life and in this earth and the pleasures and the toys and all the treats, it's just... It's gone. When you experience the pleasures forevermore that God has for you, the satisfaction and fulfillment of being in his presence, in his light, and being able to walk with him and him be your God and you be his people.

[ 24 : 43 ] And what goes on beyond that, I can only speculate. And we might do that in a few more weeks. I don't know. But for now, I just know that I'm going to be able to drop some stuff off and never have to pick them back up because I'm going to be satisfied.

The Bible describes it as rest. As rest. Not laying down. But do you know what rest is? I'll show you. We'll stop with this. I'll give you one little... Look at Genesis chapter 2.

It's a little cross-reference here to a Bible word. Do you know that the Sabbath was a day of rest? It was called the Holy Sabbath. And in that day of rest doesn't mean that you go lay down on a cot all day long. That doesn't mean that's what rest means. The word rest means you stop doing what you're doing.

You could just be sitting at the table cutting coupons out. I don't know what you do. But you're not working. You're not doing what you were doing.

[ 25 : 49 ] So you've rested from that. It means you ceased from that. And so heaven being a rest and it's the rest of God, it doesn't mean that we're just laying on pillows of clouds or something.

That's not it. It's meaning that we cease from the work. We cease from the labor. And we're satisfied in God. Now, Genesis chapter 2 verse 1 says, Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. Verse 3 says, God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.

He did not take a nap. That's not what it means. It means He ceased. And I think that's what the, I guess to give you the real thing, I'll just read this to you.

If you want to write it down, write it down. It's Hebrews 4. In Hebrews 4 it says in verse 9 and 10, There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

[ 26 : 56 ] For he that has entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works as God did from His. So the word rest is describing ceasing from your works.

And so I just thought I'd add that on there, a little Bible study to top off why I can call heaven a place of rest, not of sleep, not of slumber or being a sluggard and turning on the bed like the door in the hinges, but rather it's a place where we cease from our works, where we cease from our labor, where we cease from scraping and scrapping to get by and stay alive.

God provides. And God sustains and He feeds and leads and it's a place where we can just forget about it. We don't have to think about it.

He's just going to handle it. And so that in and of itself is a blessing too. These things are compiling. They're getting better and better. So I'm going to take a pause there on our study and stop a little early.

And part of the reason is I'd like to get some guys to help do a little bit of setup outside. If we can get some tents popped up, we're going to need them for sure. It won't take but a minute if we can get some hands on that.

[ 28 : 05 ] So let's pray and then we'll dismiss and get to that. Father, thank you for the study here this morning and for what we anticipate our future holds. We believe every word of God and I know that I'm not doing this justice.

I know that if you would come here and would speak to us on these things, we'd have such a better handle and such a better idea of what this is. And I don't know what else to say about it, but I thank you for the light that you've given and for what we can anticipate and believe and look forward to. We long to be with you and desire to drop this flesh and to be absent from the devil and from our sins and from this world. And Lord, from all the working and laboring of this life and the toil that is there, the sorrow and the pain that comes with it.

And Lord, like John prayed, even so come Lord Jesus. Come quickly. Come and take us to our home. We desire it. You created it for us.

You made it. You made us for it as well. We want to be like you. We want to see you as you are.

We want to be in your presence. We want to know what that fullness of joy feels like. And so Lord,

as we anticipate that, put that inside of us in our minds.

[ 29 : 18 ] Help us to not fancy this world. Help us to not love the things that are in it. Help us to stay true to you and to your word until you come and get us. And please bless our day and our fellowship, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Amen.