

The Wonders of Heaven

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 September 2011

[0 : 00] A place that's beyond our imagination. 1 Corinthians 2 verse 9 tells us of that.

! In 1 Corinthians 2 verse 9 it says, A place beyond our human imagination.

We can't really conceive of it, can we? We can't even picture it with our human terminology. In 2 Corinthians 5 verse 1 it tells us a little more about that place.

It says, 2 Corinthians 5 verse 1, For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

And it goes on that we're groaning to get there, to that place that we're going to abide forever, his dwelling place that he's preparing for us.

[1 : 24] And we're going to take a guided tour of that place today. I'm going to give you a guided tour of your future mansion, of your future eternal home, and point out some of its features.

I'm going to be like a real estate agent, but it's not going to cost you any money. But it's cost our Lord everything, of course, hasn't it? It's cost his expenditure of his blood that was expended on the cross.

But for us it is free. Free. No mortgage, no rent, no council rates, no water rates. Everything provided for eternity, forever.

And the very best of the best. Firstly, what will be in heaven? His presence will be there. His presence will be there. People ask, where is heaven? And the answer is, where God is.

Where God is. That is heaven. In Revelation 21, verses 3 and 4, if you'd like to flick there.

Revelation 21. Now this is a relevant message, this talk in church scenes of circles of relevance.

[2 : 36] Well, this is relevant, because you're going to be there. God willing, if you've trusted Christ, we know for a certainty you will be there. You will be in this heavenly dwelling.

In Revelation 21, from verse 3, you could read the whole chapter really. It says, And I heard a great voice out of heaven, this is John, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God, the dwelling place of God, the tent, the tabernacle of God, is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.

And everybody said, Hallelujah. For the former things are passed away. And he that sits upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.

Isn't that wonderful? It's going to be glory, isn't it? Because why? Because God will be there. His presence will be there. Shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

[4 : 06] He shall dwell with them, and be with them. Verse 3. In Psalm 16, 11, it says, That in his presence is fullness of joy.

In his presence is fullness of joy. Where is heaven? It is where God is. It is where God is. We can have a foretaste of it now, as we walk with our Saviour.

And think of that place of his presence. There's fulfilment there. There's comfort. There's joy.

There's relief. There's renewal. His presence will be there. It goes on in Revelation 21, verse 23, it says, And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

It says that the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it, in Revelation 21. But people today, the glory of God will be there.

They won't need... You know, people are worried. You know, scientists are worried. They're saying the sun is starting to, you know, in a few thousand years, not that we need to worry about it, but in a few thousand years, the sun will kind of fizzle out.

[5 : 24] I don't know how many thousands or hundreds of thousands of years. It's not going to matter. We're not going to need the sun anymore because the glory of God will lighten this place.

We won't need the sun or the moon for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb of God is the

light thereof.

God's glory will shine. His wonderful glory. All the darkness and all the shadows of the earth will pass away. It's going to be glorious, radiant, bright.

His presence will fill the place. It'll just so overwhelm the place because it's His dwelling place. And Revelation 22.5, it says, There shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light.

Now, I know a son who's bragging on about he's just got a solar system on his roof, and his wife was telling me how he goes and scours the horizons, and he checks the weather report daily to make sure.

And because he's got this wonderful new solar system on his roof, and he's got it geared up so great now that he's actually getting money from the grid. You know, the government's paying him to have solar power on his roof.

[6 : 35] But we're not going to care about solar energy then. We're not going to care about the light of the sun, because the light of the Lamb is going to be the light that's filling this place.

And there's going to be no light bills there. You won't have any electricity bills, no power bills. It's going to be a glorious, a glowing, wonderful place. The question is, do you, do you have a mansion there in the Father's house?

Do you have a dwelling place there? In John 14, he says, in my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you.

I go to prepare a place for you. And Philippians 1.23, it says, Paul writes, I'm in a strait, he says, I'm torn here, betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.

You know, for me to live is Christ, to die is gain. And to be with Christ, that's what he was hungering and longing for, to be in his presence. So, number one, a feature of this home, this dwelling place for eternity is his presence.

[7 : 45] Secondly, another feature of this glorious city is his life. His life. Revelation 22, from verse 1. We read it before. And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it and of either side of the river was there the tree of life, which bear twelve manners of fruits and yielded a fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

The tree of life. His life is going to be there. Verse 3. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it. It's a fact today that people are quite reliant on all kinds of medications and especially people that might, and it can happen genuinely, have depression and might need necessary medications and such like.

But it's a kind of sad fact, isn't it, in our world today. It's been calculated that in the USA, people consume 30 tonnes, 30 tonnes of aspirins, sleeping pills and tranquilizers per day.

That's a lot of medicine, isn't it? But, you know, you're not going to need 30 tonnes a day up there. Amen? All those things that you've got to keep count on and work out what's in your pill box and what you're supposed to do and not get mixed up.

[9 : 15] You're not going to worry about any of that up there. And people are living today in turmoil. They're lacking peace and rest. People are wanting a better life and sometimes they turn to, you know, could be necessary medication, could be unnecessary booze.

It could be illegal drugs that they turn to to get some kind of a satisfaction, some kind of a relief from their pain, from their concerns.

But up there, we'll have His life, a rich and full and complete life. We'll have the tree of life, the water of life, a picture of His abundant life, isn't it?

That we can enjoy in Christ. And it says there that the curse of sin and death will be gone. There'll be no more curse. There'll be no more of the effects of sin. No tears, no death, no sorrow, no pain, no night, no defilement, no broken hearts, no divided homes, no hospitals, no cemeteries, no undertakers, no crime, no hatred, no fears.

And it's a fact that, as someone has said, earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal. Of course, in our lot in life, we may bear some crosses, as we must.

[10 : 32] Our Saviour says we are to daily carry His cross. And yet, earth's sorrows, earth's sadness, earth's sickness, and griefs, will be left behind.

Earth hath no sorrows that heaven cannot heal. And this life, this life that we'll have with Him, with our Saviour, it's eternal. It's without end, without beginning or end.

It's eternal life, eternal relationship with God. And He offers this life freely, freely to all who will receive it. Revelation 22, 17, and let him, that is a thirst, come.

And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. Oh, aren't you thirsty this morning? Oh, it's just beautiful, isn't it?

Water, I'm going to make you all thirsty. Thirsty, longing for that water of life. Are you thirsty for the water of life? Thirsty for that water of heaven? That water of everlasting life?

[11 : 34] Come, He says. If you're not coming to Christ, come, come now, don't hold back. When we come to Him, He gives us life, more abundant, life absolute, life to the max.

And we can be set free for a life of fulfillment and purpose. D.L. Moody says, my interest is in heaven because I'm going to spend the rest of my life there.

You know, you might think, oh, this home that I've got, I'm going to spend the rest of my life there.

No, sir, there's a life in there, a life to come. That dwelling place that you might paint and care for and maintain and that lovely garden you might spend hours pulling all the weeds out of and planting in, it's going to be left behind.

There's one to come. That's everlasting. That's forever. And so we see, His presence is there, His life is there. And we're told that another aspect of heaven is His lordship.

His lordship. In Revelation 22.3, it says, His servants shall serve Him. His servants shall serve Him.

[12 : 44] We can truly serve and live for our Master as the King and the Ruler, the ultimate dominion and rulership of this city.

will be perfect. And we might have some governments change from time to time and governors change and premiers change and prime ministers change and presidents change.

But this ruler, of whom it says that one day the government shall be upon His shoulder, He is the perfect and absolute one. He can make no mistake. He doesn't go and have some affairs and cause some disastrous decisions of state and send countries to war and into defeat and into debt. This governor, this great one, this one on whom the government shall be on His shoulder is the perfect ruler, the one who's the ultimate. And Revelation 22.4, it says, and they shall see His face and His name shall be in their foreheads.

The best part of eternity is that we'll see Him. We'll see Him. We'll see His face. 22.4 of Revelation will be with Him to praise Him, to see that face.

[14 : 01] One day you're going to see that face. That face of whom it was said that His face was more marred than any man. His face was bruised and torn and shredded and wounded and hurt for you, for me, that face of compassion, that face of love, that face wounded for you, for me, that lovely face, that face with the eyes of love, with the eyes of still, of judgment.

For us, it is the Saviour's face and He looks on us with grace because of Calvary, because of our trust of our faith in Him, the face of mercy and grace.

He looks to us and we shall see Him in all His power and majesty. We'll see Him. George, you're going to see Him. Lila, you're going to see Him. You're going to see His face.

Paul, you're going to look and He will be there. You'll see that face. You'll see that face. Una, that king, that ruler of that city is going to look on you with grace if you've trusted Him.

If you're His by faith, He'll see you and you will see Him. You'll see His might, His greatness. There'll be perfect worship there, perfect music there.

[15 : 17] In 22.5 it says, and of the saints, they shall reign forever and ever. You know, some of you might have crowns and tiaras on your head. And we shall have a royal position with the king of kings.

We shall have a place of authority. In Revelation 7.15 it says, of some there, that they shall be before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple.

And He that sits on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. There'll be no more tears there. He shall dwell amongst us.

He shall give perfect fulfilment. His care, His love, His comfort, He'll feed and lead us there. There was a church in a town and a new preacher came to take over and as the new preacher moved into

town someone talked to him in the street and they questioned him.

[16:33] They badgered him and tried to snooker him here and they said this to the preacher. They said, I hope you're not one of those narrow-minded preachers who thinks that only the members of his congregation are going to heaven.

Hope you're not one of those narrow-minded preachers. The preacher said, I'm even more narrow-minded than that. I'm pretty sure that some of the folk in my church aren't going to make it. Could you be one of those people? Could you be one that comes week after week, midweek, night, whenever the doors are open and yet still be lost?

What a sad, sad thing that would be. I pray not. I pray not. Do you know where you are going? John and Betty Stan were early missionaries to China and they were led to certain execution by their communist captors.

They were marched off to their deaths and someone asked, where are you going? After saying that he didn't know where the guards were going, John added, but we are going to heaven.

[17:58] We're going to heaven. Whatever awaits you, whether it's a martyr's death, whether you face some challenges at the time of death, beyond is heaven for you, by his grace, by his promise.

If you've received his gift, how about you today? Let's make it personal now. Have you met the entry requirements? There are entry requirements.

It's like coming to our fair land as entry requirements. Joshua and Sophia had to be of excellent character to be given that piece of paper, to be given that passport, to be given that visa, to be given that chance to become a citizen of this nation.

What about the entry requirements for heaven? Have you met them? There's a gate there.

Revelation 21 says, And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, and every gate was of one pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

And the eternal city, it's got beautiful gates, streets of pure gold. Wonders that are literally out of this world, and we know that our Savior says, I am the way, the truth, the life, I am the gate, I am the door.

[19:19] Here's the one in whom we can enter. Revelation 21 27, And there shall he know wise, so in other words, no way, absolutely no way at all, is going to enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they, which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

You've got to make sure your name's recorded in the Lamb's book of life, not on the church register, not in the church membership role, but in heaven. Has your name been written down?

We know our Savior said of his disciples, your names are written in heaven, and we can know that also. This eternal city can be yours.

It's got wonderful company there and companionship. The best people who have ever lived. There's no phonies there. There's some people I think are good people that we know when you scratch the surface they're not really, and really none of us are good as it is really, but the best of the best will be there.

Those, the godly, the loving, the kind, the humble, the faithful, the obedient, those who have overcome. And as someone has put it, Christians never meet for the last time.

[20:34] We never meet for the last time. Who knows whether it could be one of our number passes away this week ahead. That could happen. But we will need to gain.

We will need to gain. There's never a time that is the last time. We can meet again and we can meet over millions of years in the future. 2 Corinthians 5 verse 8 says, we are confident and willing to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

It's going to be good to leave this old body behind, isn't it? With all of its faults and failings and it's just going to be perfected. It's going to have an extreme makeover and it's just going to have everything right.

And the real you will be with the Lord. He's going to give you a brand new body, a brand new life. And how do you deserve it?

It's interesting, as someone puts it this way, only one person in the Bible receives a direct promise of heaven. A thief. A thief who just moments before was cursing him.

[21:47] That makes you wonder, doesn't it? the lowest of the low and of cursing. It was saying he was using some derision towards our Saviour, because it says that they both were at one time.

And then we see our Lord says, you're going to be with me in paradise. Isn't that an encouragement? Because obviously he repented and he acknowledged our Saviour. He acknowledged him as Lord.

And you are made to live forever somewhere. How can we enter? How can we make heaven our home? We're just in temporary accommodation. We're just in transit at the moment. Our permanent home is in heaven.

And we must use just one password, one password to gain entry, to call on the name of Jesus, Lord. Jesus, Lord. That's the password.

Have you made a reservation? Our name can be written down, must be entered into the Lamb's Book of Life. And we can enjoy that. His presence, His life, Lordship. Here and now, we can have each one of those things in the present tense.

[22 : 53] And there is joy in heaven, Luke 15, 7, when one sinner repents. We can add to heaven's joy by reaching others for the Lord Jesus. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Those who are destined for heaven are making a point of living their lives for the Lord. We don't have that at-home feeling here on earth, do we? This is just temporary. Our home is beyond this old earth.

There's a new heaven and a new earth to come, a new city. Of course, we know that great heavenly city is going to come down out of heaven and to the earth. And what a blessing that will be.

And yet, for the meantime, there's a bit of a waiting time, there's a bit of a transition time, there's a separation from heaven just now. There's a story about a young boy, he came from an extremely poor family, and he received no gifts at Christmas time, but he often looked into the store windows and the exciting things that other little boys could have, but he could not.

And one day he was run over by a car and taken to hospital, and one of the nurses brought him some toys, a troop of soldiers, and as he touched them, he said, there isn't any glass between.

[24 : 09] He'd never got to touch them. And it's like heaven is, there's a glass between us and heaven right now, and our loved ones that have gone before are there, but we know that there's a glass between just now, but one day the glass will be taken away.

The glass that separates us will be taken away. That veil will be removed. And heaven is not just a pie in the sky when we die, it's a reality, it's a real place, it's a place prepared, a prepared place for prepared people, and it's called paradise, 2 Corinthians 12, 4, it's called a country, in Hebrews 11, 14, I challenge you today, as Matthew 6, 20 says, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust are corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal, for where your treasure is there, will your heart be also.

And this rewards promise for faithful service in heaven, 1 Corinthians 3, we know the crowns, the rewards, and the acknowledgement. So what does this mean for us today? It means that we can start our heavenly life now.

Heaven can come to your heart. We can experience this in some measure here and now. We don't have to wait till the hereafter. We can have a foretaste of heaven on earth, and we have a reason to live.

The question is again, think of this now, will you be forever with the Lord, or forever without him. It's one or the other.

[25 : 42] And of course we know it's ultimately and absolutely his grace that saves, it's only his free gift extended that can merit our entry and our simple response.

What else can we but do? And yet some still refuse, some still neglect, some still scorn and deny our saviour. Will you do that or will you receive him?

It says to as many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. We can enjoy his presence, his life, and his lordship, even now in this earthly life.

And really that's the key to making the most of the life that we have now. Because really, what is earth but really a preparation time for forever.

And make today count, make the now count while you're in waiting, while you're in the departure lounge, as it were, as we know that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.