

A SUPERIOR PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE

2 Cor. 4:16-18

INTRODUCTION

1. The Bible describes heaven as God's dwelling place (Isa. 66:1; Matt. 6:9). Jesus is there (1 Pet. 3:22).
2. Heaven is where our reward will be (Matt. 5:12). It is where an inheritance is reserved for us (1 Pet. 1:4). It is where our hope is (Col. 1:5).
3. Beyond these facts we know very little about heaven. Someone described it as "an unknown region with a well-known inhabitant," and there is not a better way to think of it than that.
4. To those who have learned to love and trust Jesus, the prospect of meeting him face to face and being with him forever is the hope that keeps us going, no matter what life may throw at us. It is this hope that provides our *superior perspective on life*.

I. A GLIMPSE OF HEAVEN (Rev. 21:1-22:5)

- A. In this passage the church (the bride of Christ) is pictured at home with God in its final and eternal resting place. It is a vision of heaven, the glorious home of the soul beyond the judgment.
- B. It is going to be something *new and better*.
 1. "New heavens and new earth" in Isa. 65:17 looked forward to something new from the perspective of the prophet and all who preceded the coming of the Messiah. It would be a completely new order of things.
 2. Peter used the same phrase to refer to that which was still in the future (2 Pet. 3:13). The writer of Hebrews wrote of a "better country" (Heb. 11:13-16).
 3. So the new heavens and new earth in Rev. 21 looks forward to that new and better place where the redeemed will be with God.
- C. It will be a place of *perfect fellowship with God*. This is the idea of the "tabernacle of God."
- D. It will be a place of *perfect protection*. There is the picture of the city of God in all its splendor and glory and perfection. No lamp is needed because the Lamb of God is its light. There is no temple in this city because God and the Lamb are its temple. No sacrifices will be needed because there will be no sin.
- E. It will be a place of *perfect provision*. The picture of the city of God includes features of a garden.
 1. In Eden there was a garden, a river, the tree of life, and fellowship with God.
 2. But man disobeyed God and so man was separated from all these blessings. Instead came all the curses—death and separation from God.
 3. Jesus came to inaugurate something better—light and life (John 1:1f).
 4. Heaven will be the restoration of what God intended for man in the beginning but was

lost because of sin.

II. WHO WILL BE IN HEAVEN?

- A. “Two things will surprise us when we arrive in heaven: who is there and who is not.”
- B. Only those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb will be there (Rev. 22:14-15).
- C. Heaven is for those who lay up treasures there (Matt. 6:19-21).
- D. “If you read history you will find that the Christians who did the most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this.” (C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*).
- E. Heaven will be home for those who press on toward the goal (Phil. 3:12-14) and finish the course (2 Tim. 4:7-8)

III. A TRUE PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE

- A. What is your life? (Jas. 4:13-14)
- B. Seek heavenly things (Col. 3:1-4)
- C. Longing to be at home with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:1-10)

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