

**The Word Today**  
**#828—Heaven**  
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As we talk about heaven we want to remember that people have been curious about where heaven is; will heaven actually be where earth presently is after the earth has been cleansed, so to speak, and refined by God. Will heaven actually be here where earth presently is or will it be a different place?

You know, a lot of people get concerned about questions like what about those who have passed away, those that have died physically. Their bodies are buried here on earth and their spirit is with God. If the person died as a believer their spirit is with God. If a person died as an unbeliever, still died in their sins without forgiveness, then of course obviously their spirit is not going to be with God and on resurrection day, on judgment day when the bodies are raised from the dead, the separation will take place between the believers who are going to be going with their glorified body to be with God in heaven and the unbelievers, who with their resurrected body will go to hell and be joined with their spirit in hell because they had not accepted Christ's salvation and had not believed in him as their personal savior.

So you have only those two alternatives. At judgment day the resurrection of the bodies that are in the tombs, in the graves, are cremated or one way or another separated from the spirit will be joined to the spirit of the person. The believer in heaven, the unbeliever in hell.

So those are the only two alternatives. There is no purgatory, there is no middle ground. That was stated by some Christians as an attempt to find a

solution to some of the questions regarding eternity but it is not a Biblical teaching; it is not found in God's word.

So when you talk about heaven, let's begin with the thought that it is to be a comforting thought. Heaven is to be a comforting thought. It is the dwelling where Christ is, where God is and when we talk about the ascension of Jesus, when he ascended into heaven after his resurrection he is with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. So true God, the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit is where heaven is. Now it is not important to try and figure that out geographically as though it is up north or down south or whatever. This is just nonsense! It is where God wants it to be. And people get all mixed up and confused about saying where is that person's soul from the time that it dies here on earth to the time of judgment day.

Well, your dealing with a concept that is divine. That is the concept of time. There is no time with God; God is eternal and therefore there is no time difference between when a person dies and when judgment day is. It is totally in God's hands. You can't identify or answer some of those questions which obviously are unanswerable. It is in God's hands and it is His timing so to speak, even though with God there is no time. God simply created time for us to be able here on earth to know the day and the evening, just for our own benefit here on earth.

But in heaven there is no time. That is why it is called eternal—the absence of time. It will be forever without end.

One of the things that I believe God intends heaven to be for those of us here on earth that want to talk about heaven and want to think about going to heaven is that it is to be a comfort. It is the abode and dwelling place of God and also where God has the angels. And I am talking of course about the good angels, those that serve God. The evil angels are at work with Satan.

Now God tells us and a good place to look for this is in the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of John. You know the gospel of John is such a beautiful piece of writing I just hope that I can urge you take a look at John. You know the emphasis on the gospel of John is especially on the deity of Jesus, to show us that Christ is true God. In fact, over and over and over again John refers to this. Let me just give you a couple good examples of this: in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of John he says “I am the bread of life”. He is referring there to the fact that Christ is the power of life, true life, the bread of life. “I am the light of the world”, that is in John 8. “I am the gate”, he is talking about the gate of the sheepfold. That is John 10. “I am the good shepherd”, that is also John 10. “I am the resurrection and the life”, that is in John 11. You can see almost chapter after chapter—“I am the way, the truth and the life”, in John 14. “I am the vine, you are branches”, that is John 15. You can just go through the gospel of John like that and see all the references to the deity of Jesus. It is a beautiful, beautiful gospel and it is intended to give us a great deal of comfort in our hearts and trust in the deity of Jesus.

In fact, if you take a look at the opening verses of John 14 you will see there, “do not let your heart be troubled, trust in me (Jesus is speaking),

peace I leave with you for my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives". You know the world gives and then takes away. Jesus says we as God, the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit do not give to you that way, like we are there with you one second and then we are gone again and we have given you faith and then we take it away. That is not at all the way God gives. God gives in a way that is to comfort us and to console us and to convince us in our faith that he is true and he is real and he will never leave us. In fact that whole beginning entrance into the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of John, verse 2 and 3 for instance are all about the fact that he is preparing a place for us.

He talks about it in an analogy of a house. He says there are many rooms, if it were not so I would have told you. He said I am telling you exactly the way heaven is. It is as if it is a big home and I am preparing a place for you and I go and prepare a place for you. I will come back and take you to be with me so that where I am you may be also. What an enormous comfort that is to know that heaven is being prepared for us.

As I already indicated to you, these opening verses all the way from verse 1 through the chapter is just filled with comforting words. So, when you are talking about heaven and when you are talking about the place where God dwells and where the angels dwell, you know there are a lot of Bible verses here. You could look at Matthew 6 verse 9 for instance and as long as you are going to the Gospel of Matthew, go to the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter, the second part of verse 10 in Matthew 18 deals with that. It is the place where God dwells—

heaven is therefore where God is. And, the preparation that is being made there is for us when we too one day eternally will be with God in heaven.

Talking about Matthew here, let's stick with that for a second, in the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew there are 7 parables. And these 7 parables describe the Kingdom of God or we could say heaven which means that the earthly stories that are being told there, the parables, give us an insight in to what heaven is all about. As a matter of fact, those parables are so beautiful let's take a moment here while we are thinking of heaven to look at these.

The first is the parable of the weeds, the reference to the Son of man in vs. 37 does not deny the deity of Jesus. Some religious groups try to say that this means Jesus is not true God. That is so ridiculous. The Son of man is an Old Testament phrase that refers to the deity of Jesus. That is the way he was referred to. You see in the early church, way, way, way back there were people that had trouble believing that God could take on human nature. They thought that would be lowering God so much that he would never take on human nature and the fact that the human nature of Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary is added to the deity of Jesus that he is both God and man, is confessed here in these words. Son of man and Son of God; he is both God and man. This is a reference to the deity of Jesus. It is just the opposite in fact of what those that want to deny his deity are saying.

Well, the parable, there is another parable here in Matthew 13—all 7 parables here should be given some time and some interest. I don't have much

time left today to cover them but take time to take a look at these 7 parables.

They are a definition, an earthly way of describing what heaven is.

Heaven is for our joy and for the hope that we share because of the forgiveness Jesus has given us that we now will spend eternity with him without end. There is no death in heaven. So heaven is something to be looked for and to be joyful about. We all who believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior will spend eternity with God in heaven. It will be without end.