

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, January 11, 2022

Heaven | Revelation 21:1-3

Overview: After having covered such a breath of perspectives in the pages of scripture, it is fitting that it closes with a perspective on that which is to come. A glorious picture of heaven. How often do we stop and reflect on our "future" lives? Let's pause for a bit to consider this wisdom and insight from the last chapter in the Bible.

Why I Picked This Verse: "he is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." – Jim Elliot (20th century missionary & martyr)

Video: Core 52 Video: <https://vimeo.com/338039911>

Segment Questions: (References are on back)

- How often do you think of eternal life? When? Why?
- Mark Moore talks about the stereotypes we have of heaven and hell that come from literature, art, and cartoons, not the Bible. Can you relate to any of these misconceptions?
- What is it that most excites you or intrigues you about eternal life in the New Heavens and New Earth as described in Scripture?
- Who do you know that is focused on eternal life? How can you tell by their actions & words?
- What investments (time, energy, resources, etc.) in eternity are you making right now?
- What investments in eternity do you feel would be wise to make that you have a hard time executing?
- How often do you consider those who reject God and do not wish to experience eternal life in His Kingdom?

Action Questions:

- If you could live tomorrow with a total focus on the eternal life with Christ in the new heavens & new earth, what would your day tomorrow look like? What would be different from a normal day?
- How can you be more focused on eternity tomorrow? This week? This year?

Closing Personal Prayer:

Our Father, we are so often guilty of not considering the life that exists beyond these bodies we occupy. We live in a culture that is addicted to comfort and leisure and individualized pleasures. All too often our lives look no different from the world around us. We can be infatuated by the present and ignorant about the forever. Teach us to fix our eyes on a forever friendship with You, our Savior. Teach us to leverage our time, our energy, and our resources for that which brings eternal reward. Teach us to look differently from the world around us, like citizens of heaven, and that our conduct would be a selfless and loving reflection of the new heavens and new earth that is to come. Amen.

Introduction

WARNING: This is going to get heavy. OK, now that you have been warned...

Take a moment to remember the last funeral you attended. Who was it? What kind of mental space were you in during the ceremony? How were others feeling and responding?

The Bible says "it is better to be in a house of mourning than a house of feasting." (Ecclesiastes 7:2) While the author of Ecclesiastes doesn't explicitly say why this is, I think that recognizing our own mortality is extremely wise. When we remember that this life does not last forever, that tomorrow is not guaranteed, and that we ultimately will be called to account before a holy God, then we have the proper perspective to live life as it was meant to be.

The Lord, in His wisdom, gave us Revelation 21:1-3 as a powerful reminder of what is to come. I believe He desires for us to live every day with the perspective of eternity: a place of wholeness and God-centeredness that will last forever: a Kingdom that has no end. I believe that the most influential followers of Jesus, those with the gutsiest, most transforming faith, live out of a daily confidence in eternal life. C.S. Lewis is credited for saying, "If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely 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."

Scripture related to heaven:

Revelation 21:1-3 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God."

John 14:2: "My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?"

Philippians 3:21: "who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."

Revelation 22:20: He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon."