

THE TRUTH ABOUT HEAVEN

JOHN 14:1-6

I. INTRODUCTION-

- a. Tonight I want to remind us ... of some important truths about what the Bible says about Heaven.

II. THE PROMINENCE OF HEAVEN-

- a. Heaven... is a prominent theme in Scripture.
- b. The word Heaven is mentioned more than 600 times in the Bible... 33 of the 39 books of the Old Testament talk about Heaven... and 21 books in the New Testament talk about Heaven.
- c. In the Old Testament... the primary Hebrew term for Heaven is sha-ma-yim... which is a word that means “the heights.”
- d. The New Testament word for Heaven is oh-ura-nos... from which we get the name of the planet Uranus.
- e. The New Testament word for Heaven refers to something that is raised up... or lofty.
- f. So the language of the Bible... in the Old Testament and the New ... speaks of Heaven as a place that is high and lofty and lifted up.
- g. The Bible uses other words and phrases... to refer to Heaven.
- h. Such as the “house of the LORD” (Psalm 23:6)... “Paradise” (Luke 23:43) ... “the city which has foundations” (Hebrews 11:10)... “Mount Zion” (Revelation 14:1)... and “New Jerusalem” (Revelation 21:2).

(Prominence)

III. THE PLURALITY OF HEAVEN-

- a. The Bible... specifically speaks of three heavens.

- b. In 2 Corinthians 12:2... Paul told the Corinthians about the time he was “caught up to the third heaven.”
- c. This clearly implies that there is also... a first and second heaven.
- d. The first heaven the Bible refers to... is the atmospheric heaven... the atmosphere and sky surrounding the earth... with its clouds and birds and life-giving oxygen.
- e. Isaiah 55:10 speaks of the rain and snow... coming down from heaven... referring to the sky above the earth.
- f. The second heaven the Bible refers to... is the vast universe in which we live... filled with billions of stars, planets, dust clouds, meteors, and galaxies.
- g. The psalmist referred to the second heaven... when he wrote in *Psalms 19:1* “*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.*”
- h. The Lord Jesus referred to the second heaven in Matthew 24:29 ... when He said at the very end of time... “*The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven.*”
- i. The third Heaven the Bible talks about... is the dwelling place of God ... it is Paradise... our eternal home.
- j. The third Heaven is the place where believers will live side-by-side with God... and with the angels... and with the redeemed of all the ages.
- k. This is the place Paul was referring to... when he said in 2 Corinthians 12 that he was caught up into the third Heaven.
- l. Jesus was referring to this Heaven when He taught us to pray... “*Our Father who art in heaven.*”

m. The psalmist referred to this Heaven in Psalm 11:4 when he wrote...
“The LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven.”

n. Psalm 103:19 refers to this Heaven when it says... *“The LORD has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all.”*

(Prominence... Plurality)

IV. THE PLACE CALLED HEAVEN-

a. It is important to understand that the third heaven... is just as real and just as literal... as the other two heavens.

b. In John 14:3... Jesus referred to Heaven as a “place”... a word that implies a specific literal location.

c. The Greek word for place in John 14:3 is the word topos... from which we our word “topography”... topos was always used to refer to a literal real place.

d. Psalm 33:14 says of God... *“From the place of His dwelling He looks on all the inhabitants of the earth.”*

e. Heaven is a real and literal place... it is not an imaginary world... a fantasyland... a hypothetical place.

f. Sometimes the Bible refers to Heaven as a country... which implies its vastness.

g. Sometimes Heaven is referred to as city...which brings to mind buildings... streets... residents... and activity.

h. Sometimes Heaven is referred to as a kingdom... which speaks of organization and government.

i. In John 14:2... Jesus referred to Heaven as *“My Father's house.”*

j. In Psalm 23:6... the psalmist said... *“And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”*

- k. Calling Heaven the Father's House... means that for every believer ... Heaven is home... a place of love... a happy place... a safe place ... a family place ... a warm place... a place of protection and provision.
- l. For the believer... this world is not our home... Heaven is.
- m. Where is Heaven?... the Bible says that wherever you are on earth ... Heaven is up.
- n. In Mark 6:41... when Jesus feed the 5,000...the Bible says that when He took the little boy's loaves and fish ... "*He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples.*"
- o. In John 17:1... as Jesus began to pray His High Priestly Prayer... the Bible says that He "*lifted up His eyes to Heaven.*"
- p. Luke 24:51... and Acts 1:9 says that at the very end of His earthly ministry... Jesus ascended and went up into Heaven.
- q. Where is Heaven?... the Bible says that no matter where you are on earth... Heaven is up.

(Prominence... Plurality...Place)

V. **THE PRECIOUSNESS OF HEAVEN-**

- a. Heaven is a precious place... everything that is near and dear to those who follow Christ... is in Heaven.
- b. #1, Our Redeemer Is in Heaven... the Bible says that Jesus our Redeemer is in Heaven.
- c. I don't know how it will all work... but when we get to Heaven each one of us will be able to fellowship with Jesus personally... and know Him in a way that is far beyond the way that we can know Him now.
- d. Revelation 22:3-4 says about Heaven... "*The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face.*"

- e. #2, Our Relationships Are in Heaven... our loved ones who have died in Christ are all in Heaven.
- f. As the years have gone by... I have a growing number of family and friends in the Lord... who are in Heaven.
- g. I miss them... but one day I will join them in Heaven... and we will never part again.
- h. #3, Our Resources Are in Heaven... the Bible talks about three resources that believers have in Heaven.
- i. #a, The Bible says that every believer...has an inheritance in Heaven.
- j. What does that mean?... every believer in Christ will have full and equal access... to all of the joy and blessings of Heaven.
- k. There are no restricted places in Heaven... there are no second-class citizens in Heaven... there are not different levels and different classes of believers in Heaven.
- l. In Heaven every believer receives the same inheritance... we will all walk the streets of gold... we will all fellowship with the angels and the saints of God ... we will all see Christ and fellowship with Him.
- m. Heaven is the same glorious place ... for every believer there.
- n. #b, The Bible says ...that God will give rewards to believers in Heaven.
- o. Unlike what many people believe... Heaven is not a reward for a good life lived... no one can deserve Heaven no matter how good they may be... no one can earn Heaven no matter what they do.
- p. Heaven is a gift... that God gives to those who trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

- q. While Heaven is not a reward... the Bible teaches that in Heaven God will give rewards to believers... based on our faithfulness, obedience and service to Christ in this world.
- r. It makes a difference how a person lives for Christ... after they are saved.
- s. The life a person lives after they are saved... proves whether they are truly saved or not... and the life we live after we are saved will determine the rewards we will receive in Heaven.
- t. Some believers will receive few or no rewards in Heaven... because of the unfaithful and uncommitted life they lived after they were saved.
- u. Some of the tears that God will wipe away from the eyes of believers in Heaven... will be tears of regret shed by believers who lost rewards in Heaven they could have had... because they failed to live faithful and committed lives for the Lord after they were saved.
- v. But with grace and mercy God will wipe those tears away... and when He does the regret and sorrow of those believers will be forever replaced by the joy of the Lord... and the blessings of Heaven.
- w. #c, The third resource that believers have in Heaven... are the riches and treasures that we have laid up in Heaven.
- x. Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-21... *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*
- y. We lay up treasures in Heaven... by investing our lives, time, treasures and talents in God’s work in this world.

- z. This world is passing away... whatever we invest and stockpile in this world will be lost... but whatever we invest in the work of God's kingdom... and in the souls of men and women... will never be lost.
- aa. While some believers will receive more rewards in Heaven than others ... while some believers will have more riches in Heaven than others... there will be no gloating or jealousy in Heaven... and there will be no sense of inequality in Heaven...because the focus of Heaven is not on us... it is on the Lord Jesus.
- bb. #4, Our Residence Is in Heaven... our eternal home is in Heaven.
- cc. The Bible describes Heaven as a place of beauty... beyond what we can imagine.
- dd. In Heaven there will be no sin, suffering, sorrow, sadness, or pain ...we will never do anything to displease God... there will be no persecution, division, disunity, or hate... there will be no quarrels or disagreements... there will be no disappointments.
- ee. In Heaven we will know perfect pleasure... perfect knowledge... perfect comfort... perfect love... perfect joy... we will be perfectly free from evil forever.

VI. THE PEOPLE OF HEAVEN- (Prominence... Plurality...Place...Preciousness)

- a. God is in Heaven...the Father, Son and Holy Spirit... the good angels are in Heaven... and there are people are in Heaven... but not every person has gone or will go to Heaven.
- b. Revelation 21:27 says only those whose names are written... in the Lamb's Book of Life go to Heaven.
- c. The Lamb is Jesus... and only those who have repented of their sins and trusted in Him as their Savior and Lord are in His Book of Life and go to Heaven.

- d. In Luke 10:20... after His disciples had reported great success in a ministry He had sent them on... Jesus told His disciples ... *“Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”*
- e. The names of those who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord are written in Heaven... is yours?

VII. CONCLUSION-

- a. Let us be faithful to the end!