

Introduction: Why Study Heaven?

1. Our **MISCONCEPTIONS** are crippling us.

- Common misconceptions

- Predictable results

2. We're **COMMANDED** to do so.

Colossians 3:1-4

3. A faulty view of heaven destines us to a **WASTED** life on earth.

John 14:1-11

A Theology of Heaven

Definition – 3 uses of the word:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The promise of heaven:

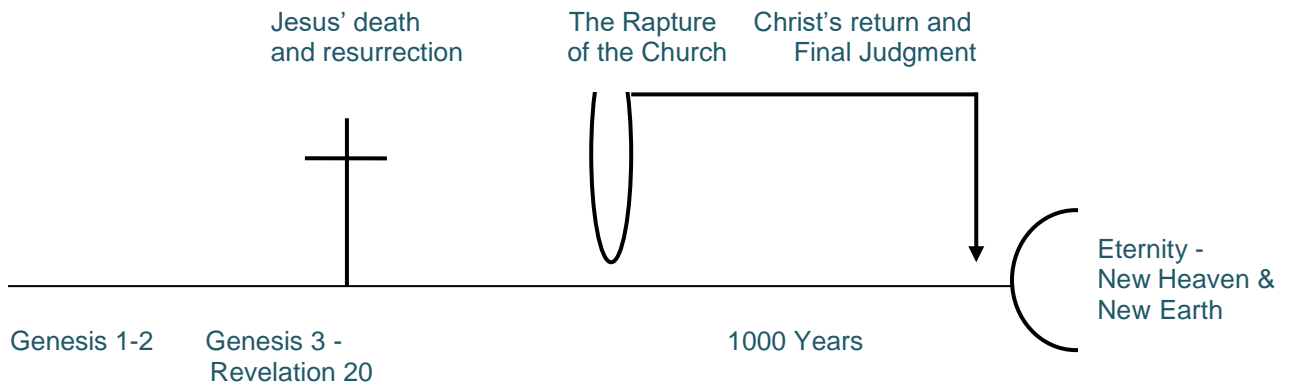
- It's a real, tangible, place John 14
- The Father is there Matthew 6:9
- Jesus is at His right hand Hebrews 9:24
- Believing loved ones are there Hebrews 12:23
- Our names are recorded there Luke 10:20
- We have an inheritance there 1 Peter 1:4
- Our citizenship is there Philippians 3:20
- Specific, eternal rewards given Matthew 6:9-21
- It's the best of earth...better Revelation 22
- Sin, death, and sorrow are absent Revelation 22
- Adventure, work, discovery and rulership await us Revelation 22

Heaven in historical context:

1. Past: Eden Genesis 1-2
2. Present: Intermediate Heaven Genesis 3- Revelation 20
Philippians 1:20-21
2 Corinthians 5:6
3. Future: New Heaven on New Earth Revelation 22

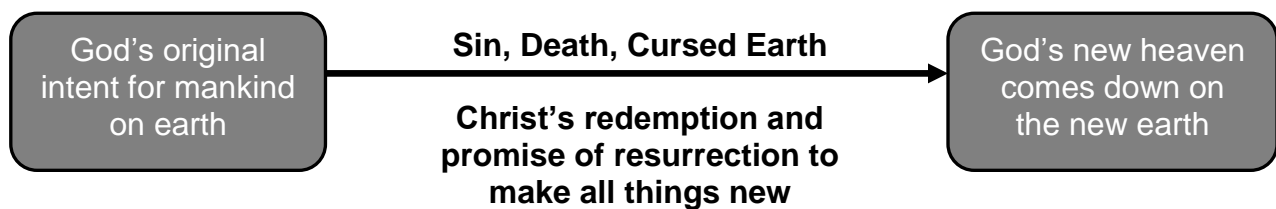
Understanding heaven requires a macroscopic view of **SCRIPTURE** and a microscopic view of God's **PURPOSE** for His people.

Macro view of scripture:



Micro view of God's responses:

GOD	GOD	GOD	GOD
With man on perfect earth Genesis 1 & 2	Separated from man and a cursed earth Genesis 3 – Rev 20	With man on a temporary earth Revelation 20	With man on a perfect earth forever Revelation 21 & 22
JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS
In Theophany visits earth	The incarnate Savior and Redeemer	King of Kings	The Emmanuel forever



Summary: God **WANTS** to be with His people!

An Accurate View of Heaven Provides...

- **PERSPECTIVE** in times of trouble 2 Corinthians 4
- **PERSEVERANCE** in times of temptation John 14
- **PRIORITIES** when under pressure Matthew 6

Application / Discussion Questions:

1. Prior to today's message, how would you rank your knowledge about heaven?

Minimal Expert
1 _____ 10

2. What did you learn today that shifted your view of heaven? It's importance? It's attractiveness?

3. What relationship do you see between overcoming challenges/temptations and one's view of heaven?

4. What are you facing today that requires perspective? Perseverance? Priorities?

Introduction: What's your idea of heaven?

Review – A biblical overview* of heaven:

PAST Genesis 1-2	PRESENT Genesis 3 – Revelation 20	FUTURE Revelation 21-22
Original mankind	Fallen mankind; some believe and are transformed	Resurrected mankind
Original earth	Fallen earth with glimmers of the original	New earth; resurrected on mankind's coattails
God delegates earth's reign to innocent mankind	Disputed reign with God, Satan, and fallen mankind	God delegates earth's reign to righteous mankind
Creation and mankind are perfect	Creation and mankind are tainted by sin	Creation and mankind restored to perfection
Mankind in ideal place	Mankind banished, struggles, and wanders in fallen places	Mankind restored to ideal place, but much improved
God's plan for mankind and earth revealed	God's plan for mankind and earth delayed and enriched	God's plan for mankind and earth realized

*From Randy Alcorn's book *Heaven*

Question: What's Heaven like?

What will heaven be like if you died today? Revelation 4-20

A moment after a believer dies...

1. Angels usher your soul to heaven. Luke 16:22
2. You immediately enter God's presence. 2 Corinthians 5:6-8
3. You are conscious, in command of your faculties of thinking, feeling, speech and memories. Luke 16:19-31
4. You participate in magnificent worship with angels and believers before the throne of God and Christ. Revelation 4-5
5. You are aware to some degree of activities and events on earth. Revelation 6:9-10
Hebrews 11 & 12
6. You will recognize and communicate with believers who preceded you to heaven. Luke 9:28-36
7. You will be joined by all living Christians when Jesus "raptures" the Church from the earth to be judged for rewards at the Bema Seat. You will then enjoy the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in heaven with Christ and His Bride. 2 Corinthians 5:10
Revelation 19:6-10
8. You will await God's judgment of the earth at the end of the tribulation and will be bodily resurrected to reign and judge with Christ for 1,000 years on the earth. Revelation 20:4-6
9. You will witness the justice of God at the judgment of Satan, angels and the wicked dead at the Great White Throne. Revelation 20:11-15
10. You will witness the new heaven coming down on the new earth. Revelation 21:1

What will heaven be like in the new heaven and the new earth? Revelation 21-22

1) It will be a lot like the “new” **ME**.

- Just as my body will be **RESURRECTED** 1 Corinthians 15:40-53
so the earth will be **RESTORED**.
- My new body will be like **CHRIST'S**. 1 John 3:2-3
- Jesus' resurrected body **ATE** and **DRANK** and Luke 24:39
had flesh and bone and new capabilities.

2) It will be a lot like the old **EARTH**.

- The new heaven and new earth is **FAMILIAR**. Revelation 21:1
- The old earth “passes away” not **ANNIHILATED**. 2 Peter 3:8-9
- Like the “old me” passed away, so will the old **EARTH**. 2 Corinthians 5:17
- The new earth = New, better, different, but with continuity from the old earth.

Summary:

- As mankind was, so was the earth.
- As mankind went, so went the earth.
- As mankind will be, so will be the earth.

Two big questions for you:

1. Do you know for certain that you've trusted God's plan and accepted Jesus' sacrifice for your salvation?
2. On what are you focusing / how are you living today?

Discussion Questions:

1. What new fact about heaven or the intermediate heaven most surprised you? Why?
2. What about heaven give you the most comfort and hope? Why?
3. How does a specific and clear view of heaven impact how and why you live each day?
4. What are some of the sobering aspects of entrance into heaven and the justice of God's judgment for those who reject Him?

Recommended Resources:

Book – *Heaven* by Randy Alcorn
Book – *The Glory of Heaven* by John MacArthur
CD Series – *The Revelation* by Chip Ingram

Introduction: “There’s no place like home.”

Have you ever wondered...

1. Will heaven be an actual place?
2. What will we look like in heaven?
3. Will heaven be boring?
4. What will we do for all eternity?
5. Will animals be in heaven?
6. Where will we live in heaven?
7. Who gets to go to heaven?

First Earth (Eden) Genesis 1 & 2	Fallen Earth (Now) Genesis 3 – Revelation 20	New Earth (Heaven) Revelation 21 & 22
God visits mankind	Christ restores mankind	God lives with mankind forever
Perfect environment	Creation groans (tornados, earthquakes, tsunamis, etc.)	Restored environment
No sin	Sin and death	No sin or death – ever

What will heaven be like on the new earth?

1. It will be a lot like the new me.

- A **RESURRECTED** body 1 Corinthians 15:42-49
- A **RESTORED** earth Isaiah 65:17, 2 Peter 3:9-13

2. It will be a lot like the first earth.

Genesis 1-2

- A perfect environment
- A tree of life
- A river, trees, fruit, food
- Animals, harmony, peace, beauty
- No death no shame, no curse
- No sin, no sorrow, no pain
- Meaningful work to accomplish
- Intimacy with God and people

3. It will be a lot different and infinitely better because we will have...

- A new kind of relationship with GOD. Revelation 21:1-3
- A new kind of relationship with SIN. Revelation 21:4-5
- A new kind of experience of complete SATISFACTION. Revelation 21:6-8
- A new city and people to ENJOY. Revelation 21:9-23
- A new earth with new NATIONS, commerce, culture, and capabilities TO SERVE and love our God. Revelation 21:9 – 22:5

Summary: Behold I will make all things NEW! Revelation 21:5

Three very important questions for you:

1. Are you certain you are going to heaven? Why?

1 John 5:11-13

2. Do your current priorities and passions reveal an eternal or earthly prospective?

Have you considered the implications carefully?

Philippians 3:17-21

3. Are there people you care about who don't know about heaven or how to get there?

How could God use you to help them?

Luke 19:10

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