

Heaven is for Real: Far Better Place John 14:1-6 FBC Canton Sunday am
November 2, 2025

Introduction: Death troubles us, belief solves heart trouble. V. 1

There was no death before sin. Romans 6:23

All have sinned; therefore, all will die a physical death. Romans 3:23

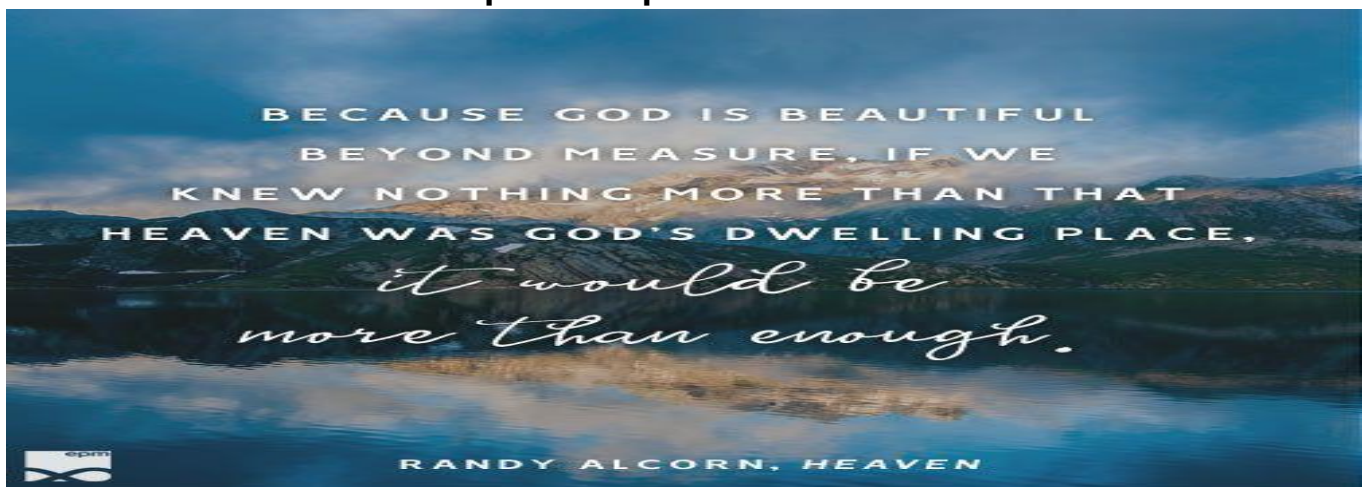
Death is separation, not extinction, no one like being separated

Unbelief in Jesus means separation is permanent. Luke 16

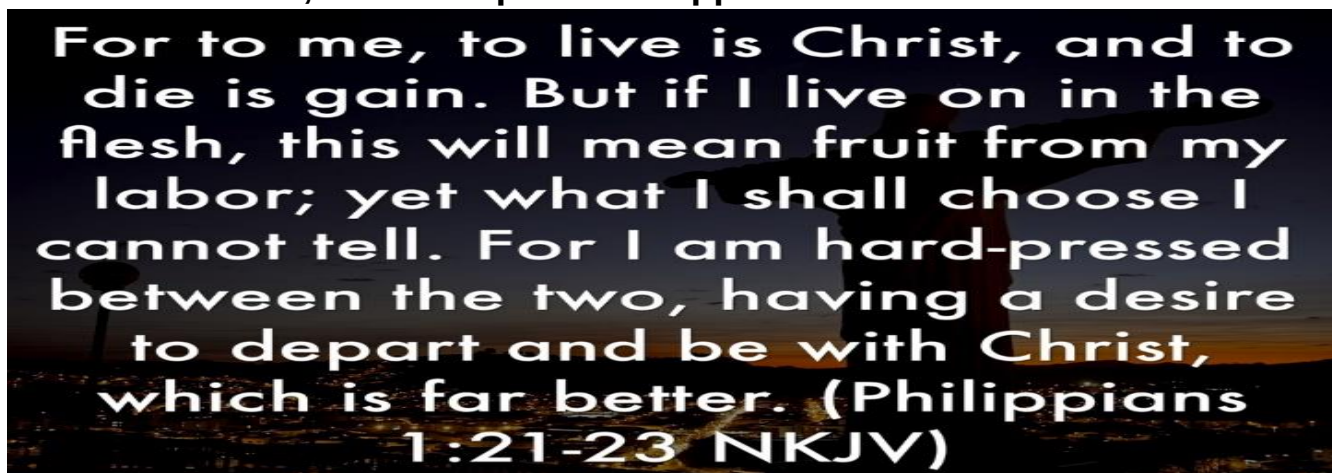
Belief in Jesus means our separation is not permanent. John 14:1-6

I. The Father's heart prepares mansions for his children. V. 2

a. God's workmanship will be perfect.



b. A real, far better place. Philippians 1:21-23



c. Even a place to hang out with angels. I Peter 1:10-13

¹⁰ Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, ¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹² To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have

been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into. I Peter 1 10-13

II. The Father sends the Son to gather His children. V. 3, I Thessalonians 4:13-18

a. Where the 'I am' is, we will be. V. 3-4

7 "I AM" Statements

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. "I am the bread of life" | John 6:35 |
| 2. "I am the light of the world" | John 8:12 |
| 3. "I am the door for the sheep" | John 10:7, 9 |
| 4. "I am the good shepherd" | John 10:11, 14 |
| 5. "I am the resurrection and the life" | John 11:25 |
| 6. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" | John 14:6 |
| 7. "I am the true vine" | John 15:1, 5 |

b. Doesn't tell you how to get there; He goes for you and with you. v. 5-6

- i. There is only 1 way, because God is gracious.
- ii. There is only 1 truth, because God is alone wise.
- iii. There is only 1 life, because God is all powerful.

Conclusion: Heaven; you can actually go there.

Dictionaries - Heaven

Below are articles from the following dictionary:

- [Torrey's New Topical Textbook](#)

Torrey's New Topical Textbook

Heaven: Created by God

[Gen 1:1](#); [Rev 10:6](#)

Heaven: Everlasting

[Psa 89:29](#); [2Cr 5:1](#)

Heaven: Immeasurable

[Jer 31:37](#)

Heaven: High

[Psa 103:11](#); [Isa 57:15](#)

Heaven: Holy

[Deu 26:15](#); [Psa 20:6](#); [Isa 57:15](#)

Heaven: God's Dwelling-Place

[1Ki 8:30](#); [Mat 6:9](#)

Heaven: God's Throne

[Isa 66:1](#); [Act 7:49](#)

Heaven: God

Is the Lord of

[Dan 5:23](#); [Mat 11:25](#)

Reigns in

[Psa 11:4](#); [135:6](#); [Dan 4:35](#)

Fills

[1Ki 8:27](#); [Jer 23:24](#)

Answers his people from

[1Ch 21:26](#); [2Ch 7:14](#); [Neh 9:27](#); [Psa 20:6](#)

Sends his judgments from

[Gen 19:24](#); [1Sa 2:10](#); [Dan 4:13,14](#); [Rom 1:18](#)

Heaven: Christ

As Mediator, entered into

[Act 3:21](#); [Hbr 6:20](#); [9:12,24](#)

Is all-powerful in

[Mat 28:18](#); [1Pe 3:22](#)

Heaven: Angels Are In

[Mat 18:10](#); [24:36](#)

Heaven: Names of Saints Are Written

[Luk 10:20](#); [Hbr 12:23](#)

Heaven: Saints Rewarded In

[Mat 5:12](#); [1Pe 1:4](#)

Heaven: Repentance Occasions Joy In

[Luk 15:7](#)

Heaven: Lay up Treasure In

[Mat 6:20](#); [Luk 12:33](#)

Heaven: Flesh and Blood Cannot Inherit

[1Cr 15:50](#)

Heaven: Happiness Of, Described

[Rev 7:16,17](#)

Heaven: Is Called

A garner

[Mat 3:12](#)

The kingdom of Christ and of God

[Eph 5:5](#)

The Father's house

[Jhn 14:2](#)

A heavenly country

[Hbr 11:16](#)

A rest

[Hbr 4:9](#)

Paradise

[2Cr 12:2,4](#)

Heaven: The Wicked Excluded From

[Gal 5:21](#); [Eph 5:5](#); [Rev 22:15](#)

David Guzik

Study Guide for John 14

THE DEPARTING JESUS

A. Calming troubled hearts with trust and hope in Jesus.

1. ([John 14:1](#)) A command to calm the troubled heart.

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.”

a. **Let not your heart be troubled**: The disciples had reason to be troubled. Jesus had just told them that one of them was a traitor, that all of them would deny Him, and that He would leave them that night. All of this would legitimately trouble the disciples, yet Jesus told them, **let not your heart be troubled**.

i. Jesus never wanted us to have life without trouble, but He promised that we could have an untroubled heart even in a troubled life.

ii. This was in some sense a command. “The form of the imperative *me tarassestho* implies that they should ‘stop being troubled.’ ‘Set your heart at ease’ would be a good translation.” (Tenney)

iii. Jesus didn’t say, “I’m happy you men are troubled and filled with doubts. You’re doubts are wonderful.” “He takes no delight in the doubt and disquietude of his people. When he saw that because of what he had said to them sorrow had filled the hearts of his apostles, he pleaded with them in great love, and besought them to be comforted.” (Spurgeon)

iv. “His disciples felt His departure like a torture. And it was then that He consoled them with such simple and glorious speech that all Christendom is the debtor to their agony.” (Morrison)

b. **You believe in God, believe also in Me**: Instead of giving into a troubled heart, Jesus told them to firmly put their trust in God and in Jesus Himself. This was a radical call to trust in Jesus *just as* one would trust in God the Father, and a radical promise that doing so would bring comfort and peace to a **troubled** heart.

i. “What signalizes Him, and separates Him from all other religious teachers, is not the clearness or the tenderness with which He reiterated the truths about the Father’s love, or about morality, and justice, and truth, and goodness; but the peculiarity of His call to the world is, ‘Believe in Me.’” (Maclaren)

ii. “One who seems a man asks all men to give Him precisely the same faith and confidence that they give to God.” (Meyer)

iii. There is some debate as how the verb tenses of this verse should be regarded. It is possible that Jesus meant, *You must believe in God, you must also believe in Me* (imperative) or it is possible that He meant, *You do believe in God, you also do believe in Me* (indicative). On balance, the best evidence seems to be that Jesus meant this as a command or an instruction to the disciples.

- “The verb **believe** *both times is imperative*.” (Alford)
- “In view of the preceding imperative it is in my judgment best to take both forms as imperative. Jesus is urging His followers to continue to believe in the Father and to continue to believe also in Him.” (Morris)

iv. “Jesus’ solution to perplexity is not a recipe; it is a relationship with him.” (Tenney)

2. ([John 14:2-4](#)) Reasons for calming the troubled heart: a future reunion in the Father’s house.

“In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

a. **In My Father’s house are many mansions**: Jesus spoke with complete confidence about heaven, here spoken of as His **Father’s house**. Jesus didn’t wonder about the life beyond this earth; He knew it and told His disciples that there was room for all in heaven (**many mansions**).

i. “Plato tells of the last hours of Socrates in prison before he drank the poison....Like Christ, Socrates is going to die. Like Christ, his thoughts run on immortality. He discusses it with his

friends, who come to visit him; he speculates, he argues, and he wonders. What a perfect and stupendous contrast between that and the attitude of Christ.” (Morrison)

b. **Many mansions**: In light of the ancient Greek, **mansions** is better translated “dwelling places.” The noun **mone** (connected to the verb **meno**, “stay” or “remain”) means “a place to stay.” In light of God’s nature, it is better to translate it **mansions**. Whatever dwelling place God has for us in heaven, it will be as glorious as a mansion.

i. There will be **many** such dwelling places. Jesus could see what the disciples never could — millions upon millions, even billions from every tribe, language, nation in His Father’s house. He may have even smiled when He said, **many mansions** — **many** indeed!

ii. “**Mansions**, **monai**, came into the AV and RV through the influence of the Vulgate **mansions**, which can mean ‘stations’ or ‘temporary lodgings’ where travellers may rest at different stages in their journey. In the light of this, many scholars, especially Westcott and Temple, following Origen, assume that the conception of heaven in this passage is that of a state of progress from one stage to another till the final goal is reached. This was not however the interpretation generally given to the word by the ancient Fathers, and by derivation it would seem to denote much more the idea of permanence. It is found once more in the New Testament, in [John 14:23](#), where the permanent dwelling of the Father and the Son in the hearts of loving disciples is stressed.” (Tasker)

c. **I go to prepare a place for you**: Love prepares a welcome. With love, expectant parents prepare a room for the baby. With love, the hostess prepares for her guests. Jesus prepares **a place** for His people because He loves them and is confident of their arrival.

i. James Barrie was the man who wrote [Peter Pan](#), among other works. One of his books was about his mother, Margaret Ogilvy, and his growing up in Scotland. His mother endured a lot of misery in life, including the tragic death of one of her sons. According to Morrison, Barrie wrote that his mother’s favorite Bible chapter was [John 14](#). She read it so much that when her Bible was opened and set down, the pages naturally fell open to this place. Barrie said that when she was old and could no longer read these words, she would stoop down to her Bible and kiss the page where the words were printed.

ii. **I go** speaks of Jesus’ own planning and initiative. He wasn’t taken to the cross; He went there. “**They** thought that His death was an unforeseen calamity. Christ taught them that it was the path of His own planning.” (Morrison)

d. **I will come again to receive you to Myself**: Jesus promised to come again for the disciples. This was not only in the sense of His soon resurrection or in the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus also had in mind the great gathering together of His people at the end of the age.

i. "They were not to think of Him as having ceased to be when they could not see Him. He had only gone to another abiding-place to prepare for their coming; and moreover, He would come back to receive them." (Morgan)

ii. "The reference to the second advent should not be missed. It is true that John does not refer to this as often as do most other New Testament writers, but it is not true that it is missing from his pages." (Morris)

iii. "This was a very precious promise to the early Church, and Paul may well be echoing it when he informs the Thessalonians 'by the word of the Lord' that Jesus will descend from heaven and gather believers unto Himself to be with Him for ever (see [1 Thessalonians 4:15-17](#))." (Tasker)

e. **That where I am, there you may be also**: The entire focus of heaven is being united with Jesus. Heaven is heaven not because of streets of gold, or pearly gates, or even the presence of angels. Heaven is heaven because Jesus is there.

i. We take comfort in knowing that even as He prepares a place for us, Jesus also prepares us for that place.

3. ([John 14:5-6](#)) Jesus is the exclusive way to the Father.

Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

a. **Lord, we do not know where You are going**: Thomas should be praised for honestly and clearly explaining his confusion. He thought Jesus was simply going to another place, as if it were another city.

i. "Though a necessity of human language compels Jesus to speak of 'going away' and of 'a way to the Father', these terms have no spatial or material significance." (Tasker)

ii. "Thus we notice how they speak to him with a natural, easy familiarity; and he talks to them in full sympathy with their weakness, teaching them little by little as they are able to learn. They ask just such questions as a boy might ask of his father. Often they show their ignorance, but never do they seem timid in his presence, or ashamed to let him see how shallow and hard of understanding they are." (Spurgeon)

b. **I am the way, the truth, and the life**: Jesus didn't say that He would show us a way; He said that He is the way. He didn't promise to teach us a truth; He said that He is the truth. Jesus didn't offer us the secrets to life; He said that He is the life.

- *I'm wandering about; I don't know where I'm going.* Jesus is the way.
- *I'm confused; I don't know what to think.* Jesus is the truth.
- *I'm dead inside and don't know if I can go on.* Jesus is the life.

i. In light of soon events, this declaration was a paradox. Jesus' way would be the cross; He would be convicted by blatant liars; His body would soon lie lifeless in a tomb. Because He took that way, He is the way to God; because He did not contest the lies we can believe He is the truth; because He was willing to die He becomes the channel of resurrection — the life to us.

ii. "Without the way there is no going; without the truth there is no knowing; without the life there is no living. I am the way which thou must follow; the truth in which thou must believe; the life for which thou must hope." (a' Kempis, cited by Bruce)

c. **No one comes to the Father except through Me**: Jesus made this remarkable statement, claiming that He was the only way to God. In this He set aside the temple and its rituals, as well as other religions. It was a claim to have an exclusive way, truth, and life — the only pathway to God the Father, the true God in heaven.

i. Understood plainly, this was one of the more controversial things Jesus said and the Gospel writers recorded. Many people don't mind saying that Jesus is one legitimate way to God, but other religions and even individuals have their own legitimate ways to God. Many think it isn't fair for God to make only one way.

ii. Nevertheless, this is a consistent theme in the Bible. The Ten Commandments begin, I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me ([Exodus 20:2-3](#)). Throughout the Old Testament God denounced and mocked the supposed gods others worshipped ([Isaiah 41:21-29](#); [1 Kings 18:19-40](#)). The Bible consistently presents One True God, and Jesus is consistently presented as the only true way to the One True God.

d. **No one comes to the Father except through Me**: Simply put, if Jesus is not the only way to God, then He is not any way to God. If there are many roads to God, then Jesus is not one of them, because He absolutely claimed there was only one road to God, and He Himself was that road. If Jesus is not the only way to God, then He was not a honest man; He was most certainly not a true prophet. He then would either be a madman or a lying devil. There is no middle ground available.

i. Sometimes people object and say, "I believe Jesus was an honest man, and I believe He was a true prophet. But I don't actually believe He said those things about Himself in the Gospels. I believe Christians added those things in later on all by themselves." But there is no objective reason for a person to make a distinction between "Jesus really said this" or "Jesus really didn't say that." We have no ancient texts showing us just the supposedly

true sayings of Jesus. Any such distinction is based purely on subjective reasons — “I personally don’t think Jesus would have said that, therefore He did not say that — later Christians only put those words in His mouth.”

ii. If it is all up to personal opinion — if we can determine what Jesus said or didn’t say on our own whims — then we should reject the Gospels completely. It really is an all-or-nothing deal. Either we take the words of Jesus as recorded by these historically reliable and accurate documents, or we reject them completely.

iii. But is Christianity bigoted? Certainly, there are some who claim to be Christians who are in fact bigots. But Biblical Christianity is the most pluralistic, tolerant, embracing of other cultures religion on earth. Christianity is the one religion to embrace other cultures, and has the most urgency to translate the Scriptures into other languages. A Christian can keep their native language and culture, and follow Jesus in the midst of it. An early criticism of Christianity was the observation that they would take anybody! Slave or free; rich or poor; man or woman; Greek or Barbarian. All were accepted, but on the common ground of the truth as revealed in Jesus Christ. To leave this common ground in Jesus is spiritual suicide, for both now and eternity.

iv. “If this seems offensively exclusive, let it be borne in mind that the one who makes this claim is the incarnate Word, the revealer of the Father.” (Bruce)

v. The Christian faith will receive anyone who comes through Jesus. Jesus said, through Me: “It is not ‘through believing certain propositions regarding me’ nor ‘through some special kind of faith,’ but ‘through me’.” (Dods)

Matthew Henry Commentary on John 14

Chapter 14

This chapter is a continuation of Christ's discourse with his disciples after supper. When he had convicted and discarded Judas, he set himself to comfort the rest, who were full of sorrow upon what he had said of leaving them, and a great many good words and comfortable words he here speaks to them. The discourse is interlocutory; as Peter in the foregoing chapter, so Thomas, and Philip, and Jude, in this interposed their thoughts upon what he said, according to the liberty he was pleased to allow them. Free conferences are as instructive as solemn speeches, and more so. The general scope of this chapter is in the first verse; it is designed to keep trouble from their hearts; now in order to this they must believe: and let them consider,

- I. Heaven as their everlasting rest (v. 2, 3).

- II. Christ himself as their way ([v. 4-11](#)).
- III. The great power they shall be clothed with by the prevalency of their prayers ([v. 12-14](#)).
- IV. The coming of another comforter ([v. 15-17](#)).
- V. The fellowship and communion that should be between him and them after his departure ([v. 18-24](#)).
- VI. The instructions which the Holy Ghost should give them ([v. 25, 26](#)).
- VII. The peace Christ bequeathed to them ([v. 27](#)).
- VIII. Christ's own cheerfulness in his departure ([v. 28-31](#)).

And this which he said to them is designed for the comfort of all his faithful followers.

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown Commentary on John 14

The Gospel According to John Commentary by DAVID BROWN CHAPTER 14

[Jhn 14:1-31](#). DISCOURSE AT THE TABLE, AFTER SUPPER.

We now come to that portion of the evangelical history which we may with propriety call its *Holy of Holies*. Our Evangelist, like a consecrated priest, alone opens up to us the view into this sanctuary. It is the record of the last moments spent by the Lord in the midst of His disciples before His passion, when words full of heavenly thought flowed from His sacred lips. All that His heart, glowing with love, had still to say to His friends, was compressed into this short season. At first (from [Jhn 13:31](#)) the intercourse took the form of conversation; sitting at table, they talked familiarly together. But when ([Jhn 14:31](#)) the repast was finished, the language of Christ assumed a loftier strain; the disciples, assembled around their Master, listened to the words of life, and seldom spoke a word (only [Jhn 16:17, 29](#)). "At length, in the Redeemer's sublime intercessory prayer, His full soul was poured forth in express petitions to His heavenly Father on behalf of those who were His own. It is a peculiarity of these last chapters, that they treat almost exclusively of the most profound relations--as that of the Son to the Father, and of both to the Spirit, that of Christ to the Church, of the Church to the world, and so forth. Moreover, a considerable portion of these sublime communications surpassed the point of view to which the disciples had at that time attained; hence the Redeemer frequently repeats the same sentiments in order to impress them more deeply upon their minds, and, because of what they still did not understand, points them to the Holy Spirit, who would remind them of all His sayings, and lead them into all truth ([Jhn 14:26](#))" [OLSHAUSEN].

1. Let not your heart be troubled, &c.--What myriads of souls have not these opening words cheered, in deepest gloom, since first they were uttered!

ye believe in God--absolutely.

believe also in me--that is, Have the *same trust* in Me. What less, and what else, can these words mean? And if so, what a demand to make by one sitting familiarly with them at the supper table! Compare the saying in [Jhn 5:17](#), for which the Jews took up stones to stone Him, as "making himself equal with God" ([Jhn 14:18](#)). But it is no *transfer of our trust from its proper Object*; it is but *the concentration of our trust in the Unseen and Impalpable One upon His Own Incarnate Son*, by which that trust, instead of the distant, unsteady, and too often cold and scarce real thing it otherwise is, acquires a conscious reality, warmth, and power, which makes all things new. *This is Christianity in brief.*

2. In my Father's house are many mansions--and so room for all, and a place for each.

if not, I would have told you--that is, I would tell you so at once; I would not deceive you.

I go to prepare a place for you--to obtain for you a right to be there, and to possess your "place."

3. I will come again and receive you unto myself--*strictly*, at His Personal appearing; but in a secondary and comforting sense, to each individually. Mark again the claim made:--to come again to receive His people *to Himself*, that where *He* is there they may be also. *He thinks it ought to be enough to be assured that they shall be where He is and in His keeping.*

4-7. whither I go ye know. . . Thomas saith, Lord, we know not whither thou guest. . . Jesus saith, I am the way, &c.--By saying this, He meant rather to draw out their inquiries and reply to them. Christ is "THE WAY" to the Father--"no man cometh unto the Father but by Me"; He is "THE TRUTH" of all we find in the Father when we get to Him, "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" ([Col 2:9](#)), and He is all "THE LIFE" that shall ever flow to us and bless us from the Godhead thus approached and thus manifested in Him--"this is the true God and eternal life" ([1Jo 5:20](#)).

References for Jhn 14:1 — [1](#) [2](#)

Chuck Smith

Sermon Notes for John 14

"THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVERS"

I. [Jhn 14:16](#). "PARACLETUS" ALONG WITH (SIDE) TO HELP.

A. Walking with Jesus for three years - exciting.

1. You begin to depend on Him to come through.

a. Need tax money?

b. Have to feed a crowd?

c. Are you about to sink?

2. As Jesus begins to talk of His departure, panic begins to set in.

B. Another comforter, (Paracletus, one who will be along side of you to help) even the Spirit of truth.

1. Jesus promised the Christian path would be tough.

a. "In this world you will have tribulation."

b. "They that live godly in Christ Jesus..."

c. Danger in presenting gospel as panacea.

1. Just accept Jesus and your troubles will be all over.

2. Not so, we have troubles just like anybody else, but we have someone alongside to help us.

2. Jesus said, "They are going to hail you before the magistrates, take no forethought."

II. [Jhn 14:26](#). "BUT THE COMFORTER...HE WILL TEACH YOU ALL THINGS."

A. "The natural man understands not the things of the Spirit neither can he know..."

1. The blind man does not enjoy the beauty of the sunset.

2. The deaf man cannot enjoy the concert.

3. They lack the faculties by which they are perceived.

B. "He will bring all things to your remembrance."

1. The value of reading the Word.

a. Programming the computer.

b. Satan fights us in this.

2. If you have it stored in your heart, the Holy Spirit will bring it forth to meet the needs.

C. He will guide you in all truth. [John 16:13](#).

1. So many false doctrines sound so reasonable.

a. The line of logic seems correct, the conclusions are unscriptural.

2. We need the discernment of the Spirit.

3. Jehovah's Witnesses case in point.

a. Have you ever tried to argue with one?

b. Their whole premise is wrong, the Holy Spirit did not come to be Jehovah's witness. Jesus said, "He shall testify of Me and you also shall bear witness."

III. TO GIVE US NEEDED POWER.

A. New Year's resolutions are a joke, why?

1. With Peter, spirits are willing but our flesh is weak.

2. We all have our ideal self and our real self. Our ego and super ego.

B. The Spirit is in constant warfare with our flesh. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit..."

1. Paul speaks of the battle in [Romans 7](#).

C. Jesus told His disciples in [Acts 1](#) to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. "You will receive power after that the Holy Spirit has come upon you."

1. Word "power" in Greek is dunamis.

2. We get our word "dynamic."

3. And ye shall be witnesses.

a. A witness for Christ is something you are, not something you do.

4. Peter, a classic example.

5. Spirit's method is to work from inside out.

IV. THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IS TO CONFORM US INTO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST.

A. Trying to imitate Christ can be a study in futility.

1. That which sets Christianity apart from other world religions.

a. They say that is the way you should live. I know it, but I can't.

b. Jesus says, now this is the path. You can't make it alone, I will indwell you.

c. Two sets of prints.

B. [2Cr 3:18](#), "We all with open face beholding..."

V. SEALING THE BELIEVER, "WE WERE SEALED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE."

A. God's mark of ownership.

1. This is comforting to me.

a. I don't always act like I belong to Him.

b. I don't always feel like I'm His.

VI. NOW THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE.

[Jhn 14:1-6](#), [19](#)

"BECAUSE HE LIVES."

Heaven: Questions and Answers with Randy Alcorn



BY [RANDY ALCORN](#)

April 26, 2010

What are some of the misconceptions about Heaven?

"I heard a pastor make a startling confession. He said, 'Whenever I think about Heaven, it makes me depressed. I'd rather just cease to exist when I die.' I tried not to show my shock as I asked him, 'Why?' 'I can't stand the thought of that endless tedium,' he said. 'To float around in the clouds with nothing to do but strum a harp...it's all so terribly boring. Heaven doesn't sound much better than hell. I'd rather be annihilated than spend eternity in a place like that.'

"Where did this Bible-believing, seminary-educated pastor get such a view of heaven? Certainly not from Scripture, where Paul said to depart and be with Christ was 'far better' than staying on earth. Though my friend was more vocal about it, I've found many Christians share the same misconceptions about heaven. I'm often told by readers of my books that though they are Christians they've never looked forward to Heaven, but have thought of it as a distant, boring, and even frightening place."

Where do we get these misconceptions about Heaven?

"The devil labors to give people an inaccurate view of Heaven. Some of Satan's favorite lies are about heaven. [Revelation 13:6](#) tells us the satanic beast 'opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven.' Paul warned us to be aware of the devil's schemes and put on God's armor to stand against them. Well, according to Revelation, one of Satan's favorite tactics is slandering God's dwelling place, Heaven, feeding us a distorted view of it. He knows this will rob us of joy in anticipating being with our bridegroom. It will make us fall in love with this world, as if it were our home. It will take away our motivation to tell others about Jesus. Why tell someone about how to go to Heaven when you think it's going to be a boring and tedious place to live? For this reason we should pray for God to enlighten our minds and break through the devil's lies as we look at what God's Word says about heaven. This is an emphasis not only in my nonfiction book on heaven, [In Light of Eternity](#), but also in all six of my novels, most recently [Safely Home](#)."

Is Heaven a real place, a tangible reality?

“Heaven is an actual place, in an actual location, designed by God with people in mind. Beings have traveled to and from Heaven, including Christ, angels and humans. Jesus, speaking as the bridegroom to his beloved bride, said to us, ‘I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am you may be also.’ Heaven is that place. The New Earth, where the heavenly city will be brought down to and relocated, will be a vastly improved form of the present earth and will have much in common with it—light, water, trees, fruit, people and animals.

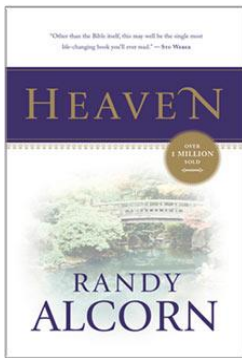
“As a new car is a better version of an old car—but with the same essential components that make a car a car (four wheels, engine, transmission, steering wheel, etc.)—the New Earth will be a far better version of the old earth but with the same essential components. Heaven will exist within the realm of the New Earth and will therefore be very earthly in its properties. Since it’s not only the dwelling place of God, but is fashioned by God to be populated by people, the present Heaven is also people—friendly, designed with their God-given desires and interests in mind.”

Are we really supposed to think about Heaven?

“When Jesus said to us, ‘I’m going [to Heaven] to prepare a place for you’ ([John 14:2-3](#)), he spoke as a groom to his bride-to-be. These are words of love and romance. How would any bride who loves her husband-to-be respond to them? She’d be thrilled. Not a single day would go by, not a single hour, in which the bride wouldn’t anticipate joining her beloved in that place he prepared for her to live with him forever. Like a bride’s dreams of sharing a home with her groom, our love for Heaven should be overflowing and contagious, just like our love for God. Our passion for God and our passion for Heaven should be inseparable. The more I learn about God, the more excited I get about Heaven. The more I learn about heaven, the more excited I get about God.”

What is Heaven like?

“Heaven is both a country and a city. A country is typically a large territory of various geographies, with citizens of diverse cultures and vocations, sometimes even languages, under one government that provides a common identity. A city is a place of many residences in near proximity. A city’s inhabitants are subject to the common government. Cities usually have varied and bustling activity, community events, education, arts, and visitors.



“Heaven is a place of great beauty, both natural created beauty and architecture, including streets of gold and buildings of pearls and emeralds and precious stones. Heaven will have the advantages we associate with earthly cities, without the disadvantages (e.g. crime, pollution, corruption). Heaven’s gates are always open. People will travel in and out, some bringing treasures into the city. Travel outside the city shows that the city is not the whole of heaven, but merely its center. The great city is the capital of an endless empire, called a heavenly country. There’s a universe outside the city’s gates, to which its citizens have free access.”

What will we do in Heaven?

“We’ll rest from our labors on earth, but that doesn’t mean constant inactivity. We’re told we’ll be reigning with Christ and serving him—that means we’ll have plenty to do. But heaven’s labor will be refreshing, productive and unthwarted, without futility and frustration. We will eat and drink and celebrate at the table with Christ and the redeemed saints from earth, communicating and fellowshiping and storytelling and rejoicing with them. And we’ll worship God. Multitudes of God’s people, of every nation, tribe, people, and language, will gather to sing praise to God for his greatness, wisdom, power, grace, and mighty work of redemption.”

For more on the subject of Heaven, see Randy Alcorn’s book [Heaven](#)

5 Curious Questions About Heaven

In a day when speculation about heaven runs rampant, I've found it both exciting and refreshing to carefully examine what Scripture says.

- [Randy Alcorn](#)

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I once heard a pastor make a startling confession: "Whenever I think about heaven, it makes me depressed. I'd rather just cease to exist when I die."

I tried not to show my shock as I asked him, "Why?"

"I can't stand the thought of that endless tedium. To float around in the clouds with nothing to do but strum a harp—it's all so terribly boring. Heaven doesn't sound much better than hell."

Where did this Bible-believing, seminary-educated pastor get such a view of heaven? Certainly not from Scripture, where Paul said to depart and be with Christ was "far better" than staying on earth (Phil. 1:23). And yet, though my friend was more honest about it than most, I've found that many Christians share the same misconceptions about heaven.

More than 30 years ago, I began studying what Scripture tells us about eternity and have written about heaven and the importance of an eternal perspective ever since. The Bible tells us much more about heaven than is often assumed. In a day when speculation and subjectivism about heaven run rampant, I've found it both exciting and refreshing to carefully examine what Scripture says.

1. Will we have bodies and live human lives?

Many people imagine that we will remain disembodied spirits in the afterlife and that heaven won't be a tangible, earthly place.

Given the consistent physical descriptions of the present heaven and those who dwell there, it seems possible—though this is certainly debatable—that between our earthly life and our bodily resurrection, God may grant us some physical form that will allow us to function as human beings while in that unnatural state "between bodies," awaiting our resurrection.

Just as the intermediate state is a bridge between life on the old earth and the new earth, perhaps intermediate bodies, or at least a physical form of some sort, serve as bridges between our present bodies and our resurrected bodies.

Revelation 21:1 says, **"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away."** This eternal heaven, the new earth, is our true home, the place where we will live forever with our Lord and one another.

In my book *Heaven*, I explain biblically why I believe that on the new earth there will be natural wonders, animals, trees, rivers, cities, houses and architecture. We will laugh, eat and drink, tell stories, make crafts, build, garden, care for animals, play, enjoy sports and physically demanding activities and tend and manage and rule the earth.

We will collaborate, research, invent, read books and write them, create and perform dramas, compose music and perform it, all to God's glory. Why?

Because we will still be physical beings created in God's image, which means we are creative and intelligent. And, we will be restored to a new earth without sin and death—to fulfill God's original plan of stewarding the material universe to His eternal glory.

2. Will we still be ourselves with our memories of this life?

After Jesus rose from the dead, He said to His disciples, "Look at My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself! Touch Me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have.' Having said this, He showed them His hands and feet" (Luke 24:39-40).

The resurrected Jesus did not become someone else; He remained who He was before His resurrection. And His old body was the same body made new. Our bodies will be the old ones made new, just as the new earth will be the old earth made new.

You will be you in heaven. Who else would you be? If Bob, a man on earth, is no longer Bob when he gets to heaven, then, in fact, Bob did not go to heaven.

If we weren't ourselves in the afterlife, then we couldn't be held accountable for what we did in this life. Judgment day would be meaningless. Scripture is clear that our own personal history and identity will endure from one earth to the next.

3. Won't heaven be boring?

Sadly—even among christians—it's a prevalent myth that heaven will be boring.

Sometimes we can't envision anything beyond strumming a harp and polishing streets of gold. Satan's most basic strategy, the same one he employed with Adam and Eve, is to make us believe that sin brings fulfillment. **However, in reality, sin robs us of fulfillment. Sin's emptiness inevitably leads to boredom.**

Psalms 16:11 says, "You reveal the path of life to me; in Your presence is abundant joy; in Your right hand are eternal pleasures."

Everything good, enjoyable, refreshing, fascinating and interesting is derived from God. God promises that we'll laugh, rejoice and experience endless pleasures in heaven. **To be in His presence will be the very opposite of boredom.**

4. Will we know our loved ones and have ongoing relationships with them?

Scripture gives no indication of a memory wipe causing us not to recognize family and friends. Paul anticipated being with the Thessalonians in heaven (1 Thess. 4:13-18), and it never occurred to him he wouldn't know them. In fact, if we wouldn't know our loved ones, the encouragement of an afterlife reunion would be no encouragement at all.

Relationships among God's people will resume in ways even better than what we've known here. Once the curse is lifted and death is forever reversed, we may live out many of the "could have beens" taken from us on the old earth.

5. Will there be animals—and is it possible the pets we've loved will be there?

In isaiah 65:17, 25, the Lord says: "I will create a new heaven and a new earth The wolf and the lamb will feed together They will not do what is evil or destroy on My entire holy mountain."

Scripture says a great deal about animals, portraying them as earth's second most important inhabitants. God entrusted animals to us, and our relationships with animals are a significant part of our lives.

Scripture's descriptions of animals peacefully inhabiting the earth may have application to a millennial kingdom on the old earth, but their primary reference appears to be to God's eternal kingdom, where mankind and animals will together enjoy a redeemed earth.

Many people also want to know whether their pets might live again.

Romans 8:20-23 sees animals as part of a suffering creation eagerly awaiting deliverance through humanity's resurrection. This seems to require that some animals that lived, suffered and died on the old earth must be made whole on the new earth.

Wouldn't some of those likely be our pets? Wouldn't it be just like God to take animals entrusted to our care in the old world and allow us to enjoy with them the wonders of the new world?

Jesus' death and resurrection made the way for us to be restored to the Father in our eternal home. If you know Jesus, I look forward to meeting you there and worshipping our King together in that incredible and indestructible world He has planned for us.

Randy Alcorn is the author of more than 40 books and the founder of Eternal Perspective Ministries (EPM). He served as a pastor for fourteen years, holding degrees in theology and biblical studies, and has taught on the adjunct faculties of Multnomah University and Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon. Randy resides in Gresham, Oregon, with his wife, Nanci.