

FOCUSING ON HEAVEN Text: Hebrews 11:8–16

The Home of the Soul

Introduction:

1. **Following God by Faith is not always easy—Especially during difficult times**
 - a. There is a longing of the human spirit—for eternal life
 - b. “If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.” (C.S. Lewis)
 2. **Focusing on heaven can help us through the difficult times... that’s what Abraham did—He focused on heaven (Hebrews 11:8–10, 13-16)**
 - a. There’s a lot about heaven we don’t know... we have questions...
 - b. But God has revealed some wonderful things about heaven to Help us and Prepare us
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1. IS HEAVEN REAL?

A. HEAVEN IS REAL

1. **I’ve never been to the city of Tokyo...**

But I have faith Tokyo exists, even though I’ve never seen it.

- a) I’ve never SCUBA dived the tropical waters or coral reefs of the South Pacific
- b) I’ve never visited deep space galaxies—or other planets, But I have faith they exist
- c) But My Faith is not a blind faith—it is based on evidence

2. **So it is with heaven—Heaven is real—Whether or not you’ve been there**

- a) God’s Word that tells us Heaven Exists...
- b) and of some who were allowed to see it! Like Apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 12:2-4)

3. **The word “heaven” is used in three different ways in the Bible.**

- a) 1st would be: **atmospheric heavens**—what we would call Earth’s atmosphere.
- b) 2nd: is the **expanse of the heavens**—deep space of planets and stars.
- c) 3rd: it is used of the **heaven of heavens**—the dwelling place of God.
—a spiritual realm outside of space and time.

*Of these three heavens, someone said, “The first we see by day,
the second we see by night, and the third we see by faith.”*

B. THE THRONE OF GOD IS THERE

1. **The Apostle John was allowed to see the Throne of God... (Rev. 4:1-6a)**
2. **His body was on the Island of Patmos—His Spirit was taken up to heaven**
3. **Where he was given a glimpse into the spiritual realm of heaven**

C. HEAVEN IS THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD

1. **Jesus said, ‘in my Father’s house’ (John 14:1-3)**
2. **Let not your heart be troubled... Believe it!**
3. **There is a beautiful future for God’s children**

2. WHAT IS HEAVEN LIKE?

God's Word gives us a glimpse into the spiritual realm to show...

A. HEAVEN IS A PLACE OF PEACE AND JOY

1. No More Sorrow or Suffering (Revelation 21:4)

- No More Regrets or Misunderstandings...
- No more Broken Relationships or Betrayal
- No more Tears or Death

B. HEAVEN IS A PLACE OF BEAUTY AND GLORY

1. Heaven is described with incredible beauty and glory (Revelation 22:1–2a)

- Heaven is beyond our frame of reference—Beyond our Comprehension
- So Symbolic language is meant to give our finite minds, a sense of the infinite,
- using words and ideas that we can understand.

2. These rare earth gems were also in the Garden of Eden (Rev 21:18-21, 23)

C. HEAVEN IS A PLACE OF VICTORY

1. Victory Over Suffering (Revelation 20:4; 22:5)

2. Victory Over Tribulation (Revelation 7:13–17)

3. Victory Over Evil (Revelation 12:9–12)

D. HEAVEN IS A PLACE OF WORSHIP & SERVICE

1. We See Spiritual Worship in Heaven (Revelation 7:9-12)

2. We also see Spiritual Service in Heaven (Revelation 7:15)

3. Some people think Heaven will be boring! I don't think so (Rev. 8:3–5)

E. HEAVEN IS A PLACE OF ETERNAL LIFE

1. The River of Life flows w/ crystal clear water from the throne of God (22:1)

2. The Tree of Life is there (22:2)

3. The Crown of Life for those who are faithful unto death (2:10)

4. Eternal life in the presence of our eternal Savior (21:6)

3. WHO IS IN HEAVEN?

A. FIRST—THOSE WHO ARE IN HEAVEN

1. GOD the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit

2. The ANGELS: Created Spiritual beings (Mt 18:10; Rev 7:11–12)

3. The REDEEMED Who have already gone before us (Revelation 7:9–10)

B. SECOND—THOSE WHO ARE NOT IN HEAVEN

1. Not everyone who call on the name of Jesus (Matthew 7:21)

a) Some think all they have to do is Believe in Jesus...

b) But even the demons believe, and tremble! (James 2:19)

c) Faith without works is dead (James 2:24)

2. Not everyone who does good works (Matthew 7:22-23)

- a) These people believed and did good works
- b) But good works is not enough to earn your way to heaven

3. Only Those Who Do The Will of the Father in Heaven... (Matthew 7:21)

- a) Is this Legalism? NO!
- b) Legalism is salvation by perfect law-keeping, thinking you earned salvation.

“Righteousness is what is on the inside, Legalism is what you see on the outside”

(Willis Warmuth, Rogue River church of Christ)

4. AM I GOOD ENOUGH TO GO TO HEAVEN?

A. IS BEING GOOD ENOUGH—GOOD ENOUGH?

1. Most People assume that we will go to heaven if we are good enough.

- a) A Barna poll found that 63 percent of the U.S. population thinks that if a person is good enough, he can earn his way to heaven.

2. USA TODAY asked: “What are your chances of going to heaven?”

- a) A middle-aged man from Illinois said his *chances were “50–50. The older I get, the more I think my chances will improve.”*
- b) A young woman from Indiana said, *“My chances are kind of slim—maybe 50–50. You have to be more than a nice person. But I’m still in the running.”*
- c) A Florida man was pretty laid back about it: *“Eighty-five percent. I don’t think the entrance exam will be that tough.”*

3. Do you See the Problem? They are gauging their chances of going to heaven in terms of how good they perceive themselves to be.¹

- a) Like a scale: I was 49% bad — but 51% good tips the scales.

B. BEING GOOD ENOUGH—IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH

1. No One is good enough—it only takes one sin to keep you out of heaven

- a) “For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.” (James 2:10)
- b) We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23)

2. Sin is the One Thing Not Allowed in Heaven! (Revelation 21:27 ESV)

3. And Our Own Self-Righteousness cannot Atone for our own sins

**4. Even if you Piled up all your Self-Righteousness you’ve ever done —
—all you have is a pile of filthy rags. (Isaiah 64:6)**

5. We need True Righteousness—not self-righteousness

6. A Righteousness that only God can provide (Isaiah 61:10)

¹ Jack Cottrell, Grace—Set Free, p.23

5. HOW CAN I HAVE THE HOPE OF HEAVEN?

A. BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB!

1. Only the Blood of Jesus Can Provide Atonement for Our Sins (Rev. 1:5-6)
2. The Only Way Anyone Can Have the Hope of Heaven
is by the Blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:13–17)
3. This is the only way we can enter! (Revelation 22:14 NIV)

B. BY BEING SAVED BY GRACE

1. This is why Jesus went to the Cross—to shed His blood for our sins
2. You Could not be redeemed by anything else! (1 Peter 1:18–19)
3. So we could be forgiven and sanctified and saved! (Titus 3:4–7)

C. YOU CAN HAVE THE HOPE OF HEAVEN!

1. But Only By the Grace of God and the Blood of the Lamb! (Roman 6:23)
2. Jesus said: Unless one is Born Again of the Water and the Spirit,
he cannot Enter the Kingdom of God (Jn 3:5)
3. When you Believe, Repent, Confess and are Baptized into Christ for the
forgiveness of sin you become a Child of God! (Mk 16:16; Ac. 2:38)
A citizen of heaven! (Phil 3:20)

CONCLUSION:

1. The Invitation is open (Revelation 21:6 / 22:17)
2. There is room in the kingdom!

But as it is written:

*“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,
Nor have entered into the heart of man
The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

¹⁰ But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. (1 Cor. 2:9-10)