

## **THE TRUTH ABOUT HEAVEN**

**John 14:1-11**

**By Andy Manning**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Have you ever heard the saying, “He is so heavenly minded that he is of no earthly good”? The idea is that there are some Christians who are super spiritual, but they aren’t very good at life on earth. That may be true of some Christians, but it is not because they are heavenly-minded.
2. The Bible tells us to keep our focus on heaven. **Colossians 3:2** “Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”
3. **C. S. Lewis** (1898-1963) “If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. The apostles themselves, who set on foot the conversion of the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English evangelicals who abolished the slave trade, all left their mark on earth, precisely because their minds were occupied with heaven. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this.”

### **II. TEXT AND COMMENTARY**

1. 1 “Don’t let your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.
  - i. Why would the disciples be troubled? Because Jesus had just told them that He was soon going away. He was referring to His forthcoming death.
  - ii. Why shouldn’t they be troubled?
2. 2 In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? 3 If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also. 4 You know the way to where I am going.”
  - i. Jesus comforts His disciples by talking about the promise of heaven.
3. 5 “Lord,” Thomas said, “we don’t know where you’re going. How can we know the way?”
  - i. Thomas was one of the Twelve. He was also known as the Twin, or Didymus in Greek. Some scholars speculate that it was because he looked like Jesus.
  - ii. It is likely that none of the disciples fully understood what Jesus meant, but Thomas was the only one with the courage to admit his ignorance, and it is because he was brave enough to ask a question that we have one of the greatest sayings of Jesus in verse 6. Never be afraid to ask questions; or to admit that you don’t understand.
4. 6 Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

- i. This is the foundational verses for the most hated Christian doctrine – the exclusivity of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only way to God; the only way to heaven.
- 5. 7 If you know me, you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”
- 6. 8 “Lord,” said Philip, “show us the Father, and that’s enough for us.”
  - i. Philip was another of the Twelve apostles. He was from the same hometown as Andrew and Peter, Bethsaida (Jn 1:44). When he met Jesus, he immediately introduced Him to his friend Nathanael (Jn 1:45-46).
- 7. 9 Jesus said to him, “Have I been among you all this time and you do not know me, Philip? The one who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10 Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who lives in me does his works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Otherwise, believe because of the works themselves.
  - i. Once again Christ declares His divinity very clearly by making Himself one with the Father, and equal to the Father. He says...
    - 1. Verse 7: To know Christ is to know the Father.
    - 2. Verse 7, 9: To see Christ is to see the Father.
    - 3. Verse 10-11: Christ is in the Father, and the Father is in Christ.
    - 4. Verse 10: The Father lives in Christ.
    - 5. Verse 10: Christ’s words are the Father’s words.
    - 6. Verse 10-11: Christ’s miracles and ministry were the product of the Father working through Him.

### III. EIGHT TRUTHS ABOUT HEAVEN

#### 1. It is a key to inner peace.

- i. **John 14:1-2** “Don’t let your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?”
- ii. The disciples were upset because Jesus said He would soon leave them. Jesus quelled their fears with the promise of heaven.
- iii. The promise of heaven is one of the keys to inner peace. It is one of the keys to enduring the trials of life.
  - 1. Are you tired? In heaven you can rest.
  - 2. Are you sick? In heaven you will be made whole.
  - 3. Are you lonely? In heaven you will surrounded a loving spiritual family.
  - 4. Are you being mistreated? In heaven you will be safe.
  - 5. Are you in pain? In heaven you will find relief.
  - 6. Have you lost a loved one? In heaven you will be reunited.
  - 7. Are you depressed? In heaven your tears will be wiped away.

- 8. Are you poor? In heaven you will be eternally rich.
- 9. Are you hungry? In heaven you will feast.
- 10. Is your body falling apart? In heaven you will receive a new one without any defects.
- 11. Are you struggling with addiction? In heaven you will finally be set free.
- 12. Are you a failure? In heaven you will be a victor.
- 13. Have you made some horrible mistakes? In heaven all will be forgiven.
- 14. Are you discouraged with your own sinfulness? In heaven sin will be no more.
- 15. Are you afraid of death? It is only the promotion to paradise.
- iv. Any time you are bothered by something in this life, just meditate on heaven.
- v. **Thomas Moore** "Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal."
- vi. **Ben Franklin** "By heaven we understand a state of happiness infinite in degree and endless in duration."
- vii. **Saint Augustine** "Heaven is the perfectly ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God and of one another in God."
- viii. When you are going through a hard time, just remember that you are one day closer to paradise with God.

## 2. There is room enough for all Christians.

- i. **John 14:2** "In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?"
- ii. The KJV says "mansions," but this is a mistranslation of the Latin. The word is rooms, or dwelling places, or abiding places.
- iii. It does not mean that there is one big house with many rooms, but that there is plenty of room for you in heaven.
- iv. **William Barclay** "An earthly house becomes overcrowded; an earthly inn must sometimes turn away the weary traveller because its accommodation is exhausted. It is not so with our Father's house, for heaven is as wide as the heart of God and there is room for all. Jesus is saying to his friends: 'Don't be afraid. In this world, people may shut their doors upon you. But in heaven you will never be shut out.'"

## 3. Christ prepared a place for us.

- i. **John 14:2** "In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?"
- ii. This does not mean that Christ is in heaven using His carpentry skills to build you a custom house in heaven. The work of preparation is already done.
- iii. Christ prepared a place for us in heaven when He died on the cross, paying the penalty for our sins, so that we could be forgiven and have peace with

God. Now, because of Christ's work on the cross, we can look forward to heaven.

- iv. In Heb 6:20 Christ is called the forerunner (*prodromoi*). In the Roman army, the *prodromoi* were reconnaissance troops sent ahead of the main body to prepare the way; they would blaze a trail and ensure that it was safe for the rest to follow. In the harbor of Alexandria, Egypt, it was very difficult for ships to approach. A small pilot boat, called the *prodromos*, was sent out to guide the ships along the channel into safe waters. Christ is our forerunner because he prepared the way for us to heaven. He made it possible for us to go to heaven by appeasing God's wrath against us. – William Barclay

#### **4. Heaven is real.**

- i. **John 14:2** "In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?"
- ii. Christ is reassuring His disciples of the reality and certainty of heaven. He must have sensed doubt in their hearts.
- iii. In December 2005, ABC News correspondent Barbara Walters hosted the TV Special "Heaven: Where is it? How do we get there?" and interviewed leaders of various faiths on their views of heaven. Her lineup included such notables as the Dalai Lama and atheist Ellen Johnson, who matter of factly declared, "Heaven does not exist, hell doesn't exist. We weren't alive before we were born and we're not going to exist after we die. I'm not happy about the fact that that's the end of life, but I can accept that and make my life more fulfilling now, because this is the only chance I have."
- iv. How can we be certain that heaven is awaiting us? Because Jesus said it, and He is trustworthy.
  - 1. John described Jesus as full of grace and truth. Jn 1:14
  - 2. Paul said that He did not know sin. 2 Cor 5:21
  - 3. The author of Hebrews said He "has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin." Heb 4:15
  - 4. On multiple occasions He predicted His death and resurrection, which came true.

#### **5. Christ is coming again to take us there.**

- i. **John 14:3** "If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also."
- ii. This could mean one of two things:
  - 1. When Christ comes back, He will gather His people to be with Him. But at that time, Christ will not take us away to heaven, but will keep us with Him as He comes to create a new heavens and earth, where heaven and earth will be joined. If this is the case, then He wasn't promising to come back before the disciples died but stating a general truth that He will come back for His people.

2. A second possibility is that Christ meant that He will come back to get each of His disciples when they die and take them to be with Him in heaven. This does not mean that Christ will personally come back for each of us; He may send an angel. The main idea is that He will make sure to come get us when we die.

#### 6. We will be with Jesus.

- i. **John 14:3** “If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also.”
- ii. The Bible tells us a lot about heaven. **R.C. Sproul** “It is likened to paradise, to the bosom of Abraham, and to a glorious city that comes down from heaven. The New Jerusalem is described in terms of translucent streets of gold, a place with walls of precious gemstones, and a setting of perpetual and everlasting joy. What is most notable about heaven is what is absent from it as well as what is present in it. Things that will be absent include: (1) tears, (2) sorrow, (3) death, (4) pain, (5) darkness, (6) ungodly people, (7) sin, (8) temples, (9) the sun or moon, and (10) the curse from Adam’s sin (see Genesis 3:14-19). What will be present in heaven includes: (1) the saints, (2) the river of the water of life, (3) healing fruit, (4) the Lamb of God, (5) worship, (6) the wedding feast of the Lamb and His bride, (7) the unveiled face of God, and (8) the Sun of Righteousness.”
- iii. As wonderful as all of that sounds, the very best thing about heaven is that we will be with Jesus.
- iv. The Bible says that we will see Jesus (1 Jn 3:2), and that we will see the very face of God (Rev 22:1-5). Theologians call this the beatific vision, or the blessed vision.

#### 7. We know the way there.

- i. **John 14:4** “You know the way to where I am going.”
- ii. On multiple occasions Jesus told His disciples the way to heaven. What was the way?
- iii. **John 3:16** “For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.”
- iv. The way to heaven is to believe in Jesus.
- v. What does the Bible mean by “believe”?
  1. **William Barclay** “To believe in Jesus means to accept everything that Jesus said as absolutely true, and to stake our lives upon that in perfect trust.”
  2. To believe in Christ means two things:
    - a. Trust in Christ as Savior. Don’t trust in yourself or your own good works. Heaven is not earned by good works; it is received by trusting in the work of Christ on your behalf. Why

should God let you into heaven? Because of the cross of Christ.

- i. **A.W. Tozer** “The man who is seriously convinced that he deserves to go to hell is not likely to go there, while the man who believes that he is worthy of heaven will certainly never enter that blessed place.”
- b. Trust in Christ as Lord. Give up control of your life to Christ. Only the one who follows Christ on earth will follow Him to heaven.

## 8. Jesus is the only way.

- i. **John 14:6** Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
- ii. This one of the most important verses in the Bible. It teaches two foundational truths.
  1. Not everyone goes to heaven. Some won’t come to the Father in heaven because they rejected the way that God provided.
    - a. **John 3:36** “The one who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who rejects the Son will not see life; instead, the wrath of God remains on him.”
    - b. Where do people go if they don’t go to heaven? To hell, the place of eternal torment. Jesus spoke more of hell than heaven. This is where the wrath of God is poured out on those who reject the gospel of Jesus Christ.
  2. There is only one way to heaven – through Jesus Christ.
    - a. A [study](#) this year found that 70% of born again Christians believe other religions can lead to heaven. That’s not what the Bible says. You can’t get to heaven through Mohommed. You can’t get to heaven through Buddha. You can’t get to heaven by being a Mormon or a Jehovah’s Witness. You can’t get to heaven through good works. The only way is through Jesus Christ.
    - b. Do all the people who reject Christ go to hell?
    - c. **Acts 4:12** “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved.”
    - d. **1 John 5:12** “The one who has the Son has life. The one who does not have the Son of God does not have life.”
    - e. **Jewish Proverb** “One path leads to Paradise, but a thousand lead to hell.”
- iii. The shocking thing is not that there is only one way to heaven, but that God has provided a way for us at all. We are so sinful, all we deserve is hell. Yet

God is so rich in mercy and grace that He has provided a sacrifice for our sins so that we can be forgiven and receive eternal life.

- iv. If you are hanging from a cliff and someone throws you a rope, you don't complain that they didn't give you several options – a stick, a chain, a pole, a ladder, etc.; you grasp the rope. You can complain that there is only one way, or you can rejoice that there is a way and grasp Christ in faith.
- v. **Billy Graham** "I'm not going to heaven because I've preached to great crowds of people. I'm going to heaven because Christ died on that cross. None of us are going to heaven because we're good. And we're not going to heaven because we've worked. We're not going to heaven because we pray and accept Christ. We're going to heaven because of what he did on the cross. All I have to do is receive him. And it's so easy to receive Christ that millions stumble over its sheer simplicity."

#### IV. CONCLUSION

1. Story:
  - i. The teacher asked her preschool class, "Now, how many of you would like to go to heaven?" All the children raised their hands except Tommy.
  - ii. The teacher asked Tommy why he wouldn't like to go to heaven. Tommy answered, "I'm sorry, but I can't. My mother told me to come right home after Sunday school."
2. I know you want to go to heaven, and the good news is that you can.
3. But you must put your faith in Jesus Christ.
4. **Pastor Tommy Nelson** "When I get to heaven, I will be amazed at three things. I will be amazed at those I thought would be there who are not there, those I did not think would be there who are there, and the fact that I am there at all."
5. I wonder how many people there who think they are going to heaven, but will end up in hell?
6. Why would that happen? Because they didn't turn from their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. That's the only thing that can keep you out of heaven.