

Are You Prepared for Eternity?

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Mike Miller

Straight Paths Bible Church

1 Cor. 10:21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

John 3:1-7 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

- I. We speak of preparing to meet God, but few truly understand what that involves.
 - A. Most believe and are taught that it simply means performing a prayer or ritual.
 - B. Many believe that it is simply agreeing with a set of facts or creed.
 - C. There are many, many people who think all that is required is that you abstain from a few certain sins.
 - D. Many, if not most, believe that it is enough to just become a part of a church and to associate yourself with those who are known as God's people.
 - E. But being prepared to meet God involves much more than all of this.
 - F. We must become acquainted and familiar with God and the spiritual realm in which He lives.
 - G. We must also become alienated and estranged from this world and its system of life.
 - H. We must not be mindful of this world from which we have come, and we must see ourselves as strangers and pilgrims here with a mindset that looks for a city that hath foundations whose builder and maker is God.

- II. It is simply impossible for a person to go to heaven and be in the presence of God in this earthly condition.
 - A. It is a different realm and a different life altogether.
 - B. The things that are so important here on earth are not important there at all.
 1. Safety – there will never be a pandemic, famine, recession, breakdown of law and order, or a war in heaven. (no thieves there, either)
 2. Cares of life – there will be none there.
 3. Making money and getting gain – no need for such things there.
 4. Struggling against others to keep from being taken advantage of.
 5. Competition against others for attention, for gain, for superiority.
 - C. The things that most consider secondary here and not so important, will be all that life is about there.
 1. Worship.
 2. Love and benevolence.
 3. The knowledge of God and understanding of his ways.

4. Pleasing God and considering him first in all things.

III. There are things in our life that must be purged forever before we are prepared to be ushered into the presence of God forever.

- A. Selfishness.
- B. Worldly views and opinions that are contrary to God and his ways
- C. Heart that is attached to the ways and the things of this world
- D. Lack of knowledge and understanding of God himself
- E. Head full of misinformation about God and eternity

IV. There are some things that must be put into our very being before we are prepared to live with God forever.

- A. Love for God
 - 1. True all consuming love, not just lip service.
 - 2. Love that surpasses all other loves.
 - 3. An intimate love that is not shared with anyone or anything else – with ALL our heart, ALL our soul, ALL our mind, and ALL our strength.
 - 4. This cannot be substituted for by religious discipline or socializing with those who are known as the people of God.
- B. A basic concept of the true reality of heaven and what it is like.
 - 1. It is truly beyond our ability to comprehend from where we are right now, but God has given us the means to get a glimpse.

1 Cor. 13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

- 2. A glimpse is sufficient to make us see the vanity of earth.
 - 3. We must go beyond thinking of heaven as just a continuation of life as it is here – without the bad things.
- C. A true knowledge of God and a real relationship with him here and now in this present, evil world.
 - 1. This is not something that will be initiated when we die or when Jesus comes – if it ever happens, it must begin now.
 - 2. Jesus is coming for his own – not those who simply have heard of him.
 - 3. Jesus is preparing a place in heaven for those who know and love God – not for those who simply recognize there is a God.
 - 4. We must have a basic understanding of the ways of God and his order for his Creation.

V. There are many, many people who are taking eternity far too lightly.

- A. They are skipping through life thinking that since they have said a prayer and they say they are saved, and they associate with God's people a little, that they are safe and that after they die they will be in heaven with all their troubles behind them.
- B. They know little or nothing about God and his character, his ways, his heart, because they neglect to read and study his Word.
- C. All the evidence of their life shows that they are in love with the world and not with God.
 - 1. They are much at home here and therefore are strangers to heaven.
- D. All of us need to examine ourselves and make sure that we are truly prepared and ready to step into the presence of God at any moment.