

Heaven- Would Tom Sawyer want to go?

Forest Hills Baptist Church

July 29, 2018

Pastor Jim Lacy, guest speaker

I Corinthians 2:9-10

Would heaven be boring to
Huckleberry Finn?

Think of all the best of this life, but no
drudgery, or despair, or
disappointments

All the holy pleasures of life, but nothing that has
been touched by sin or failure

Are we making this up?

- No, there are over 300 references in the Bible to heaven, the new heavens and earth, or related subjects!

Let's begin by reminding ourselves of the reality of Christ's return

- *“Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near; right at the door.”*
–Matthew 24:33
- *“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven...”*
-from I Thessalonians 4:13-14
- *“...This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”*
-Acts 1:11

Please do not fight about the timing. Prepare for the reality!

- *“And now, dear children, continue in Him, so that when He appears we may be confident, and unashamed before Him at His coming.”*

-I John 2:28

*“We shall all stand before the
judgment seat of Christ.”*

-II Cor. 5:10

Why will there be eternal joy in heaven?

I. The House

*“In my Father’s house are many rooms
(mansions)...*

*I am going there to prepare a place for
you. And if I go and prepare a place for
you, I will come back and take you to be
with me...”*

-John 14

Also described as “heaven, paradise, a kingdom, a garden, etc.”

- My delight in visiting with friends Hal and Leigh Wilkins
- Many people’s delight in visiting royal homes and castles

The Wedding Feast ("marriage supper") of the Lamb

"Hallelujah! For the Lord God Almighty reigns.
Let us be rejoice and be glad and give him
glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come,
and his bride has made herself ready. Fine
linen, bright and clean was given her to wear.
(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the
saints.)"

The Wedding Feast

Then the angel said to me, 'Write: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'"

-from Revelation 19:6-9

What happens at a wedding feast?

Psalm 16:11

*“You have made known to me the path
of life,
You fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right
hand.”*

Contrasting heaven and hell

Life	Death
Light	Darkness
Joy	Sorrow
Fellowship	Selfish
Pleasure	Torment

...But both are “eternal”

Recommended reading...

- Heaven by Randy Alcorn
- Heaven is a Place on Earth
by Mike Whitmer
- The Glories of Heaven
by John MacArthur

Randy Alcorn quoting C.S. Lewis-

- In The Silver Chair- The green witch says to the captured Eustace in the underground, “There is no sun... there is no Aslan...” But she is revealed to be the serpent and is defeated. Then rejoicing comes. (p. 12-13)
- In The Last Battle- Heaven looks like the old Narnia, but “more real.” It is larger and brighter and it is “home.” (p.238-239)

The New Jerusalem alone is 1400 X 1400 x 1400 miles

- This means the ground level itself will be nearly two millions square miles (40 times bigger than England).
- There will be over 600,000 stories or levels.
- The building materials are jewels, gold, etc.
- The inhabitants are perfect.
- There is no need of security.
- The light of heaven is Jesus.

Theologian Anthony Hoekma...

“The ‘new Jerusalem’ does not remain in a ‘heaven’ far off in space, but it comes down to the renewed earth; there the redeemed will spend eternity in resurrection bodies. So heaven and earth, now separated, will then be merged: the new earth will also be heaven, since God will dwell there with His people. Glorified believers... will continue to be in heaven while they are inhabiting the new earth.”

From Revelation 21:1-5

“Then I saw a ‘new heaven and a new earth,’ for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away...

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain...”

We will have resurrected bodies like Jesus

*“When we see Him,
we shall be like Him.”*

Why will there be eternal joy in heaven?

Not just because of the house, but because of...

II. The Host!

“He Who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new!’ Then He said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.’” -Rev. 21:5

Heaven is entered by responding to an invitation...

*“The Spirit and the bride say ‘Come!’
And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’
Whoever is thirsty, let him come;
and whoever wishes, let him take
the free gift of the water of life.”*

-the invitation of Revelation 22:17

In 1952 young Florence Chadwick attempted to swim from Catalina Island to the mainland of – California (she had already been the 1st woman to swim the English channel- both ways!)

After 15 hours she was told she was close, but she begged to quit. She stopped. On the boat she discovered she was only ½ mile away.

“All I could see was the fog. I think if I could have seen the shore, I would have made it.”