

Heaven: A Place Where We Will Be With Christ Forever!

Text: John 14:1-6

Introduction:

Sadly, this text has most often been emphasized, in a way, which I believe misses the whole point of the text. How often have we heard this text used, in such a way as to emphasize the "spacious" reality of heaven. It goes something like this, "Jesus tells us not to worry and not to let the problems of this life, sink us down into despair, because, after all, when we get to heaven, we will all receive large mansions! Isn't that great?!"

But brethren, I can assure you that the disciples were not at all concerned about living in large mansions in heaven. If that were the great emphasis of this text, then our Lord's words would have offered little comfort to his downcast disciples. He would have spoken, right past the very root of their sorrow and fears. Imagine for a moment, if someone you love dearly (a spouse, a parent, a child, a sibling, a close friend...etc) was about to be taken away from you. And then, that loved one says to you, "Hey, don't worry! Don't be discouraged! I am going to secure you a large mansion!" That would hardly alleviate the hurt you are feeling, because the root of your hurt, is that, the person whom you love, is leaving! You don't want to lose them! And the grief of losing them, could never be made up, by a promise of mansions, or silver and gold, or anything else, for that matter! You want *them*!

This was the position the disciples were in. The One, who had so touched and impacted their lives; the One, whom they came to love more than all else; the One, who gave them comfort, security, assurance, and His own heart; the One, who was so precious to them, that they left all to follow Him; indeed, their Lord, their God, their Creator and Savior, was now going to leave them for a time! And this broke their hearts! This sunk their souls into a tremendous void, as they had assumed that they would now be with Him forever!

And so, our Lord answers this "heart wrenching" dilemma, with His most comforting words, in verses 1-6, in our text! And to miss this reality; to get lost in the "mansions," is to wholly miss the great emphasis and comfort of this text, brethren! Indeed, heaven is spacious and beyond glorious, in every way, but that is the side dish, to the main course, which the

disciples so earnestly desired! They wanted to be with Christ! They did not want Him to leave! They did not want Him to be apart from them! And the great assurance; indeed, the greatest assurance and comfort of this text, lies not in verse 2, but in verse 3:

"Yes, My Father's house has many mansions; there is more than enough room for everyone of my people to live there; and I am only leaving now to prepare a place for you there. In fact, by My leaving, I am securing a place for you there ("My cross is the preparation!)"... And here is the key, "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."

Ahhh! Here is the answer to their sorrow, isn't it? Here is the great emphasis of this text, isn't it? Christ is not leaving His disciples forever! He is merely going to prepare a place for them, so that He can return and bring them to where He is, to be with Him, forever! Yes, there is plenty of room; yes, there is plenty of room for all of us; yes, by His death, He secures our place, but, so that we can BE WITH HIM FOREVER! That is the glory of this text, and that is the glory of heaven, brethren! Heaven is "A Place Where We Will Be With Christ," and that, forever! And this is the subject of our concentration/meditation for this morning, brethren!

I. Heaven: A Place Where We Will Be With Christ Forever

Brethren, what will it be like, to finally see Christ, face to face, never to be pulled away from Him, by remaining sin, worldly interference and/or demonic hindrance? Peter tells us, in 1 Peter 1:7c-8, "Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory..." But, what about when we do see Him? If we have great joy, because we have, by regeneration and a God-given faith, been truly united to this blessed Savior, what will it be like, when our faith becomes full-blown sight?!

Presently, our trials, mixed feelings, ongoing battles with remaining sin, sufferings...etc, all, in a sense, diminish the realization of His presence, don't they? We love Him, indeed, we do! Having experienced the miraculous new birth; having come to realize our reconciliation and peace with God; witnessing the power of His sustaining grace (daily); knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ; Understanding that He constantly intercedes before the throne of grace, on our behalf; beholding the incomprehensible love that He has shown us,

even when we were yet sinners; seeing how His love never fails us, it never grows cold, in spite of us, all of these things and so much more, compel us to love Him *now*, with a sincere and heartfelt love! But, in all of this, we dip down into dark valleys, don't we? Present trials and sufferings, and the present reality, that we are still in this decaying body, all hinder us from maintaining a constant hold on a *felt* reality of His smile and presence.

And so, we long for Him now! And every step of the way, as we grow in the grace and knowledge of our blessed Savior; as we behold more of His beauty and glory in His Word; as our faith grows stronger in His wholly reliable trustworthiness, we long for the day of entering into the joy of seeing Him face to face, with nothing left, ever, to hinder us from beholding Him, in the fulness of His love for us! You think you comprehend the love of Christ, now, brethren? Wait until you meet Him, with not a speck of doubt or remaining sin blocking your view; when the full extent of His love for you, is wholly realized, and that, without end! You think you grasp the reality of the cross now? Wait till you process its meaning, in the presence of the One, who hung on it, without any hint of regret, for you!

What will we say to Him, then? When He looks you in the eyes and says, as it were, "Ahh, my beloved child! I have waited for this day, to see you, whom My soul has loved, even from before the foundation of the world! You were written in My heart then; indeed, I knew you with a perfect affection, and when I endured the agony of the cross, I did so, without regret, so that you would secure a place, eternally in My presence! You are the object of My love and affections, and you will be such, forever and ever! Enter into My joy, beloved saint!" "But Lord, my sins, my sins, were many and great and weighty...and now, even to consider them, in the presence of your holiness, how could this be?" "I have carried them all; indeed, every last drop; yes, a weighty heap of evil, in my own body on the tree, and My blood was poured out, extinguishing every spark of fire, due you, for your sins!"

Oh brethren, we will be with this Christ, forever! Heaven is a place where we will dwell with Christ forever! Not a dull moment in His presence! Not a yawn! Not a looking at the watch, to see how much time has gone by! Every moment will be as fresh and lovely as the first! Every moment will outweigh entire lifetimes; for our joy, in and with Christ, will be without end!

You can convince me otherwise, if you can convince me that eternity or infinity can ever meet a boundary!

John tells us that we don't know what we will be in heaven. We don't know many of the details of what we will do, and all that goes on there. The glory is simply inexpressible, in a world, where all that we understand, is within the confines of this world. You may as well attempt to explain the workings and uses of an Ipod, to a new born infant! But, what we do know, John tells us, is that, we will see Christ! And when we do, we will be like Him! We are a world of copy cats, are we not? Everyone loves to emulate and copy their so-called heroes. A young child copies his father or her mother. Trends and styles are passed down from people of influence, to all of their followers. Being image bearers, from the beginning, we love to bear images. Well then, brethren, we will bear the glorious image, of the most loveliest, pure and perfect human being, ever to step foot on the earth. The God-Man; God, to the highest heights, and humanity at its most proper, lovely, and glorious display and function, even the Lord Jesus Christ! We will be forever with Him, and like Him! Indeed, the "us" in "us," will be "us," but we will be conformed to His perfect image!

And brethren, here, in our text, our Lord presumes that His anxious disciples might agonize over the question, "Lord, how can we be certain that we will get there? We have no idea where you are going? How can we know, which way to go?" And so, our Lord states in verse 4, "And where I go you know, and the way you know." He says, "Look, not only am I promising to come and get you, as I am now leaving, merely to prepare a place for you there, which assumes with the utmost certainty that you will get there, but furthermore, you know where I am going, and you know how to get there!" And so, Thomas responds, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, and how can we know the way?" (vs. 5). And then, the Lord responds with those most famous and precious words of comfort; taking all eyes off of looking for some physical map or GPS for directions, and placing Himself forward, as the Way! "Jesus said to him, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me'" (vs. 6). And what is our Lord saying here? Namely, that our access to glory; our access to Him and to the Father, is granted by faithfully fixing our eyes on Christ! As we place our confidence in Christ; as we walk in the light of His truth, we must; we most certainly will, be guaranteed passageway

into His glorious presence, forever! The God, who never sleeps; the God, who is all sovereign; the God, whose power and providence and knowledge, can never be compromised by anyone or anything, guarantees our passage into His heavenly glory, through the portal of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ! In other words, brethren, as we walk with Christ, by faith, on this side of the grave, we can be certain that we are already on that path, which leads to glory! And when our time of departure from this world arrives, He will most certainly bring us to Himself!

Now, some of you have been sitting through these sessions, and may not know the Lord in truth. Maybe you are still living in your sin, and have never come to Christ by faith, receiving the forgiveness of your sins, reconciliation with God, and the certainty of eternal life in Christ. This wonderful promise and guarantee is only for true believers, who have repented of their sins, and have come to Christ by faith, in truth! Do you want to be in the heaven, that we have been considering, over these last few days? Do you want the guarantee of eternal life? Then you must; indeed, your only hope, is to repent of your sins, and to set your feet, on the Way of Jesus Christ! He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no one can ever come to the Father; no one, can ever obtain peace with God, apart from Him! Call upon Him this night, by faith; believe into Him; cast your life and dependence upon His cross, His suffering, His promises, His resurrection; cast your life upon Him! Follow Him, and you will be saved! There is no other way into His glorious heaven!

And brethren, rejoice then, that just beyond the vale of tears; just beyond the sorrow and trials of this short life, there is an eternity of glory, where you will forever be with Christ, and His people! And there will never be a time, that you will be separated from Him, ever, ever, again!

Philippians 1:12-30- "But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of

the gospel. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me."

AMEN!!!