

Series: Heaven: My Forever Home

C.R. 8-12-19

“Preparing for the Trip”

**Text:** John 14:1-6

**Intro:** Today we launch out into some mighty big waters. The more I study Heaven, the more I find out how little I truly know. I will not lie. There will be more questions asked than answered, but the answers we find are magnificent. Before our trips to Israel we met with our groups and went over the details. We prepared ourselves for the journey that we were about to go on. Many questions were asked. We went over the daily stops and looked at our maps. That is what I want us to do this morning. We are going on a trip to a place that none of us have ever been before. The thing about this trip is this trip is finally taking us home. So again, we will barely scratch the surface of Heaven, but I feel sure it will be enough. Let’s start our preparation.

**1) The Location of Heaven**

- a. To begin with Jesus to make sure that you have calibrated your spiritual GPS correctly.
- b. The only way to Heaven through Him. Through Faith in Christ. This must be established.
- c. We also know that our journey is going to take us in an upward direction.
- d. weaken the nations!
- e. **Isa 14:13** For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:
- f. **Act 1:9** And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.
- g. But most people want to know more about the realm of heaven.
- h. There are 4 Heavens. 1) The sky. Where the birds fly, clouds are. 2) Space. Where we have sent men and women to. 3) Present Heaven. Where are loved ones are now, and if we die before the rapture where we will go as well. 4) Future Heaven. The New Heaven and New Earth.
- i. This future heaven is under construction and is the place that Jesus said he has gone to prepare for us. Its location might surprise you.
- j. It is important for us to keep in mind the difference in **“Present Heaven”** and **“Future Heaven”**.

**2) The Present Heaven**

- a. Do Christians immediately go to Heaven when they die?
- b. **2Co 5:6** Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:
- c. **2Co 5:7** (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)
- d. **2Co 5:8** We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.
- e. **2Co 5:8** We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.
- f. Worldwide, 3 people die every second, 180 every minute, and nearly 11,000 every hour.
- g. This means that every day 250,000 people either go to Heaven or Hell.
- h. Read Illustration (joke) from book on Heaven by Dr. Robert Jeffress page 79-80 (see attached)
- i. But because we’ve all had loved ones die, and we ourselves will die unless Christ returns first, we should consider what Scripture teaches about the present Heaven—the place Christians go when they die.

- j. The present Heaven is Temporary.
- k. **Rev 21:1** And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.
- l. The word passed away here in KJV means “gone”. No more.
- m. The present Heaven has the presence of God in it, and our loved ones are there enjoying the presence of the Lord.
- n. Are we spirits, or do we have a body? Great debate here.
- o. One of those unanswered questions. We know that Enoch left here in a body. We know that Elijah left here, and no body was found. We know that on the mount of Transfiguration they were all in bodies. But God could have made all of that happen for sure.
- p. **Illustrate** with crown on my tooth. Temporary and Permanent.
- q. The Apostle Paul makes it clear that at the Rapture all Christians will receive their new, glorified bodies in the which they will live for eternity.
- r. **1Th 4:16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:
- s. **1Th 4:17** Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
- t. **1Th 4:18** Wherefore comfort one another with these words.
- u. **1Co 15:51** Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,
- v. **1Co 15:52** In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

### 3) The Future Heaven

- a. In preparing for the trip you should all know that our first destination is not our final destination.
- b. We are going to have a lay over in Paradise before our final forever home.
- c. **Rev 21:1** And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.
- d. **Rev 21:2** And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- e. **Rev 21:3** And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.
- f. Listen to Peter as he tells us what happens to Earth and Heaven.
- g. **2Pe 3:7** But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.
- h. **2Pe 3:10** But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.
- i. **2Pe 3:11** Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,
- j. **2Pe 3:12** Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?
- k. **2Pe 3:13** Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.
- l. God is going to bring the New Heaven down to a newly created Earth and in many ways this New Earth will resemble our present Earth, but it will be vastly improved.
- m. There will be a capital City on this New Earth. New Jerusalem. (Under construction as we speak)
- n. This city is Hugs. An angel measured it for John. (Rev 21:16).

- o. 1500 miles. City surface is 2 million square miles. New York City is a wimpy 305 square miles.
- p. If we placed New Jerusalem in the middle of the United States it would stretch from Canada to Mexico and from the Appalachians to California.
- q. Its height is staggering. 660,000 stories. By comparison the tallest building in the world in Dubai is 2,717 feet high.
- r. The thickness of the walls is 72 yards thick.
- s. Think about God has made some pretty big stuff before. Mt. Everest. The Pacific Ocean, the Milky Way. So this is not a problem
- t. One Mathematician calculated that if New Jerusalem is shaped like a cube, it would have enough room for 20 billion residents if each individual residence were a massive 75 acres. There would also be plenty of room left over for parks and streets and other features that you'd likely see in any major city.
- u. There is a great high wall, with twelve gates. (Rev 21:12-13). Each gate with the names of the tribes of Israel.
- v. **Read Revelation 21:21-end.**
- w. The city is beautiful, and eternal. God's glory will cause the city to shimmer like a diamond under the noonday sun.
- x. **Rev 22:1** And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.
- y. **Rev 22:2** In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.
- z. **Robert Jeffress:** I don't pretend to understand what all of this means, but one thing is certain: on the new earth there will be no doctors to wait for, no hospital food to gag on, and insurance companies to wrangle with because there will be no sickness.
- aa. Also, in the New Jerusalem there will be no temple (21:22) The presence of God and of Jesus will turn the whole city into a temple.
- bb. The fact is that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us. It is a place more beautiful than any place we have ever seen; a place of peace and protection; a place that will literally be paradise on Earth. And the place He is preparing, He is preparing with us in mind.
- cc. **C. S. Lewis** "Your place in Heaven will seem to be made for you and you alone, because you were made for it-made for it stitch by stich as a glove is made for a hand.