

Plain Path

Weekly newsletter of the Fry Road church of Christ

Sunday, July 13, 2014

Volume 19, Number 28

“Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path... Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart” (Psalm 27:11-14)

WHAT WILL HEAVEN BE LIKE?

by Bob Pulliam

Heaven is a place that we can only know of through the inspired word of God. All that I know to be true of that place, and all that is not true, can be determined by God's word. When anyone supposes to know more, they are presumptuous and accursed (Gal 1:8f; Col 2:18).

So what does the Bible say about heaven. First let's see what will not be there. These are clearly implied by the perfection of heaven clearly described in passages we will note later.

No Boredom...

People commonly picture heaven as a place in the clouds where people go to play the harp for the rest of eternity. If they don't even like music, this becomes the least likely place they

would want to go.

While harps are mentioned in the book of Revelation (5:8; 14:2; 15:2), these are a part of the vivid symbolism and imagery given to convey the glory of God, and the praises that are offered to Him. These events are not represented as going on for all eternity. In fact, the three passages cited have to do with events in our past!

What will we do for all eternity in heaven? Other than praising God, I don't know! To be honest with you, I don't care, because I trust God to have the best existence all prepared to be beyond my satisfaction. All of this sidesteps the question of the alternative. Even if you suspect God has something in mind that you won't like, I guarantee that it will be infinitely better than going to hell.

And this brings me to the ulterior motive for arguing that heav-

en won't be worth the effort. That's right, I said "ulterior". Arguing that something undesirable about heaven is keeping one from serving God is an intellectually dishonest argument. The truth is, you don't want to serve God, so you've reasoned that there is something deficient in the reward that He offers. My friend, God deserves your loyal devotion whether you actually ever got a reward, or not! The problem here is that you do not believe. You either don't believe that there is a God, or you don't believe He is who He really is.

No Pining...

At times people worry about pining for lost ones who did not serve God faithfully. Won't they get to heaven and miss them? No way! Do you really think that you will stand in the very presence of God almighty and think of something other than the glory before
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you. I don't know what we will or will not be caused to forget. I do know that God will not allow us to be in a sorrowful state.

No Temptations...

I've heard people worry about the possibility of losing heaven once it's been reached. They fear that they will arrive, be tempted, sin, and get thrown out. Heaven is a place of rest after our battles on earth. The tests of temptation and sin are here and now. If we pass now, we will escape them for all eternity.

Besides this, who is going to tempt you? The devil and his angels will have been cast into the lake that burns with fire and brim-

stone (Rev 20:10; Mt 25:41). And what will be used to entice you? The lust of the flesh and eyes, and the pride of life will have vanished with the end of this world, and our glorification into the next. Don't be a worry-wart over what God has promised to be so magnificent and comforting.

What Will It Be Like?

Now that we've gotten a few misconceptions out of the way, let's talk about what heaven will be like.

First of all, let's keep in mind that it is beyond description and our imagination. We know that heaven is not a carnal place. After all, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor 15:50). Descriptions of gates and streets are used to convey important aspects of heaven. We are not intended to believe that heaven is a "Davy Jones Locker" of incredible riches. These show the value of a place we cannot begin to fathom. And then above these we have a description of our own state while there. Note that these are a description of the bride, the wife of the lamb (Rev 21:9ff). In other words, this is the church glorified as she will be before God:

Gates That Never Close...

The only reason gates would never close is if there were no threat from an enemy. Mankind's only enemy will have been defeated and cast into torment. Here on earth we fear many enemies. Some imagined, and others real. We lock our doors, and turn on alarms. We watch the news in horror as terrible scenes of evil

and death are paraded before us.

In heaven, none of these things will exist. Some imagine that they will in hell. They think that the wicked will continue their wickedness there. To think that is to negate the torturous descriptions of hell in scripture. No one in hell will do evil... They will endure the remainder of eternity regretting the evils they indulged while on this earth.

A Street of Gold...

The value of gold is not the only consideration here. What stands out to me is that we only ever read of one street. Have you ever been in a large town, and felt swallowed up by all the avenues crisscrossing and extending out. Who were you close to?... While the description of heaven gives it majestic proportions, it still maintains one view to be in close proximity to life and happiness.

A Light That Never Fades...

The light in heaven will be the glory of God. His very presence will be all that our existence has ever needed. We can bask in the warmth of His love and mercy, and praise Him as will be fitting.

Our State of Being...

Can you imagine never again shedding a tear, or being sorrowful (Rev 21:4)? This life has made these things to be expected, and not on an irregular basis. But in heaven there will be no sorrow or tears. The physical pains of our body will have been banished from us by the change which Jesus brings in the resurrection. We will "be like Him" (I Jn 3:2; Phil

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THIS WEEK'S DAILY BIBLE READINGS

NEW TESTAMENT READING

ACTS 5 - 8

July 13 - 15

OLD TESTAMENT READING

DEUTERONOMY 14 - 22

July 16 - 19

I TIMOTHY 4:13

FAMILY NEWS & NOTES

News and Notes of Interest
to Fry Road Members

Because of the large number of visitors to our services, we would ask those wishing to identify with the congregation to do so by expressing this interest directly to the elders.

Upcoming Meetings & Events:

Annual Singing
September 6, 2014

Gospel Meeting (Joseph Casimier)
September 7 - 10, 2014

Sick and Shut-Ins

Sections have been removed to preserve members' privacy

Sermons:

Next Sunday:

If I Have Not Love

Information on local
gospel meetings and
preachers we support
can be found on the new
bulletin board in the
West hallway.

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3:21). Our emotional ills will be removed that we may have the greatest of joys in God's presence. While much of this deals with what will not be (sorrow, tears, etc...), impossible are the words to adequately express the glory of that day... The ecstasy of the vindication of His saints... The awe at finally witnessing that for which we had live our lives, and even made sacrifices for. Can you not find a yearning within you that is akin to what Paul expressed in these words:

"For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body."

(Romans 8:22f)

Conclusion...

What will that day be like for you. The alternative to what we have written here is also beyond words. There is no way to adequately describe the terror and torment of hell. Nothing in this life will have been like it. And nothing in this life would be worth sending oneself there by indulging it's pleasures.

Praise belongs to our God that we do have a choice, and that it is clearly laid before us. Each of us makes that choice in the decisions we make each day. Which indescribable place are you choosing for yourself?



FOR THE RECORD

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

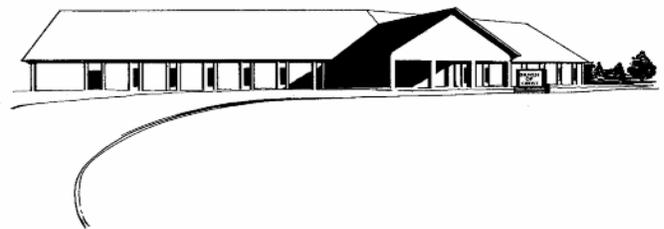
MONTHLY ASSIGNMENTS

Sections have been removed to preserve members' privacy

IN KEEPING WITH OUR LONG STANDING AGREEMENT, THOSE SERVING PUBLICLY ARE REMINDED TO PLEASE DRESS IN A MANNER RESPECTFUL OF THE GOD WHOM WE SERVE.

ELDERS:

Ruben Amador
Matthew Heaton
Donnie Mangrum
Steve Voss



DEACONS:

John Coleman	Ken Dunsmore
David Ellison	Ray Farrell
Aubrey Garner	Steve Geraci
Steve LaGrasta	John Light
Steven Martin	Mike McMurray
Jason Mock	David Stevenson
Glenn Tomblin	

EVANGELIST & EDITOR:

Bob Pulliam bob@fryroad.org

TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Classes	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Assembly	10:30 AM
Sunday Evening Assembly	6:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes	7:30 PM