

Heaven-Centered Thinking

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Introduction: Having mind of Christ fills us with purpose and direction

- A. God has given us an indescribable gift in “the mind of Christ.” (1 Cor 2:16)
 - 1. In conversion, we have died to the world and “put on Christ.” (Gal 3:26-27)
 - 2. This involves a change of the mind, the will and relationship. We have “died” and are now a “new man” with a new mind is born. (Col 3:9-10)
- B. This new way of thinking has a specific beginning and then a clear path of growth.
 - 1. The decision to repent and put on Christ is now followed by a daily need to “renew our minds” and keep “putting on the mind of Christ!” (Phil 2:5)
 - 2. How can we stay motivated to stay on this daily renewal? God’s promises have planted “the hope of God” in our minds.
 - 3. I am in a race with a certain finish line ahead!

I. What is heaven and why would man want to go there?

- A. What is heaven? Heaven is the present abode of God, Jesus Christ and the angels.
Heaven - οὐρανός, οὐ, ο` heaven, as a part of the universe (MT 5.18), opposite γῆ (earth); (3) as the dwelling place of God (MT 5.16), the angels (MT 22.30), and the righteous dead (2C 5.1, 2) heaven... **Freiberg Lexicon**
 - 1. God is in heaven. (2 Chron 36:23; Rev 4:1-3)
 - 2. Angels are in heaven. (Mt 18:10; 22:30; 24:36)
 - 3. God’s glory and Jesus Christ is in heaven. (Acts 7:55-56)
- B. God wants to bring His people to be with Him!
 - 1. In this life God considers us as His people and we are His delight! (Prov 11:20; 12:22; Mal 3:16-17; Jer 9:24)
 - 2. Why is heaven desirable? We will simply be with God. (2 Cor 5:6-8; Rev 21:4)

II. Heaven is a future abode based upon the clear promises of God

- A. The resurrection of Christ gives clear evidence of this powerful hope! (1 Pt 1:3-4)
 - 1. Having strong reasons for the hope that is in us gives us a strength to live that the world cannot understand.
 - 2. Jesus pleads with us to accept His testimony of this unseen realm. (Jn 3:11-13)
- B. God expects us to have a confident expectation of going to heaven. This thinking is essential to our final salvation! (2 Cor 5:1-2; Rom 8:24)
 - 1. We cannot know the purpose of life until we understand the meaning of death!
 - 2. The resurrection of Christ and the promise of heaven frees us from the bondage of fear that Satan uses to paralyze us. (Heb 2:14-15)
- C. We must take time to daily get our thinking straight. We need to “set our minds” on the future unseen reality based upon the delivered promises of God. (Col 3:1-2)
 - 1. Unseen things must be pursued and our minds renewed. We can easily neglect this for the demands of that we see, touch and hold.
 - 2. You can see the difference in the things we pursue and in how we treat others.
 - 3. Are you stressed and unhappy? Pursue the hope of God! (Mt 6:19-20)
- D. The present blessings of God are assurance that God will bring us to His abode, heaven.

1. The Holy Spirit is given now as a down payment of what we will experience in heaven. **(2 Cor 5:1-5)**
2. How do you know that you have this “earnest money?” Do you know that you have the fruit of the Spirit?
3. What is your present taste of heaven like? Do you “feel the tug?”
4. We will have new bodies and a new abode!

III. What will heaven be like?

- A. Paradise will be restored. We will have a complete fulfilment of purpose and peace.
 1. The garden of Eden was a paradise that was lost because of sin.
 2. Heaven is described as the restored paradise of God. **(Rev 2:7)**
 3. The thief was promised this by Jesus! **(Lk 23:43)**
 4. Paul received a glimpse of it but could not give the details. **(2 Cor 12:4)**
- B. We will be in the presence of God and Jesus Christ. **(1 Pt 1:7-9; Rev 22:3-5)**
 1. The ultimate joy is found in being with the one we love and the one who loves us.
 2. We will receive glory, honor and praise from God!
- C. Heaven is likened unto a marriage feast. **(Rev 21:2)**
 1. What a joy to see the expectant bride coming down the aisle.
 2. Do you ever try to imagine what that day will be like?
- D. Heaven is a place where there is no pain, sorrow or tears. **(Rev 21:4)**
 1. The past is forgotten, and God gives us personal care.
 2. Do we trust His promises today?
- E. Heaven is enduring. **(Heb 10:34-35)**
 1. All riches found on this earth will fail.
 2. Where do we find our comfort and strength? **(Ecc 5:10)**
- F. We will have access to the water of life. **(Rev 21:6; 22:1, 17)**
 1. We will have life without end!
 2. Paradise will be restored with the tree of life. **(Rev 2:7, 22:2, 14)**

IV. How the hope of heaven changes our lives

- A. Heaven lets us understand the difference between the eternal and the temporary. **(Mk 8:35-37)**
 1. What would you give up in a life-or-death situation?
 2. How would you react to the loss of an expensive car but the good health of a loved one?
 3. Satan traps us when we do not have these priorities! **(1 Tim 6:9-10, 12)**
- B. What kind of cost will our faith endure? We will lose relationships, money and the goodwill of some! What will we gain? **(Heb 11:35)**
 1. We can have a clear minded focus that brings strength and resolution – we will not accepting deliverance when asked to compromise our faith.
 2. This hope gives us great strength in death. At the deathbed of a Christian this is clearly seen. **(Rom 8:18)**

Conclusion: Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.