

Our Eternal Home

Text : **Revelation 21: 1-27**

S#1.

A. Do you believe in Heaven ?

1. According to Pew Research Center only 58% of Americans believe in Hell.
2. But depending on affiliation, from 72 to 82% of Americans believe in Heaven.

B. Most Americans define Heaven as :

1. “a place where people who led a good life are rewarded”
2. Merriam-Webster : **a** : the dwelling place of the Deity and the blessed dead
b : a spiritual state of everlasting communion with God

C. The Christian view of an afterlife is not shared by other religions.

1. Muslims believe in an afterlife, but their belief is different from Christians.
 - a. 89% believe in paradise – Rivers of water, milk, honey, wine and 70-100 virgins
 - b. 76% believe in hell – (*Jahannam*) 7 levels, Blazing fire and boiling water, forgiven
2. Roughly half or fewer of Hindus, Buddhists and Jews believe in an afterlife.
 - a. Half of those believe in a place of reward for a good life.
 - b. Less than 1 in 5 believe in a place of punishment.
3. Even many atheists believe in and afterlife.
 - a. 37 % believe in Heaven
 - b. 27% believe in Hell (*Consistently, less believe in punishment than in reward.*)

D. Culturally, the dead are assumed to have gone to heaven.

S#2.

1. You’ve never been to a funeral where the people spoke of the dead as being in hell.
2. Death is spoken of as having “gone to be with God.”
3. “He has gone home to be with Jesus.”
4. “He’s in a better place.”
5. Well, at least he’s gone where there is no more pain.
6. Tombstones :
 - a. He sleeps with Jesus, a rest from which no one wakes to weep
 - b. “He reigns with Him on high.” “Gone to the Lord’s house above”
 - c. “At peace with Christ Jesus” “Gone for a walk with God”
7. While walking in a graveyard reading the stones with his grandmother, a young boy asked, “*Where do they bury the ones who go to Hell?*”

The world is not a reliable source of information about spiritual things so let us look into the only reliable source of information about God ... His revealed words.

S#3.

I. Heaven is a real place. (*Not a nebulous empty space where spirits drift about.*)

A. Our text refers to Heaven as a :

1. Vs. **1** ... “a new heaven and a new earth”
 - a. Infrastructure ... Vs. **12** ... It has walls, gates with inscriptions and jewel stones.
 - b. It is 1,500 miles sq. (*Chicago to Philadelphia and back*) (All western states) S#4.
 - c. **Rev. 22: 1** ... River
 - d. **Rev. 22: 2** ... Trees
 - b. **Rev 21: 21** ... Streets
2. It has a population of living creatures, saints, angels and God.
3. “New heavens” tells us it has an atmosphere

B. Jesus refers to Heaven as a place.

1. **John 14: 1-3** – Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. **2** In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. **3** 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. S#5.
2. This is the place where Jesus lives. “where I am, there you may be also”
3. Being a large place, there are many houses. (*dwelling places*)
4. Jesus has completed a house for every saved person.

I Pet. 1: 3-5 – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, **5** who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. S#6.

 - a. “an inheritance” We do not have to pay for our heavenly dwelling, we inherit it.
 - b. “imperishable” Jesus built us a house that is totally maintenance free.
 - c. “undefiled” Our dwelling has never been lived in before.
 - d. “will not fade away” It is made to last forever. *Just like your new resurrected body.*
 - e. “reserved in heaven for you” Christian, your heavenly home has your name on it. (*If 20% of all who ever lived go to Heaven, there is enough area for each to have acreage.*)

II. Heaven is a wonderful place.

S#7.

A. Heaven is a glorious place.

S#8.

1. Steven was shown a vision of Heaven just before his death.

Acts 7: 55 – But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; S#9.

2. When Jesus ascended, it was observed that He ascended into glory ... i.e. Heaven

I Tim. 3: 16 – By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: S#10.
He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit,
Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in
the world, Taken up in glory.

3. Christians live in anticipation of basking in the glory of God.

Col. 1: 27 – manifested to His saints, **27** to whom God willed to make known S#11.
what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles,
which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

4. Basking in God's glory will be a time of great joy.

Jude 24 – Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make S#12.
you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,

B. Heaven is a place of comfort.

S#13.

1. There will be no reason the cry in Heaven.

Rev. 21: 4 – God Himself will be among them, **4** and He will wipe away every S#14.
tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there
will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things
have passed away.

*. There will never be a funeral in Heaven, no funeral home and no cemeteries

2. There will be no sickness in Heaven.

Rev. 22: 2 – On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve S#15.
kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and
the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

*. There will be no doctors or hospitals, and no dentists.

3. In Heaven we will again have direct fellowship with our creator God.

Rev. 22: 3-4 – There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and S#16.
of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him;
4 they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

a. When the “curse” of sin is removed, that barrier between God and man is no more.

b. We will see the “face” of God and hear His voice.

c. We will hear God's voice. (*When God spoke to Moses, he feared, not Jesus.*)

d. There will be “service” for us to perform in **Heaven.**

III. Heaven is an eternal place.**S#17.****A. The scriptures clearly present Heaven as eternal.**

II Cor. 5: 1 – For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. **S#18.**

B. God has promised life that is eternal to those who faithfully follow Him.

1. **Rom. 2: 6-8** – ...Revelation of the righteous judgment of God, **6** who will render to each person according to his deeds: **7** to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; **8** but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. **S#19.**
2. **Rom. 6: 22-23** – For the outcome of those things is death. **22** But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. **23** For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. **S#20.**

C. What does it mean to have eternal life ?**S#21.**

1. What does “eternal” mean ?
 - a. We reason from the known to the unknown. Eternity is a total unknown.
 - b. Everything in man’s experience has a beginning and an end.
 - c. Meredith-Webster : **Eternity** – a state to which time has no application

* A child defined eternity as “*A candy cane with only one end. It just goes on.*”
2. Death is separation and **life** is the opposite, being united.
 - a. When the soul leaves the body, one is dead.
 - b. When one is separated from God he is spiritually dead.

D. The thought of living endlessly in this body is not at all appealing.**S#22.**

1. This body was made to be temporary ... life on a temporary earth. (*like paper cups*)
2. When God places us in His timeless Heaven, He will give us a timeless body.

I Cor. 15: 47-49 – The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. **48** As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. **49** Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. **S#23.**
3. Our new body will be designed by God to never age or wear out. (*immortal vs mortal*)

E. There are many unanswered questions about our new bodies.

1. **I John 3: 2-3** – Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared **S#24.**
as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. **3** And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.
2. We will be like Jesus, but we do not know exactly how Jesus will be.
 - a. Many people ask how old we will be ??? (*Rich man recognized Lazarus*)
 - b. Jesus arose with holes in His hands and in his side. ... **Luke 24: 39-40**
 - c. On the Mt of Transfiguration his face and robe shone bright. ... **Matt. 17: 2**

IV. Heaven is an exclusive place. (*Christians' home in a gated community.*) **S#25.**

A. Access to Heaven is severely limited.

1. **Matt. 7: 13-14** – Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the **S#26.**
way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. **14** For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.
2. **Luke 13:23-25** – And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there just a few who **S#27.**
are being saved?" And He said to them, **24** Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. **25** Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.' (**Heb 9:27** .. death - judgment)

B. God clearly identifies those who will be excluded from Heaven.

1. All those who are guilty of sin are excluded. (**Rom. 6: 23**)
Rev. 21: 8 – But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and **S#28.**
murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."
2. Those who do not have faith and do not obey the gospel will be excluded.
II Thes. 1: 7-10 – ... when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with **S#29.**
His mighty angels in flaming fire, **8** dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. **9** These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, **S#30.**

INVITATION : God wants you to live in His Heaven .. choose Him now

S#31. ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**Revelation 21: 1-27**

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, 4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

5 And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." 6 Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. 7 " He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. 8 " But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, " Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. 12 It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. 13 There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. 16 The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. 17 And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. 18 The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 19 The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; 20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

22 I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. 25 In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; 26 and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; 27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.