

Heaven!

Millennium

At the end of this age (after the Tribulation period) Jesus Christ will return to earth in His glorified body and rule and reign over the earth in righteousness from Jerusalem for 1000 years (Revelation 20). The earth will be restored to an Eden-like paradise and there will be true peace on earth. The Bible has much to say about the Millennium and I have written an article which reviews many of these Scripture promises entitled *Millennium Promises, Population, and the Faithfulness of God* that is on our website.

At the end of the Millennium there will be one final rebellion. After this, the Lord will create a new Heaven and a new Earth where there will be everlasting righteousness, peace, and joy (Revelation 21 and 22)! Heaven and earth will meet and God will dwell among His people forever! This article explores the New Heaven and Earth.

The Focus of Heaven

“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3).

“And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads” (Revelation 22:3-4).

“You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:11).

The main reason Heaven will be wonderful is because we shall be with our awesome Creator. We shall see the glory and majesty of the Lord and enjoy His perfect love forever!

Consider three of God’s attributes:

- 1) “God is light and in Him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). “The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light” (Revelation 21:23). God is the source of all light. Light illuminates and guides. Light energizes, warms and cheers. We will be with the Creator whose first words were “Let there be light” (Genesis 1:3). Oh, what bliss, to forever be illuminated, guided, energized, warmed, and cheered by God Himself. Jesus Christ is the “Light of the world” (John 8:12). Apart from Jesus there is only “outer darkness” (Matthew 25:30). But with Him believers “have the light of life” forevermore! Moses asked to see God’s glory and

the Lord showed him His goodness, but said “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live” (Exodus 33:18-23). God dwells in “unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see” (1 Timothy 6:16). The fact that we shall see God’s face should astound and excite us! Yet, this is God’s promise to those He purifies and glorifies by faith in Jesus Christ – “They shall see His face” (Revelation 22:4)!

- 2) “God is love” (1 John 4:8). All true love originates from the Lord. And God’s “lovingkindness is better than life” (Psalm 63:3), and stronger than death (Song 8:6; 1 Corinthians 15:26). Jesus is perfect love incarnate (1 Corinthians 13). “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2). In heaven we shall be like Him and fellowship with the Father and Son in perfect love forever! “...to depart and be with Christ, ...is far better” (Philippians 1:23).
- 3) “Exalt the LORD our God, And worship at His holy hill; For the LORD our God is holy” (Psalm 99:9). God is perfect in righteousness, purity, kindness and love (Psalm 145:17). Almighty God is whole and complete – He transcends His creation and is complete in and of Himself. God is also morally perfect, faithful and true. By God’s grace, and through faith in Christ’s substitutionary death for our sins, believers will be partakers of God’s holiness (2 Peter 1:4). We will not be little gods – there is only one Almighty, Sovereign God – but the Lord will make us complete, holy and forever sin-free. Imagine a day without sin or temptation. Imagine eternity in perfect righteousness! Our Creator who saves us by His grace will also glorify us and forever remove all evil and unlawful desires (Psalm 103:12; Romans 8:30).

Perfect communion with the Lord will be the supreme pleasure of heaven. “As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness” (Psalm 17:15). “Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). “For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:25-27).

All secondary joys in Heaven are derivatives of being with the One who is the source of all goodness. Jesus prayed, “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world” (John 17:24). We were created for the Lord’s good pleasure and He is our one desire (Psalm 73:25; Revelation 4:11). God Himself is the source and pinnacle of all blessings. To be with the one who loved us and died for us will be the ultimate satisfaction of Heaven.

Consider an earthly example. Have you ever had a person – perhaps a close friend, spouse, beloved parent, childhood sweetheart – who you really enjoyed being with? Whether you were at the beach or dining out or involved in your favorite pastime, being with that person far surpassed the secondary pleasures. How much more will being with our perfect God transcend all other blessings.

Heaven's Nature

Though Heaven will contain many wonderful surprises that Paul said were "...inexpressible ... not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Corinthians 12:4), God's Word does present us with some exciting glimpses. Not surprisingly, the last two chapters of the Bible provide us with the most details of the eternal new Heaven and Earth. Here are ten insights:

- 1) "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4). This is beyond comprehension. No more death, sorrow or pain! Perfect joy. "And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, And come to Zion with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, And sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isaiah 35:10). In this life we don't experience a day without sighing, but eternal joy is the Lord's promise for all the redeemed!
- 2) "Behold, I make all things new" (Revelation 21:5). The new Heaven and the new Earth will have no rust, corrosion, wear, rot, disease, sweat, foul odors, dirt, dross, pollution, garbage, sickness, thorns, bugs, annoyances, irritants, etc. Jesus said "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal" (Matthew 6:19-20). Peter explained that our eternal inheritance is "incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:4). Everything in the new Heaven and Earth will forever be new and shiny and perfect. Everything will be eternally pure. No more wearing out, getting old, breaking down. Hallelujah!
- 3) "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son" (Revelation 21:7). All who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ in this short life will overcome by faith (1 John 5:4), and "inherit all things"! We shall be sons and daughters of our heavenly Father and co-reign with Christ as kings and priests (Revelation 1:6; 5:10). The Bible contains thousands of promises to believers, and in Christ they are ours: "For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us" (2 Corinthians 1:20). Amazing! Incomprehensible! This is one of the reasons it is so important to read through God's entire Word regularly. We need the encouragement

and daily reminder that “His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Peter 1:3-4).

- 4) “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife” (Revelation 1:9). Believers are the eternal bride of the Lord (Hosea 2:19-20; 2 Corinthians 11:2). “My beloved spoke, and said to me: ‘Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away’” (Song 2:10). “His banner over me was love.” (Song 2:4). We all desire perfect, intimate love, and this will be realized only when we are forever united with the Lord Jesus Christ in glory!
- 5) “And showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal” (Revelation 21:10-11). Our eternal home with the Lord will be a pure, precious, magnificent, eternal city (Revelation 21:10-27). The city will be spectacular in both size and appearance. It will be in the form of a cube that is 1,500 miles in every direction! And it will reflect “the glory of God” (Revelation 21:11, 16). This tremendous extension of the city vertically into the air is a clue that the new earth may be much larger than the current earth. How much room will we have? Dr. Henry Morris in his book *The Revelation Record* postulates the total number of Redeemed might be as many as 20 billion. He further guesses that approximately 75 percent of the New Jerusalem might be devoted to streets, parks and public buildings. Can 20 billion people be squeezed into only 25 percent of the space of this city? The answer is yes! In fact, it can be done easily. Each person would have a cubical block with about 75 acres of surface on each face. We are talking about an immense city! Plus we will have the entire purified universe to explore: “We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless” (2 Peter 3:13-14).
- 6) “But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light” (Revelation 21:22-23). The Lord Himself will be the center and pinnacle of life in the New Jerusalem – the holy city of God! He will be the light. The sun, moon and stars will continue forever (Psalm 72:5, 17; 89:36-37; 148:1-6; Jeremiah 31:35-36), however they will not be necessary for illumination in the celestial city.
- 7) “And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it” (Revelation 21:24). Scripture assures us that there

will be redeemed people from “every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Revelation 5:9; 7:9). Every nation, tribe, and people group have unique cultural characteristics that are good. Consider the great variety of music, art, inventions, entertainment, literature, architecture, sports, farming, produce, scientific achievements, etc., that are done in obedience to the Dominion Mandate given to mankind at the very beginning of time (Genesis 1:26). Those who are saved shall bring into the celestial city their cultural distinctives that are good and wholesome and glorifying to the Lord. Our Creator created us to be fruitful and creative and good stewards. Any aspect of the nations that was done in obedience to the Lord will be redeemed (Isaiah 60:5, 11; 66:12). Therefore, the new Heaven, the New Earth and the New Jerusalem will be recognizable in many ways, but also incomprehensibly glorious.

- 8) “But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life” (Revelation 21:27). Those who rejected God’s grace and went their own way and followed this world’s corrupt ways will never enter the New Jerusalem. Only those who have turned to the Lord and had their sins washed away by His blood will enter. Therefore, there will be no more temptation, deceitful lusts, pride, envy, sin or deception! “Jesus answered them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.’” (John 8:34-36). Only those who have personally repented and trusted the Son of God will enter. And then all of creation will be restored and made pure and perfect (Matthew 17:11; Acts 3:21; Romans 8:18-21)!
- 9) “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22:1-2). There will be crystal clear water proceeding from the throne of God forever. The tree of life – perhaps multi-dimensional – will produce twelve fruits every month forever. The leaves of the tree will heal the nations.
- 10) “And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever” (Revelation 22:3-5). There will be no more curse! We shall forever be with the one who created and redeemed us by His blood! We will serve and reign with our Lord forever and ever!

Glorified Bodies

This huge, three dimensional city (the New Jerusalem) assumes, of course, that our new glorified bodies will be immune to the current law of gravity, as are the bodies of angels. This is a safe assumption, for Philippians 3:20-21 says that our glorified bodies will be like the body of Jesus after His resurrection, and His body was not subject to gravity, as evidenced by His ascension into Heaven (Mark 16:19). This is the reason the city will be so tall. We will be able to utilize and enjoy all levels of it. There will apparently be vertical streets as well as horizontal ones.

After Jesus' bodily resurrection, He also appeared and vanished at will and walked through walls (Luke 24:31; John 20:19, 26). This suggests that our new bodies may be multi or hyper dimensional. Of course only the Lord is omnipresent, so we will not be able to be in multiple places at the same time. However, like angels (Matthew 22:30), we may be able to "fly quickly" (Daniel 9:21), move through material effortlessly (Revelation 8:13), and have great strength (Revelation 18:21).

In 1 Corinthians 15:35-58 – known as the resurrection chapter – we are given a description of our glorified bodies. Our current earthly bodies are described as corrupt, dishonorable, natural, dust, weak and mortal. In contrast our glorified bodies are described as incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual, heavenly and immortal! Wow! For those of us who have had frequent infirmities, this is wonderful news.

Peter, James and John saw the Lord transfigured into His glorious form: "His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light" (Matthew 17:2). Later John again saw the glorified Lord: "[Jesus'] head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ...and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength" (Revelation 1:14-16).

The glorified saints (all believers) will also shine (1 John 3:2). Jesus promised "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43). Gabriel explained to Daniel "Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever" (Daniel 12:3). Paul compares our glorified bodies to stars – "There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15:41-42).

“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life” (2 Corinthians 5:1-4).

Ethereal or Substantial?

If you envision Heaven as a ghostly, insubstantial place where the angels and saints float around on clouds playing harps, then you are in for a very happy surprise. According to God’s Word, “the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18). This life is a mere shadow, but Christ and His soon coming kingdom are substantial. Earthly things now are a mere “shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ” (Colossians 2:17). The current material realm that we live in is only a “shadow of the heavenly things” (Hebrews 8:5).

It has been rightly said that the physical realm is a mere electrical simulation. Everything we see in the universe is made of atoms. Atoms consist of a nucleus and electrons that skim about at a great distance from the nucleus. Though there is tremendous energy associated with the atom, it is over 99.9% empty space. That means even the most solid-looking objects we see are predominantly nothingness. Put another way, if you were to remove all the empty space in the atoms that make up your body, you would be a lot smaller than a grain of salt. If you removed all the empty space from the atoms that make up all the humans on the planet, then you could fit all 7 billion of us inside a single apple. When you sit in a chair, it is the electrical interaction with the atoms of the chair that holds you up. When you shake hands, your sense of touch is an electrical interaction. However, very soon, we will receive new bodies and live in a renewed Earth and Heaven that are both substantial and eternal!

We are currently walking “through the valley of the shadow of death” (Psalm 23:4), but soon we will be in rapturous glory! “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face” (1 Corinthians 13:12). Currently, we don’t know what a tree or flower or fruit or sunset looked like before the curse (Genesis 3). When we are with the Lord, we shall see everything in living color – in all its depth and dimensionality. God has gifted mankind with five senses now, but what if God gave us new bodies with even more senses? Or perhaps we will be able to smell a fragrant melody or taste the color purple or fully perceive a friend’s love and kindness for us? What if a hug in Heaven transcends every know pleasure on earth? “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit” (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).

Redemption of All Things!

When Jesus died on the cross He accomplished far more than most Christians are aware of. His final words were, “It is finished!” (John 19:30). This was a victory cry that meant “Paid in full!” Jesus died to pay the penalty for the sin of the world. “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).

In addition to bearing our sins and shame, Isaiah chapter 53 explains that the Lord also carried our sorrows, sicknesses, and pains – and promises us an eternity where “God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

Furthermore, our Creator – the Lord Jesus Christ – bore the entire curse on the cross. As God warned, disobedience resulted in death. Not just death for Adam and Eve, but for all of creation. When God pronounced the curse after man’s sin, He cursed the very ground (the dust – the very elements), and said a result would be “thorns and thistles” (Genesis 3:18). As is evident, all of creation has been groaning, wearing out and dying ever since.

However, the good news is that Jesus bore the entire curse. “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us” (Galatians 3:13). This is why He wore a crown of painful thorns on the cross (Matthew 27:29). Jesus paid the price to redeem all of creation. The Lord “abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2 Timothy 1:10). “There shall be no more curse” (Revelation 22:3)!

In one of the most marvelous passages in the entire Bible, Romans chapter 8 explains that Jesus Christ redeemed the entire creation on the cross: “For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now” (Romans 8:19-22).

Oh, how we groan for the “restoration of all things” (Acts 3:21). Jesus promised the regeneration – the renewal of all things in Matthew 19:28. The Greek word *paliggenesia* used in Matthew 19:28 – usually translated regeneration or renewal – comes from two words which together mean “new genesis” or “coming back from death to life” or “new creation.” Very soon all creation shall be renewed and “all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD” (Numbers 14:21)!

Redemption of Good Works and Faithful Service

God's Word explains that we are saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is a free gift purchased by Christ's blood. The same Creator who gives us all good gifts – eyesight, taste buds, food, flowers, friends – offers eternal life free. The Lord invites all to receive eternal life: "And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17).

God the Father saves us by His free gift of His only begotten Son Jesus Christ (John 3:16-17). Scripture is clear that good works cannot save us or appease God (Ephesians 2:8-9). However, all who have repented and received Christ by faith are exhorted to be "rich in good works" (1 Timothy 6:18). In fact, believers were "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

Every service, every act of kindness, every prayer, every ministry outreach in Christ will be rewarded in Heaven. Jesus promised: "For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward" (Mark 9:41). The Bible lists five crowns that the Lord will give for faithful service. The five are as follows:

- 1) Incorruptible Crown (1 Corinthians 9:25-27). This is the victor's crown. It will be given to those who have exercised self-control and kept their bodies in subjection to the Lord. By the power of the Holy Spirit, these disciples restrain their appetites and lusts so as to be ready and available for ministry.
- 2) Crown of Rejoicing (Philippians 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:19). This is the soul winner's crown. Those who reach out and evangelize the lost will receive the Crown of Rejoicing.
- 3) Crown of Righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8). This crown is for those who love the Lord's appearing. Saints who eagerly await Christ's appearing will receive this crown.
- 4) Crown of Life (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10). This crown is for those who suffer, endure temptation, and yet still hold fast their confession in Jesus through tribulation and even death.
- 5) Crown of Glory (1 Peter 5:1-4). This crown is for those who lovingly serve as overseers and faithfully teach God's Word and disciple others in the faith. They will receive the elder's Crown of Glory.

Whether you are a mom who prays for, reads the Word to and serves her children and husband in the Lord, or an evangelist who is preaching God's Word to the lost, the Lord will reward and

redeem all faithful service. “For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister” (Hebrews 6:10).

Jesus wants you to receive a full reward (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Colossians 2:18; 2 John 8; Revelation 3:11). With these rewards we will apparently have the great privilege and honor of casting our crowns before His throne (Revelation 4)!

By God’s love and grace and the power of the Holy Spirit in us, may we all serve the Lord in sincerity and hear these words from our Lord: “Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matthew 25:23).

Answers to Common Questions about Heaven

- 1) Will we know our saved loved ones? At the transfiguration, Peter recognized Moses and Elijah (Matthew 17:4). After his death the rich man recognized Lazarus and Abraham (Luke 16:19-31). Memory and relationships are gifts from God. The Bible explains “For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known” (1 Corinthians 13:12). We will not only know our loved ones, but other believers in Heaven as well. As one person replied when asked this question, “I won’t be more ignorant in Heaven than I am now!” Imagine fellowshiping with Noah and Moses and Mary.
- 2) Will we eat and drink? Jesus promised His disciples “I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom” (Matthew 26:29). All believers will participate in a magnificent marriage banquet beyond earthly comparison: “Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!” (Revelation 19:9). Although Paul explains that “the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Romans 14:17), he does not say we will not eat or drink. Rather Paul explains that the focus and greatest joy of Heaven will be our relationship with the Lord in perfect righteousness, peace and joy. Many passages indicate we will eat and fellowship in glory: “Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!” (Luke 14:15). Apparently even angels eat (Psalm 78:25), and so shall we eat the best and finest food and drink (Isaiah 25:6). For those of you who have had serious digestion problems, do not fear: “Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them” (1 Corinthians 6:13). Our glorified bodies and the produce of the restored Earth will never again cause indigestion or result in waste. There will be no need for bathrooms.

3) Will our pets be on the New Earth? This is an often asked question. We are assured that the Lord will make all things new (Revelation 21:5). It's not just redeemed people who will be made new – all of creation will be renewed. This includes trees and flowers and water and horses and cats and dogs and dolphins and chipmunks and eagles. Researchers have discovered that the vast majority of the bird, animal, fish, insect and plant species are now extinct. This agrees with the global flood described in Genesis chapters 7 and 8. But because Jesus has redeemed all of creation (Romans 8:21-23), we should expect to live in perfect harmony with an enormous variety of regenerated creatures (including dinosaurs!) on the New Earth. Christ redeemed all creation and all creation includes pets (Romans 8:21-23). God's Word states "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke 3:6). The Greek word translated "flesh" is *sarx*. Though some translations translate this word as "all people" or "all mankind," the word is more inclusive. *Sarx* is also used to describe animals (1 Corinthians 15:39; Revelation 19:18). Furthermore, God's blessings on the righteous include blessings not only on their children but also on their animals and their offspring (Deuteronomy 7:13-14; 28:1-4).

Summary

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning" (James 1:17). Our Father is the source of every good gift. Yet, the Giver is infinitely greater than all His gifts. Therefore our God of love gave Himself: "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:19). "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! (2 Corinthians 9:15).

We have great hope and inexpressible joy in anticipating our eternal home with the Lord. May these truths encourage every believer to redeem the time now and reach out to a lost and dying world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him" (John 14:23).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:4-7).