

Heaven Awaits the Faithful. (Rev. 14:13).

Introduction:

- 1- We live in a world of uncertainty.
 - a- uncertainty about affairs near and far away.
 - b- We do not know what will be the outcome of wars abroad. We do not know what will be the outcome of the economic situation we face. We do not know about the political situation.
 - c- In short, we do not know with certainty much of anything.

- 2- However, there is good news. The child of God has a great deal of certainty.
 - a- He has been given absolute assurance that he is of the truth (1 John 3:19)
 - b- and that heaven's reward is certain (Phil. 1:21; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 John 5:13).
 - c- Instead of fearing death, God describes death as a glorious day in which the faithful child of God finally gains his glorious victory (1 Cor. 15:51-57)

- 3- Heaven is a place we long for and a subject of great interest. Heaven is usually very interesting to those who are old in years, but the subject of heaven can be just as interesting to the young. ("The more interest we have in heaven the better our opportunity of reaching it. The more we know about heaven the greater our interest will become") (Elkins).

Transition:

[Heaven is the reason for all our labour and sacrifice and it is worth our best efforts. There is a song by W. Oliver Cooper, entitled "Heaven Will Surely Be Worth It All," that tells about the different struggles Christians will face in life and how great heaven will be if we endure them until we get there. In this lecture,

In this lesson I will suggest some reasons why we should be interested in going to such a wonderful place—a place that we know awaits the faithful.]

Discuss:

- I- First, I am interested in going to heaven because it is a place of great associations.
 - A- All of us like to be associated with those we regard as great.
 - 1- Even children wish to sit by the visitor at the dinner table because they think there is something special going on.
 - 2- In heaven we will be able to associate with the greatest of all—the entire heavenly host—God, Christ, the Holy Spirit and the redeemed of all the ages.

B- Jesus tells us that God is in heaven (Matt. 6:9). How great it would be to be in the presence of God for eternity! John says, "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them" (Rev. 7:15). Also note Revelation 21:1-3.

- 1- Jesus tells us in (John 6:38) that He came down from heaven, "not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (cf. John 1:1-2, 14). Jesus wants us to be with Him. Why would He have prayed, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24)?
- 2- Jesus told His disciples not to be troubled, because He was returning to prepare a place for them and that He would come back so that they could be there with Him also (John 14:1-3).
- 3- Paul tells us that when Jesus returns, the dead in Christ will rise first, then the living will meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:16-17); further, he says that Jesus will return from heaven (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

II- **Second, I am interested in going to heaven because of the type of place it is.**

A- Paul refers to the gospel message this way, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9).

- 1- Surely, it would be true to say the same about the wonderful place God has prepared for those who obey His gospel and remain faithful to Him.
- 2- We are not able to describe what heaven is really like because we are limited by time, space and distance.
- 3- So, how do we describe what heaven is like? We let God describe it for us. God inspired John to write a good description recorded in **(Revelation 22:1-5).**
- 4- This is discussed further in Revelation 21:27, when we are told that nothing that is defiling will enter into heaven. These passages all paint a gorgeous picture of what heaven will be like for us. Heaven is called the paradise of God (Rev. 2:7). The author of Hebrews writes, "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11:16).

B- It is a place where we will be able to rest. Heaven offers the best rest possible. It is the ultimate place of comfort. Jesus invites us to a spiritual rest (Matt. 11:28). Those who labour for the Lord will have true rest ultimately.

- 1- We should strive for that spiritual rest (Matt. 7:13-14; Luke 13:24). If Christians put God's concerns above their own and do what He says to do, then they should have no problem receiving eternal rest.

- 2- The spiritual rest provided by Jesus to those who answer His invitation is but a taste of good things to come—the rest and glory which heaven provides. John tells us, “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them” (Rev. 14:13).
- 3- As the song says, “Toiling and pain I will endure, till I shall hear the death angel call.”

III- **Third, I am interested in going to heaven because it is the permanent home of the soul.**

A- We strive for some permanence in this life. We want a place we can go to, a place called home. In this place we feel safe.

- 1- All of us want this in this life. We are not promised that long (Psa. 90:10). Each day we are given evidence that our earthly house is dissolving.
- 2- The Bible promises the same (2 Cor. 4:16; 5:1-2). The apostles recognized that there was a time when they would be no more in this physical frame (2 Tim. 4:6; 2 Pet. 1:14-15). Heaven is a place of permanence. Paul tells us that the things we see are temporary, and the things we do not see are eternal (2 Cor. 4:16-18).
- 3- Paul also tells us that when the Lord comes back, we shall be with Him forever (1 Thess. 4:17). Jesus says the righteous will have life eternal (Matt. 25:46). “Forever” means eternal, everlasting, without end (cf. Rom. 16:26; Heb. 9:14-15).

IV- **I am interested in going to heaven because of the price that was paid for me to go.**

A- At one time man had a relationship with God. He became separated from God (Rom 3:23; Isa. 59:1-2; 1 Pet. 3:10-12).

B- To remain in this condition was inevitable spiritual death (Ezek. 18:20; Rom. 6:23). The only answer to avoiding such a spiritual disaster was the “righteousness of God” (Rom. 1:14-17; 5:6-10). Jesus paid the price for all of us (Rom. 3:24-25; John 14:6).

- 1- Not everyone will go to heaven (Matt. 7:13-14; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 21:8, 20:10-15).
- 2- Heaven is for those who prepare to go (John 14:1-3; 6:44-45; Luke 6:46). Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.

Conclusion: Each person should ask himself the question, “Am I nearer to heaven today than I was a year ago?” As the song says, “After this life with all its strife, Heaven will surely be worth it all.”