

In Search of a Home

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[0 : 00] If you have your Bibles, I want you to turn with me to two passages. One I'm just going to read and then make a brief comment on. The other is going to be our focus. The first is Hebrews chapter 11, and then that's going to set the stage for the message.

And then we're going to actually look, examine in detail, to some degree, Revelation chapter 21. So you can hold both those places. I just want to read chapter 11, and I'll do so in just a moment. But before I do that, let me preface the message by saying this. I retired five years ago this past February, and about two years before I retired, my wife and I began looking for a permanent retirement home.

We live now in the house we've lived in about 18 years, had a little place down at the lake, and we thought about moving down there, and then we decided, no, we needed something with deeper water before we were going to do that, and so we just began to search.

And we had a checklist. How many of y'all have looked for a house in the last 10 years? Anybody here look to move or something? Probably most people in this room, they say the average American doesn't say anywhere, but about seven years. And so we developed a checklist, and we were looking for this and this and this, one and 10, five to 15 acres of land, a place where we could have some goats and, you know, some chickens and just have an outbuilding if I wanted to.

[1 : 14] I live in one of those little communities. You know, they've got an HOA, and, you know, they've got the Scopo coming around telling you, can't do this, can't do that. So I was looking to, you know, get out of there and got great neighbors and great neighborhood and all, but just a little bit more freedom.

So we looked for about four or five years, and finally about two, three years ago, we just gave that up, just said, you know, it doesn't exist. We're not going to find it. Abraham, in the Scripture, ran across a similar thing.

God spoke to him one day, and he says, I want you to leave Ur of the Chaldees, that had been his home, and I want you to go find this place, and it's going to be a great, great, great place. And so I want you to read that with me, because the other day we were doing our devotion about two weeks ago, in fact, and we read this passage, and I thought about ourselves.

By faith, verse 8, by the way, of chapter 11, by faith, Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and went out to a place, he was going to receive as an inheritance. He went out not knowing where he was going.

By faith, he stayed as a foreigner in the land of promise, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, co-heirs of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

[2 : 30] Now, boy, he had a high checklist, right? He's looking for a city that is built by God. He's not just looking for a place to call home, to hang his hat. He'd been made a lot of promises.

And I want you to read about that. Verse 11, By faith, even Sarah herself, when she was barren, received power to conceive offspring, even though she was past the age since she considered that the one who had promised was faithful.

And therefore, from one man, in fact, from one as good as dead, came offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as innumerable as the grains of the sand by the seashore.

Now, that's a fulfilled promise, isn't it? He says, I'm going to give you children, but I'm going to give you more than you could count, if you count the stars of heaven or the grains of the seashore of all the beaches on earth.

Then he says in verse 13, These all died. That includes Abraham. These all died without having received the promises, but they saw them from a distance.

[3 : 38] So here he is here, and he's looking and he can see it going to be fulfilled, but he hasn't realized it yet. But they saw them from a distance, greeted them, and confessed that they were foreigners and temporary residents on earth.

He recognizes as he's roaming the earth, looking at this place, he goes to the place God tells him, but he realizes, that's not it. Nice track of land. Got a great place to raise sheep, but it's not the fulfillment of the promise.

And so it says, Now those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been remembering the land they came from, they would have had opportunity to return. I'm from Seneca, South Carolina, and a lot of us want to go back to our home where we grew up, right? But that's not the case with Abraham. He's not thinking about the fact that he wants to go back to Ur of the Chaldees.

He's looking for something better. But they now aspire to a better land, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

[4 : 45] Now go with me to Revelation chapter 21. Go with me to Revelation chapter 21. In Revelation chapter 21, you read about this land that Abraham was looking for.

If we went across the room, took the time to do that, and just went person to person, family to family, every one of you have a different dream. Some of you want that white house with a little picket fence, and some of you want to live in town.

Folks in Greenwood are just paying huge bucks to live right downtown in the thick of things, and they'll settle for something, a fifth as large as they might find out in the suburbs, but that's what they want, right?

And some folk want to live out in the country, and some folk want to live in the suburbs, and folk just want a variety of different things. Every one of us in this room do. But I want to tell you something. Every one of us in this room this morning, I would believe long for a land like Abraham was looking for, a place of peace and tranquility.

I want to tell you something. I wouldn't really care where it's at. If I could find a place on this earth where I could go and just know you could live safely, and you could be happy, and you could know joy, and there was no conflict, wouldn't you love to live in a place where you say, wouldn't you like to say today you've had the last argument you'll ever have in your life?

[6 : 08] Wouldn't it be a great thing that you'll never have another harsh word with another human, that you'll never feel disappointment again in your life, that you'll never shed another tear?

That's the home that Abraham was looking for, and that's the home we read about in Revelation chapter 21. Now, there are a lot of things we could say about this place, but the first thing I want to tell you about this place, it's a place of absolute, undescrivable, unparalleled beauty.

A lot of you in this room travel a lot of places. I've had the privilege of going a few places. I'm not a big world traveler or anything, but I've been a few places in the world, and I want to tell you, this is a gorgeous planet that we live on, right?

But this place, boy, it is of unparalleled beauty. I want you to look with me to chapter 21 and verse 1 and 2. John says, Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.

The sea existed no longer. And I also saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

[7 : 22] Now, the Jews, they loved and still love Jerusalem. It was the city of David, Zion. They loved Jerusalem.

There are places in the Old Testament where you can read, it appears, at times, like the Muslims do Mecca, they would turn toward Jerusalem, even to pray.

It was a holy, holy city. But he says, I saw the new, not the old, the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. Can I tell you, the old Jerusalem was a war-torn city.

The Babylonians had ransacked that in 586 B.C. I mean, they destroyed the temple, they tore down the walls. When they marched out of town with those exiles, it was in smoldering ruins, right?

They built it back. They rebuilt Solomon's temple back, but never to the level of spectacular glory it once knew. The Romans later would do war in the city of Jerusalem.

[8 : 28] The Greeks before them would do war in the city of Jerusalem. The Assyrians would do battle in the city of Jerusalem. It was a war-torn city. But he says, I saw the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven.

And then notice what he says. I love this. It's so captivating, the idea. He says in verse 2, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband.

Isn't that a great image? Prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. Now, as a pastor, I've seen as many brides as probably anybody in the room.

Because I've done a lot of weddings, right? And can I tell you something? I have never seen an ugly bride. I've seen some brides, to be quite honest, who outside of that wedding were a little bit...

I'll let you use your imagination. But on their wedding days, four brides are just beautiful, aren't they?

[9 : 36] Let me show you the prettiest bride ever walked down the aisle. That was made December 31st of this last year. My daughter, Angela, got married.

And boy, it was a great, great, great day. And when I escorted her down the aisle, and then I gave her away, and I sat down, and the pastor of the church did some preliminary things. And then during prayer, he sat down, and I slipped up on the safe.

When they opened it out, I'm standing there. And I get to do the vows. First thing out of my mouth was, I turned to Adam, her husband, and I said, boy, you are one lucky guy. You are getting a gorgeous girl. Isn't she gorgeous?

I mean, to me, she is. She's just a good-looking gal. Looks just like me. No, she looks like her mama. But I'm telling you, brides are just beautiful on their wedding day, right?

Because you know what? You pay a ton to get that makeup job done. You pay for that hairdo. I mean, you buy that beautiful dress that they all want, right?

[10 : 36] And so they're looking there. The best they can look, they look on their wedding day. And that's what he's saying. Hey, this is a breathtaking image. She's absolutely gorgeous.

And that's the way you'll find this heavenly city. I want you to notice another thing he says. He says, The walls, they are diamond-like, of pure jasper. Look at Revelation 21, verse 10, and verse 11.

Then 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. Arrayed with God's glory, her radiance was like a very precious stone, like a jasper stone, bright as crystal.

You know what that is? That's diamond. Can you imagine the walls of this city? And they are pure diamond. Now, if you want to see a small diamond, you come up after the surface and look at my wife's ring, right?

I mean, it looks like it came out of a cracker jack box. I was a sophomore in college, and it's a tiny... When Adam gave the angel of the ring, I mean, he just showed me up real, real bad. He got a real rock, right?

[11 : 42] But I'm telling you, this city is a city that is built with walls of diamond. And then notice yet a fourth thing about this beautiful place.

There are massive gates, and each one is made of a single pearl. Look, if you will, at Revelation 21, and verse 21. The gates are 12 pearls.

Each individual gate was made of a single pearl. The broad street of the city was pure gold-like transparent glass.

And so what he says is, there are four walls around the city. On each wall, three gates. Each of these gates is of a giant pearl. Can you imagine that?

Wouldn't you like to see the orchestra they got that out of? I mean, I don't know about you. There are fancier gems than pearls, but I don't think a woman ever looks more elegant.

[12 : 43] If you're just going for a look of elegance, this is just Ralph's opinion. When a woman has on a black dress and a white string of pearls, that's about as elegant as it gets, isn't it?

And he says, when you come into this city, here are these giant gates of a giant pearl. He's giving us a picture of absolute, breathtaking elegance. And then he says, on the foundation stone, you read about that in chapter 21 and verse 14 and then verse 19 and 20, he says, they're each one a different stone.

And each one is a different color. And on those stones are written the names of the 12 apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, this city has no artificial lighting.

Jesus is the light of the city. And so here's the idea again. As the brilliance of Jesus shines through, radiates through that city, here are these 12 foundation stones, each a different color, walls of transparent glass, streets of pure transparent gold.

My, the prism effect must absolutely be incredible. I can't begin to even imagine what it looks like. Now, here's the million dollar question.

[14:03] Is John speaking figuratively because he does so often in the book of Revelation? Or is he speaking literally? Is he describing literally what he sees or has he seen something and he's just wanting to paint for us a picture of something so breathtaking and he uses this imagery that he gives us?

I can't answer that. Because you see, I don't know. I didn't see it. And I can't say, he's telling us exactly what he saw and it's literally going to be that way in heaven.

Or if he's just describing for us something that he wants to paint a picture for us, this is beyond your wildest imagination. I don't know. I can't tell you.

I'm going to tell you this. I don't have any trouble believing that God has created exactly what John described. The only reason I say it could be that he's describing this figuratively is this.

A couple of reasons. One is, have you ever been someplace and come back and you're so excited because you've seen this thing that's so magnificent and you can't wait to tell your friend and you sit down across them at Hardee's with a sausage biscuit and say, we just got back from such and such place, Niagara Falls, for instance.

[15:18] And how do you describe it to them? We got there and man, it was so cool. You could just feel the spray off the water and just tons and tons and tons of water ran over this cliff and man, it was great.

Kind of anticlimactic, isn't it? I mean, they're going, hmm, yeah, great, great. Or you say, we went out, you know, to the Grand Canyon and we found this spot where we could make pictures.

We made a ton of pictures. What was it? It was huge hole, man, huge hole. Wow. Huge hole. You understand what I'm saying?

There are some things that are so great you can't capture it with words. In fact, how many of you go and make a lot of pictures when you go on vacation are those beautiful, you make snap tons of pictures, right?

And you come back and you look at your picture and you say, that's good, but, eh, it's not like being there, is it? Even pictures can't capture the essence of everything that you see.

[16:23] And so it could be that John is writing to us about something that's just beyond description. He does the best that he can do with it.

There's another reason, too, that I wonder if it's figurative, and let me tell you what that is. A few years ago, I was preaching in India. I went there for about a week and preached in India, and on the way back from India, we stopped in Dubai.

My daughter was booking the flight, and I was going with a couple people from my church, and she was along with us, and she booked the flight, and she planned for us to spend 24 hours in Dubai. If you ever get to go there, boy, go there.

It's the most opulent city in the world. There's just nothing. I don't care what city you've been to, there's nothing like Dubai. The skyscrapers, the tallest building in the world by three times is in Dubai.

But not only that, it's surrounded by architectural just masterpieces, right? I could just take several moments telling you about the different buildings in Dubai.

[17:25] But I want to tell you something. For all their splendor and all their glory, they don't begin, to me, to measure up to some of the natural things that I've seen that God created when he created the world.

I don't know about you, but man-made structures, buildings and streets of gold and even walls of jasper, they don't begin to match the things in my mind at any rate that I've already seen God produce here on this earth when he spoke the world into existence.

And I want to tell you something. I've not seen the world as God created it, and you haven't seen it. We've seen some beautiful things, but just about everything we've seen has been marred by sin, hasn't it?

Man, he's lived here for so long, and we've not taken care of what God has prepared, and sin has been introduced, and so it's not the creation that God first established.

And so I just got to tell you, if you want a beautiful place in eternity, you want to go to heaven.

There's a second thing I want you to see, and this is something I like even more than the beauty of heaven. It's a place of joy, peace, and happiness, and comfort.

[18 : 32] I want you to think about those words for just a moment. A place of joy. How many of you would like to have any less joy in your life than you have now? How many of you would say, I'd sign on, I'd move tomorrow if I could find a place where there was more joy and more peace and more contentment, more happiness, and more comfort?

That's what this place is like. Look at verse 4 of chapter 21. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will exist no longer. Everybody say praise God.

Isn't that great? Death will exist no longer. Grief, crying, and pain will exist no longer because, underscore that word because, the previous things have passed away.

And here's the picture. John says, the moment you enter heaven, God wipes away your tears for the last time. I want to ask you to raise your hands, but everybody in this room would raise their hand if I ask, saying, there have been plenty of times you shed tears.

When you've cried in the past, and it wasn't tears of joy, we can have tears of joy, but when we've cried in the past, you know what we cry over?

[19 : 42] We're not so different. We're all alike. When you've cried, it's been over one of three things. You've cried over death. The doctors looked you in the face and said, you're going to be dying before long.

This disease is inoperable. It's untreatable. You've only got X number of weeks, months to live. You've cried even more over the death of those you love, those friends, those family members, those children and grandchildren you've had to say goodbye to.

Boy, that breaks your heart. It's a time of deep, deep emotion and sorrow and suffering. And then there's a second thing you've cried over, and that's disease.

Not just the loss of a loved one, but disease. It's why I've sat across from just hundreds, if not thousands of people over the years of my ministry who've told me about some disease they've developed, and I've seen tears go up in their eyes, and I've cried for them.

In fact, you don't even have to know people. You just, if you're healthy emotionally and healthy spiritually and healthy intellectually, you can go home this afternoon, and your wife can read you something on Facebook about some child you've never met and their condition, and it'll break your heart.

[20 : 56] We just don't like to hear about suffering, do we? Disease brings tears. Death brings tears. And the final thing is disappointment brings tears. Every one of us in this room have known disappointment.

Every one of us have had that moment in our life where things didn't go the way we thought they would. Some of you got into a marriage, and you went south. And man, is there any greater heartache than a marriage that goes bad?

See a family split up in divorce? That's about as tough as it gets emotionally. We've known what it is to take a job and have great promise about this job only to find out that we're working for somebody that we just can't make it happen.

We can't please them. And there's that disappointment. We had kids that we began to raise, and we had such high hopes. We thought they would do this or this in life, and then they got strung out on drugs, so they got to run with the wrong crowd, and their life went south.

Maybe it came back, but still, in that moment, you had great, great heartache, right? Life is full of disappointments and heartache. But I'll tell you, here's why there are no tears, if you've wondered that, because it almost sounds too good to be true.

[22 : 02] It sounds magical, right? But he tells me why. He says, because all the former things are passed away. There is no disappointment. There is no disease. There is no death.

And I'll tell you something. Where there are none of those things, there are no tears, because those are the very things that bring us to tears. Those are the very things that break our heart.

But in heaven, all that's been taken away. I want to tell you, here's something else I like about heaven, third thing. It's a place where no one lives in fear. There are good emotions, joy and comfort and happiness, but there are bad emotions.

One of those bad emotions is fear. I don't know about you, but of all the emotions I've ever experienced, I hate fear worse than them all. Fear just paralyzes us, doesn't it?

A lot of psychologists have said, and I read in magazines like all of you have read, that the number one fear among people is the fear of public speaking.

[23 : 06] But I want to tell you something. I know that's not true. Not because I'm a speaker. I just know it's just not true. That's what people think they fear. And I hear things like claustrophobia, tight spaces, or being in crowds for some folk, or spiders or snakes.

That's not the greatest fear that man has. I can tell you with absolute confidence what the greatest fear we have is, and that is the fear of death. And the reason is because we have lived long enough and we know enough about the history of the earth to know this.

Every one of us, from the youngest person in this room to the oldest, every one of us has a date with death. You see, Adam's children saw Adam and Eve die.

And their great, great, great children saw their parents die. And all through the Old Testament, those younger died. And all through the New Testament, and even until today, we just know this, we're all going to die.

For every one that's ever been born, one has died. And the writer of Hebrews understood that. And I want you to hear what he says. Go with me quickly to Hebrews. Just turn back quickly to Hebrews chapter 2.

[24 : 23] I just want you to read two verses. Two of the most powerful verses I've ever read.

Chapter 2, verse 14. Now since the children have flesh and blood in common, he also shared, speaking of Jesus, in these.

In other words, he came as a flesh and blood human being. So that through his death, he might destroy the one holding the power of death. That is the devil.

Jesus came through his death. He destroyed the devil and the power that he had, which was death. And listen to verse 15. And free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. When Jesus came, he set free every human being, potentially on the planet, who were held in the slavery. I love that phrase he uses.

The slavery of the fear of death. Because I'm going to tell you something. If you're in constant fear, you're a slave to fear. Well, I'm going to tell you something.

[25 : 24] Last thing any of us want to be is to have our freedom take away and for us to be a slave. There's not a worse life on this planet than to be a slave. And many of us are slaves to the fear of death.

But he says Jesus has come and he's taken that away. And so this is a place where people, they live without any fear at all. Now, I'm going to talk very practically to you and especially the older ones in this crowd.

For just a minute, those of you who are younger and this doesn't apply, you just call a time out and hang here with me for a second. But when you get a little older, you get 65. When I was 25, I never thought about death unless I was doing something really, really, really stupid or dangerous.

But when you get 65, you don't have to be doing anything dangerous. You can be sitting there in your easy chair and suddenly be overwhelmed with thoughts of death.

There are a lot of people, they get up in the morning thinking about how long I'm going to live. And they go to bed wondering why I wake up in the morning. Because you see, they see they're getting closer and closer and closer to death.

[26 : 31] And I want to tell you something, you shouldn't beat yourself up over that. God has created us to want to live. You're not a bad Christian. If you say, well, I just want to live. I want to stay here. I know this.

It's all you know. You understand? It's all you know. You shouldn't feel bad about that. But I want to tell you something. In this new land, this is a good word for you if you're in that category.

When you get to this new land, that will never cross your mind again. Isn't that a great thing? You'll be free of that. You'll never worry again about death's coming.

It's coming. It's on the horizon. In this new land, that's forever gone. It is a place where no one lives in fear of death. Here's the fourth thing.

It is a place that is safe. I really do like this one. It is a place that is safe. You know what I did about 15 years ago? The world was getting so crazy and schools were being shot up and people were coming in churches and we had a security team at Brushy Creek and they said, we got your back and all that kind of stuff.

[27 : 33] But you know what I did? The world got so crazy, I went and applied for a carry permit to carry a gun. I went and took the test and I got my permit and I carried that gun about three days.

And then I just put it away. I thought, I'm not going to live like this and I ain't going to carry no gun and I'm not saying anything about it. Some of you may be talking right now, right? Okay? Please don't pull that thing out in here.

But I'm just telling you something. I understand why people do that. It's because they don't feel safe going into any public place, into restaurants and all kinds of places. And you know why? Because our world is not a safe place.

I'm not saying you're in danger now. You're not going to be in danger in all likelihood when you go to eat this afternoon. But I just want to tell you something. We live in an unstable, unsafe world because there are folk out there who are twisted mentally and spiritually and morally and emotionally.

And we see it every day. You don't need me to tell you. I'm just telling you something you already know. I'm just bringing it to your conscious thought. There are twisted folk in our world. When a woman like Susan Smith can take her children and strap them in the back seat of the car because she's having an affair with some guy and drive it off into a lake and see them drown.

[28 : 48] Boy, that's twisted. You understand? That's twisted. That's a sick human being. And we live in a world where it's twisted. Our world wasn't safe altogether when I was a boy.

But you can't imagine how more unsafe it is today. My mother would send me out of the house in the morning and she didn't want to see me until dark. Parents would go crazy today if they didn't see their child from morning to dark.

Because we live in fear. It's unsafe. I want to read you a verse. Look at the last verse of Revelation 21. Revelation 21, 27. Nothing profane will ever enter it.

No one who does what is vile or false but only those written in the Lamb's book of life. This is a safe place. You know why? Manuel Scott, the great black preacher.

Man, I loved him when I was a young preacher. I just, I like, every time I could go here and I'd go to hear him, he'd take those suspenders he wore and he'd pull them out here and this is something he said one time he's preaching on heaven.

[29 : 55] He said, you know what I like best about heaven? There ain't gonna be no heathen there. Now I want you to understand this. It's not that there won't be people who've not sinned and sinned horribly there.

It's that there won't be any people there who don't have a changed heart. A lot of people have done wrong things and have come into the kingdom of God because they came to Christ and he gave them a new nature.

They were born again. And now they're safe. Boy, don't you long for a safe, wouldn't you to date move from wherever you are if you knew I could take my family and go to a perfectly safe place. Heaven is such a place. It is a place where we're always safe. Fifthly, it is a place where we'll be a much better version of ourselves. This is one of the things I like best about heaven.

It's one of the places, it's one of the things is that we will be a much better version of ourselves there. I don't know about you, I like a lot about me and I don't mean that bragging.

[31 : 00] I like a lot about me and I hope you like a lot about you. If you have a good self-esteem, I think that'll be the case. But I gotta tell you, there are a lot of things I don't like about me.

There are some things I detest about me. There are times in my life when I look at myself and I've done something, I've said something, I've thought something, and I think to myself, you've been a Christian since you were 14.

How in the world can you think that way? How in the world can you have that thought? How in the world can you entertain that thought? How in the world can you say that? How in the world is it you did this stupid thing you did?

I tell you, I disappoint me more than anybody else. Is it that way with you? Aren't there times you just wish, what in the world is wrong with me? What made me say that?

What made me do it? Why do I think this way? I'm gonna tell you something, when you get to heaven, you're gonna like you a lot better than you do now. You know why? Because you're a work in progress, but you're not there yet.

[32 : 02] Romans 8, 28 says he's molding us and fashioning us and changing us into the image of his son. But I got news for you, you may think you're there, but you're not there yet. And 1 John, chapter 3 and verse 2 says this.

John says, I don't know what we'll be like because I have not yet seen him, but I know this, I will be like him. Isn't that a glorious thought? Just to say, you know why when I get to heaven, I'll be just like Jesus.

I'm gonna like myself a lot better, I don't know about you, a lot better than I do now when I come to be like Jesus. It is a place, finally, where we will continually dwell with God.

Look at Revelation 21, 3 and I close. Then I heard a loud voice from the throne, look, God is dwelling with men and he will live with them and they will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God.

It is a place where we will eternally be with God. It doesn't get any better than that. I've seen the talk shows and you have too where they are asking people, if you could spend two hours with anybody on the planet living now or has lived in the past, who would it be?

[33 : 22] And you know the drill, they say politicians from the past or the present. They name some athletes from the present or the past. They name some great folks in human history.

Some of them think of relatives who've gone on to glory. I'd spend it with my mother and my dad. I'll tell you something, if everybody on the planet had time to think that through and they knew what the New Testament says about Jesus, there'd only be one answer to that question.

I'd spend it with Jesus above everybody else because I'm going to tell you something, when you're spending it with Jesus, you're spending it with God. When you're spending it with Jesus, you're spending it with the one who said be and the world was.

Can you imagine that? You're spending it with the one who loved you enough that he left the glory of heaven and came to earth in a flesh and blood body like mine and yours and spilled his blood on the cross because he loves you that much.

I'll tell you, hands down, you'd say, I want to spend two hours with Jesus. I want to tell you something, in heaven you're going to spend all eternity with Jesus. Jesus, on the eve of his death, he's getting ready to die.

[34 : 34] All day long, even that night at the supper, he's been talking about his impending death. They've been arguing, well, you're not going to die. Yes, I am. No, you're not. We're not going to let you. I'm going to die. So by the time they get ready to go to the garden, it'd be like you and I, if your loved one today started saying, I know I'm going to die tomorrow, I know I'm going to die tomorrow, I know I'm going to die tomorrow.

You just, huh. So he looks in their faces and he sees they're just so despondent. This is what he says, fellas, fellas, fellas, listen, listen. You believe in God, don't you?

Well then believe also in me. Because you see, in my Father's house, there are many, many, many dwelling places, mansions, whatever you want to say. If it were not so, I would have told you.

I'm going to prepare a place for you that where I am, there you may be also. And the way you know, and whither I go, you know.

Now Thomas, the other's just standing like a deer in headlights kind of looking at him. And Jesus looked at Thomas and Thomas is scratching his head because he don't get it because he's right.

[35 : 49] It doesn't make sense. And Thomas says, what the others may be thinking, he says, you haven't told us where you're going, how can we know the way? Imagine you walk out on the streets picking and somebody says, pardon me, sir, could you tell me how to get there?

Where? Where are you going? And when he tells you where, you can tell him where he's going. But Jesus hasn't told him where he's going. And then Jesus looked at him, this is what he says, Thomas, I am the way.

I am the truth and I am the life. And no man comes to the Father but by me. Now get this, get this. He doesn't say, I'm going to heaven. He doesn't say, I'm going to streets of gold.

He doesn't say, I'm going to walls of Jasper. He doesn't say he's going any place. He says, I'm the way, the truth, life. No one comes to the, say it with me, Father, but by me.

When Jesus thought of heaven, you know what he thought about? One thing. The Father. I'm going to the Father. And the way you get to the Father is through me. And I want to tell you this and I close.

[36 : 57] The world has just missed that by a million miles since we were created. Because you study all the religions of the world and all the nations of the world and all the continents of people of the world.

And it's pretty obvious what man thinks. Man thinks he gets to heaven by being good. You watch all the newscasters, they don't even believe in heaven. They'll say this, well, so and so must be looking down on us now in heaven because he was such a good guy.

Right? But you don't get to heaven by being good because you're not good enough. Because you're not perfect. And you never can be. And you can start undoing all the wrongs you've ever done, trying to.

You can never make them up. Can you imagine how offensive that is to God? It'd be like this, that I come up to you today after the service and you just make me a little crossbar and I just punch you right in the nose.

And then I reach my wallet and I pull out \$20 and say, here, take this, forgive me. You'd say, are you crazy? You can't give my forgiveness because you punched me in the nose and gave me \$20.

[38 : 02] Are you nuts? That won't happen. I'll tell you something. We can't give the forgiveness of God by, okay, I'll go to church. Okay, I'll give some money.

I'll be better. Really? God says, the only way you can have forgiveness forgiveness, is to have your sins pardoned.

You have to receive a divine pardon. And God can grant you that pardon because He came and paid for your sin and my sin Himself on the cross.

And He's made it available to you. And the only way you're ever going to get there is through Jesus. You can be good. You can have your name on this church roll or a thousand church rolls. But the only way you'll ever get there is have your sins pardoned.

Have you ever asked for that pardon? Have you ever said, Lord Jesus, I believe You came and died for my sins. I am a sinner. I confess that to You. I want my sins pardoned. I want this eternal home.

[38 : 59] I want to spend eternity with You. I know I'm not going to get out of here alive. I know that this is all going to end one day. But when it's over, I want to go and live with You.

I want that pardoned. Would You forgive me of my sins? You can have it right now here today by just praying something like this, Lord Jesus, I don't know a lot about You, but I believe You came and died for me.

I believe what this man said about You today. I'm willing today, I want today to receive You as my Savior. I'm asking You to forgive me of my sins. I want to follow You. I give You my life going forward.

I give You my life. I surrender my life to You. Would You do that today? If You've never done that, I'm going to ask You in just a moment to get up out of Your seat and just come here and say, Pastor, I want that.

Even if you don't come, if fear of embarrassment would keep you from coming, you pray that right there where you are. You just turn Godward and say, God, I want You. I need You. Would you do that?

[39 : 59] Let's stand and sing their hymn of invitation. KiCON in, and make you Dep■■, Thank you, you're welcome. You have to take down your patience in the factory, and how much God does the happen are were going to participate in the karma law. You're damaging it.

I've thrown the place and I move on until I leave you with the empresarial and direction, all of my-ahr programming. And how about it is offered to enable the ready? I don't have to seize and come to come. I should not have but be fit ine if I don't really want to assist in and instead go other than you're going to■■pare.