

What Is Not In Heaven

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Date: 03 September 2023

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[0 : 00] Amen. That's good, man. A little special for Jimmy Buffett there.

If you have a Bible, turn to Revelation 22. Revelation 22. How marvelous heaven is. It's not some made-up, unrealistic, far-fetched fantasy. It's real.

Now, it's been exploited. It's been exaggerated. It's been caricatured in many ungodly and even more so unbiblical fashions.

But it's time we understand as much as we can through the evaluation of Scripture what heaven is like. And we've been talking about what heaven has being the beauty and the fellowship and the worship.

But did you know that heaven is missing some things? I want to share with you this morning what heaven does not have.

[1 : 16] Revelation chapter 22, beginning in verse 1, it says this. Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the city, also on either side of the river, the tree of life with its 12 kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month.

The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. There will be no light.

They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light. And they will reign forever and ever.

I want to deal this morning with three broad categories that encompass a lot. The first thing that heaven does not have, heaven does not have a place of worship.

[2 : 31] It does not have a place of worship. Heaven will be completely different than any place that we've ever been in any way, and in every way, including worship.

In the Old Testament, after God used Moses to establish the law, the tabernacle was created. The tabernacle was a curtained courtyard with a place for sacrifice, a sacrificial place of worship in the midst of that curtained courtyard.

As the Israelites would wander in the wilderness, they would uproot that tabernacle, pack it up, and take it with them, following the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night of the Lord.

It was the central part of their camp. The Bible tells us strategically how God told them to camp around the tabernacle.

It was literally at the center of their camp, and they would camp strategically around it. It was the place of worship. There is not one in heaven.

[3 : 49] When the Israelites settled in Jerusalem, the temple was built. It was the permanent replacement of the portable tabernacle.

It was the center of Jerusalem, and it was the place of worship. But there will be no temple in heaven. In the New Testament, the churches were formed, and houses of worship were in people's homes.

And as that changed over the years, they began building sanctuaries and would meet in sanctuaries. That's what we worship in today. But there are no sanctuaries in heaven.

Jesus speaks and exemplifies the need for private time with the Lord. He spoke of the need of a closet of prayer. He went alone to pray, and it is necessary in order for us to maintain our relationship with God the way it needs to be for us to have a private time of prayer.

Corporate prayer is valuable and is needed. Private prayer is required to get alone with God from others. But there will be no private place of worship in eternity.

[5 : 12] Hopefully, as Christians, we worship God all day long, every day, but we get serious about it when we come to the private place or when we come into this sanctuary to worship.

In heaven, it will be serious worship all the time. Now, not in the sense of one long, eternal worship service.

Some of you sometimes feel like you're in one, okay? But give me a break. It's not at all what it means. No, in a very real sense, we will understand and live out what 1 Corinthians 10 verse 31 says.

And 1 Corinthians 10 verse 31 says, So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Revelation chapter 3 verse 22 says that in one sense, heaven does not have a temple or a worship spot, but in another sense, God is the temple.

The point is this. We will forever be in the unhindered, perfect, sinless presence of God.

[6 : 22] Heaven has no place of worship because it is a place of worship. Period. You think about the most glorious experience you've ever had in worship, whether that be personal or whether that be private, whether it be personal and private or whether it be public and in a corporate setting.

The most powerful experience that you've ever had in worship. It is just a nibble compared to the feast of eternity.

There's not a place of worship because it is a place of worship. Heaven does not have, and I don't know how else to put this, does not have an earthly atmosphere.

I struggle with how to say that because it does not fit with the others on the surface, but I know of no other way to say it. Scripture goes out of the way to share with us the difference.

Look at Revelation 21 verse 23 when it says this, And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives its light and its lamp is the Lamb.

[7 : 36] In Exodus 33 through 34, God spoke to Moses, and when God experienced the glory of God, his face was radiant by the presence of God.

It glowed to such a degree that they were afraid of him, and he had to veil it. In the Gospels, the transfiguration of Christ is recorded, and when heaven came down upon Christ, his face, Matthew 17 verse 2 says, shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light.

Those are the closest illustrations on earth that we have of heaven. But I want to be clear, there'll be no sun, and God will never leave the horizon, so there'll be no night.

There'll be no moon, no stars as well. God will be as much in one place there as he is in the other in heaven.

There will be no shadows. How do I know that? Because a shadow happens when something blocks light, and nothing will block the presence of God in glory.

[8 : 49] There'll be no evil. There'll be no night. It'll be completely secure. The strong walls of heaven speak of its security.

The fact that the gates that never close are on those walls speak of the availability that we have to all come through Christ into eternity.

The gate is open. But you know what? Beyond that, there'll also be no calendars in heaven. Can I get an amen? There'll be no calendars in heaven.

The sun and the moon, the days and the nights help us keep time, but those things will be gone because there'll be no time. We will live in eternity.

Second Peter chapter 3 verse 8 tells us this, that with the day, excuse me, with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

[10 : 00] What in the world does that mean? Well, the primary purpose of saying that is you need to be patient. That's primary. Let's think deep for just a moment, okay?

From time we get our chronology, our before and our after, there'll be no chronology in heaven.

There'll be no keeping time. Now, how does that pan out? Think about that for a while, okay? Well, let's go back to that passage when it says that with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, a thousand years as one day.

I want to be clear about something. I don't take that literally. I don't think it's meant to be taken literally. If you have some issue with that, I'll tell you, I don't have a problem with it being literal, okay?

I just don't think it is. But let's just say it is. And let's say that that is, just for a moment, just to get an idea of what we're talking about, and that describes the timing of heaven of sorts, okay?

[11 : 15] Well, if a day is like a thousand years, that means that 40 years in this life is like one hour to God in heaven.

So my grandfather died in 1979. If he's not in glory, we're all in trouble, okay? He loved the Lord. That's approximately 40 years ago based upon this formula of sorts.

If I die today, and I don't plan to, but don't worry about where I'm going if I do. Based on this formula, he'll get to heaven about an hour before I do.

Because 40 years is like an hour. A day is like a thousand years. Charles Spurgeon died about 120 years ago. That's like three hours. Now, again, I don't take this literally.

I don't mean that. But I do want you to understand that when somebody dies in the Lord, I believe to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

[12 : 30] So they are there now, but we're all going to get there about the same time. And the reason why I say that is because we're talking about if there is a chronology, it's an eternal chronology.

It lasts forever. But there is no sun. There is no moon. There is no way to keep time in heaven because it's always light.

And so therefore, what that teaches us, it'll make your head hurt when you think about it. But the significance and where it lands is this. We'll never grow old. Don't ever worry about being bored with doing something in heaven because you did the same thing too long.

It's not going to happen. There's a Christian song that I heard growing up by the title, Look For Me. And a couple in the church would sing it and they'd say, after we've been there a thousand years, a million maybe two, look for me because I'll be there too.

And as a child, I thought, am I going to have to talk to these people for thousands of years? My soul. Oh, no. That's not what it'll look like.

[13 : 45] There's another old gospel hymn that kind of says what it'll be like. I think it's more appropriate. It says, When our work here is done and the life crown is won and all troubles and trials are over, all our sorrow will end and our voice will blend with the loved ones who've gone on before.

Never grow old. Never grow old. In a land where we'll never grow old. Never grow old. Never grow old. In a land where we'll never grow old.

If there's no sun, no sky as we know it, and there is no sin there, then there'll be no pollution. There'll be no aftertaste to the water.

No chlorine is needed. Who cares about that? Okay, well, look at something with me. It's the first of what I read a little while ago.

It says in Revelation 22, 1 and 2, it says this, Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, brightest crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city.

[14 : 55] Also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its 12 kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. That's fascinating to me.

The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22, verse 2, describes that tree that I call the fruit of the month tree.

Have you ever looked at a Harry and David catalog? Best pairs in the world. Unless you grow them and then yours is the best. But I'm telling you, they are absolutely fabulous.

And if you look at the back of those little catalogs, you'll see what's called the fruit of the month club. Now, I've been familiar with the fruit of the month club for years.

And it's kind of fascinating to me because every month you get a box of premium fresh fruit brought to the house. And I love fruit.

[15 : 57] And so I get excited. Now, they come up, if you do 12 months, they come up with some goofy stuff, you know, guava and papaya and all that stuff. But I mean, it is fresh, real, good stuff.

I mean, what a club to be a part of when they're bringing it to the house. Now, I looked that up in preparation for this and they got about 12 different clubs now. It's hard to know what they originally started with.

But I remember when it was just the fruit of the month club, you know. I mean, they just bring in the stuff every month. Heaven has a tree that's even more grand.

And if you think heaven's going to be a bunch of white robes roaming around a gold-plated amusement park, I got news for you. You're a long way off.

My whole point, and don't get lost in my timing thing here, my whole point is it is beyond our atmosphere and it is beyond our imagination.

[16:58] I don't think folks that went on before us years ago are going to be ready to give us a tour of heaven. I believe they're going to be standing around the throne of God giving praise and honor to the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's my point. Third thing is this. Heaven does not have sin or evil or its results.

The second part of that passage that I read speaks of this. It says, no longer will there be anything accursed but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it and His servants will worship Him.

They'll see His face and His name will be on their foreheads and night will be no more.

There'll be no light or lamp or sun for the Lord God will be their light and they will reign forever and ever. Do you remember the curse? when Adam and Eve sinned enmity and evil came in violence became a part of life the pain of blessing entered in even childbirth became painful after the curse. tension started in relationships thorn and thistles of the ground began the need of hard work and even death.

[18:27] all of that happened due to the curse none of which will be in heaven. But not only that the ramifications of sin and of sickness and of struggle and of tension and of death none of that will be there.

Revelation 21 3 and 4 tells us that Christ Christ is our comforter our prince of peace and He'll be there. It says there'll be no tears I believe that's what you read a little while ago there'll be no tears there'll be no pain there'll be no death there'll be no mourning there'll be no loneliness there'll be no defeat there'll be no dejection there'll be no depression there'll be no confession of sin because there'll be no sin.

Has your heart ever broke before God due to your sin? If your heart has never broke before God due to sin it needs to break before God due to sin but it will not in glory.

There'll be no separation by death no broken relationships no jealousy no enmity no envy no hatred not only will the atmosphere be radiant but the atmosphere will be too.

Revelation 21 1 says then I saw a new heaven and a new earth from the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and the sea was no more. Why in the world does it say the sea was no more?

[20:16] It's very significant may not be to you but it sure was to the first century Christian because the sea separated folks. There was separation there.

They had seen drownings they had seen storms they didn't have the meteorological predictions that we do today so they didn't get wrong forecast.

There was a fear of the sea because they knew that when they sent people out on sea sometimes they never came back. What happened to them?

There's no way we can know. They didn't have sonar technology. They didn't have the capabilities to do all those things. They just knew that sometimes people would hit the sea and never return.

It was fearful. That may be why the Lord repeatedly dried it up for them to cross and to worship to remove that fear from them. The sea became a symbol of sinful chaos.

[21:33] Many myths and legends were built around the sea. But fear of the sea was definite. It was real.

When John wrote that there would be no sea he wrote from the island of Patmos in exile separated from the believers by what? By the sea. The sea represented separation and chaos and fear and in many ways the result of sin.

Thank God there will be no more sea in heaven. Rest not sleep we won't need sleep we'll just be able to rest in the Lord.

Now you may be like that little boy that was in the balcony of that old time church that time.

Preacher was preaching a sermon like this and he said how many of you want to go to heaven tonight? hands went up all over the building that little boy didn't raise his hand how many of you want to go to heaven?

Hands went up that little boy's hand didn't go up preacher looked up at that boy and said son don't you want to go to heaven? The little boy said yes sir someday but I thought she was getting up a load I love to live I don't care to die but when I do I'll be just fine what a place is waiting for us we read of a place called heaven it's made for the pure and the free these truths in God's word he's given how beautiful heaven must be how beautiful heaven must be