

When in Glory

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Date: 24 September 2023

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[0 : 00] Bibles, I want you to turn to Revelation chapter 22. Revelation chapter 22. Haven't you been blessed by this music this morning? Wow, me and three other people have been blessed this morning by that music.

Haven't you been blessed? Man, that's sweet. It's been good stuff, I'm telling you. It's great. Amen. Amen. I'm going to tell y'all, one of my hope and prayers from preaching this sermon today, well, you'll leave here and think, man, I need to practice for heaven.

I need to get ready for worship, you know, because I'm telling you, we're going to have a good time. We've been talking about heaven for several weeks now, and we talked about what will be certain the minute we die, what we'll know at least within 60 seconds of passing this life.

We've talked about that heaven is real, and it is immediate, and it is eternal, and it is beyond our imagination. We've talked about what heaven has. We've talked about some things heaven does not have.

We've talked about what will be like in heaven. We have a lot of curiosities about heaven, and the Bible does not answer every curiosity that we have.

[1 : 14] God didn't write the word of God just so we can have all our answers, all our questions answered. He wrote it so we rely and trust in him.

However, it does answer several for us. And in this series on the reality of eternity, we close out this morning a look at heaven, and I want to share about us when we're in glory.

When in glory, we will serve. That don't sound too glamorous, does it? That's what you had intended.

Why? Because we're not serving for reward or acceptance or for good impression. When we get to heaven, we'll serve because we want to.

Have you ever served because you want to? Have you ever done something for somebody just because you wanted to? Not because you had to, not because you were forced to, just because you wanted to and enjoyed doing it.

[2 : 36] Who will we serve? We'll serve the Lord. Revelation 22, 3 and 4 says this. 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. Leave that up for just a moment because that word there in verse 3, the next to the last word that says worship, is an interesting word.

It is a word that in its primary meaning means to the service of a hireling, one who's been hired to do a job, the service that they do.

And it means to serve, or it means to minister to. It means to pay homage to. And then, of course, that rolls into worship.

And so sometimes translations say in this passage that we'll worship him. And it's true because the reality is that we'll serve him. And it's true that we will serve him as well as worship him.

[3 : 38] And then it says, they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. Somebody asked me recently when they were leaving worship about these names on the foreheads.

And so let's take a moment and talk about that. I want you to think about this for a minute because you've heard this before. In reality, in a couple of places. Let me remind you of Deuteronomy chapter 5 through 8.

It says this. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be upon your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children.

And you shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise. Listen to verse 8. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand. And they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. Now, some believe that the last part of that verse 8.

[4 : 39] Some believe that that is to be taken literally. And they take these little leather boxes called phylacteries. And they put small pieces of paper with the law written on them.

The Ten Commandments written on them. And they place them in those boxes. And they strap those boxes to their head before they pray. They take the same kind of box and they put it upon the back of their hand.

And they wrap it around. I was on a flight to Israel and saw an Orthodox Jew do this. And he had to get the wrapping. It had to be wrapped seven times. He had to get the wrapping wrapped. And he was wrapping his arm with this leather strap again and again to make sure that it was perfectly wrapped before that old boy got loose in prayer.

I'm telling you on that plane. I wanted to go over and give him some requests. You know what I mean? Because he was serious about it. He was serious about it. Now, listen, folks.

You know that wearing things is not the answer. Okay? It's not. What this passage speaks of is allowing the law of the Lord and the word of God to be on your minds.

[5 : 46] Let it mark your thinking. He mentions the hands. Let it dictate what you do and why you do it and who you serve.

Let it dictate those things. Take it to the heart of where it's at. This passage also may remind you of another passage of the mark of the beast in Revelation. Let's deal with that a minute.

Because in Revelation 13, it speaks of the beast of corrupt worship and the second beast of a corrupt government. And it says that if people did not take the mark of the beast, which was his name or number on their right hand or forehead, they would not buy or sell anything because they didn't have the mark.

That passage is much debated. And I don't want to get sidetracked, but I do want to camp for just a minute. But I want to be clear about something. Whether you think that is a tattoo of 666 or a barcode.

Years ago, some of you have lived here for a long time, you'll remember this. We had a bilo. And at bilo, we had a bilo card.

[6 : 53] It was one of the first cards that I ever remember anybody had. And somebody took the numbers off the back of the bilo card and found the square root. And every bilo card, because the first half of the numbers were the same on all of them, every one of them had a square root of 666 point something.

And that automatically meant that bilo was of the devil. They've since went out of business. But anyway. They did.

I remember that coming out. And I thought, well, can I go get milk or not? Have I sold my soul to the devil if I buy a gallon of milk? Whether you believe it's a tattoo of 666, a discount card, a barcode, a computer chip that is put in you.

None of those are the problem. The problem for the condemned is that their mind is set on things that are not of God.

That's the problem. And their hands are busy about matters that are not of God. They've been marked by the beast by not surrendering and faithfully serving the Lord.

[8 : 10] That's the problem. That's the problem. And for their and for your, it applies to all of us. For our lack of surrender to the Lord, you will be marked for all of eternity.

That is more than a physical mark. It is more than a mark of technology. It is a state of mind. It is a state of heart. It is a state of life of wrongdoing.

Tattoos and computer chips don't condemn people, folks. It don't. Rejecting Christ is what condemns. The unpardonable sin is to reject Christ and die without him.

Now, set all that to get back to Revelation 22 verse 4 when it says, Those serving the Lord have his name upon their foreheads. Do you see where this is going?

In the book of Revelation, if you study the Old Testament, it will show you what the things it's talking about resemble and what it's talking about. There is a connection between the two.

[9 : 09] And he is saying, look back at what we've seen in the past and understand what it means now. It means that they are marked by God for faithfully setting their hearts and minds on him and

serving him in this life and for all of eternity.

We will serve. Our minds and our hands will be fixated on serving the Lord. Not only that, but when in glory, we'll worship.

We'll worship. And that word I just told you is interchanged for service as well as worship. But Christ will be our focus in glory.

Not each other. Our focus will not be on each other. But sometimes the emphasis that is put upon heaven is this great reunion that we'll have. And scripture speaks of it.

It will be a great reunion. And we'll see loved ones that have died in the Lord and they're there. And we'll see folks who are in the Bible and we'll recognize them when we see them. I get that from the transfiguration in Matthew 17.

[10:14] We'll know who Moses is. Even if he don't look like Charlton Heston, we'll know who he is. How? Because we'll have a knowledge that we don't have here. God will show us those things.

But our focus won't be on each other. As a matter of fact, Christ tells us that there will not be marriage in heaven. So let's deal with that a minute.

Because we see this issue in Matthew 22 when the Sadducees and the Sadducees were a religious political group that did not believe in the resurrection.

And they were sad, you see. Because they thought this was all there was. And they were trying to poke fun at Jesus by giving him a brain teaser. Don't mess with Jesus, okay?

Matthew 22, verse 23, it says this. The same day Sadducees came to him who say that there is no resurrection. And they asked him a question saying, Teacher, Moses said if a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.

[11:22] Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died and having no offspring left his wife to his brother. So to the second and the third down to the seventh.

After all, after them all, the woman died. In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her.

Now let me just get past the obvious first. I mean the first question that I have to ask about this story is, What kind of woman is it that appeases men to such a degree that seven of them die under her care?

When's the trend going to pick up? I mean the third guy ought to have gotten nervous, you know. But they just kept on. How dumb is a bunch of brothers they are? Just a distracting question.

Just trying to throw him off. And Jesus don't put up with that. He abruptly takes the mystery away. And he says in verse 30, For in the resurrection there will be neither Mary, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

[12:35] Now let me be clear about something. Their effort was to make heaven so complicated that it didn't make sense. Some people didn't believe. And Jesus clearly states that our interests are going to be more focused on the throne of God than on each other.

And Christ says we will not be married, we will be like the angels. Now don't take that out of context. Okay? What he means is angels aren't married.

And we're not going to be married. He is not saying we'll be like angels. In all our ways. You're not angels now. If you think you are, ask the person beside you.

Okay? And you won't be then. He does not mean that in every way that we'll be like angels. That would be contrary to scripture quite honestly. And don't believe that your loved one has now become an angel.

Please don't put that on social media. Please don't do that. That's not what scripture says. Don't you dare say that some Christian who you loved has gone on to be your guardian angel. You got God watching your back.

[13:39] You don't need grandpa to watch after you. He's got you. Don't lower the level that Christians have reached. We're king's kids. We're made in the image of the creator.

And that's what he's saying. Read the context. He's saying that we will not be sexually intimate. And we won't be worried about physical relationships when we get to heaven. Angels are not sexual creatures.

We will not be in heaven either. It does not mean that we won't love each other deeply and dearly. More so than we ever have. We love family deeply without sexual relations.

We love our church dearly without it. We love the Lord Jesus dearly without it. Physical intimacy does not make love, folks. It is an earthly product of marital love.

Only in the bounds of marriage. And outside of that, it's a sacrilege to God. In heaven, the splendor of heaven, the presence of God will outshine any focus we have in this life.

[14:42] I just want you to listen to Revelation 7, 9 through 17. It expresses it wonderfully. When it says, After this, I looked and behold a great multitude that no one could number from every nation, from all the tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands, crying out with a loud voice, Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb.

And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever.

Amen! Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, Who are these clothed in white robes? And from where have they come? And I said to him, Sir, you know. And he said to me, These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They've washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God. And they serve him day and night in his temple.

And he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore. The sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lord, excuse me, for the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd.

[16:06] And he'll guide them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Folks, the trouble and the tribulations of this life, no matter how great they are, are when they come, will be over and we will be worshipping at the feet of Jesus.

When in glory, we'll be caught up. Now that's a term that is used in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 that speaks of the return of the Lord.

And if we still remain on the earth when the Lord returns, we shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will ever be with the Lord. However, that is not what I meant when I said we will be caught up.

I use that term instead to embrace several things that I want to share with you today. I mean that we'll be caught up with what's going on in heaven.

I mean we get caught up. In other words, the matters of the day, the matters of this world will not fill our day and overwhelm our conscience.

[17:29] Will we know what's going on on the earth? We often tend to speak of our loved ones as looking down on us, as if there's some loft of sorts in which the inhabitants of heaven can peer off and see us.

It's probably not a loft, but there's biblical evidence that they know what's going on. Hebrews chapter 12 verse 1 says this, therefore since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, and this follows Hebrews 11, which is the hall of fame of faith, which are all these saints who faithfully serve the Lord and gone on to see him.

And because of what they've done and because of who they are, he follows it up by saying, therefore since we are surrounded by those, that great cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

What this picture draws, and Paul was either an athlete or a wannabe, because he likes to use athletic terms, and what he pictures here is a stadium crowd that is cheering us on and rooting us on.

Notice what they're cheering us on to do. They are cheering us on to run the race of the Christian life with tenacity, letting no sin or distraction entangle or run for Christ.

[18:51] But do you know how they get their greatest joy? How they get their greatest joy is in Luke chapter 15. Verse 3 through 10. It says this about Jesus.

It says, so he told them about this parable. Now a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. That's an overused definition of a parable, okay?

And he said this, what man of you having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the 99 in open country and go after the one that is lost until he finds it?

And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors saying to them, rejoice with me for I have found my

sheep that was lost.

Just so. You can underline that if you're an underliner. I tell you there'll be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous people who need no repentance.

[19 : 56] Now that last verse there is not part of his parable. He's sharing with you what that parable actually means. And then he goes on to share another parable. And he says, or what woman having 10 silver coins if she loses one coin does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it?

And when she's found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors saying, rejoice with me for I found the coin that I had lost. Again, just so. I tell you, there is joy.

Get this now. There is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents. Leave that up for me for a minute. There is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

Now he's using a parable to describe a real atmosphere and I want you to notice something. It does not say it is the angels rejoicing. It's not what it says. Read it again.

It says, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents. So who's in the presence of the angels? The saints of God. And what are they rejoicing over?

[21 : 01] When one is saved. My friend, if heaven is celebrating when one comes to the Lord, we ought to be livid when somebody comes to Christ.

When somebody's baptized, we ought to cheer. I don't mean that figuratively. I think we ought to celebrate it. It's the best decision they've ever made in their life to give their heart and life to the Lord.

And when they're bold enough to make that public before others, we ought to celebrate that. When somebody comes down this aisle and says that she has given her heart and life to the Lord, we ought to shout. Why? Because we know of the victorious life that they've entered into.

we don't know the half of it. We don't know the half of it. But those in heaven do. Those in heaven see it from a whole different perspective.

They know the fullness of salvation so they rejoice even more. They've seen the Lord Jesus. They know what it's about. They've experienced eternal bliss. Think about this.

[22 : 08] If heaven sees all are saved every day across the world, that is one big camp meeting. I mean, they're celebrating when somebody gets saved in any church anywhere in the world on Sunday.

They celebrate when somebody quietly gives their heart and life to the Lord Jesus Christ by their own bedside, by themselves. They celebrate every time that is done.

they celebrate those that never come to Christ. Do they see that? Well, I don't know.

Because the Bible tells me there's no crying and mourning, therefore they must see it from a different perspective. As a matter of fact, a heavenly, eternal perspective.

Now, we can't imagine this, but it's almost like watching a replay of a game and knowing that your team is going to win the game. Okay?

[23 : 11] I went to a ball game yesterday. And so I didn't get to see other games. And I was looking forward to going home and watching Colorado and Oregon before I checked my app.

And I didn't want to see how that went down. But it would have been easy for me to find out what the final score of a game is and then go back and watch that game to see how that developed.

To see the whole deal. You see, the bad plays aren't that big a deal if you know you're going to win the game. I mean, if you know how it all ends. And therefore, you're celebrating the victory because you know you won because the game's already been played.

In reality, in heaven, they see it different, folks. And they celebrate. They cheer us on. It's kind of like a parade. Dawn and I celebrated our 20th anniversary a few years ago by going to New York City.

A dream of hers, a bucket list item, had always been to see the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade. And one thing on my bucket list every Thanksgiving was always not to see the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade.

[24 : 22] But she dreamed of that. But I'll tell you what I did want to do. I wanted to go to a renowned steakhouse and eat a New York steak. I did. I wanted to do that.

So first, on Thanksgiving Day, we went to the parade. We stood about eight thick with us in the middle watching the floats come by. It was a long and it was a fun experience.

We anticipated when Santa would come and the parade would come to its climactic conclusion. And for a long time, we could never see that. I know what time my reservation was.

I was checking my clock. However, overhead, there were helicopters. I would imagine they had cameras. I would imagine they used those cameras for television.

And those in those helicopters could see the whole trek of two and a half miles that we had walked the day before. The night before, we had went to Central Park and watched them blow up those great floats.

[25 : 27] Watched them net them down and weigh them down so they didn't float away. We had seen that at the beginning. And then right outside our hotel room, we had walked down the street and saw the middle of the parade and watched as that went by.

But we could only see as the individual floats came by. I tried to remember the order they were in from the night before and watching those things come by. But those in that helicopter could see the beginning and they could see the end and they could see it all.

I just saw a float at a time. They saw the whole thing. That's the way life is. Heaven sees the whole thing.

We live one float at a time. We watch our event a day at a time. But heaven sees it from a different perspective. They see the glorious climactic conclusion to all of this.

Therefore, they celebrate. They see the good things and the bad but they know how it ends. They see what we don't. But what about those? Let me readdress this.

[26 : 34] What about those who don't go to heaven? Do they know if loved ones are missing from heaven? Are they aware of those not in heaven? The Bible's clear that there's no grief, crying, or mourning in heaven.

That being the case, what about those that we know and love that don't make it? Well, I want you to hear listen to this hard truth because the Bible's pretty clear about it. In Psalm chapter 9, Psalm 9, excuse me, it's not a chapter, it's a psalm.

Psalm 9 verse 5, it says, you have rebuked the nations. You have made the wicked perish. You have blotted out their name forever and ever.

Psalm 69 verse 28, speaking of those that do not have salvation said, you have rebuked, excuse me, let them be blotted out of the book of the living.

Let them not be enrolled among the righteous. Did you get that? Let them be blotted out of the book of living. Now to me, that brings a whole new meaning of the Lamb's book of life because I thought it was the names of those who made it but in reality, it's the name of those who really experienced life because those outside of Christ never really experienced life.

[27 : 55] Not the way Christ can give it. it's like the walking dead folks of sorts. Until you know Christ, you haven't really lived.

I want you to listen to what Jesus said about Judas. Jesus said this. In Matthew 26 verse 24, he said, it would have been better for that man if he had not been born.

Now did he say that because Judas betrayed him? No. He said that because Judas, although he hung out with the church folk, although he walked along with Christ, never knew the Lord Jesus personally.

He never surrendered his life to the Lord and he would have been better off to have never been born because the only true life is eternal life in Christ.

Revelation 20 verse 15 says, and if anyone's name was not found in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. In other words, it's as if they never lived at all.

[29 : 04] Now don't misunderstand me. No, they were here. But in heaven, there will only be a faded memory because there's no real life. There's no real existence outside of Christ.

However, for those in Christ, there's an eternal celebration that never stops until all are saved that will and we're all in heaven.

Then we'll have what is described as the marriage feast. They describe it that way because the church, those saints in the Lord Jesus are considered the bride of Christ.

They're described as the bride of Christ and Christ is the groom and together around the table of the Lord will celebrate we all come home. Those in Christ Jesus.

I can hardly wait. Do those in heaven know what's happening on earth? Yes, they do. They know how God is working and they rejoice in that. Winning glory will be rewarded.

[30 : 06] Give me just a minute. Let me finish this. 1 Corinthians 3 verse 10 through 15 says this. According to the grace of God given to me like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation and someone else is building upon it.

Let each one take care how he builds upon it for no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on a foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become manifest for the day will disclose it because it will reveal by fire and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.

If the work has anyone has, if the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up he'll suffer loss though he himself will be saved only as through fire.

In other words it's kind of like the story of the little pigs. Only the house of brick withstood the winds in the end and the only thing that really lasts past this life is what we do for the Lord.

That's really it and as Christians we are building our lives but what is our motivation in that? Well listen you can fool some of the people all of the time and you can fool all the people some of the time but you can't fool the Lord any other time he knows your heart and what is done in accordance with scripture for the right reasons to honor and glorify the Lord and not to worry about glorifying ourselves that will shine forth in eternity and we shall receive a reward and the reward is not based on how great the accomplishment is it's based upon our faithfulness to his work and to his service.

[31 : 44] Now I'm not talking about earning your salvation you can't earn your salvation period you can't we are saved through Christ only because of what he's done but after that point we are to serve him in the opportunities that he gives us in this life and what we do in service to him with those opportunities they'll be represented they'll be responded to in eternity.

Now there are different levels of rewards in heaven because we all serve him differently but listen what's cool about this there'll be no pride there'll be no envy there'll be no jealousy I heard it explained like this little boy had a dream he wanted to be a bat boy in the World Series he dreamed of being a bat boy in the World Series that was his ultimate dream what a reward to do that and with that being his dream it brought unmeasurable pleasure to do such a task however there's another little boy that dreamed of playing center field in the World Series and he went on to be able to play center field in the World Series both them boys are happy just as happy as they can be the ball boy never realized he could have been playing he doesn't feel slighted in the least because the levels of reward are different but the joy is equal now I'm not telling you there's baseball in heaven there's not but I'm saying this everyone will be content in their status in heaven because any reward we receive we'll just lay at the feet of Jesus we'll be rewarded that might have been my cue to quit but I'm not winning glory this is it listen quick we will reign we'll reign

Revelation 22 verse 5 says a night will be no more don't need no light of lamp or sun for the Lord God will be their light and they will reign forever and ever that does not mean that we'll lord over people and it does not mean that we'll be gods it's not what it means it means that we'll celebrate victory victory over every battle that we faced victory over every physical sickness over every spiritual sickness over every struggle the battle will be over we'll be champions with the Lord and we'll be celebrating and we will reign I know that does not answer all your questions but don't be concerned about the uncertainties that you have about eternity tell you what you need to be concerned about is the state of your heart if the Lord Jesus was to return today are you going to walk out that front door and get hit by a car and go on to eternity have you ever come to the point in your life where you know for certainty you have eternal life and you'll go to heaven when you die can you rest in that today that's not a threat it's just true but you need to have that nailed down all of heaven waits for you eternal life waits for you right here now today because Christ said

I've come that you might have life and have it more abundantly he's not talking about heaven he's talking about here he'll give an uptick to your life that'll change you forever if you're surrender your life to Christ but don't ever think your affiliation with this church will take care of that don't ever think that some service that you've done for somebody else will take care of that don't ever think that preaching will take care of that or teaching will take care of that or volunteering will take care of that no no no the only thing that takes care of that is saying there's nothing I can do to earn it and I need you to forgive me and to cleanse me and to come into my life and if that's never happened to you today's the day of salvation if you feel a tugging in your heart you didn't come up with that God gave that to you because he's burdened for you and loves you and the saints of glory are ready to celebrate your salvation maybe you're here and you have done that but you've never acknowledged

that publicly you never tell anybody to know that Jesus by his example and by his commission told us to be baptized and acknowledge what we've done a physical picture of what happened to us spiritually you come take care of that maybe God's drawing you to this church
God's blessing us in mighty ways I'm thankful for that and you want to be a part of that and feel led to be a part of that you come we'll guide you in that process maybe you just need to do business with God I don't know what it is listen I'll be honest with you folks I struggled with this sermon this week because I knew what time it'd be when I was done and I don't like doing that to you I didn't feel led to take a thing out so let's just give God a couple more minutes and respond to him in obedience I'll never ask you to do anything that God didn't tell you to do but when God leads you to do something don't you dare stay there and not do it Lord Jesus I love you and I thank you dear God for this day and for the opportunity to serve you dear Lord and for eternity and we can celebrate Lord speak to our hearts and help us to have the obedience to respond in Jesus name Amen thank you
[37:17] I love you to hear I love you I love you I love you I love you I love you