

Paradise

Message 02 in the series, “What Happens When We Die?”

1. In Paradise (Heaven), our souls await the resurrection.

“For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died.” 1 Thessalonians 4:14 (NLT)

a. While we wait, we will be resting.

“When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of all who had been martyred for the word of God and for being faithful in their testimony. They shouted to the Lord and said, ‘O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you judge the people who belong to this world and avenge our blood for what they have done to us?’ Then a white robe was given to each of them. And they were told to rest a little longer until the full number of their brothers and sisters—their fellow servants of Jesus who were to be martyred—had joined them.” Revelation 6:9–11 (NLT)

“And I heard a voice from heaven saying, ‘Write this down: Blessed are those who die in the Lord from now on.’ ‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘they are blessed indeed, for they will rest from their hard work, for their good deeds follow them!’” Revelation 14:13 (NLT)

Note: Envision a state of complete rest, liberated from worries, stressors, job demands, interpersonal struggles, and health issues.

b. As we wait and find rest in heaven, we will be in a continual state of discovery that will lead us to worship Jesus over and over again.

“Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.” 1 Corinthians 13:12 (NLT)

“Then as I looked, I saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.’ And instantly I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it. The one sitting on the throne was as brilliant as gemstones—like jasper and carnelian. And the glow of an emerald circled his throne like a rainbow. Twenty-four thrones surrounded him, and twenty-four elders sat on them. They were all clothed in white and had gold crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning and the rumble of thunder. And in front of the throne were seven torches with burning flames. This is the sevenfold Spirit of God. In front of the throne was a shiny sea of glass, sparkling like crystal. In the center and around the throne were four living beings, each covered with eyes, front and back. The first of these living beings was like a lion; the second was like an ox; the third had a human face; and the fourth was like an eagle in flight. Each of these living beings had six wings, and their wings were covered all over with eyes, inside and out. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty—the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come.’ Whenever the living beings give glory and honor and thanks to the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever), the twenty-four elders fall down and worship the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever). And they lay their crowns before the throne and say, ‘You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased.’” Revelation 4:1–11 (NLT)

Note: Paradise (Heaven) will be a place of wonder, joy, and pleasures beyond comprehension.

“For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” Psalm 16:10–11 (ESV)

2. If Paradise (Heaven) is real—and it is—we should live a lifestyle that reflects the values of heaven while we are still here on earth.

“Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God’s right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is

your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory. So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming. You used to do these things when your life was still part of this world. But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him. In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us." Colossians 3:1–11 (NLT)

"But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior." Philippians 3:20 (NLT)

"Dear friends, I warn you as 'temporary residents and foreigners' to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls." 1 Peter 2:11 (NLT)

"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be." Matthew 6:19–21 (NLT)

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