

The Eternal State
1 Corinthians 15:50-55, 2 Peter 3:10-13 and Revelation 21:15-21
January 1, 2023

“The best of life on Earth is a glimpse of Heaven; the worst of life is a glimpse of Hell. For Christians, this present life is the closest they will come to Hell. For unbelievers, it is the closest they will come to Heaven.”¹

1) We are aliens and strangers in this world. (1 Corinthians 15:50-54)

Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. **James 4:14**

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. **1 Peter 2:11**

¹¹ Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. **Ephesians 2:11-12**

“In the truest sense, Christian pilgrims have the best of both worlds. We have joy whenever this world reminds us of the next, and we take solace whenever it does not.”²

“Nothing is more often misdiagnosed than our homesickness for Heaven. We think that what we want is sex, drugs, alcohol, a new job, a raise, a doctorate, a spouse, a large-screen television, a new car, a cabin in the woods, a condo in Hawaii. What we really want is the person we were made for, Jesus, and the place we were made for, Heaven. Nothing less can satisfy us.”³

Tweet on struggle that I shared!

2) Be on the lookout, ready yourself for the Lord’s return (what will you be doing)? 2 Peter 3:10-13

¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**

Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. **Matthew 24:44**

³⁴ But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. ³⁵ For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man. **Luke 21:34-36**

Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. **Matthew 24:42**

3) Only reason we are still here is for God’s praise, to testify about Him (Greatest Commandment).

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” ³⁷ Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and great

¹ Heaven, Randy Alcorn

² C.S. Lewis

³ Ibid.

commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Matthew 22:36-40

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.¹⁹ Go ^[a]therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20

"Is It Unloving to Speak of Hell? If you were giving some friends directions to Denver and you knew that one road led there but a second road ended at a sharp cliff around a blind corner, would you talk only about the safe road? No. You would tell them about both, especially if you knew that the road to destruction was wider and more traveled. In fact, it would be terribly unloving not to warn them about that other road."⁴

4) Heaven is our home. (Revelations 21:15-21)

The city will be a cube 1400 miles in width, height and length. A city this size in the United States would stretch from Mexico to Canada and from the Appalachian Mountains to the border of California. Alcorn goes on to say that if the city has levels 12 feet high, there would be 600,000 levels which would handle billions of people! ²³ The size will be incredible, but so will be its adornment. The walls are of Jasper. The twelve gates are one pearl each. The foundations are each of precious stones. The streets are of pure gold like transparent glass and the city will always be open. All enemies of the Kingdom will be forever cast into the lake of fire, far away from the New Earth. So the gates will remain open, with no need for searches or metal detectors. Any citizen of the New Earth is always welcome, always free to come to the capital city—and even to access the King's throne! The open gates guarded by angels remind us that our safety has been bought and permanently secured by our God. ²⁴ This will be an incredible city!⁵

"Think of friends or family members who loved Jesus and are with him now. Picture them with you, walking together in this place. All of you have powerful bodies, stronger than those of an Olympic decathlete. You are laughing, playing, talking, and reminiscing. You reach up to a tree to pick an apple or orange. You take a bite. It's so sweet that it's startling. You've never tasted anything so good. Now you see someone coming toward you. It's Jesus, with a big smile on his face. You fall to your knees in worship. He pulls you up and embraces you."⁶

"Set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God." (Colossians 3:1) This is a direct command to set our hearts on Heaven. And to make sure we don't miss the importance of a heaven-centered life, the next verse says, "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." God commands us to set our hearts and minds on Heaven." Ibid.

"If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next."⁷

Prayer Focus:

- **Are you looking out for the Lord's return and are you ready?**
- **Are you testifying about the Lord? Do others know you know Him?**
- **Are you anticipating going "home"?**

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.