

# Heaven

“And my God will meet all your needs  
according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.”  
*Philippians 4:19*

Play the song ‘I Can Only Imagine’ by MercyMe as people enter the class

## **Will we have our own homes?**

Jesus said that He will build a mansion for us. **John 14:2**

The New Earth’s citizens will build, plant and eat as human beings have always done but it will be unlike anything we can imagine. *Display the futuristic homes on the PowerPoint screen.*

## **Will we need ‘only God’ in heaven?**

God said “it is not good for man to be alone; I will make a helper suitable for him” in **Genesis 2:18 before the fall**. He designed us to need other people before the fall. Meaningful human relationships turned God’s assessment of ‘not good’ into ‘very good’. We should expect the same thing to hold true for the new Earth. To take pleasure in another image-bearer doesn’t offend God, it pleases Him. Jesus considered the second greatest commandment (inseparable from the first) as paramount importance. One of the highest ways we love God is by loving other people. **Matthew 22:37-39** Being lonely is an unmet need. But in heaven, we won’t have any unmet needs. So we’ll NEVER be lonely in heaven.

## **Will we remember things or people from the old Earth?**

The martyrs now in the intermediate heaven remember the old Earth. **Revelation 6:9-11**

Jesus said this about all the bad things we endured on the old Earth: we will be comforted from them. **Luke 16:25** How can we be comforted if our memory was erased? Our minds will be clearer in heaven, not foggier. Heaven cleanses sin but nothing is said about it erasing our memory. God will wipe away every tear and sorrow attached to this Earth but He probably won’t erase our memories. **John 20:24-29** says that Jesus still has His scars after he gets His resurrected body. Seeing those scars in heaven will always remind us of what He did for us. The new Earth will include memorials to the twelve tribes and the twelve apostles. **Revelation 21:12-14**

If we remember some people but don’t see them in heaven, we won’t be sad because in heaven, we’ll probably ‘see’ our memories from God’s point of view and we won’t feel sorry for people who knowingly rejected Jesus. Maybe these memories will be enhanced by our new appreciation of God’s grace and justice as we are able to grasp what really happened...

*(Continued next page)*

Page one

# Heaven

“And my God will meet all your needs  
according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.”  
*Philippians 4:19*

## ***Will there be marriage in Heaven?***

***Ephesians 5:31,32*** says that there will be marriage in heaven, but it will be between Christ and His Church. ***Matthew 22:30*** says there won't be marriage in heaven between a man and a woman. Earthly marriage is a 'shadow' of the ultimate marriage between Christ and His Church. Human marriage will have served its purpose and will be absorbed into the one, great marriage that it foreshadowed. God usually doesn't replace any part of His original creation but when He does, it's with something better; never worse. But deep relationships between family members (wife, children, relatives) and friends WILL NOT END. The clear doctrine of continuity between this life and the next says those relationships will continue...

### ***1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 2:17-20***

So marriage is not a contradiction to the doctrine of continuity, just a different from of it. Marriage will continue in heaven but will change its form from what it was on Earth.

## ***Will there be sex in heaven?***

Because sex is part of the human marriage relationship, and that will end in heaven, logically sex will end also. Since sex was designed by God and intended for our intimacy and pleasure, He probably won't discard it without replacing it with something much better; although it's not specified what that would be. If we won't have physical sex in heaven, and if in heaven there's no frustration of desire, then we may not desire physical sex. While we'll have some desires (for food, etc.), those desires will be met. Maybe what we will desire is the relational intimacy that was the best part of sex. Who knows, but Heaven will not take away things that God has said were 'good' without replacing them with something better. As C.S. Lewis said, "I think our present outlook might be like that of a small boy who, on being told that the sexual act was the highest bodily pleasure should ask whether you ate chocolates at the same time. On receiving the answer 'no', in vain would you tell him that the reason why lovers in their carnal raptures don't bother about chocolates is that they have something much better. The boy knows chocolates; he doesn't know the positive thing that excludes it. We are in that same position. We know sex, we don't know that positive thing in heaven that excludes it."

# Lesson 6

# Heaven

“And my God will meet all your needs  
according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.”  
*Philippians 4:19*

## ***Will there be animals in heaven?***

In Noah’s time, when God saved eight humans, He took great care to save all species of animals. God’s plan for the renewed Earth after the Flood included animals. Note that Adam wasn’t instructed to name the plants; only his wife and the animals, indicating their special relationship.

God created us to be caretakers of the animals (*Proverbs 12:10, Psalm 8:6-8*), but they belong to God. *Psalm 50:10,11* He populated Eden with animals. He used animals for His purposes: in *1<sup>st</sup> Kings 17:4,6* ravens to feed Elijah and in *Jonah 1:17* a big fish to swallow Jonah and in *Matthew 17:27* a fish with a coin in its month to teach the disciples a lesson. We would expect His plan for the new Earth to include them as well. Since animals are part of God’s creation, they will be redeemed also (*Romans 8:20-23*), remembering that humans sinned but animals didn’t, so their redemption is a little bit different than that of humans.

Maybe then, animals will be peaceful. *Isaiah 11:6-9, 65:25*

## ***Will animals be able to talk?***

We don’t know but consider this. Today Satan can speak thru a human but not an animal because humans can speak but animals can’t. But in Eden, Satan spoke through a snake and Eve wasn’t surprised to hear this. *Psalm 148:10-13* says let everything that has breath, praise the Lord. While this is poetic, it may also be physical. If people are smarter and more capable on the new Earth, it wouldn’t be an irrational jump to say that animals would be also...

## ***What will we do in heaven?***

Some people think heaven will be boring and hence, that God is boring. Nonsense! The assumption is that sin is fun and righteousness is boring. In truth, sin robs us of fulfillment. It doesn’t make life interesting, but monotonous. Many rich people come to realize that money is a hard task-master, not a liberating one. Because of the doctrine of continuity, many of our skills in this life will carry over into the next life. Maybe some skills that we never developed in this life will be developed in the next life. Remember that God’s gifts are irrevocable. *Romans 11:29* These skills and gifts will be redeemed also, so they will probably be greater than they are now.

# Heaven

“And my God will meet all your needs  
according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.”  
*Philippians 4:19*

## ***Will we work in heaven?***

**Genesis 2:15** says work was part of the original creation in Eden. Work is not a part of the curse, but the curse did make work much harder. **Genesis 3:17-19** God works. **John 5:17** Jesus found satisfaction in His work. **John 4:34**

Since work was called ‘good’ before the fall AND SINCE God (who is perfect) is a worker, we will probably have work to do in heaven. But it will be work that we will consider fun, satisfying and enriching. The kind that we can’t wait to get back to, maybe like a hobby now. God also says that we will find joy in our work in heaven. **Matthew 25:23**

So yes, we will work in heaven, it just won’t be corrupted by sin. We’ll enjoy it, and won’t ever grow tired of it, as boredom won’t exist. Some jobs probably won’t exist like policemen (crime), dentists (decay), funeral directors (death), insurance salesmen (disability), etc. The author Victor Hugo (*Les Misérables*) said that when he died he could say “My day’s work is done” but he could not say, “My life’s work is done”.

My work will recommence the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes upon the twilight but opens upon the dawn.

Our gifts and interests aren’t accidents. God wired us this way. He intimately designed us this way to uniquely express His glory. **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:7, Jeremiah 1:4**

On this world, even under the Curse, look at what we’ve accomplished: Shakespeare’s plays, Beethoven’s 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony, heart transplants, prenatal surgery, DVD’s, moon walks, etc. With the resources God will provide us with and with resurrected minds, think of what we’ll be capable of? Better Beethoven’s; better, more advanced technology; better architects; better space travel? Our culture will glorify God in ways that we can’t even imagine now. Undistracted and undiminished by sin, and the demands of survival, we will create and innovate at unprecedented levels. *Display the flying cars on the screen.*

# LESSON 6

# Heaven

“And my God will meet all your needs  
according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.”  
*Philippians 4:19*

## ***Will there be arts & entertainment in heaven?***

Scripture is full of singing to the Lord. While many songs will not endure, some will. Those that expressed good things and weren't sinful. But think of the new songs that will be written. In heaven, God will unleash our creativity, not confine it.

God has placed within us an instinctive physical response to music called dancing. While many forms won't transition, some will. Think of dancing that will be free from sinful desires and that will express our love for God.

Think of how we're captivated by heroic stories and films now. What about when we hear Jim Elliot's story in person or see it in a movie? What about John Newton's story (writer of the song 'Amazing Grace') or William Wilberforce (abolished slavery in Great Britain) or Mary Magdalene's story? What about listening to the angel who strengthened Jesus in Gethsemane?

Consider **John 21:25** that says Jesus did many other things that weren't written down. With our resurrected minds and abilities, we'll probably be able to see their emotions and what they were thinking much more than we can now.

Art used to be God-glorifying. Consider what it could become... Rather than forget about our lives on the old Earth, maybe we'll depict them in literature with new perspectives and gratitude to God? Surely the greatest books, dramas and poetry are yet to be written.

# Lesson 6