

SERMON OUTLINE

'KNOWING CHRISTIANITY'

Study - 10

'What do we believe about eternity - about heaven?'

Revelation 21 v1 - 5

Key Quotation - 'There is a heaven to be gained, and there is a hell to be shunned.' (John Newton / Martin Luther) This is what the gospel of the death and resurrection of Jesus is all about. See - Jn 3 v16.

Key Question - Why is it so important for the Christian believer to be always thinking about heaven?

A. HEAVEN IS ALL ABOUT THE FUTURE

It's where, as Christian believers, we will spend all of eternity. Don't we want to know what it's like?

Application - see - Matt 6 v19 - 20.

B. HEAVEN IS ALL ABOUT THE PRESENT

It's what enables us to live in the present with all of its trial, troubles, and tribulations. Note - almost all of the passages in the NT to do with heaven are set within the context of the believer going through some sort of a time of suffering.

Example - Jesus! See - Heb 12 v2

What is heaven like - what sort of a place is it?

1. HEAVEN IS A REAL PLACE

Nothing insubstantial or ethereal about it. It's a real place with a physicality and a materiality about it. Note - the Bible just doesn't speak about heaven, but particularly about "a new heaven and a new earth." See - v1a, 1 Pet 3 v13, Is 65 v17. This new heaven and new earth will not be 'brand new', but this present heaven and earth gloriously transformed. See - Rom 8 v19 - 21.

Note - as Christian believers we will be part of this newness. See - v5. In other words, our aging and weakening bodies will be made to be as 'good as new'. See - Rom 8 v22 - 23.

Note (for our comfort) - heaven is a real place filled with real people. That is - people who will be instantly recognisable to us. Wasn't the resurrected Jesus, in His new heavenly body, recognisable to the disciples?

2. HEAVEN IS A HOLY PLACE

Definition of heaven - Heaven is the dwelling place of God. Who is there in heaven with God? Answer - God's people. See - v3. Note - covenant terminology is used here. In other words, this is what the gospel is all about (why Jesus came, lived, died and rose again) - that God might have a people of His own to love and care for.

Note - what it is that marks out the people of God in heaven. It's - holiness. Because God is a holy God, His people are a holy people. See - v2.

A. THE CITY IS A HOLY CITY

See - v27

B. THE BRIDE IS A HOLY BRIDE

See - Eph 5 v25 - 27

Application - You need to be holy to get into heaven. See - Ps 24 v3 - 4a. It's only Jesus who can make us holy.

3. HEAVEN IS A WONDERFULLY PERFECT PLACE

See - 1 Cor 2 v9. Heaven is described here, therefore, in terms of negatives. See - v1b. The sea in the Bible is a picture of trouble. See - Is 57 v20. We won't need Kleenex Tissues in heaven. See - v4.