

1. Revelation's New Heavens and New Earth



2. A few years ago, a survey was done by the Barna Research Group exploring people's beliefs about Heaven. The results were rather interesting.



3.

- 46% of the respondents said that Heaven is "a state of eternal existence in God's presence."
- 30% said that Heaven is "an actual place of rest and reward."
- 14% said that Heaven was only "symbolic." In other words, it's not a real place.



4.

- 5% said there is no such thing as life after death.
- Another 5% said they are not sure. In other words, they didn't know what to believe.



5. But I want you to notice something. Based on the first two responses, 76% of the people surveyed believe that Heaven exists. More than three-fourths believe that Heaven is a real place. Now that's a bit surprising because we are always being told how the world is so secular in its thinking, and has, for the most part, rejected the teachings of the Bible. Yet, 76% said they believe in Heaven!



6. You know what that tells me? It tells me that deep inside the human heart there is an innate longing for something better. That deep inside the human soul is the desire for something more than this world has to offer. It seems like people want to believe in Heaven. It seems like they want to believe in eternity. And that makes a lot of sense because the Bible tells us that God has placed eternity in the heart of every person.

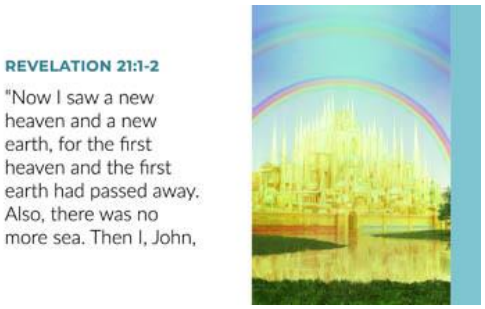


7. The good news is the book of Revelation speaks to this desire of the human heart. Revelation speaks to this innate desire for something better. You see, God has promised He would make all things new again—that He would restore this earth back to the way it was before sin invaded and brought with it sorrow, suffering, and death. He has promised us a world without sin.



8. In fact, Revelation gives us a detailed description of what Heaven is really like. So, tonight we're going to be exploring the beauty of the new heavens and the new earth. The last two chapters of the Bible have a lot to say about Heaven

Let's begin in Revelation chapters 21 and 22.



9. *"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also, there was no more sea. Then I, John,*



10. *saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."*

As John is being shown the glories of Heaven, he's probably having a difficult time putting it into words. It seems that human language just can't do justice to the Heavenly things he saw. So, the best analogy he could come up with to describe the beauty of Heaven is comparing it to a bride on her wedding day.



11. Now let me ask you a question. If there is any day when a woman wants to look her absolute best, if there is any day when she wants to look as perfect as possible, what day would that be? Of course, her wedding day. That's one of the most important days of her life. Family and friends will be gathered together. Vows will be exchanged. Pictures will be taken. Memories will be made. It's a big deal, isn't it?



12. Now who do you think spends more time preparing for the wedding day? The bride or the groom? Definitely the bride. When a girl finds out she is going to get married, according to custom, she usually takes her mother and her best friends and together they go shopping for the wedding dress and the bridesmaid dresses. And how long do you think they take to do this? Sometimes days or weeks.



13. They will go from store to store looking for the perfect bridal dress. The bride will try on multiple dresses and model it to her mother or best friends. They will all *“ooh”* and *“aah”* and tell her how beautiful she looks. Then she’ll stand in front of the mirror and examine every inch of that dress to make sure she looks good in it. Meanwhile they will tell her: *“Oh, honey, you look gorgeous in that dress.” “That’s the one for you.” “It fits you so well.” “You’ll make a beautiful bride.”*



14. Then, on the wedding day itself, who do you think takes longer to get ready? The bride or the groom? Of course, the bride. She gets up early in the morning to start getting ready for the big day. The maid of honor may help her do her hair, curling and primping it just right. She may help her apply her make-up in subtle ways and assist her in putting on the dress. And this could take hours to do because she wants everything to be just right. After all, this is her big day.



15. But it doesn’t quite work that way with guys. I can assure you when I got married, I didn’t need my guy friends to go along and help me pick out a suit or a tux. I didn’t need to model it in front of them so they could say*, “Yeah man, you look good!” Or “You look handsome in that tux.” Or “That suit really brings out your eyes.” “You’ll make a charming groom.”*



16. And I definitely didn’t need my best man to come into my room on the wedding day and help me do my hair and get dressed. I can put my own pants on, thank you! You see, it just doesn’t work that way with guys. He can get up, take a shower, do his hair, get dressed, and in half an hour, he’s ready to start the wedding, say “I do”, eat the cake, and leave for the honeymoon. I guess that’s why John didn’t compare Heaven to a groom getting adorned for his bride.



17. But in all seriousness, when she's walking down the aisle, his eyes are locked on her. He's not concerned with anyone else in the room. He is enraptured with her beauty. Mesmerized by her appearance. Captivated by her smile. All the effort, all the time spent was worth it. He's in love with her. And that's all that matters.



18. In the same way, Jesus is in love with you and me. And He has spent millennia preparing a city for us. A beautiful place unlike anything that has ever been created. That's how much He loves us.

REVELATION 21:10-11

"And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of



19. The Bible goes on to describe what the city looks like. It says in Revelation 21:10-11:

"And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of

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REVELATION 21:10-11

heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."



20. *heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."*

As John sees the Holy City, he describes it as being illuminated with the glory of God and that her light shone as clear as crystal. Now what does it mean that the city shone with the glory of God?

There are two examples in the Bible describing the display of God's glory.



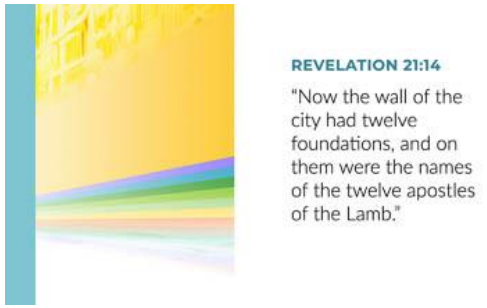
21. One is in Exodus chapters 33 and 34 where Moses went up on Mount Sinai to get the Ten Commandments from God. He asked God to show him His glory. God told him, *"I'll hide you in the cleft of the rock and when My glory passes by you can see My back. But you cannot see My face."* After spending time in God's presence, when he came down from the mountain, what did the people notice? His face glowed so bright from being in God's presence they told him to put a veil over his face. Moses was exposed to just a portion of God's glory, and it was overwhelming.



22. The second example is in 2 Kings 19:35 when Assyria went to war against God's people. Sennacherib's army came to attack Israel. And to protect Israel, the Bible says God sent one angel into the camp of the Assyrians. That one angel slew 185,000 Assyrian soldiers!



23. What's it going to be like when the full, unveiled glory of God along with the glory of millions of His angels are shining throughout the Holy City—and that glorious light is reflecting off all the gold and precious stones? It will be an awe-inspiriting sight. It's no wonder John a hard time finding words to express it. It's no wonder the city had no need of the light of the sun. The glory of God is powerful enough!

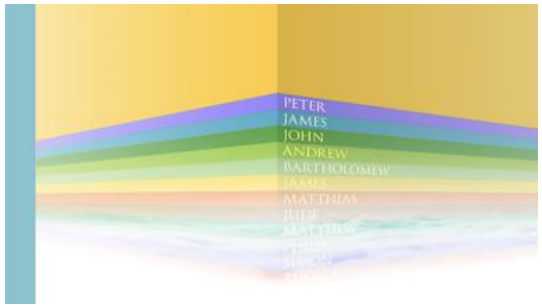


24. Now let's move to the wall of the city and its foundations in verse 14. The Bible says,

"Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."



25. This wall had 12 foundations. When is the last time you heard of a wall or a building having 12 foundations? That's unheard of! You know what that tells me? This city is built to last forever! The kingdoms of this world have come and gone. Many empires have dominated history, but eventually crumbled. But the kingdom of God is different. It's not going to lose its power or its beauty. It's not going to crumble after 500 years or even 5000 years. Because this is a city where sin cannot rear its ugly head. This is a city where there is no more death or pain or sorrow. This is a city where Jesus is on the throne and love reigns supreme. And a city that is built on Jesus will last forever!



26. But there's something else significant in this verse. It says the names of the apostles are written on the foundations of the wall. Have you ever wondered about that? Why are their names written on the wall? That's quite on honor. But were these perfect people? Were these persons without fault? No. They were ordinary people like you and me. In fact, if we were to be honest, these guys had serious issues in their life.



27. Peter was impetuous and would act rashly without thinking. James and John had terrible tempers. Why do you think they were called "sons of thunder"? Simon the Zealot was a violent man, always ready for a fight, especially if you were on the opposite side of his political views. In fact, he was a trained killer. Matthew had a past he was ashamed of—a reputation for cheating and taking advantage of many people. And Thomas was faithless. He frequently doubted what Jesus said.



28. But when these men gave their lives to Jesus, and spent 3 ½ years in His presence, they were changed and transformed from the inside out. The fact that these faulty men have their names written on the foundations of the city tells me something important. God is saying, there is hope for me too. There is hope for you. If they can be changed and saved by Jesus, so can you and me!



29. Heaven isn't a place for perfect people who've never made mistakes. Heaven is a place for sinners who have given their lives to Jesus. Heaven is a place for people who've been haunted by the past. A place for people who used to deny God and reject His love. A place for people who used to disregard His commandments. But the conviction on their hearts finally became too strong. The love of God was too much to ignore any longer. And they surrendered their hearts to Jesus to be cleansed and changed.



30. Listen, if those 12 disciples can be changed by the love of Jesus that gives you and I the hope that we cannot fall so low that Jesus can't change us.

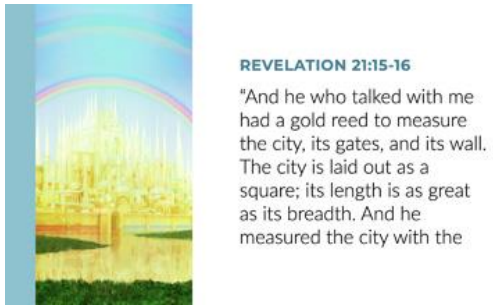
Besides, did you know that your name is written somewhere special too? Not on the walls of the city, but somewhere even better.

Notice what it says in Isaiah 49:16—



31. *"See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands. . . "*

When Jesus was crucified on the cross, and those nails were driven through His hands, that was Jesus writing your name on His hands. Those nail prints are a testimony of His undying love for you. They are a testimony that He would do anything to save you. He was opening the door of Heaven to you. My friend, won't you choose to answer His call and accept Him as your Savior?



32. Let's move on to verses 15 and 16. The Bible says,

"And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the



33. *reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal."*

These two verses describe the size of the city. The Bible says it's 12,000 furlongs. A furlong is an ancient unit of measurement. We don't use it too often today. But if you translate that into a modern unit of measurement that means the city is about 1400 miles in circumference. You know what that tells me? Two things. Number one, that's a huge city! Number two, there's enough room for anyone who wants to be there.



34. We were also told back in verse 12 that the city had 12 gates, three on each side. In the ancient world, how many gates do you think most cities had? Not many. It certainly wasn't 12. You know why? Because the more gates you have, the more vulnerable you were to your enemies. The fewer gates you had the more you could control whose going in and out.



35. But here John describes the opposite. He describes a city with many gates. That's unheard of! But it tells us something very important. God's not trying to keep people out. He's trying to get people in. He wants to save as many people as He can.

That's why the Bible says in 2 Peter 3:9:



36. *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise. . . but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."*

In this world, there are some people who will try to keep you out. Keep you out of their business. Keep you out of their school. Keep you out of their neighborhood.



2 PETER 3:9

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise. . . but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

37. There are even some people who will try to keep you out of their church. I wish it wasn't true. But there are some churches who will close their gates because you're not the right color, or you speak a different language, or you don't wear the right clothes. But in Revelation, Jesus opens the gates to everyone who is willing to accept Him as their Savior.



2 PETER 3:9

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise. . . but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

38. In Heaven, the color of your skin doesn't matter. The country where you were born doesn't matter. The amount of money you have in the bank doesn't matter. The degrees behind your name don't matter. And most of all, your past doesn't matter because you've been washed clean by the blood of Jesus, and we will all live together in perfect unity.

REVELATION 21:21

"The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass."



39. Verse 21 tells us something else about those gates. The Bible says:

"The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass."



40. I don't want you to miss this. It's something we normally overlook. Revelation says each individual gate was made of one pearl. Is there any significance to that?

Jesus once told a story in Matthew 13:44 about a man who was walking in a field when he noticed there was buried treasure in the ground. What did that man do? He went and sold everything he had so he could buy that field and obtain the treasure



41. Jesus is that treasure. That parable is telling us there is nothing in this world that is worth missing out on Heaven. There is nothing in this world worth missing out on spending eternity with Jesus. No person, no cherished sin is worth missing out on the paradise Christ has prepared for you and me. If there's something that stands between you and eternal life, Jesus implores us to let it go.

Jesus Himself said, *"What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, but lose his own soul?"*



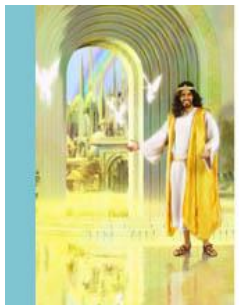
42. Is it worth to have all the money in the world, but no eternal life? Is it worth it to be popular and famous in the eyes of the world, but no eternal life? Is it worth it to have power and prestige, but no eternal life? How we answer those questions determines our future.



43. In the Bible, who is symbolized by the pearl of great price? Jesus is. So, these pearls that are gates into Heaven represent Jesus. In other words, if I want to get into that city, it's only going to be through Jesus. It's not going to be by my righteousness. It's not going to be because of my accomplishments. It's not going to be because of social status or my bank account. It's going to be because I've given my life to Jesus and His perfect righteousness now covers my sins. His perfect life is written in my record book in Heaven. And when God sees the record of my life, He doesn't see all my sins and mistakes. He sees the perfect life of Jesus that counts for me.

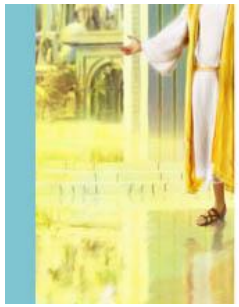


44. What would it be like to know that God could look at you as though you were perfect? That's what it means to have Jesus as a personal Savior. Is He your Savior, my friend? Do you have that assurance?

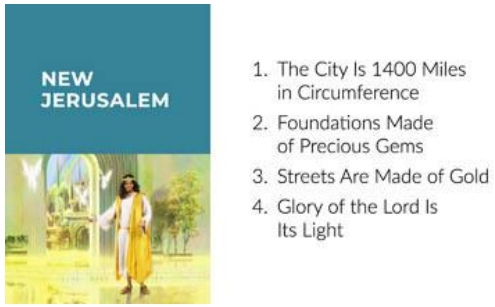


45. That's why Jesus said, *"I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved..."*

Mohammed isn't the door. Buddha isn't the door. Confucius isn't the door. Hollywood celebrities and athletic superstars aren't the door. Only Jesus is the door to eternal life!



46. Revelation also describes the streets of the city as being made of gold. Notice what it says in verse 21, *"And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass."* Can you imagine what that would look like? Or how much that would be worth? Right now, gold is selling for $1600 an ounce (or $52 a gram). What if all the streets of (your city) were made of gold? You're probably thinking, "I'd just be happy if we had streets without potholes." I hear you! I know some city streets that have potholes so big they'll knock the hubcaps off your car! But not in Heaven.



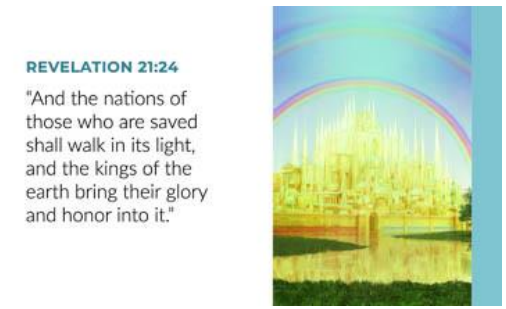
47. So, here's what we've seen so far.
The city is about 1400 miles in circumference.
The foundations of the wall are made of precious gems.
The gates are pearls. The streets are gold.
The glory of the Lord is its light and reflects off those gems, the pearls, and the gold in all its magnificent splendor.



48. So why does God put forth the effort to make Heaven so beautiful, so glorious, so valuable? You know why? Because you are valuable to God. You are worth it in His eyes.
You see, we live in a world where sometimes there are people who will tell you you're not worth anything. That you're not special. That you're not good enough, or smart enough, or pretty enough. But it doesn't matter what this world says about you. It only matters what God says about you! God says, *"you are valuable!"* God says, *"you are worth everything to Me!"* God says, *"you are priceless!"*



49. To the woman who is throwing her life away, giving herself to one man after another, looking for love in all the wrong places—God says, *"I love you! You are valuable to Me."* To the young man who has almost ruined his life with drugs and alcohol, lost his job, destroyed his marriage, made one mistake after another—God says, *"I love you! You are valuable to me."*
Is your heart crying out to God tonight? Does your heart long for a God who loves you? Does your heart long for a God who thinks you are valuable?



50. Let's take a look at another description of the city. In verse 24, the Bible says. .

"And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it."



51. Revelation outlines that people from all nations will be there. Heaven will be a place of great diversity. The Russians are there. The Americans are there. The Iranians are there. The Chinese are there. You have the Africans, the Indians, and the Australians. Black and white, brown and red. Every skin color, every culture is represented in Heaven.



52. There's no strife there. No ethnic cleansing. No tribal wars. No prejudice. No hatred. No racism. Because all are of one blood. All are beautiful in God's eyes. We all are His children. God loves all the colors He has made.



53. Nobody is going to get to Heaven because of their skin color. Nobody is going to get to Heaven because of the country they're from. Nobody is going to get to Heaven because of the language they speak. Everybody is there because of one reason—the blood of Jesus! Because we call Jesus our Savior!

But the question is—have you called upon Jesus as your Savior?



REVELATION 22:1-2

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of the street, and on either side of

54. Now we move to chapter 22, where John's vision transitions to the tree of life. The Bible says:

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of the street, and on either side of

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REVELATION 22:1-2

the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

55. *the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."*



56. This is the first time the tree of life is mentioned since the time of Creation in the book of Genesis. Remember when Adam and Eve sinned, God barred access to the tree of life because God could not let them eat of it and have sin become immortalized. Eventually God removed the tree of life from this earth. But here it is again in the New Jerusalem. It is described as being on either side of the river of water of life and bearing a different fruit each month.



57. Now I love to eat fruit, and even fruit here on earth can taste delicious. If you've ever had a perfectly ripe, super juicy, fresh cut pineapple from the tree, you know what I'm talking about. Or a perfectly plump Georgia peach where the juice runs down your chin as your taste buds have a party. Can you imagine what Heavenly fruit tastes like? I'm sure it is 1000 times better than anything here on earth. Maybe there will even be some kind of new fruit that God will create just for us.



58. But what is most significant is that it says, *"the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nation."* Something about those leaves heals us from the curse of sin. We will be healed of everything we've had to endure on this earth. We will be healed physically. We will be healed mentally. We will be healed spiritually. No more fears. No more discouragement. No more depression. Minds are healed. Bodies are healed. Hearts are healed. The curse of sin is gone. It can't hurt us anymore!



59. Some scholars think this may even refer to reconciliation between nations and various people groups. In other words, the healing of hate. No more wars. No more disagreements. No more fighting. As we meet together in the presence of God under the tree of life, all hatred and animosity are gone. For the first time, all nations are one—united by the love of Christ!



60. Now Revelation is not the only book in the Bible that talks about Heaven. The prophet Isaiah give us some descriptions as well. In fact, Isaiah describes some of the activities we will do in Heaven. Will we just be floating on a cloud strumming a harp for all eternity? I hope not.



61. Take a look at this wonderful promise in Isaiah.

"And the inhabitant will not say, 'I am sick'; The people who dwell in it will be forgiven their iniquity."

Isaiah tells us two wonderful things about Heaven in that verse. Number one, people will not get sick. Somebody ought to say "amen" and "hallelujah" to that! How many people hate being sick?



62. (TELL A STORY OF YOU BEING SICK)

But guess what? In Heaven there will be no more flu. No more viruses. No more broken bones. No more diseases. No more diabetes. No more bi-polar. No more lack of energy. And you know what else? No more doctor's offices. No more hospitals. No more medical bills and fighting with the insurance company. Because no one will ever be sick!



63. The second wonderful thing in this verse is not only will we be physically whole, but we will be spiritually whole because all our iniquities will be forgiven. So often we carry our guilt, our shame, our regret for years and it weighs us down like a heavy boulder. But Jesus offers forgiveness. Jesus gives us a clear conscience. Jesus fills our hearts with the joy of salvation!

ISAIAH 35:5-6

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. . . "



64. What else does the Bible say about our health in Heaven? Isaiah writes more. The Bible says,

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. . . "



65. People will no longer be blind. Their sight will be restored. For the first time they will see the face of their family, their kids, or even themselves. Most importantly, the first face they'll see is the face of Jesus. No more eye exams. No more glasses. No more contact lenses.



66. Many will hear for the first time. They'll hear the voices of their family. They'll hear the music of a Heavenly choir. They'll hear the sound of a bird singing. No more sign language. No more hearing aids. No more living in silence. Can you say, "amen"?

But you know what else that means? Husbands will no longer be able to make excuses that they didn't hear their wives. And wives will no longer have to repeat themselves. I thought the ladies would say "amen" to that!

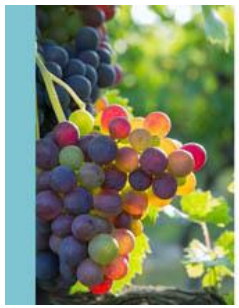


67. Many will walk or use their limbs for the first time. No more disabilities. No more artificial arms or legs. No more crutches. No more wheelchairs. No more scooters. We'll be able to run and play in perfect health.



68. Many will be able to speak for the first time. They'll be able to communicate with loved ones. They'll be able to express thoughts and feelings that have been bottled up inside for so long, because now the mind is healed. The brain is perfectly whole.

My friends, we have a lot to look forward to. Praise the Lord!



69. Now let's look at some of the activities we will be doing in heaven. Turn in your Bibles to Isaiah 65:21. The Bible says:

"They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall

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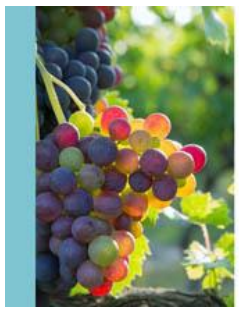
70. *not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."*

We're going to be able to build houses and then inhabit them. I love that promise. No more will a person lose their house in foreclosure. No more will they be unable to pay the mortgage. No more will they be evicted from their own home.



71. The Bible also says we will plant gardens. Many people find joy in taking care of a garden. In fact, taking care of a garden is what God had Adam and Eve do before sin entered this world. We can also enjoy that in Heaven.

Imagine what the fruits and vegetables will look like there. No more worms in apples. No more dark spots or blemishes. No more pesticides to ruin their taste. We'll find out what fruits and vegetables really taste like.



72. (PERSONALIZE THIS LIST AND MAKE THE ILLUSTRATION YOUR OWN. YOU CHOOSE THREE THINGS)

Now, there's a few things I want in my garden.



73. Number one, a coconut tree because I love coconuts. They remind me of beautiful weather, warm sunshine, and pristine beaches. When I think of coconuts, I think of peace and serenity.

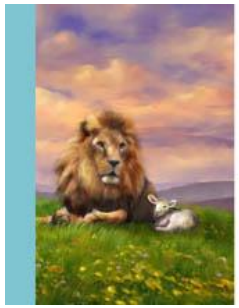


74. Number two, a durian tree. Anybody know what durian is? It's a special fruit you find in Asia, particularly the Philippines. It's about the size of a large coconut and the shell is very thorny. It has a strong odor, so much so, that it is actually forbidden to carry it on a plane. But the odor is deceptive because the fruit inside is delicious. My family hates it, but I love it. You should go to an Asian market and try one.

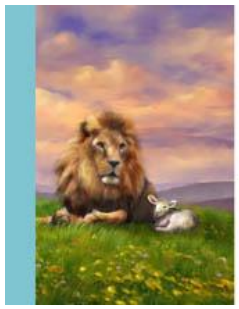


75. And number three, I want a chocolate tree that bears Hershey's chocolate bars! Now those of you who are health experts don't come up and lecture me after the program tonight about how unhealthy chocolate is. Because in Heaven chocolate will be good for you! Amen!

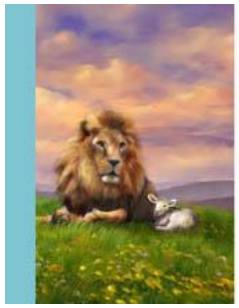
So those are the three things I want in my garden. What about you?



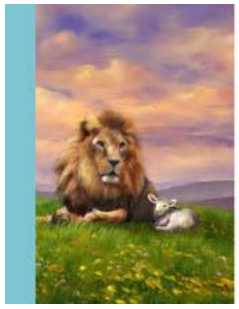
76. Then we come to the animal lover's favorite text about Heaven, verse 25. The Bible says:
" 'The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox. . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,' says the Lord."



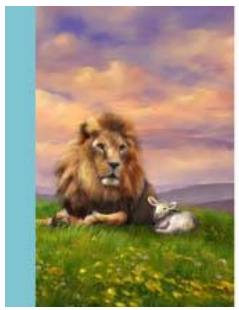
77. This was Esther's favorite verse. Esther was older lady who lived in Pennsylvania. She loved spending time with her grandson. If you had met her, you would think she was one of the most Godly women you had ever met. The circumstances of her life were sometimes difficult, but she loved the Lord deeply. She was always at church. She was always peaceful and calm.



78. She loved animals and animals loved her! Every Thursday night her grandson, David, would come over to visit while his parents went grocery shopping. He would play with her two cats, Calico and Pumpkin. And he'd have fun with Spotty, the dog. Sometimes Esther would take her grandson across the street to Jim and Nena's Pizzeria and they'd eat pizza and ice cream together.



79. Sometimes Esther and her grandson would sit at the table and read the Bible together. One night they read this verse about how *"they shall neither hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain"*—and she'd say to her grandson*, "Oh David, won't that be wonderful?"* And she's right. It will be wonderful.



80. Violence will be gone from the animal world. Wolves won't prey upon lambs. Lions won't attack antelopes. Animals won't cruelly devour each other. Because in Heaven, love will reign supreme in our land, in our homes, and in the animals.



81. But one of the best things about Heaven is back in the book of Revelation. Let's go to chapter 21 and verse 4. The Bible says:

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying.



82. *There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*

It says no more pain or sorrow. God will wipe the tears from our eyes. I can't tell you how many times I've cried in my life. What about you? When is the last time you cried tears of pain or sorrow? Maybe from the pain of rejection, or the pain of loss, or the pain of disappointment? There's a lot of pain in this world, but not in Heaven.



83. **(INSERT YOUR OWN STORY OF A LOVED ONE OR A TRAGIC PHONE CALL)**
But the best part is there's no more death. You'll never get one of those tragic phone calls in the middle of the night. Have you ever got one of those? Michael did. Michael's grandmother was a big part of his life growing up. He would call her Grammy. She was a short, spunky, fiery woman who lived to be about 95. For as long as Michael can remember, Gram lived with them when he was a kid. She took care of him while his mom was at work during the day. She was a big part of his life as a child.



84. But eventually her diabetes started to get the best of her legs and affect her ability to walk. When she went to the hospital the doctors told her she needed to have her leg amputated. That news took the life out of her. Michael watched his grandmother bury her head in her hands and cry. He had never seen his grandmother cry before.



REVELATION 21:4

There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

85. A few days later, his phone rang at 4 o'clock in the morning. He had a foreboding feeling inside. He can't describe it but something inside of him said, "I bet Gram died." Sure enough, it was his aunt on the other end of the line crying, telling him that Gram had passed away last night. Michael remembers hanging up the phone and burying his head on the couch and crying for a while. She had been part of his life for as long as he could remember. And now she was gone. The house would never seem the same.



REVELATION 21:4

There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

86. Phone calls like that won't happen in Heaven. Because there is no death there. Jesus has gained the victory over the grave and given us eternal life.

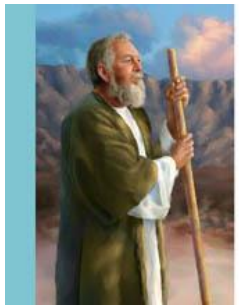
I CORINTHIANS 15:54

"Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'"



87. That's why the Bible says, *"Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' "*

What about fellowship? What will friendships be like in Heaven? Did you know Jesus had something to say about that?



MATTHEW 8:11

"And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."

88. In Matthew 8:11, Jesus said, *"And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."*

The fellowship in Heaven is going to be one of the sweetest things we have ever experienced. To explore the universe with family and friends. To climb the highest mountain with your spouse. To traverse space with your kids. To figure out the mysteries of the universe with new friends and old friends alike.



89. Can you imagine what it will be like to meet people from long ago? To meet Adam and Eve, and ask them what it was like at creation? To meet Joseph, and ask him what it was like to be sold by his brothers and end up as prime minister in Egypt? To meet Elijah, and ask him what it was like to be carried to Heaven in a chariot of fire? To meet Peter, and ask him what it was like to walk on water or to see Jesus on the cross? To meet Mary Magdalene, and ask her what it was like to be forgiven and changed by Jesus?



90. But the best part is being able to fellowship with Jesus. For the first time we'll be able to see Him face to face. Not getting on our knees in the bedroom and hoping our prayers make it past the ceiling. Not praying to someone we can't see. But being able to wrap our arms around Him, look into His loving eyes and say, *"Thank you, Jesus, for saving me! Thank you for allowing Yourself to be nailed to a cross for me! Thank you for giving me your righteousness! Thank you for preparing this place for me!"*



91. In fact, we're going to see Jesus every Sabbath. Notice what the Bible says in Isaiah 66:22-23:

"'For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,' says the Lord, 'so shall your descendants and your name remain.



92. *And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,' says the Lord."*

The Sabbath will still be important in Heaven. Every Sabbath we will come into His presence to worship. We may not have a physical building to go to like we do here on earth, but it says "all flesh shall come to worship before Me." Think about it. If the Sabbath is a memorial of Creation, is He still our Creator in Heaven? Of course. Is He still our Redeemer in Heaven? Yes.



ISAIAH 66:22-23

And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,' says the Lord."

93. Then the Sabbath will still be an important part of our personal relationship with Jesus. The Sabbath will be filled with many blessings throughout all eternity. So, if we are going to honor the Sabbath in Heaven, then we should start honoring the Sabbath here. Because the Sabbath is all about Jesus.



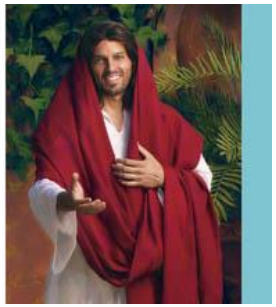
ISAIAH 66:22-23

And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,' says the Lord."

94. Tonight, we've read about the wonders of Heaven. And I hope you realize Jesus has prepared this indescribable place for you. And He desperately wants you to be there. The book of Revelation ends with Jesus making a heart-felt appeal to each of us.

REVELATION 22:17

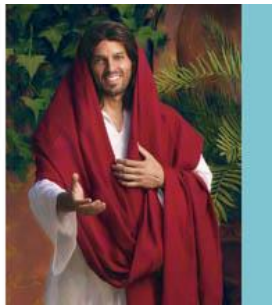
"And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' And let him who thirsts come.



95. This is Jesus' appeal to you. *"And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' And let him who thirsts come.*

REVELATION 22:17

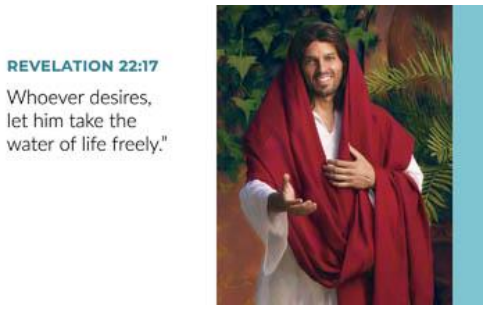
Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."



96. *Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."*

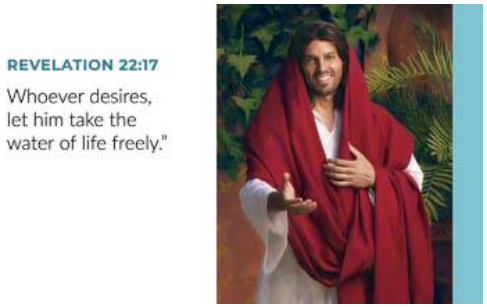
Three times Jesus invites you to come. To come to Him. To come and surrender your heart to Him. To come receive eternal life and enter the gates of the city.

You're so precious to Him that He created this place for you. You're so precious to Him that He gave His life on the cross of Calvary. You're so precious to Him that He opens up the door of Heaven and invites you to come in.



97. My friend, there is nothing in this world that is worth missing out on the glories of Heaven. There is nothing in this world worth missing out on spending eternity with family and friends. There is nothing in this world worth missing out on being with Jesus forever.

Jesus says, “Come!” Tonight, I want to give you an opportunity to respond to that invitation. I’m going to do a good old-fashioned altar call as we end our series tonight. This is your opportunity to come. So please listen carefully.



98. Tonight, if you would like to say, *“Yes, Lord, I want You to save me in your kingdom. I want to be in Heaven with my family and friends. I want to spend eternity with You. Help me to follow You with all my heart.”* Then I want to invite you to come forward and stand with me here at the altar as we sing a closing song.



99. I’m not asking you if your life is perfect. I’m not asking you if you are without fault. I’m not asking you about your past. I’m asking you about your future. You are simply saying, “Yes, Lord, I want to be in Heaven with You. I want to have eternal life.”

If that’s your desire, when we start singing, you’ll see me step down from the platform. Then you can come forward and stand with me here at the altar as we sing. Then, after the song, we’ll have a special prayer of dedication.



100. (HAVE A TEAM LEAD OUT IN SINGING *“WHEN WE ALL GET TO HEAVEN”)*

(At end of song). Jesus said, *“Come!”* And you have come. The heart of Jesus rejoices tonight. Many of you have experienced a revival in your hearts during this seminar. Many have been drawn closer to Jesus.



101. But before we close our meeting tonight, I want to take this call one step further. Not only do you want to be in Heaven, but deep in your heart you know it's time to be baptized. And tonight, you want to make that decision to be baptized one day soon. Some have already made that decision in these meetings.



102. In fact, those of you who have already made the decision to be baptized, I want to invite you to come forward for a moment and gather around me. I want people to see you because it may encourage others to make the decision, too. So, wherever you are, just come stand with me. All those who have already made the decision to be baptized, or who were recently baptized, please come forward and stand with me. [Encourage them to come].



103. Now, if there's someone else who would like to join this group and be baptized one day soon, I want to invite you to raise your hand at this time. Wherever you are, in the front, in the back, on the balcony, just raise your hand to say, "I want to be baptized one day soon." You sense the conviction that it is time to make that decision. You want to conclude this seminar by making your decision for Jesus. Would you raise your hand just now?



104. Now those of you who raised your hand, I'd like to invite you to slip out of your seats, come forward, and join this group. I want to have a special prayer of dedication for you as we close. So, please, just come. Slip out of your seat and join this group up front and let's have a special prayer together.



105. In fact, we are going to sing the closing song one more time, just the first and last verses. So, while we are singing this song, those of you who have raised your hands—it will give you time to come forward. If it's your desire to be baptized one day soon, just come forward as we sing this song one more time.



106. **(HAVE TEAM SING THE SONG AGAIN AND WAIT FOR PEOPLE TO COME FORWARD)**
God's Spirit has been moving in this place. You have responded to the conviction of your heart. Heaven rejoices that you have come forward tonight. This is a special moment in your spiritual journey. I hope you will always remember it.



107. Those of you who have come forward to be baptized, please stay by for a few minutes after prayer. We have a card for you to fill out. We need to get your name so we can work together to make your baptism a reality.



108. **(PRAYER)**—Heavenly Father, thank you that Your Spirit has been here tonight. Thank you that we have sensed Your love to us. Thank you for those whose hearts have responded to You tonight. Bless them in a special way. Bless their home. Bless their families. Fill them with Your Holy Spirit. Draw them closer to You.



109. And if there’s anyone else who should have come forward, but for some reason didn’t, bless them too. Take away their fear. Take away their hesitation. Encourage their hearts. Help them to make that decision soon. We ask all these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.



110.