

Last week - We **started studying** a **subject** that should be **NEAR & DEAR** to **EVERY Christian's Heart**

& a **subject** that should be **HIGH ON THE PRIORITY LIST** of **EVERY Non-Believer** . . . that subject, is **HEAVEN !!**

& I **did my best** to try to **get us thinking** about just **ONE Truth** **Heaven, is REAL** - it is **VERY REAL!!**

& I've **had** a **great time** this week - **hearing** from **MANY of you** - with **questions** & **interest** in **HEAVEN**

& I **gave** you a **LOT** of **Summary Truths** & **General Statements** about Heaven last Week

to try to get us to **ADJUST** some of our **Assumptions** & (possibly) our **MIS-conceptions**

So **TODAY** - I want to Start - **BACKING UP** & **CLARIFYING** **some** of the **Truths** we **introduced** last week

& **YES** - we **ARE** still **studying Revelation Ch's 21 & 22**

& **my desire** is for us to **leave** these **last two Ch's** of the **Bible** **Excited** - & **Passionate** - About the **REALITY** of **HEAVEN !!**

Let's Pray

Again - As last wk - **the book** that has **challenged ME**, about **HOW REAL** I see this subject, is - **HEAVEN, By Randy Alcorn**

It's Large & a Bit Detailed - but a great challenge
to our possible mis-conceptions about Heaven

Let's start today (Again) at Revelation 21:1 (ESV)

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

I want to talk more today - about the NEW EARTH
that is an INTEGRAL PART of the Eternal Heaven

Cause maybe (like me), you've never Really Considered How REAL,
How TANGIBLE, & How AWESOME the New Earth is gonna be

We talked last week about what may be our Biggest Misconception

That is that Heaven is some kind of Ethereal, Disembodied,
spirit-only, "out there place" . . .

where we get: a Toga, a Set of Wings, a Harp, & a Cloud

& I tried to share - that is a Deceiving LIE of the Devil

Because it takes away our PASSION for Heaven
Cause it doesn't really SOUND all that Exciting

& maybe one reason we view Heaven as
SO "Ethereal & Disembodied" is because of what happens
to the Earth - at the end of the Millennium

We grasp that the Millennium is a 1,000 yr reign ON THIS EARTH
with Jesus Christ - & we can kind of envision that

BUT THEN - We have these vs's that say This Earth will Pass Away (at the END of the Millennium) - to make room for the New Earth

2 Peter 3:10 (ESV) is the most descriptive

10 . . . the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

This last sentence is complicated to translate - NKJ = "Burned Up" but in a footnote it says the word is LIT - FOUND (found out)

But still - the PASS AWAY Part is the part we get stuck on (I'd encourage - Read All of 2Pet 3 re: Jdgmnt & New Earth)

Plus, here in Rev 21:1 it says This Earth is going to PASS AWAY

& Recorded in THREE of the Gospels - Jesus says This Earth will PASS AWAY

& we think, well, that's it for us on the Earth - This earth is gonna PASS AWAY - & it's only Harps & Clouds from then on out

But that's Just NOT TRUE!

We find references to God creating a New Earth Thru-out the Bible Includ'g THREE Key Prophecies in ISAIAH

We READ about the New Earth here in Rev 21 & 22

But we somehow Don't Think the New Earth will be AS Real & AS Tangible - as This Earth

Maybe because it sounds So Much More "Spiritual" (Heaven-Like) to NOT think about a Tangible Earth & Sky in Heaven . . .

with Trees & Mountains & Rivers & Animals & Cities
& Nations & Kings - & Real People & Real Work to Do

But the Bible talks about EA of these being PART of the New Earth

PLUS - with MY personality - I LIKE to Dramatically Say - *"Man, this world is passing away, it's gonna Vaporize, & all that we think is SO important to GAIN on this earth - it's all gonna BURN UP"*

I'm actually Talking about the THINGS
that have a SINFUL HOLD on us in this World

& I talk like that to try to SHAKE US LOOSE
from the HOLD that those things have on us

BUT - Unfortunately - I May be contributing to our thinking that
NOTHING in Heaven could be - ANYTHING Like this Earth

But there ARE plenty of things on this Earth that ARE actually Godly
- & WILL actually Remain on the New Earth

The Bible describes the NEW Earth - with terms that are SIMILAR to
Life on THIS Earth - ONLY BETTER, & WITHOUT SIN

& so - some scholars - instead of using the Dramatic
"THIS EARTH IS GONNA BURN UP!!!!"

They use the words - REGENERATION or RENEWAL

& they see the vs's re: this earth being JUDGED by Fire - Kinda Like
the Judgment BY FIRE of OUR Works - described in 1Cor Ch 3

In **1Cor 3:10-15** (write dwn) - **Believer's works** are judged by **FIRE** (which we **looked at** in Msg #12)

& **thru this fire** - Our **USELESS** works are **BURNED UP** - **BUT** our **GODLY WORKS** are **REFINED** by the Fire - **NOT destroyed**

& **it could be** the **Same** with the **Judgment by Fire** upon **This** earth

All that's SINFUL - will be **DESTROYED** by the **FIRE**
& **All that's GODLY** will be **REFINED** by the same **FIRE**

& so - As **2Cor 5:17** says about **US** when we're saved - ***"Old things have passed away, behold all things have become new"***

Here's how Randy Alcorn Summarizes it

"The earth's death will be no more final than our own. The destruction of the old Earth in God's Purifying judgment will immediately be followed by its resurrection to new life. Earth's fiery "end" will open straight into a glorious new beginning."

Heaven is REAL - & the **NEW EARTH is REAL** -
AS REAL - & in some ways - **MORE REAL** - than **THIS Earth**

So - I thought **a good place** for us to **go today** (*to establish this*) is the **REAL Resurrection** of our **BODIES**

Because one of the **greatest misconceptions** about heaven is **that** we **won't** have **real** - **tangible** - **actual** - **BODIES**

& **IF** we **see OURSELVES** in **UNREAL BODIES** ('spirit-only) **then** we'll **see HEAVEN** as **UNREAL** (spirit-only)

In fact - the Real - Tangible - Physical Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the Absolute Cornerstone of our FAITH

TURN OVER TO 1Cor 15

ALL of 1Cor 15 deals with the Resurrection (58 vs's) - It's about the Truth of the Resurrection - AND the Resurrection Body

I CAN'T Teach it all - But let's just skim thru it (*Agn - Read it all*)

Let's start in 1 Corinthians 15:17 (ESV)

17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

Paul is talking about the Physical - Bodily Resurrection of Jesus & he says w/o that Physical Resurrection - Our Faith is Useless

& then - in 1 Corinthians 15:20 (ESV)

20 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep (died).

Jesus Christ is the FIRST-FRUITS of the Resurrection

It means He is The Forerunner,
The First Of Many More Who Will Be Like Him

NOT like Him in His DIVINITY -
But like Him in His RESURRECTION

So if I were to say to you - HOW do you ENVISION your own Resurrection?? Is it Ethereal (spirit-like) - or Physical ?

You might say "*I'm not really sure*" - *I might be kinda flyin around with wings or something . . . probably just a SPIRIT*"

But if we'll CRUSH that misconception - & SEE our Resurrection
as a REAL - TANGIBLE - PHYSICAL BODY . . .

maybe we'll start seeing HEAVEN the SAME WAY

R.A. Torry - sScholar & Original Builder of Biola:

"We will not be disembodied spirits in the world to come, but redeemed spirits, in redeemed bodies, in a redeemed universe."

& when you read those words "REDEEMED BODIES" - do you think
of an ACTUAL BODY - similar to the one you have now?

Because THAT is what we see in the resurrected body of Christ -
His Body is Similar to the Body He had BEFORE the Resurrection

& look down at 1 Corinthians 15:35 (ESV)

35 But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?"

That's the first question, isn't it?

What KIND of Body will we have - in the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:40 (ESV)

40 There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another.

Heavenly BODIES, & Earthly BODIES

But THE KEY WORD here is - BODIES

GRK Word = SOMA

It means LITERAL - The Material Composition of an Entity

**When the Bible Says we'll have a Heavenly BODY - it IS Heavenly -
But it is STILL a BODY - LIKE Jesus' resurrected Body**

But **some of us - when we read "Heavenly BODY"
we instantly think - well, that means SPIRIT**

But **If God MEANT we'd be a SPIRIT - He would've said:
There is an Earthly BODY, & a Heavenly SPIRIT . . .**

& **some may say - what about V.44?**

1 Corinthians 15:44 (ESV)

44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

**Again - God doesn't say a "natural Body" - & then a "Spirit"
He's Setting Apart - TWO Different BODIES . . .**

BOTH are BODIES - One Earthly - One Heavenly

& **then some might say - what about V.50?**

1 Corinthians 15:50 (ESV)

50 I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

**The context here is that THESE Earthly Bodies CANNOT inherit
the Kingdom of God - NOT the way they are TODAY**

**As Jesus' Resurrected Body was SIMILAR TO His Earthly Body
But it was NOT His EARTHLY Body**

& so - **look down at Vs.53 - & Let me READ Out of the NLT**

1 Corinthians 15:53 (NLT)

53 For our *dying bodies* must be *transformed into bodies that will never die*; *our mortal bodies* must be *transformed into immortal bodies*.

It's **NOT** that we **STOP** having **BODIES**

It's that these **Dying & Mortal BODIES** will be **Transformed** into **Never DYING & IMMORTAL** Bodies . . . but **BODIES Still**

& what **KIND of Bodies??** **What** will they **be LIKE??**

1 more Vs here - 1 Corinthians 15:49 (ESV)

49 Just as we have *borne the image of the man of dust*, we shall also *bear the image of the man of heaven*.

we shall also *bear the image of the man of heaven*

So - **What** did **Jesus'** Resurrection **Body Look like** ?

Jesus walked this earth for **40 days** **AFTER** His **Resurrection**
& **BEFORE** His **Ascension** to Heaven

& the Bible is CLEAR about BOTH

Jesus' Resurrected Body **BEFORE** His **Ascension**
& **AFTER** His **Ascension** When He **Returned** to **Heavenly Glory**

& **Certainly** there are **SOME PARTS** of His **GLORIFIED BODY**
we will **NOT Share** - Definitely **NOT** to **His Extent**

But it **certainly seems** that Jesus' **Resurrected Body**
AND the **way** He **interacted** on **THIS Earth** . . . →

SHOULD give us a **Good PICTURE** - of **OUR Resurrected Bodies**
& How **WE** will **interact** on the **New Earth**

Jesus is the **First-Fruits** of all who are **Resurrected** -
& **1Cor 15:49** says we will **BEAR His IMAGE** (to some degree)

So - **what** does that **LOOK LIKE?**

Well - **First of all** - The **EMPTY Tomb** is the **Ultimate Proof**
that **Christ's** Resurrected **Body** was the **SAME Body** He **Died in**

If resurrection didn't mean **BODY** -
Then **His Body** could have **remained** in **the Tomb**

But His Body **DID NOT Remain** in **the Tomb**
& **for 40 days** those that **KNEW HIM** - **RECOGNIZED Him**

Yes - **Initially** Jesus **HID** his **identity** from **Mary Magdelene**
in **the Garden** - Just **after** the **Resurrection**

But **when** He **said Her Name** **Jn 20:16** says She **turned**
to **really LOOK at Him** - & **knew immediately** it was **the Lord**

& Then - TURN OVER TO LUKE 24

IN LUKE 24 - To the **unnamed Disciples** on the **Road to Emmaus**
Jesus also initially **HID His identity**

But **WHILE** He **TALKED** & **ATE** & **FELLOWSHIPED** with them
He **allowed** their **eyes** to **be opened**

The Key Point being that He
TALKED & **ATE** & **FELLOWSHIPED** with them

Then - when **those 2 Disciples** found **the 11** - **AS** they were **telling** them **the story** - **Luke 24:36** says suddenly **Jesus** was **there**

& we read in Luke 24:37–43 (ESV)

37 *But they (disciples) were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. 38 And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” 40 And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. 41 And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” 42 They gave him a piece of broiled fish, 43 and he took it and ate before them.*

Remember - **Jesus** is the **First-Fruits** of **OUR** Resurrection
& we will **bear HIS Image**

Which is **so incredible** - When we **Think about**
HOW Jesus **Interacted** on Earth **after HIS Resurrection**

There's **also** that **great meeting** between **Jesus** & **Doubting Thomas**
in **Jn 20** Where Jesus **SHOWS Thomas** the **MARKS** of **Crucifixion**

& In **Jn Ch 21** Jesus **Again interacts** with His Disciples
This time on the **Sea of Galilee**

Peter had **convinced** some of **the Disciples** to **go fishing** with him

& after **they'd been** out **all night** **Jesus shows up** in the **morning**
& **hollers** at them from the shore - **“Catch anything?”**

They say **NO** - He says **throw the net** on the **other side** -
& **they catch** so **many fish** it almost **capsizes** the boat

**John realizes it's Jesus - Tells Peter
& Peter jumps over board & swims to shore**

The **disciples follow** in the boat & **when** they **get there**
Jesus is making a **Real Fire** & cooking **REAL Fish Breakfast**

& **after breakfast** **Jesus** takes **Peter aside** for a little **Heart-To-Heart**
about that whole **Denying Him Event** at **the Crucifixion**

REAL Jesus - REAL Friends - REAL Food - REAL Fellowship

Don't get me **wrong** - the Bible **doesn't say ANYTHING** about us
Coming back as **Ghosts** - to **communicate** with **people** here

The **point here is** - Jesus is **NOT a Ghost** - he is in a REAL BODY
Enjoying a GOOD MEAL with **GOOD FRIENDS**

& Listen to what Jesus says in Matthew 8:11 (ESV)

***11 I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at
table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,***

After what we just **Read** - **Can you imagine** - Jesus Means -
ACTUALLY **Reclining** - with **ACTUAL** **Abraham**, **Isaac**, & **Jacob**?

& **what about** when **Jesus** said to His **Friends** at the **Last Supper**

in Matthew 26:29 (ESV)

***29 I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that
day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."***

There's NO Indication Jesus is talking about ANYTHING OTHER
than the **Actual** **Cup** - **Actual** **Disciples** - **Actual** **New Kingdom**

Let me just share this thought with you about the CONTINUITY
between this Life & Heaven

When we are Living in HARMONY
with GOD & with OTHERS - we LOVE this LIFE

When we experience the Most GLORIOUS sights of God's Creation
We LOVE this EARTH

WHY? - Because GOD created us - to LOVE Living in HARMONY
& LOVE Living in the WONDER of His Creation

& it is the REAL New Earth, and our REAL New Bodies - that will
allow us to live in God's HARMONY & God's WONDER for Eternity

The New Earth - is The BEST we can imagine on This earth -
Amplified, Glorified, Perfected, & Without ANY Effects Of SIN

As we close today - Just sit back & Listen
Using a bit of your Imagination

Allow me to read to you a few EXCERPTS
from Max Lucado's "The Applause of Heaven"

Along with some of the first FIVE Vs's of Rev Ch 21

*The Book of Revelation could be entitled the Book of
Homecoming, for in it we are given a picture of our heavenly
home*

John Describes it in Revelation 21:1–5 (NLT)

*1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth . . . 2 And I saw the
holy city, the new Jerusalem . . . like a bride beautifully dressed
for her husband. 3 I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying,*

“Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. 4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.” 5 And the one sitting on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new!” . . .

The most hopeful words . . . are those of God’s resolve: “I am making everything new.”

[You and I can’t make all things new], but God can. “He restores my soul,” wrote the shepherd. He doesn’t reform; he restores. He doesn’t camouflage the old; he restores the new. The Master Builder will pull out the original plan and restore it. He will restore the vigor. He will restore the energy. He will restore the hope. He will restore the soul.

“Great,” Jesus said, “is your reward in heaven.” He must have smiled when he said that line. His eyes must have danced, and his hand must have pointed skyward. For he should know. It was his idea. It was his home.

Heaven is REAL - A REAL New Earth, REAL Resurrected Bodies,

& REAL Relationships of perfect harmony - with God, & with those you Love Who’ve Received Christ to be there with you

Let’s Pray