

1-14-2024, COTR Texarkana

Title: Who Will Be in Heaven Because of Me?

Purpose: Provoke people to take personal responsibility for reaching as many people for Christ as they can before it's eternally too late.

Truth for Today: People will go to heaven because of me if I commit myself to the Great Commission.

Text: Romans 10:13-15

Topic: Great Commission, Souls, Witnessing, Heaven, Hell

Series Title: The Man in the Mirror... What kind of person will I be in 2024?

Series purpose: Provoke people to prioritize their lives around Biblical values and imperatives in 2024.

Who Will Be in Heaven Because of Me?

I. Introduction (Missionary Scott Holiday)

A. Review Series: The Man in the Mirror... What kind of person will I be in 2024? The New Year is a time to pause and reflect on what's most important. Spiritual priorities must be deliberate choices, or they get lost in the busyness of life and we miss opportunities that will affect us for eternity.

B. Today I want to ask you a question, "Who will be in heaven because of me?" Text, [Romans 10:13–15 (NLT)] For "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." ¹⁴ But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And **how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?**]

1. **Pers. test.** **Pic Bible** 19 years old, great family, college, searching God, Navy. I'll be in heaven because of a man I don't even know, a Gideon gave me a NT.

C. Title: Who Will Be in Heaven Because of Me?

II. Heaven and Hell are real; We can help people go to heaven.

A. Context [Luke 16:19–27 (NLT)] Jesus said, "There was a...rich man...who lived each day in luxury. ²⁰ At his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus who was covered with sores. ²¹ As Lazarus lay there longing for scraps from the rich man's table, the dogs would come and lick his open sores. ²² "Finally, the poor man died and was carried by the angels to sit beside Abraham at the heavenly banquet, (*Paradise*). The rich man also died...²³ and **he went to the place of the dead** (*ESV Hades*). There, **in torment**, he saw Abraham in the far distance with Lazarus at his side. ²⁴ "The rich man shouted, '...Abraham...Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. **I am in anguish in these flames.**'²⁶...there is a great chasm separating us. **No one can cross over to you from here, and no one can cross over to us from there.**'] A precursor to Judgement Day, heaven, and hell. This is why winning souls is so important.

III. The Great Commission, A Biblical call for to win and disciple lost souls.

A. Some of the last words of Jesus, [Mt. 28:19–20 (NLT)]...**go and make disciples of all the nations...** Mk. 16:15–16 (NLT) And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. Luke 24:46–49 (NLT)...it was written long

ago that the Messiah would suffer and die and rise from the dead...⁴⁷ It was also written that **this message would be proclaimed...to all the nations...** ‘There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.’ **John 20:21 (NLT)** As the Father has sent me, so **I am sending you.**” Context **Acts 1:8–11 (NLT)** **But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere...**] **Winning souls is the #1 job of Christians.**

- B. Christians since the NT have given their lives to win people to Christ. We should follow their example. **Picture**, John Harper's Last Convert, By Dr. Erwin Lutzer. When I became pastor of The Moody Church in 1980, I knew one of the church rooms was named Harper Hall in memory of the Scottish evangelist who was on a journey to The Moody Church but drowned when the Titanic sank in 1912. John Harper, his sister, and his six-year-old daughter found themselves on the Titanic. Survivors later reported that as Titanic began to sink, **Harper admonished people to be prepared to die.** He made sure his sister and daughter were in a lifeboat even as he continued to **share the Gospel with whoever would listen.** And when he found himself in the icy water with a life jacket, floating near another man, Harper asked, **“Are you saved?”** **“No, I’m not saved!”** the desperate man replied. **“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved!”** Harper shouted. One report says Harper, knowing he could not survive long in the icy water, took off his life jacket and threw it to another person with the words, **“You need this more than I do!”** Moments later, Harper disappeared beneath the water. Four years later, when there was a reunion of the survivors of the Titanic, the man to whom Harper had witnessed told the story of his rescue and gave a testimony of his conversion I was John Harper’s Last **Convert.**¹
- C. John Harper was committed to the great Commission till his last breath. So was the apostle Paul, **[1 Cor. 9:22–23 (NLT) I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some...]**

D. Now is a good time to ask ourselves, ‘Who will be in heaven because of me?’

IV. **We never know what will grow when we plant a gospel seed**

- A. Context division, **[1 Cor. 3:5–6 (NLT) After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God’s servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. ⁶ I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow.]** Seed is the Good News about Jesus.
- B. **Picture** As of 2008, Billy Graham’s estimated lifetime audience, including radio and tv, topped 2.2 billion. **Billy Graham has shared the gospel with more people than anyone else in history, but do you know who shared the gospel with him?** It starts out a **Sunday school teacher, Edward Kimball**, who not only prayed for the boys but also sought to win each one to the Lord. One young man didn’t understand what the gospel was about so Kimball went to the shoe store where he was stocking shelves and confronted him with the importance of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. That young man was **Dwight L. Moody**. In the stockroom he received Jesus Christ as his Savior. In his lifetime, Moody touched two continents for God, with thousands professing Christ. Under Moody, another man’s heart was touched for God, **Wilbur Chapman**. Chapman became an evangelist who preached to thousands. One

day, a professional ball player attended one of Chapman's meetings, and **Billy Sunday** was converted. Sunday quit baseball and began his own evangelistic crusades. A young man was converted named **Mordecai Ham**. When Ham came to Charlotte, North Carolina, a sandy-haired, lanky young man in high school, **Billy Frank**, vowed that he wouldn't go hear him preach, but he did eventually go. He responded to the invitation and was converted. Billy Frank eventually became known as **Billy Graham**, the evangelist who preached to more people than any other person who ever lived, including the Apostle Paul.²

1. The lesson for us is clear, we never know how many people will be reached for Christ by what we do, **Gideon Bible./ Julia Guy and Robert Leslie Flynn**

V. What can I do to fulfill the Great Commission?

- A. (1) Share your personal testimony about how Jesus changed your life, e.g., Gideon, (2) Pray over your meal in public with friends, (3) Give money to God's work, especially missions, outreach and giving away Bibles. At COTR we turn money into ministry, e.g., last year we invested \$1,287,845/ \$3,528 a day, in the Great Commission outside the 4 walls of the church. (4) Social media posts, (5) Offer to pray for people after a conversation. (6) Handout out church invite cards **Pic Roman Road on the card**. (7) Say 'God bless you' when you say goodbye to someone. (8) Live the Christian life by what we say and do. Our actions and words give credibility to our witness for Jesus. (9) Rely on the Holy Spirit give you open doors and empower your witness, **[Acts 1:8–11 (NLT)] But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere...**

VI. Conclusion: **Ray Boltz...I'm so glad you gave**

- A. As a Christian we have the greatest gift possible, salvation and eternal life. The question we must ask ourselves is will we keep it to ourselves, or will we give it away? **Who will be in heaven because of me?**

VII. Response

- A. Prayer: Bow/ raise hand to commit to invest your time, talent, and treasure in the Great Commission, to win as many as possible to Christ before it's eternally too late.
B. Souls

VIII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. <https://www.moodymedia.org/articles/sharing-gift-christmas-one-minute-you-die/>
2. <https://www.travisagnew.org/2013/07/22/the-chain-of-events-for-billy-grahams-conversion/>

IX. Supplemental Material

- A. The 1st week we talked about time and eternity, 'Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow and Forever'. Last week we talked about simplifying and prioritizing our Christian life by living by the 2 greatest commands in the Bible, loving God and loving people.
B. Lost and backslidden Souls matter to God and should matter to us. [Galatians 6:1–2 (NLT)] Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you

who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. ² Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.]

- C. 1 Corinthians 9:16–27 (NLT) Yet preaching the Good News is not something I can boast about. I am compelled by God to do it. How terrible for me if I didn't preach the Good News! ¹⁷ If I were doing this on my own initiative, I would deserve payment. But I have no choice, for God has given me this sacred trust. ¹⁸ What then is my pay? It is the opportunity to preach the Good News without charging anyone. That's why I never demand my rights when I preach the Good News. ¹⁹ Even though I am a free man with no master, I have become a slave to all people to bring many to Christ. ²⁰ When I was with the Jews, I lived like a Jew to bring the Jews to Christ. When I was with those who follow the Jewish law, I too lived under that law. Even though I am not subject to the law, I did this so I could bring to Christ those who are under the law. ²¹ When I am with the Gentiles who do not follow the Jewish law, I too live apart from that law so I can bring them to Christ. But I do not ignore the law of God; I obey the law of Christ. ²² When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, **I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some.** ²³ **I do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings.** ²⁴ Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! ²⁵ All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. ²⁶ So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. ²⁷ I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.