

MISCONCEPTIONS and REALITIES ABOUT HEAVEN

- MISCONCEPTION

Heaven is a spiritual place but not a physical place: John 14:2-3; Revelation 21 – 22

- REALITY: Right now, in this present age, heaven is a real place, the dwelling place of God the Father (Matthew 5:16,34,45,48; 6:1,9; 7:11; 12:50) where he reigns with the risen Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:20; Hebrews 9:24) from where the Son will return to earth at the end of this present age (Acts 1:10,11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; Revelation 19:11). The Lord Jesus Christ is there in the glorified physical body he was raised to life in (Revelation 5:6-9). When believers in Jesus die, their spirits are immediately in the presence of the Lord Jesus and are “with Christ” in heaven, awaiting the resurrection of their physical bodies (2 Corinthians 5:1-9; Philippians 1:23).

- MISCONCEPTION:

Heaven will be boring

- REALITY: In many ways, the new heaven will be like God originally intended the Garden of Eden to be: a place of productive labor; a place where God dwells with his people in unhindered fellowship; a place of beauty where things grow. A place free from the detrimental effects of sin, and therefore a place of perfection and wholesomeness. Read Revelation 22 in its entirety.

MISCONCEPTIONS and REALITIES ABOUT HELL

- MISCONCEPTION:

Hell is where Satan reigns

- REALITY: Satan is not presently in hell. He is roaming the earth as a roaring (ravenous) lion seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). He is “the god of THIS world” (this present age – 2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 12:9). *Satan’s present activity is not in hell but on earth* (Matthew 4:1-11; Ephesians 6:11-12). At the end of history, Satan himself will be condemned to the eternal torment of hell (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10) as one of its condemned occupants, not as its ruler.

- MISCONCEPTION:

Hell is a place of destruction, not punishment

- REALITY: Hell is described in Scripture as *a place of eternal punishment*, first for “the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41) and then for all those who remain unrepentant in their sin and rebellion against God (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:8). The punishment is ETERNAL (“*tormented day and night*” Revelation 20:10; “*I am tormented in this flame*” Luke 16:24; “*the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever*” Revelation 14:9-11).

WHAT HEAVEN AND HELL TEACH US ABOUT THE CHARACTER OF GOD

Heaven and God's Character

- God is **generous** in preparing an eternal place for us which far exceed the pleasures of this world (Psalm 16:11)
- God is **gracious** in providing an eternal home for us free from the evil of this present world. Heaven is part of the eternal inheritance of the saints (Colossians 1:12; Hebrews 11:9-10, 13-16; 1 Peter 1:3-4)
- God is **loving** in that he desires for us to be with him and enjoy him forever (John 17:24; Revelation 21:3)

Hell and God's Character

- God is **just**. The justice of God demands that he deal completely with all sin and rebellion against His holy character.
- God is **wrathful** towards sin, and sinners who remain unrepentant are the rightful objects of God's wrath.
- God is **merciful** (Ephesians 2:4-7). He has provided the one sacrifice of His only begotten Son (Hebrews 9:11-14, 24-28; 10:9-14) to pay the penalty of His wrath for all who will repent and believe:
 - Romans 3:19 – 26
 - Romans 5:8
 - Romans 5:17 – 18
 - Romans 6:23
 - Romans 8:3 – 4
 - Romans 8:32