

Reality Of Heaven

10-29-17

2 Corinthians 12:2–4 (NIV)

² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago **(Paul)** **was caught up to the third heaven.** Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows.

³ And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows—

⁴ **(Paul)** **was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell.**

All Biblical scholars agree that Paul is talking about himself in the section. God was going to make great demands on Paul and would give him great revelation, which was going to bring tremendous persecution and human rejection. **Therefore God gave him a view of eternity**, his eternal home, to encourage him and give him hope of something better beyond this painful life. **Paul saw the third heaven and paradise!** The Third heaven is that which is beyond visible sky, the first heaven. It is beyond our atmosphere and space, the second heaven. The third heaven is that which is spiritual and beyond human comprehension. The Third heaven is where paradise is a component and is beyond description and beyond human explanation.

1 Corinthians 2:9 (ESV)

But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the heart of man imagined,
what God has prepared for those who love him!”

What Paul saw forever changed him and motivated him. All his life there was nothing more important than sharing Christ. However Paul also had a deep desire depart and go to the place that he had been shown. Heaven was very real to Paul. Paul said:

Philippians 1:21-22 (NIV)

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²²If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. **Yet what shall I choose? I do not know!**

Heaven was a reality for Paul!

Philippians 1:23 (NIV)

I am torn between the two: **“I desire to depart” and be with Christ, which is better by far.**

Philippians 3:20 (NIV)

Our citizenship is in heaven.

The reality of heaven was revealed to Paul. **Likewise Jesus** knew the reality of heaven and taught the reality of heaven. Jesus went to the cross and suffered so that we could spend eternity in heaven with HIM. Heaven and salvation is not an academic study – **it is reality.**

John 11:25-26 (NIV)

²⁵Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life.

The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶and **whoever lives by believing in me will never die.** Do you believe this?”

The question to us, “Do we believe this?”

John 14:1–2 (NIV)

¹Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. ²My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would **I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?**

John 14:3 (NIV)

And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.**

The only avenue to heaven is Jesus!

John 14:6 (ESV)

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through me.**”

Paul and Jesus knew heaven is a real place where we go to “immediately” after shedding this body!

Look at what Jesus said to the thief who was being crucified on a cross beside him.

Luke 23:42 – 43 (NIV)

⁴²Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

⁴³Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, **today** you will be with me in **paradise.**”

Key word “today”! Another key word **“paradise”** the very same word Paul used when he was caught up and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell.

Jesus and the Believer are motivated by truth of salvation and eternity in heaven.

Hebrews 12:2 (NIV)
(Jesus) for the joy set before him he endured the cross!

Hebrews 12:3 (NIV)
Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Heaven is real! We should live our life in this world with eternity of heaven in full view.



Like Paul we will be caught up to heaven and hear and experience inexpressible things, things that no one on earth is permitted to tell. **But also Jesus is personally going to return to this earth and take a scrub brush of fire and do a divine cleansing.** At that time, the very real place of “**hell**” will be the residence of all who have rejected Christ and “**all evil**” will be cast away.

Revelation 21:1–6 (NIV)

²I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.** ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴**He will wipe every tear from their eyes.** There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

⁵He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” **Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”**

2Cor.5:21 (NASB)

He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Prophetic Team

Hear from the Holy Spirit to change the current situation or impact the future.