

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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“Heaven Is A Place We Must Prepare For!”

By Brian Meade

We read the words of Jesus in John 14:1-6, *“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.*

“If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. “And you know the way where I am going.” Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”



You may have heard of the statement, whether in Bible classes or in sermons that, “Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.” This statement is based upon the Bible truth of John 14:1-6— that Jesus went to prepare a place for us to enter in, and we can go there if we do what the Lord commands (Matthew 7:21). This Bible truth also reminds us that heaven is a place that we will NOT accidentally stumble into... somehow entering into this greatest of all rewards without any effort.

But if we make it to heaven, it will only be because we took great intentional effort to ensure that we are on the right path to the goal. Remember the words of Jesus in Luke 13:24, *“Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.”*

Sadly, many have been misled about what God requires from us in preparing to go to heaven. Many are taught today that there are few, if any things necessary to be in heaven. Because obeying God’s will or obedience to the gospel conflicts with the doctrine “faith only,” many reject what God commands as “salvation by our own works.” But God commands obedience (1 John 5:2-3).

They have been erroneously taught that God only requires us to believe He exists to be pleasing to Him. This doctrine often states that it isn’t what you do that affects your salvation, but rather what has been done for you— by the finished work of Christ on the cross.

Then there is the other extreme view that God has made salvation so difficult that hardly no one is going to heaven. On a scale of one to ten, about how difficult some perceive it to be, going to heaven would be an 11!

Some forget about the love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness that God has offered to us freely (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:4-7). And the fact remains that God wants us to be saved (1 Timothy 2:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9). Anyone can be saved and go to heaven, if we choose to prepare for heaven!

But what does the Biblical picture of going to heaven look like? Why is it that some will get to enter in— while others will be shut out of heaven?

The answer is that God wants us to prepare for heaven by becoming more suitable to the environment we going to.... By becoming more heavenly minded in our thoughts, actions, and attitudes— because we need to changed, or better still, transformed to enter in because heaven is:

I. A Place That Is God Centered.

Notice in Revelation 4:8-11, *“And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is*

and who is to come.” And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.”

I want us all to be impressed with how much emphasis is placed on God as the center of all attention in heaven! God is the object of all praise, glory, and power!

Many have the ego-centric view that means: heaven is all about their own desires and what they want only! It’s about finally having all their wishes come true because God has designed heaven to be all about us— but it ISN’T!

II. A Place That Is Place Of Worship Offered To God.

In Revelation 5:11-14, we see heaven as a place of worship, *“Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.” And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.” And the four living creatures kept saying, “Amen.” And the elders fell down and worshiped.”*

Heaven falls down in reverence to the King! The very essence of worship is to give the praise, glory, and honor to God. From what we see in the Scriptures, heaven will be a place of eternal worship and service to God!

IV. A Place of Complete Moral Purity.

What makes heaven so special is the fact that we can escape all the bad and corrupt men and women of this earth and only be with those pure of heart.

“Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying.” (Revelation 22:14-15)

Heaven will have no penitentiaries or prisons to house criminals there. There will be more need for alarm systems on cars or houses to keep thieves out. No more will we ever see or even hear of someone lying to someone else, or thefts, murders, any alcohol to get drunk with, pornography to view, or any narcotics to “get high” with! What a wonderful and beautiful place heaven will be!

IV. A Place of Fellowship With The Righteous.

Because there will be only absolute purity in heaven, that means that only the righteous people of God will be there! And that is a great blessing!

Notice in Revelation 21:27, *“and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”* Peter also reminds us this truth in 2 Peter 3:13, *“But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.”*

Wouldn’t be wonderful to walk and talk with the saved we have read about so often in the Scriptures? Men and women of great faith like David the psalmist king of Israel, like Abraham and Sarah, Moses the deliverer, Joseph, Deborah, Esther, Ruth, Isaiah, Jeremiah... and others! And that’s just the Old Testament people of faith. What about talking with Peter, James, Paul, Timothy, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of Jesus, and even talking with Jesus Himself!

Can we imagine such a thing? It is only possible by preparing for it now!

1. We Must Make God The Center Of Our Lives Now.

That’s what God is directing us in His word to do now. Notice in Matthew 6:33, *“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”* It is why Paul teaches us in Colossians 3:2-4 to, *“Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life...”*

Is God and Christ the center of our lives now? If not, they need to be!

2. We Must Worship And Serve God Now.

God seeks us to worship Him for a purpose (John 4:23-24)— He wants us to be prepared for heaven— a place of worship to God! If we don’t like worship now, and if we think worship is so boring now, we would feel out of place there!

3. We Must Live A Life Of Moral Purity Now.

Some argue against what they call, “a list of do’s and don’ts” but God is preparing us how to live without sin (Galatians 5:19-21) and what to do (v. 22-26).

4. We Must Fellowship With The Righteous Now.

And finally, this is why being with the saints of God is so important now, it prepares us to be with them for all eternity (Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 John 1:3-7). And is precisely why God says to *“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”* (Ephesians 5:11)

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Tammy Kilgore (Jerry's niece), Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Linda Harris, Hazel Corner, Clay Ford, Clois Wright, and Dan & Linda Hunt, Mollie Harris, Danny Cottrell (Dan's Dad), and Diane Overstreet.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Tim Harris Jr.
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: *"Lessons From The Young Prophet's Mission"*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service: Fred Johnson
The Book of Romans (Kyle Pope)
Lesson 13, Page #69, Question #1

Announcements: Jerry Kennemur
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Russell Briggs
Psalm 103:1-5
Song Leader: Lee Busby
Lord's Supper: Sam Johnson
Assisting: Dan Cottrell & Russell Briggs
Singing Service: *Men of the Congregation Lead in Singing*
Invitation: Fred Johnson
Closing Prayer: Sam Johnson

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

January 29th:

Auditorium Bible Class: Russell Briggs
The Book of Psalms (Randy Blackaby)
Lesson 10, Page #42, Question #1
Invitation: Doug George
Song Leader: Brian Meade
Closing Prayer: Nathan Meade