

Sermon Notes
April 2, 2017
1 John 5:6-12

John's bottom line: belief in the promise of heaven for those who are in Christ is greater than anything we will face on this earth.

It's hard to visualize Heaven. To be honest, streets of gold and gated communities don't interest me much. And I only want a mansion if there is a staff like on Downton Abbey to take care of it. Karen Zacharias

"Heaven is democratic these days," she said. Then added, "Or at least, it is if you want it to be." "What do you mean, democratic?" "We don't impose Heaven on people anymore," she said. "We listen to their needs. If they want it, they can have it; if not, not. And then of course they get the sort of Heaven they want." "And what sort do they want on the whole?" "Well, they want a continuation of life, that's what we find. But...better...." a history of the world in 10 1/2 chapters by Julian Barnes.

Bible talks of:
Heavenly promise
Heavenly place
Heavenly persons

Hebrews 11:13-16 NLT

13 All these people died still believing what God had promised them. They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it. They agreed that they were foreigners and nomads here on earth. 14 Obviously people who say such things are looking forward to a country they can call their own. 15 If they had longed for the country they came from, they could have gone back. 16 But they were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Luke 23:43 ESV

43 And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Revelation 21:1-2 NLT

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. 2 And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

"The new Heavens and the new earth will be completely transformed but recognizable." Scot McKnight

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 NLT

51 But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! 52 It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed.

Romans 8:29 NLT

29 For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

"What we see in the body of the raised Jesus is what all resurrection bodies will be like." Scot McKnight

Jesus' resurrection body:

1. Is physical and tangible and recognizable
2. Is a body that will need food
3. Is a body that will have marks from this life
4. Is a body that will have powers that seem now to be supernatural

Some common questions:

Will we remember this life in heaven?

"This is the greatest gift God can give you: to understand what happened in your life. To have it explained. It is the peace you have been searching for." Mitch Albom

Some common questions:

Will there be families in heaven?

"Christians never say good-bye to one another. They will grow as families and best friends forever into more than they could ever imagine." Scot McKnight

Some common questions:

Will there be pets in heaven?

Isaiah 11:6-8 NLT

6 In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together; the leopard will lie down with the baby goat. The calf and the yearling will be safe with the lion, and a little child will lead them all. 7 The cow will graze near the bear. The cub and the calf will lie down together. The lion will eat hay like a cow. 8 The baby will play safely near the hole of a cobra. Yes, a little child will put its hand in a nest of deadly snakes without harm.

"Here is one of the big ideas about Heaven: what God makes God perfects, and what God has made for this world will be perfected in the kingdom of God." Scot McKnight

Luke 9:2 ESV

2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.

"What is the kingdom like as a society? It will be a society marked by love, by justice, by holiness, and by peace. ... [so now] practice love and justice and holiness and peace." Scot McKnight

2 Corinthians 5:18 ESV

18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;