

Main Idea: In Revelation 21:1-8 the Lord extends to us the certain promise of a life to come. He identifies two groups of people and two eternal experiences.

- I. Some will spend the life to come in a new heaven and new earth (1-7).
 - A. John saw a new heaven and earth (1).
 - B. John saw the new Jerusalem (2).
 - C. John heard a voice from the throne (3-4).
 1. God's dwelling is with men.
 2. God will live with His people.
 3. They will be His people, and He will be their God.
 4. He will wipe away all of their tears.
 5. There will be no more death, mourning, crying, or pain.
 6. The old order has passed away.
 - D. John heard the person seated on the throne (5-8).
 1. He announced His intent (5).
 2. He revealed His identity (6a).
 3. He declared a promise (6b-7).
 - II. Some will spend the life to come in a fiery lake (8).
 - A. The Lord tells us who will be there.
 - B. The Lord tells us what they will experience.
- Take Inventory: What am I doing with this promise?
1. We need to believe in the One who made it.
 2. We need to review the options daily.
 3. We need to share it with others.

Everyone will live somewhere forever. Let that sink in. *Everyone...will live somewhere...and it will be forever.* We have God's promise on that.

Listen to the prophecy of Daniel 12:2-3, which speaks of the coming day of resurrection, “Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.”

The Bible says in John 3:36, “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.”

It's true. Everyone who lives will one day leave this life, either by death or Christ's return, and everyone who leaves this life will live somewhere forever.

This morning we've come to the tenth and last promise in our series, “*Promises to Live by in the Crucible of Suffering.*” My goal has been to fortify you so you can experience stability and even joy in the inevitable challenges of life. The truth is, this last promise is the best of all. In fact, without this promise, the others are hollow.

Paul was right when he said, “If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men (1 Cor 15:19).” If this life is it, then there is no hope for the Christian, any more than the non-Christian. We might as well, “Eat, drink, and be merry.”

But there is a resurrection. And there is a life to come. And everyone will live in that life to come somewhere.

I'm quite sure that we would live differently in this life if that truth really got a hold of our souls. So I want to spend two weeks on this promise. I want it to sink in, and sink in deeply. We're living in a world that tells us this life is all there is, and it's easy for us as Christians to buy into that lie.

** Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

It shows up in the way we spend our time and our money—after just one glimpse of heaven, we’ll see that we really didn’t need all that stuff we thought we just had to have. It shows up in how we treat people who wrong us—I can tell you for sure we would never tell anyone to “go to hell” if we really knew what that place was like.

My friends, there is a life to come, and God wants us to know about it. In Revelation 21 the Lord extends to us the certain promise of a life to come. We’re going to look at verses 1-8 this morning, where He identifies two groups of people and two eternal experiences. Next week, we’ll look at the rest of the chapter and marvel at the spender of the city that’s going to come down from heaven to earth.

So two groups, and two eternal experiences. Here’s the first.

I. Some will spend the life to come in a new heaven and new earth (1-7).

Verse 1, “Then I saw.” John the apostle is speaking, and in this book he has recorded a series of visions the Lord allowed him to see pertaining to future events. A quick overview will help us set the stage.

Chapter one—John gives an introduction to the main character: this is the “revelation of *Jesus Christ* (1:1).”

Chapters two & three—we see seven letters to seven churches from Jesus.

Chapters four & five—John records a vision of the throne in heaven.

Chapters six through nineteen—John sees and pens the mind-boggling events of judgment that will occur during the future seven year tribulation period.

Chapter twenty—John tells us about the thousand year Millennial kingdom that’s coming after the tribulation, followed by the great white throne judgment, and a horrid description of the lake of fire.

That brings us to the final two chapters of the Bible, where we see a parallel with the first two chapters of the Bible. What do we see in Genesis 1-2? We see God creating the heavens and the earth, a paradise, a perfect universe. What do we see in Revelation 21-22? We see that God is going to create a *new* heaven and earth, a perfect paradise that will never end. The first two chapters and the last two chapters are like bookends to the Bible. The rest of the Bible is in essence the story of what God did in His grace to take His universe from Paradise Lost to Paradise Restored.

That brings us to our text. In the flow of Revelation 21:1-8, John *saw* something in verse 1, then *saw* something else in verse 2, then *heard* a voice in verses 3-4, and then *heard* another voice in verses 5-8.

A. John saw a new heaven and earth (1). “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.” New, as in totally unlike the old? I don’t think so, as we’ll see. More like, new as in totally renewed. Again, the paradise at God’s first creating work gives us a foretaste of this new creating work.

And why will there be a new heaven and new earth? John says, “...for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.” What was wrong with the first heaven and earth? Sin. Lucifer’s sin tarnished heaven, and man’s sin tarnished earth. And the wages of sin is ... death.

So the universe as we know it will pass away, says John. Peter elaborates on this “passing away” in 2 Peter 3:10-13, “But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will **disappear** with a roar; the elements will be **destroyed** by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be **laid bare**. Since everything will be **destroyed** in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his

promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.”

It's impossible for us as finite beings who are locked into "time and space" categories to explain how this passing away will occur. Just “where” will we be when the old is being destroyed and the new is arriving? John's point isn't to satisfy our curiosity here, but to assure us it's coming. And to urge us to be ready.

What struck John about the new heaven and earth in verse 1? There's no sea there. In Bible times the sea was a frightening place and it represented turmoil and danger. There will be none of that in the future place that John saw, the new heaven and new earth.

B. John saw the new Jerusalem (2). Notice verse 2, “I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.”

In apocalyptic literature, which John uses in the book of Revelation, images represent supernatural scenes that human language is incapable of fully describing. You'll see repeated use of the terms “like” and “as.” Here John likens the new heaven and earth to a beautiful bride. It's a mixed metaphor, a city that looks like a bride. As the *NIV Study Bible* suggests, “The 'Holy City' combines elements of Jerusalem, the temple and the Garden of Eden.”

John says he saw this city coming down out of heaven. In verse 9, he indicates that the bride, the wife of the lamb, will be in that city. In verse 10 he mentions the Holy City again, emphasizing that it will come down from heaven to the new earth.

We often talk about heaven as if it is the Christian's final destination. But that's not true. Granted, Philippians 3:20 says our citizenship is in heaven, but there's more in store than just heaven for the believer.¹

Randy Alcorn has written a well-known and very helpful book entitled *Heaven*, which I recommend. Listen to what he had to say in a sermon he preached on the subject, “Often we think of Heaven as our going up into an angelic realm to live with God in his place. But in fact, the Bible says the ultimate Heaven, will be God coming down from His place to live with us in our place—the New Earth. That's the place He's making for us.”²

Perhaps that's why God's Word uses so many “earthly” images to depict what's coming. I mean, what exactly are we looking forward to? Jesus said He's building a *house* with many rooms. In Hebrews 11:9, we're told Abraham was looking forward to a *city* with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. In Hebrews 11:16, we're told that the patriarchs were longing for a better *country*—a *heavenly one*, and that God is preparing a *city* for them. As F. F. Bruce explains, “There is, of course, no difference between the heavenly country and the city of God.”³

The point is, we're not going to be floating around on clouds strumming harps. We're longing for a country, a *heavenly* country. What will it be like? The following perspective comes from J. I. Packer's book, *Your Father Loves You*:

We know very little about heaven, but I once heard a theologian describe it as “an unknown region with a well-known inhabitant,” and there is not a better way to think of it than that. Richard Baxter expresses the thought in these lines:

¹ Some of the following quotes were taken from an earlier message preached at WBC on Hebrews 11:13-22, “Looking for a Better Country.”

² Randy Alcorn, http://epm.org/media-files/pdf/Heaven_Sermon01.pdf

³ Quote taken from Philip Hughes' footnote, p. 480.

*My knowledge of that life is small,
The eye of faith is dim,
But it's enough that Christ knows all,
And I shall be with him.*

To those who have learned to love and trust Jesus, the prospect of meeting him face to face and being with him forever is the hope that keeps us going, no matter what life may throw at us.”⁴

Brothers and sisters in Christ, while we don't know all the details (and couldn't fathom them if we had them), we do know that the place that our soul heads when we die, *heaven*, is not our final home. We'll be coming out of heaven with our Savior to place in a new, sin-free earth. There's more...

C. John heard a voice from the throne (3-4). “And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 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.’”

Who's speaking? John doesn't identify the source. What impressed him, at least initially, was the volume. It's a “loud” voice. The KJV says it was a “great” voice and it came “out of heaven.”

Apparently it's an angel, and he makes an astounding declaration. The long-awaited event of redemptive history has now come! He tells John (and us) that six things are associated with the coming of the new heavens and earth...

1. *God's dwelling is with men.* If you'll recall, Adam had a taste of that when in the garden, in the cool of the day, God came and walked with Him. But in the coming paradise He will actually *live* with man.

The KJV says the “tabernacle of God is with men.” The tabernacle, of course, was the tent that Moses constructed as a temporary dwelling place for the Lord. Later the temple was built, and the glory of God filled that temple. But because of man's sinfulness, in time, His glory departed. God left sinful man. Now He is back. And what is He doing?

2. *God will live with His people.* “He will live with them,” says the voice. Amazing. The transcendent God will actually live with His redeemed human beings. What does that indicate? *Living with* speaks of God's nearness and intimacy.

3. *They will be His people, and He will be their God.* This is the goal of God's plan, isn't it? God right now is forming a people for Himself. He's rescuing sinners and making them fit for the day when He lives with them. That's why He sent Jesus, and why Jesus died on the cross to remove their sins. But Jesus did something else, didn't He? He defeated death and left the tomb with a glorified body. He did that for us. We could never survive in the presence of a holy and glorious God in our current state. We need a suitable body, a *glorified* body if we're going to live with God.

My friend, if you don't know Jesus, you don't want for God to dwell with you. His presence would destroy you, if you weren't prepared for it. And only Jesus can do that.

4. *He will wipe away all of their tears.* That's what verse 4 says. What does that statement imply? That there *were* tears that needed to be wiped away, right? They were there, but no longer. Why were they there? Because this life is hard, isn't it? There's pain, there's loss, theirs persecution, and there are tears. But could it be there will be some tears in heaven, some remorse over what our lives could have been? 1

⁴ James Packer, *Your Father Loves You*, Harold Shaw Publishers, 1986.

Corinthians 3:15 speaks of some in Christ who will be saved, but “only as one escaping through the flames,” due to wasted kingdom opportunities. I think there will be regret, and tears. And then...God Himself will wipe those tears away too, just like He did our sin.

5. *There will be no more death, mourning, crying, or pain.* It's hard to fathom such a world, isn't it? We spend so much time attempting to postpone death, and soften the effects of our mourning, crying, and pain. But the day that God tabernacles with His saved people, those will all be gone. And then the voice puts it in ultimate terms...

6. *The old order has passed away.* The KJV says, “The former things are passed away.” The things that have kept us from seeing and loving and living fully for our God will be gone. No sin. No devil. No wicked flesh. No temptations. It will all be gone.

What kind of effect should this have on us now? If the old order is going to pass away then, we need to guard our hearts from getting too attached to it now, right?

After hearing this loud voice, John heard another voice, a more familiar voice, one he'd heard for three years.

D. John heard the person seated on the throne (5-8). Notice verse 5, “He who was seated on the throne said.” Who's sitting on the throne? He'll identify Himself momentarily. But first...

1. *He announced His intent (5).* “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” What the intent of this Royal Being? To make everything new. Now that's a bold claim, and to make such a claim one must have the credentials and clout. And in this case the person on this throne has both. Who's speaking here?

2. *He revealed His identity (6a).* He speaks at the beginning of verse 6, “He said to me: ‘It is done.’” John heard those words before, didn't He? Standing by the cross. “It is finished (John 19:30).”

Then He says, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.” John heard those words at the beginning of His vision in 1:8. This is the Lord God Himself speaking. He'll hear them again at the end of the vision in 22:13, and He'll hear the name of the speaker in 22:16, “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, the bright and Morning Star.”

This is Jesus speaking, the Glorified Savior Himself. And He gives John something...

3. *He declared a promise (6b-7).* It starts at the end of verse 6 and continues in verse 7, “To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”

First, He gives a promise to the one who is thirsty. What's His offer? “I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.” That's an evangelistic offer, isn't it? It's what Jesus told the immoral woman at the well, in John 4:13-14, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

And until the old order passes, His offer remains. My non-Christian friend, do you hear the voice of Jesus? He offers you living water, eternal life. Will you receive it?

Then He gives a promise to the *one who overcomes*, to the believer who's facing challenges, yet who remains faithful in this life. This is the ultimate promise to live by in

the crucible of suffering. What's Jesus' offer to this person? He will *inherit all this*, and *I will be his God and he will be my son*.

But that raises a question I want us to ponder. What will life really be like *after* this life?⁵ You'll hear a host of popular images. Some talk about "crossing the river," and others "going to the happy hunting grounds in the sky." A movie awhile back talked about "kicking the bucket." Is that what's coming?

Randy Alcorn has written a helpful little booklet, *Heaven: Biblical Answers to Common Questions*, in which he offers us some valuable assistance in understanding what the Bible really teaches about heaven.

For starters, he points out that heaven will not be our final home. "What we usually think of when we hear the word *Heaven* is what theologians call the *intermediate* Heaven. For Christians, it's where we go when we die. It's the place we'll live until our bodily resurrection. Our Christian loved ones who've died are now in this present, intermediate Heaven...The Heaven we go to when we die is a place without suffering, but it is not the place where we'll live forever. Our eternal home, where God will come down to dwell among his people, is called the New Earth."⁶

Later Alcorn elaborates, "In the intermediate Heaven, we'll be with Christ, and we'll be joyful, but it won't be our permanent home. We'll be looking forward to our bodily resurrection and relocation to the New Earth. (Our loved ones won't go to the New Earth before we get there. We'll go together to colonize the New Earth.)"⁷

I'll say it again. If you want an idea of what's coming, think of what we lost in the Garden of Eden. The paradise lost in Eden foreshadows the paradise restored in the coming New Earth. I love Alcorn's answer to the question, "What *won't* be in Heaven?" He writes:

No death, no suffering. No funeral homes, abortion clinics, or psychiatric wards. No rape, missing children, or drug rehabilitation centers. No bigotry, no muggings or killings. No worry or depression or economic downturns. No wars, no unemployment. No anguish over failure and miscommunication. No con men. No locks. No death. No mourning. No pain. No boredom.

No arthritis, no handicaps, no cancer, no taxes, no bills, no computer crashes, no weeds, no bombs, no drunkenness, no traffic jams and accidents, no sceptic-tank backups. No mental illness. No unwanted e-mails.

Close friendships but no cliques, laughter but no put-downs. Intimacy, but no temptation to immorality. No hidden agendas, no backroom deals, no betrayals.

Imagine mealtimes full of stories, laughter, and joy, without fear of insensitivity, inappropriate behavior, anger, gossip, lust, jealousy, hurt feelings, or anything that eclipses joy. That will be Heaven.⁸

This is the overcomer's destiny, beloved, and it is something to look forward to! This is what the life to come will be like, only better, for eye has not seen, nor ear heard the things that God has prepared for those who love Him (1 Cor. 2:9). This is where we are heading, if we're in Christ. We have the promise of Jesus Himself on it.

But we have another promise from Jesus, too, one not so pleasant to consider, but equally true. Everyone will live somewhere, and it will be forever. There are two groups

⁵ Some of the following material was taken from an earlier message preached at WBC on Hebrews 4:1-5, "Getting Serious about Entering God's Rest.

⁶ Randy Alcorn, pp. 8-9.

⁷ Randy Alcorn, p. 10.

⁸ Randy Alcorn, pp. 35-6.

of people in Revelation 21, and two eternal experiences. Some will spend the life to come in a new heaven and earth. That's one group. Here's the other.

II. Some will spend the life to come in a fiery lake (8).

The Lord continues to speak in verse 8, "But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

Notice that there are but two destinations in eternity. A person will either be in the new heaven and earth, or the lake of fire. We learn two things about the latter group.

A. The Lord tells us who will be there. Jesus mentions eight types of people. First, the *cowardly*. The Greek word *deilois* means "fearful, afraid, timid." Jesus used the word in Mark 4:40, "He said to his disciples, 'Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?'"

Next, the *unbelieving*. The Greek *apistois* means "to lack in trust, to doubt." It signifies an unbeliever, a non-Christian, someone who does not believe the Gospel. That's what keeps a person out of heaven, *unbelief*. They refuse to believe in the only Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord.

And their fearful unbelief, which is internal, goes public. They become *vile*. The word (from *bdelyssomai*) means "to detest, to consider abhorrent." The vile are those who do things in their lives that God detests. And Jesus gives some examples...

The murderers are in this group, those who take life. And so are the *sexually immoral*, those who take sex outside of marriage. And *those who practice magic arts*, from the Greek *pharmakois* (from *pharmikon*, a drug), which means a poisoner, a sorcerer, a magician. Those who redefine spirituality.

The idolaters are in Jesus' list, too, those who worship false gods, or even those who try to worship the true God in forbidden ways, through man-made idols.

And the last group, Jesus says, are the *liars*. He emphasizes *all* liars, and uses a word (*pseudessin*) that means "to be false and deceptive."

What strikes you about this list of those who will *not* be in the new heaven and earth? It's pretty comprehensive, isn't it? It includes what we call *big sins* and *little sins*. And it describes every one of us, doesn't it? Have you ever told a lie, lusted for sex, killed someone in your heart? Guilty, says Jesus in the sermon on the mount. A lawbreaker. Condemned to die.

Every person that will enjoy the new earth deserves to be in this number. Why aren't they? Because they came to Jesus and drank the water of life. But these refused. They would not believe. Consequently...

B. The Lord tells us what they will experience. Notice again the end of verse 8, "Their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

John just heard about that place back in 20:14-15, "Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

Friends, I'll say it again. Everyone will live somewhere forever. Either in the new heaven and earth. Or in a fiery lake where people will die but not cease to exist forever and ever.

I remember a conversation I had with my dad several years ago. We were watching a fast-pitch softball game. The pitcher was a man we both knew, and he was good. My dad made the comment, "If that man lost his right arm, he'd die." I knew what he meant. Sports was God to that man. If sports were removed, his life would be meaningless.

There are two kinds of people in the world: those who live for their Maker and those who live for something else. And those who live for something else in the Creator's world will pay a price for it, maybe not today nor tomorrow, but the day will come.⁹

In another very helpful book called *Safely Home*, Randy Alcorn tells the story of the persecuted church in China. He does a wonderful job of addressing critical subjects like why does God allow His people to suffer under wicked dictators like Mao. The book continually reminds us of the biblical truth that there is more to life than this world. As he puts it, "Death is not a wall; it is a doorway. We live on one side of death. There is another side."¹⁰

I've shared with you what Alcorn has to say about heaven. The following description by Randy Alcorn is the best word picture of hell, outside of the Bible, that I've ever read. Alcorn writes from the perspective of Mao Zedung himself. Though lengthy, listen to Mao as he speaks from his eternal home:

Where is my palace? Where are my servants? Does no one know who I am?

The vast, cold darkness cut into his face. It felt like intense frostbite, burning his skin.

I was the most powerful man in Zhongguo. I created the People's Republic. I was the revered father of my country. They worshiped me. I was god! He waited, listening to the silence. Cannot anyone hear me?

His voice disappeared into the great dark void. It did not echo, for there was nothing for it to echo off. It was immediately absorbed into infinite nothingness. His words went no farther than his blistered lips.

A parade of untold millions marched inside his mind's eye. His sentence was to relive the suffering of each of his victims. He had been here over twenty-five years. Every minute of those years he had relived the sufferings he inflicted on others. Every torture his regime inflicted he now received, one after the next after the next. Eventually, perhaps, they would start over, so the millions he had already endured were but the first installment. The pain was unbearable, yet he had no choice but to bear it. There was no escape into unconsciousness—no drug to take, no sleeping pill, no alcohol. That which he had laid upon others was now laid upon him—endlessly, relentlessly.

He longed to pluck out his eyes, to keep from seeing what he saw, to puncture his eardrums to keep from hearing the wailing misery, to pull out his tongue to keep from tasting the awfulness he had legislated. But he had no ability to destroy himself. He had no control now over his destiny, no power over himself or others. There was no one he could command to fix the situation, no one to prepare him an eight-course meal to assuage the eternal hunger, no one to serve him mao-tai. No one with whom to plot and scheme, no one to do his work, no one to punish for their errors. No one to salute him, cower at his voice, or bow heads in his presence.

Where is everyone?

Misery loves company, and he had long sought the consolation of others. But all others were still on earth, secure in heaven, or confined to their own private hells at distances immeasurable.

⁹ The following description of hell taken from a message preached at WBC on Habakkuk 1:12-2:20, "When God Doesn't Make Sense."

¹⁰ Randy Alcorn, *Safely Home*, p. 327.

The aloneness was stifling. He could hear nothing but his victims' cries, feeling nothing but their pain, see nothing but their blood, taste nothing but their vomit, sense nothing but their torture. He had only himself. He could not enjoy his own company, for he saw himself as he really was. It was an ugly sight, revolting beyond comprehension.

He felt a burning. A fury welled up inside him. Anger and bitterness, unfocused hostility, frustration leading him to lash out. But there was no one to lash out at. No incompetent aid, no dissident, no Christian pastor, no helpless peasant. No one to beat or shoot or hang or starve. No one to cower in fear at the power of the great chairman, architect of the Republic. No one to shine his shoes or rub lotion upon his burning feet...

He had come to death entirely unprepared—and now it was too late to prepare. If the torture was not enough, a sickening feeling of foreboding had gripped him from his first moments here. He had hoped it would subside, that he would get used to it. He hadn't. It only got worse.

He could see now through all his rationalizations. His arguments against belief in a Creator had never been intellectual ones, as he had claimed. By rejecting a Creator he thought he could rid himself of a Judge. But it had not worked. His atheism had been the opiate of his soul and the executioner of uncalculated millions. But now his comforting atheism could no longer exist, even for a fleeting moment, for he had been forever stripped of the power to deny reality.

He had lived his short todays as if there were no long tomorrow. He had believed the lie that all were accountable to him and he was accountable to none. He had believed the lie that death would slip him into eternal unconsciousness. He knew now—how well he knew—the curse of always being awake, ever alert, unable to allay his suffering with a moment's sleep or distraction...

He had said, "I want there to be no God; I want nothing to do with him." His atheist's prayer had been answered. The everywhere-present God had chosen to withdraw his presence from this single place, turning it into a cosmic desert. This was a ghetto of massive proportions, yet so small it could slip through a single crack in the tiles of heaven. It was located in some distant and empty place, never to be feared or even stumbled upon by the citizens of Charis. His life, with all his supposed accomplishments, was but a puff of smoke, dissipating into nothingness...

Thirst without water to quench it. Hunger without food to satisfy it. Loneliness without company to alleviate it. There was no God here. He'd gotten his wish. On earth he'd managed to reject God while still enjoying his blessings and provisions. But it was excruciatingly clear now that God was the author of good. Therefore the absence of God meant the absence of good. He could not have it both ways, not here. No God, no good. Forever."¹¹

Friends, we've just heard the promise of Jesus this morning. Everyone will live somewhere forever.

Take Inventory: What am I doing with this promise?

We need to do three things.

1. *We need to believe in the One who made it.*
2. *We need to review the options of this promise daily.*
3. *We need to share this promise with others.*

¹¹ Randy Alcorn, *Safely Home*, pp. 327-30.