

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 9/20/92 PM  
John 14:1-4 "The Hope of Heaven"

**Intro:** Suppose you were eating lunch with a workmate (schoolmate) who said to you, "Why should I consider becoming a Christian? It's a grind, isn't it? What are the benefits?"

Q: What are the benefits of Christianity? Let's name a few, with references...

1. Forgiveness of Sin--I John 1:9
2. Peace with God--Rom 5:1; Ph 4:7
3. Direction and Purpose in Life--Prov 3:5-6; Rom 8:28
4. Strength and Power for Living Life--Ph 4:13 "I can do all things..."
5. Love and Acceptance with God--Rom 5:8; 8:38-39
6. Freedom from the bondage of sin--Rom 6:12-13; 7:24-25
- 7.
- 8.

These are benefits we can experience here and now, in this life. These would make Christianity "worthwhile" (I shun to even use the term). But the benefits aren't limited to this life alone.

9. The Hope of Heaven!!

I Cor 15:20-28

I Cor 15:51-57

Fact: One of the greatest benefits of Christianity is the Hope of Heaven!

Quote: Hymn about heaven

Q: What kind of hope is it really? What will heaven be like? What's in store? Those are the questions we bring to God's Word tonight.

**Proposition: Jesus tells us about the Hope of Heaven in John 14:1-4. There are 2 things we want to see.**

I. Heaven Explained (1-2)

A. In the Old Testament

B. By Jesus

II. Heaven Anticipated (3-4)

New Series:

This morning, we began a 3 week series entitled "Life Beyond the Grave." What will life be like beyond the grave? There's only one place we can look to find accurate, absolute answers to that question--God's Word.

This morning we looked at Luke 16, the story of the Rich man and Lazarus. When it comes to Life Beyond the Grave, Jesus told us there are 2 types of men, 2 destinies, and one critical choice.

Next Sun--"The Best Is Yet to Come: The New Heaven and Earth" Rev 21:1-5

Following Sunday morning--"The Horror of Hell" Revelation 21:5-8

Q: Why devote time to a study like this?

Our Goal: Simply stated, this--I am asking that God would use this series to stimulate our thinking, to prompt us to dig into the Scriptures to find out what things are in store beyond the grave...for those who love Him, and for those who have rejected Him.

Q: What kind of hope do we have as Christians? What will heaven be like?

## **I. Heaven Explained (1-2)**

Notice Jesus' first words...

V 1 "Let not your heart be troubled..."

The disciples had a heart problem. Jesus knew it. We would have too. Why? What had Jesus just revealed to them? 3 disheartening bits of information:

1. Jesus was going to leave them!

13:33 "Little children, yet a little while I am with you..."

The other gospel accounts fill in the pieces. He told them He was going to die by crucifixion. This would be His last day of earthly ministry with them. He was leaving.

Think what that must have meant to the disciples. These were men that had left everything for their Leader 3 years earlier. When they heard Jesus say He was leaving, they were thoroughly shocked, and with good reason. When Peter and John and Thomas and the others followed Jesus, they (figuratively speaking) burned their boats and blew up their bridges behind them (Morris). Now this bomb was dropped. Jesus was leaving! No wonder they had troubled hearts!

2. Jesus told them He was going to be betrayed by one of them.

13:21 "...one of you shall betray me."

The disciples were shocked!

13:22 "Then the disciples looked on one another..."

Then Simon Peter asked a question the rest no doubt wondered about.

13:36 "Lord, where goest thou?"

Jesus said where He was going, He must go alone. To which Peter interrupted with the claim, "Lord, I'll die for You!"

To which Jesus dropped the 3rd item of disheartening news...

3. Jesus revealed that Peter would deny Him 3 times.

13:38 "...till thou hast denied me thrice."

No wonder Jesus told the disciples (in v 1 and again in v 27), "Let not your heart be troubled." They were troubled! Jesus was leaving them! Where was He going? How could they get where He was going?

Q: How did Jesus calm their hearts?

A: He told them about the Hope of Heaven.

V 1 "Let not your hearts be troubled."

Lit.--Pres Imper, "Stop being troubled."

V 1 "You believe in God, believe also in Me."

These 2 phrases could be translated a variety of ways, acc to the Greek text. The KJV uses the indicative, "You believe in God." It could be an imperative, a command, "Believe in God. Believe also in Me." In other words, "I know your hearts are troubled. But trust God! And trust Me! I'm leaving you. But I won't leave you comfortless."

Next, He share with them these words of hope.

V 2 "In my Father's house are many mansions..."

Listen friends, heaven is a real place! It's a place of hope! We all have things that trouble us in this life. Physical Pain. Broken relationships. Emotional scars. But take heart! Why? Because if you are a child of God, heaven is coming!

Q: What will heaven be like?

#### A. Heaven Explained In the Old Testament

V 2 "In my Father's House"

Q: What does Jesus have in mind when He says this? How did the disciples understand the phrase?

"My Father's House"--only other time Jesus used the phrase...

Jn 2:16 "...Make not my Father's house an house of merchandise." = the Temple

Q: What's a house?

A: A place where you live. Your abode. Your dwelling.

Q: Where does God live?

A: Remember what Stephen said...

Acts 7:47 "But Solomon built Him an house." = the Temple

Acts 7:48-50 "Nevertheless, the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands...Heaven is my throne..."

Obviously, when Jesus said "My Father's house," He had heaven in mind.

Key: Heaven is not a product of religious imagination. Heaven is not some "pie in the sky by and by" notion. Heaven is real! And watch this. Heaven is the HOME for God's children.

Quote: Some years ago, a London newspaper held a contest to determine the best definition of "home." The winning entry was, "Home is the place where you are treated the best and complain the most." The poet Robert Frost said that home is the place that, when you arrive there, they have to take you in! (Wiersbe, 350)

Let's check out what the OT had to say about Heaven, and the Life to Come:  
Ps 33:13-14 "The Lord looks from heaven; He beholds all the sons of men. From the place of His habitation, He looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth." (also Is 63:15)  
Dan 12:2 "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

That's the backdrop for Jesus' words in Jn 14.

Q: What does Jesus tell us about His "father's house," about heaven?

#### B. Heaven Explained By Jesus

Notice 2 key statements Jesus made about heaven...

V 2 "are many mansions"

V 2 "I go to prepare a place for you."

Q: What did Jesus mean by "mansion"?

--same word translated "abode" in 14:23

It simply means "rooms, abiding places." The greek word is "mona" (verb "meno" meaning "to abide"). The Vulgate (Latin Bible) used the word "mansiones." That's where the KJV picked up the word "mansions."

I hate to ruin a good song for you, but some of the songs we sing about heaven have little biblical base. If you think heaven will be a place where you'll have your own private, secluded fenced in mansion, you'd better rethink. Don't get me wrong. Heaven will be wonderful. And the reason is because we'll be with Jesus! All of us. Together!

Now having said that, Jesus' statement reveals some amazing truth. Heaven will be a "roomy" place! It will be full of marvelous dwelling places.

Quote: William Hendriksen, "The Father's house does not resemble a tenant house, each family occupying one room. On the contrary it is more like a beautiful apartment building, with ever so many completely furnished and spacious apartments or dwelling-places, and no crowding of any kind! Inside the one house are many mansions." (265)

Heaven will be a great place! Do you know how I know that? Because Jesus is preparing it for us! Just think of this (Wiersbe). When Jesus was on earth, He was a carpenter. What's He doing right now? He is building a church on earth, and a home for that church in heaven!

What will heaven be like? In other NT texts, heaven is described as a...

1. Kingdom--II Pt 1:11
2. An Inheritance--I Pt 1:4
3. A Country--Heb 11:16
4. A City--Heb 11:16 (see Wiersbe)

Heaven will be a place of joy and love. When the Apostle John tried to describe the New Heaven and Earth in Rev 21-22, it's almost as if he ran out of images and comparisons in human language to describe it! No pain, death, crying, night.

We'll see more next Sun AM.

Key: Let's get rid of the Hollywood idea of heaven. We won't be disembodied spirits floating around on clouds! When a believer dies now, his spirit goes to be with the Lord (II Cor 5:8). But one day, our bodies will be raised from the dead. We will be given glorified bodies. We will inhabit a place. A real place. A place more real than 1241 Crescent Drive! Heaven will be a wonderful place. We'll have work to do in the service of our King. We'll be with Him.

Q: Is your heart troubled today? Be encouraged! We have a hope!

Illust:

Tran: That's Heaven Explained, point 1. Notice what Jesus told His disciples next about the Hope of Heaven.

## II. Heaven Anticipated (3-4)

Listen carefully to the things Jesus said He would do:

1. And if I go...
2. And if I prepare a place for you...
3. I will come again...
4. I will receive you unto myself.

Think of what that meant for the disciples. The news of Jesus' departure was heartbreaking. But this news, though they didn't understand it until later, was breathtaking. Jesus told them, "Yes, I'm leaving. But it's for YOUR benefit that I'm leaving. If I didn't die, you couldn't live. If I didn't leave, there would be no place for you to go. But I am leaving, and I am preparing a place for you, and I am coming again for you, and I am going to take you to that special place!" That's quite a message of hope!

Note: Jesus said very little about the place He was going to prepare. He didn't tell what it would look like, how big it would be. Why not?

Key: The focus is not on the place, but the person.

Heaven will be a great place for this reason. Jesus will be there! And we'll be with Him! And if He said it's going to be great, that's good enough for me! He's already given us the foretaste, the appetizer in our present Christian experience.

Quote: "When Peace Like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll. Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul." And the last verse, "And Lord haste the day when my faith shall be sight, the clouds be rolled back as a scroll. The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend, Even so, it is well, it is well with my soul."

Illust: Like telling your child you've got a surprise waiting

Heaven is a wonderful place, a place of hope! It's a REAL place.

Q: How do you get there?

V 4 "And where I go ye know, and the way ye know."

That's intriguing. Jesus said the disciples already knew the way. They'd heard Jesus for 3 years tell them things like...

Jn 3:3 "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Jn 3:16 "For God so loved the world...believe...everlasting life."

Jn 4:14 "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give shall never thirst, but the water I shall give shall be a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Jn 5:24 "Verily...he that hears...has everlasting life..."

Jn 10:10 "I am come that you might have life...abundantly."

Jn 10:27-28 "My sheep hear my voice...and I give them eternal life..."

They'd heard all this before. But Thomas said...

V 5 "...we don't know...!"

Key: V 6 "I am the way..."

Jesus could speak no more plainly. A child could understand.

Key: The way to heaven is through a Person, Jesus Christ.  
Listen. Good people don't go to heaven. Why not? We can't be good enough to go to heaven. We need to trust Christ. He's the way, the only way.

Q: Do you know Him? Have you ever admitted to God that you are a sinner? Have you ever repented of your sin, and placed the confidence of your life in Christ?

If so, heaven is for you!

Illust:

**Conclusion:**

The benefits of Christianity are many. But tonight we've pondered what is perhaps the most unsearchable and mind-boggling benefit: The Hope of Heaven. From the very lips of Jesus we've considered: Heaven explained (1-2). Heaven anticipated (3-4).

I pray that the reality of heaven will encourage your heart tonight.

Quote: Dr. James M. Gray put it beautifully in a song he wrote years ago, "Who could mind the journey, when the road leads home?" (Wiersbe, 350)

The road of life is difficult. But the assurance of what heaven will be like keeps us going.

Illust: Trip home from Israel--30 hours, severe headache, waiting in airports, anticipation. What kept me going? I can't wait to get home!