

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

How We Will Relate to God

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 90-17

Well, we're going to talk about heaven tonight. I'm going to give you the first half of our discussion of heaven from the viewpoint of what will our relationship to God be. We won't have time to cover it all, and that's probably just as well because of the richness of this particular theme. The apostle Paul made an amazing statement when he said, "For to me to live is Christ, to die is gain." For someone to say to die is gain reflects certainly a different attitude than most people would have in this world. Most people in our society, and reasonably so, fear death. For Paul to say "to die is gain," or "to die brings advantage to me," to die is to gain something advantageous is quite a remarkable statement. And that kind of confident statement assumes that Paul felt that the life to come was better than the life he was living. He had a personal experience some time prior to saying that, in which he was caught up into the third heaven, according to 2 Corinthians 12:2. There he saw in some way the abode of God. There he saw the heaven of heavens. It was indescribable, it was unspeakable. But he saw enough to know that to die was gain. John the Apostle lived in such anticipation of heaven that he could say, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." And I believe that it's not uncommon for any believer who walks with Christ, and who rightly ascertains this life and the life, to come to be able to echo the words of Paul and John and hope for that which is yet ahead.

Now, we've been learning why heaven is so attractive. We've been learning about the fact that it is gain to leave this world and go into the presence of the Lord. That eternal dwelling place where God lives and where He lives with all the redeemed of all the ages, a place where there is infinite perfection of body and soul, a place where there is a perfect environment of love and joy and peace and fulfillment and satisfaction. We have noted many wonderful truths about heaven. But tonight we come to the most wonderful one of all. We come to the most glorious reality of heaven, that which surpasses everything else and that is our relationship to God in heaven. And so, we pose the next in our list of questions: what will be our relationship to God in heaven? And the Bible delineates several wonderful features. We're going to look at them tonight.

Let's jump right into it. Number one, in considering what our relationship to God will be in heaven, the first thing we can note is we will be with Him. We will be with Him. We can label that simply fellowship, or communion which is another way to say the same thing. This in itself is the supreme joy of heaven because God is the Supreme Being, the supreme occupant of heaven, being with Him is the supreme joy, fellowship with the Lord God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, if you look back a little bit in your thoughts to the reality of salvation, you remember that John defines salvation in 1 John chapter 1 as having fellowship. He said, "We have fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus

Christ.” When a person becomes a believer, we enter into communion with God. His life becomes our life. We become so identified with Him that, as the Psalmist said, the reproaches that fall on Him are fallen on us. We become so identified with Him that His will is our will, His purpose is our purpose, His desire is our desire, His objective is our objective even if hindered by sin, nonetheless that the deepest part of our being regenerated souls are in union with the living God and fellowship with the living Christ.

So, salvation brought us into communion. We can talk with God. We can commune with Him. We pray to Him. We hear Him speak in the Word. He moves in those silent ways in our lives by providence to reveal Himself. We are living in real spiritual communion with God. But, in a sense that communion is hindered. It is not the fullness of communion. When we go to heaven, on the other hand, we will enter into full fellowship with God, into unhindered fellowship with God, a fellowship more imagined, more wonderful, I should say, than anything we can imagine. Let’s just touch base with some of the scriptures that indicate that to us.

We can start back in the 17th chapter of the gospel of John. John chapter 17, and we find in that chapter our Lord, of course, praying to the Father and asking that He would be returned to the glory that He had before the world began, having anticipated the consummation of His earthly work, He was ready to go back to the Father. As He prays He prays on behalf of those who are His own in the world. And in verse 24 particularly He says, “Father, I desire that they also,” they referring to believers in this age and all who believe in Christ, “I desire that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am.” And stop at that point. That is the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is an amazing thing to me, that it is Christ’s desire to have eternal fellowship with us. He says, “Father, My prayer is that those who believe in Me, those You have given to Me, be with Me where I am.” What a remarkable statement. I mean, we often think about how much we long to be with Christ, but do you understand how much Christ longed to be with us? Do you understand that when a believer dies and goes to heaven, it is not only the fulfilling of the longing of the believer, but it is the fulfilling of the longing of Christ? That’s a remarkable thought. It’s one thing that I should want to be with Him, it’s quite something else that He should want to be with me. And He tells why in verse 24, “In order that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me.” Father, I want them to see My glory. I want them to see Me in the fullness of My manifest reality. I want them to see Me for who I really am. I want them to see the majesty of My unveiled deity.

And so, the Lord Jesus Christ longs for us to be in heaven. He prayed that to the Father, that we would be with Him where I am, He said. The little phrase “with Him” intrigues me. It doesn’t just say that we will see Him. It says that we will be with Him. He longs not for us to be spectators, but for us to be participants, not for us to be watchers but for us to be communers with Him. What a prayer. Do you think that Christ has His prayers answered? I’m sure He does. And the reality of it is that the day will come, beloved, when we will be with Him where He is for the purpose of beholding His glory which is given Him of the Father out of the Father’s love, it says at the end of the verse. And so, we

find then that we can look forward to being with Him where He is. We will be with Him. That's what heaven's all about. Our relationship to God the Father, our relationship to God the Son, our relationship to God the Holy Spirit will be to be in constant unending eternal communion with them.

Now, let's look at John 14, backing up in John's gospel, another scripture that gives us insight into this. This one very familiar. You know the scene, familiar to all of us who study God's Word. The disciples have been informed that Jesus will be leaving them. He has spoken of His death and resurrection. He must go back to the Father. He must be like a corn of wheat that falls into the ground and dies so that it can bring forth life. And He says to them that He will be leaving. He says in verse 36 of chapter 13, "Where I go you can't follow Me now but you'll follow later." What a tremendous promise. I'm going but you'll come later. Peter wants Him to take him right on the spot and so he says, "I'll die with You right now, I want to go now." And Jesus says, "No, you won't die right now, you won't lay your life down for Me, in fact you'll deny Me." So, the setting is Jesus telling them that He was leaving. And that's what we find in verse 1 of chapter 14, "Let not your heart be troubled, believe in God, believe also in Me." And why does He say that? Because their hearts were troubled over the thought of Jesus leaving them. He was their resource for everything. When they needed comfort, He comforted them. When they needed wisdom, He taught them. When they needed food, He created it. When they needed to pay their taxes, He pulled a fish out of the water, took the tax out of the fish's mouth. He was there in every struggle and every trial and every situation, He was there. He was their life. It had become so in those nearly three years that they had been together, or even a little over that.

So, He says, stop letting your hearts be troubled. You don't need to be anxious about My going away. You believe in God, then believe also in Me. "In My Father's house are many rooms, and if it were not so I would have told you for I go to prepare a place for you." A place where? "In My Father's," what? "House. You will be with Me. You will be with Me in My Father's house. You will be with Me and you will be with My Father." And I've said this many times before: everybody in heaven is in the Father's house. There aren't many houses in heaven, there is one house, the dwelling place of God, and God in His infinity fills all of the infinite eternal heaven with His immediate presence. That's why the Bible says that there's no temple there, for God is the temple. That's why the Bible says there is no sun or moon there, because God and the Lamb are the light of it. God is heaven. His presence is heaven. He fills all in all with His presence, so that when we go there we go into His presence. He's everywhere. He, in infinite deity, fills the infinite heaven.

So, He says, in My Father's house are many rooms and I go to prepare a place for you. Then, verse 3, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to," and here's the key word, "Myself." Why don't you underline that in your Bible? I will receive you to Myself. Can I put it simply? We're not going to a place; we're going to a person. Did you get that? We're not going to a place so much as we're going to a person. We're going into fellowship with God. We're going into fellowship with Christ. We're not going to a place from which you can get to God. We're not going to a

place from which you can get to Christ. We're going to a person, namely God and the Lord Jesus Christ. We will never be outside the presence of God or the presence of Christ. So, He says I will again come and receive you to Myself "That where I am there you may," what? "Be also." Being with Christ, being with God. That's the essence of heaven.

So, what will be our relationship to God? First of all, we'll be with Him. It will be paradise regained only infinitely beyond anything Adam and Eve ever experienced in the garden. We will be with them all the time, unending fellowship. And since God is infinite glory, and infinite beauty, and infinite majesty, and infinite holiness, and infinite everything else, you will never get bored with being with God forever and ever and ever because you will continually be experiencing the unfolding of the realities of His infinite glory. The same with Christ.

Let me take you to another passage, 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, and the emphasis is always the same. First Thessalonians chapter 4 and in the Thessalonian church there was some fear that folks might have missed out on being with the Lord because they had died, and that the Lord was going to come back, and they were dead, and they would miss being with the Lord. And to straighten that out, you know the text, verse 13, "We do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, those who have died, that you may not grieve as to the rest who have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus." Now, the promise there is as Christ rose, God would raise from the dead those who belong to Christ. And here's how: "For this we say to you by the word of the Lord that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall not proceed those who have fallen asleep." Listen, he says not only did the people who die not miss meeting the Lord, but they're going to meet Him before we do when He comes. "For the Lord Himself," verse 16, "will descend from heaven with a shout, with a voice of the archangel with the trumpet of God, the dead in Christ shall rise," what? "First." Somebody said that's because they have six feet further to go, but it's really more than that. They rise first because that's God's plan.

Now watch, "Then, we who are alive at the Rapture when Christ comes, the dead in Christ rise first, that is their bodies, to join their already glorified souls." Then, we are caught up in that Rapture, we who are alive at that time. And it says we're caught up together with Him in the clouds, now notice, to meet whom? The Lord in the air. Now, watch this, "And thus," underline it, "we shall always be," what? "With the Lord." That's what heaven is. It's being with the Lord. It's always being with the Lord. From the time we meet Him in the air, if we're there at the Rapture, coming up from the earth, from the time we meet Him in the air, if we're already there with our souls and rejoining our bodies in that great resurrection, whatever it is, we meet the Lord in the air and we will always be with the Lord.

Let me make it practical. That's the greatest reunion of heaven. You often hear people say, "Well, isn't it wonderful, when we get to heaven we'll see our friends, we'll see our relatives, my grandfather is in heaven who preached the Word of God faithfully, my grandmother is in heaven." And on the

other side, my mother's mother whom I never knew went to be with the Lord before my mother was even married, I think, to my father. There are others in all of our lives. I remember a childhood buddy of mine who played baseball with me, we were good pals and one day he was driving his little Model A that he was kind of doing up as a roadster and the brakes locked and he catapulted to the top of it and hit a curb with his skull and was instantly put into eternity. And we all think about the kind of reunions we're going to have when we see those people who were a part of our life that went on, but those were unions really pale when you stop to think that what heaven is all about is a reunion of the believer with the Lord Himself. In fact, the Bible, to be honest with you, does not make much out of the reunion of people with people. It alludes to it. There will be fellowship there. We will sit down at table with Abraham and Isaac and so forth. And there will be a sense in which when you die, as the Old Testament says, you go to be with your people, as the Old Testament referred it when it spoke of the death of Abraham. But that's not the main thrust. The main thrust of being in heaven is being with the Lord.

Let's look at Revelation chapter 21. When you stop and think about the fact that the Lord is the matchless, perfect, glorious God, to have the privilege of forever being with Him is almost inconceivable. In Revelation 21 we read about the new heaven and the new earth, the first heaven, the first earth passed away, there's no longer any sea, nothing to divide, nothing to be afraid of. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. Here's the capital city of heaven. This isn't all there is of heaven; this is just the major city. "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying," here it comes, "the tabernacle of God is among men and He shall dwell among them and they shall be His people and God Himself shall be among them." Twice He says "among them, among them." Talk about intimate presence, He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes. God Himself pitches His tent among men. The tabernacle of God is among men. He shall dwell among them. God Himself shall be among them. That's the glory of heaven. Believers will be in the eternal immediate presence of God Himself.

Do you ever feel in this life as though maybe God is afar off? Do you ever feel when you're going through some trials and difficulties as if God is a long way away? And maybe doesn't seem to be paying much attention to you? And then, all of a sudden there's some kind of an intimate experience with God that makes things completely fresh? I want to tell you something very personal, and I don't often speak too personally but this is a personal thing. A number of weeks ago, as you know, we were praying for our son Mark because it was discovered that he had some kind of lesion, some kind of growth in his brain. And I shared that with you after we knew enough to share, and you prayed with me. During those days, about a period of nine days or so, I did not eat. I fasted and prayed before the Lord for that period of approximately nine days. I didn't say anything to anybody. Patricia knew, obviously, but even the children themselves did not know. But that was just a time of total devotion before God to try to discern the will of God in my own life and in the life of my family and Mark's life. And during those days, I was really prostrate many times before the Lord, as was Patricia with me. And we just kept beseeching the Lord to show us His will, and teach us what He wanted us to know.

And we had times of prayer perhaps more intense than any other time recently.

And I was waiting on the Lord. And days went by and days went by and we couldn't seem to get any word. And every time we would talk to a doctor, there would be a little feeling in my heart the things were more serious, and there was a sense of fear that a father naturally has over his child. And there were times when you just sort of wonder to yourself, "I wonder if God really is listening." Almost incessant prayers over a period of nine days and it seems to be such a long time. And I don't seem to be hearing anything from the Lord or sensing any answer. We can't seem to resolve everything.

It was a Wednesday night. I was sitting in my office getting ready for a baptismal service. It was about the eighth day of not eating anything. And I was sitting in my office by myself when Rich Hines' wife, Barbara, came to the door. She had a little box in her hand and she said to me, "You know, I knew you were staying through for the baptism tonight, and I brought a sandwich for Rich to eat because he's staying also, and I made a sandwich for you and thought maybe you'd like to have something to eat since you're not able to get anything." Well, I hadn't eaten for eight days and I didn't want to say anything to her about that so I said, "Thank you very much. I really appreciate that." That was a sweet and gracious gesture. She has never done that ever in the past at this church. She never brought me a sandwich. I'm not faulting her for that. I'm just saying it never happened before. She's a sweetheart. But she had never brought me a sandwich before, and I'd stayed through many, many, many, many Wednesday nights. That sandwich sat on my desk, and I had this unbelievable sense of peace come over my heart, because an hour before she had brought that sandwich I said to the Lord, "Lord, if You're there and You're hearing my prayers on behalf of my son, will you show me some way that I'll know You're really involved." An hour later came the sandwich. She left and I smiled. And I said, "Lord, this is the signal, isn't it? The fast is over and I can eat." And I ate the sandwich. And I had perfect peace in my heart. And the next morning the doctor called me and said, "I want to tell you some good news," and I just kind of smiled, and he said, "It's nothing serious." And it wasn't a shock to me because the Lord in His wonderful, simple, but profound way had indicated to me that the fast was over and that I could eat.

And, Barbara, I never said anything to you about that but that was one fantastic sandwich. And you know what struck me out of that whole experience was the fact that God was intimately involved in my life to the point where He delivered a sandwich when the time came for me to know that I didn't need to fast anymore. Now, that's being intimately involved in your life. I had, that night, sweet communion with God. You're there, and I know You care, and You brought me a sandwich. It was just an unbelievable thing. But when you have those experiences in your life where you really know that God is involved with you, it's absolutely exhilarating. It's exhilarating. And you can only imagine what it will be like when you go to heaven, and all of life is God and you intimately fellowshiping.

Now, to be honest with you, in one sense thinking of being in continual communing fellowship with holy God forever could scare the wits out of you. I mean, in the Bible, when God showed up, people

were frightened. When Isaiah knew he was in the presence of God he said, "Curse me, I'm a sinner." When Peter knew he was in the presence of God and saw the incarnate God in Christ in Luke he said, "Depart from me for I'm a sinful man." The woman who touched the gown, the hem of his garment and was healed was terrified when He called her out of the crowd because she knew He was God. Being in the presence of God can be a terrifying thing. The priest in the Old Testament knew that if he went into the Holy of Holies unprepared it would cost him his life. And here we are spending all of eternity in intimate communion with the living God. Now, beloved, that means we're going to be different than we are now. We will be in that hour made holy, made holy. And in our absolute and holy perfection, we will be able to commune with the eternal holy God without a tinge of shame. How wonderful. How wonderful.

Richard Baxter wrote, "As God gives us glorified senses and enlarged capacities, so will He advance the happiness of those senses and fill up with Himself all those capacities." End quote. Eternal immediate fellowship with God, intimate unbroken satisfying personal communion with Him, what a thrill. You know, when you think about it, everything we have received from the Lord basically comes second, third, fourth-hand. We get our food from the earth although He's the creator. We get our breath from the air, although He's the creator, we need the air. We get our light from the sun and the moon. We get our assistance in this life from Christ's mediating work, and the Holy Spirit's mediating work, and even the angels serve us. But someday when we get to heaven there will be no intermediaries. They'll be no intercessors. In this life, the things of God that we handle are divine but the manner of handling them is human. Our joys come to us through the means of some other source. They don't come immediately, directly, untouched from God but in heaven they will. We'll receive joy from God through no intermediary. Peace, and love, and happiness, and fulfillment instantaneously and immediately from God to us with no one in between, no other indirect source.

We'll have light without a candle. We'll have perpetual day without a sun. We'll have enlightened understanding without Scripture. We'll be totally governed without a written law. We'll have joy that is not drawn from promises or anything else, it's just joy. We'll have blessedness that's not fetched by faith or hope; it's just blessedness. We'll have communion without ordinances, communion without prayer. To have necessities but no supply. That's the state of people in hell. To have necessity supplied by means of creatures is the state of people on earth. To have necessity supplied immediately from God is the state of the saints in heaven. Intimate communion with God, intimate communion with Christ, what an unbelievable thing, fellowship.

Let me give you a second thought. First one, we'll be with Him. Second one, we'll see Him. We will see Him. The first one was fellowship; the second one is vision. Now, you ready for this? We will have direct sight of the Lord. We will see the Lord. You say, "Wait a minute. Exodus 33, no man can see the Lord and live." The New Testament, John 1:18, 1 John 4:12 it says no man has seen God at any time. First Peter 1:8, we love the one we have not seen. First Timothy 6, I think it's verses 15 and 16, talks about the invisible God. God is not seen. He is the one who possesses immortality, dwells in

unapproachable light whom no man has seen or can see.” You say, “If nobody has seen God and nobody can see God, how are we going to be able to see God?” We’re going to have to be different than we are now. Exodus chapter 33, Moses got a little glimpse of God, you remember in Exodus 33 he said, “Show me Your glory.” God said, “I can’t show you My full glory but I’ll let you see a little of my back parts.” Tucked him in a cave, and God moved by, and put a veil over his eyes and he could see a little bit of the glow of God.

It’s true. God is inaccessible to mortal man. He is too holy, listen to this, He is too holy, too pure, and too spotless to look on iniquity, and He is too holy, too pure and too spotless to have iniquitous man look on Him. So, as long as we’re in our sin we can’t see God. And I don’t believe that even when we’re in heaven, we’ll see God in His infinity because I don’t believe we have that capacity or we would be God even in our glorified state. But we will see God in a way we will not be able to see and hear Him now. We can only see a glimpse, like the disciples who saw Jesus pull back the veil of His flesh at the transfiguration, and He was light before them, they saw the back parts again. They saw a little of the glow but not the full blazing of God’s presence. To endure that, you’d have to be a totally transformed person, all sin removed. And I do believe that we do go to glory in the perfection of body and soul, we’ll have a greater capacity to see the revelation of God.

Now, God is a spirit but when He reveals Himself He reveals Himself as what? As light. Psalm 104:2 “Who covers thyself with light as with a garment.” When God puts on His clothes, He puts on light. When God takes on that which is visible, His Spirit takes on light. In fact in Exodus 24:17 it says, “The appearance of God or the glory of God was like a consuming fire on the mountain top.” Psalm 36:9 says, “In Thy light we see light.” And so, I believe that when we go to heaven we will have a capacity beyond what we have here to see the revealed light of God. And it tells us in Revelation, doesn’t it, that He will be that which lights all of heaven. And the New Jerusalem is nothing but a series of jeweled prisms to reflect, and refract, and radiate the light of the presence of God.

You say, “Well, how do you know we’re going to see Him?” Let’s look at a couple of scriptures just very briefly. Matthew 5:8, “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall,” what? “See God.” Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall *opsontai*, see God, they shall be seeing God for themselves, the future continuous reality. They shall be living in an environment where they are continually seeing God. In the oriental courts of ancient times, the kings were secluded, and it was a rare privilege for anyone to have an audience with a king, let alone to see the King of Kings all the time continuously. Psalm 42, I just love it, verses 1 and 2, “As the deer pants after the water brook, so pants my soul after Thee, O God, my soul thirsts for God for the living God, then this, when shall I come and appear before God?” The Psalmist says, when do I get to see You? And the disciples cried out in John 14:8, “Show us the Father.” It’s always been in the heart of the redeemed to want to see God. In this life, we see God but now with the physical eye. We see with the heart, we see with the mind, we see God moving in history, we see Him moving in circumstances. We see Him in creation, we see Him in providence, we see Him in revelation. We see Him revealed in His grace, and His mercy, and His love. We see Him

revealed in the work of His Spirit. But I believe in the future there will be a vision of God with the eye, and we will see the glorious revelation of the blazing effulgence of God in heaven.

You remember in Exodus 33 it said you can see my back parts, God said to Moses; you can see My back parts. Compare that with Revelation 22:3, "And there shall no longer be any curse, and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it and His bondservant shall serve Him, and they shall see His face." And the next verse, "The Lord God shall illumine them." God turns on the light of His glory, and we will see with our perfect eyes in that perfect body, the blazing glory of God revealed in light. That's the vision of Ezekiel 1. That's the vision of Revelation 21 and 22 where God lights all of heaven, and that lights splatters from His throne like a trillion jewels, and splatters through the refracting jewels of the New Jerusalem.

Now, again let me note as John Calvin said, "Our glory will not be so perfect as to be able to comprehend the Lord in His absolute godhead. Even at the last there will remain an impassable distance between Himself and us." But I believe and I agree with Calvin, but I believe we will see God far beyond what we could have imagined in this life. And if we had seen Him at all in this life, we probably would have been consumed. Seeing God face to face, we will literally be engulfed in His heavenly glory. We will be in His blazing light. We will be caught up in it. We will be part of it. We will be with Him in glory. His glory will become our glory. We, too, in a sense, will become transparent jewels through which His glory shines. And it says in 1 Corinthians 15:28 that God will be all and in all. What a tremendous thought.

So, I believe we'll see God. I believe we'll see His blazing light. You can't see a spirit, but when God reveals Himself, He reveals Himself in light. But secondly, I also believe we will see with the eye of the mind. That is to say, we will comprehend God. First Corinthians 13:12, very important verse in this kind of consideration, you know the verse, it says this: "Now, we see in a mirror dimly but then face to face, now I know in part but then I shall know fully just as I also have fully known." He says we see dimly, we'll see clearly. We know in part, we'll know in fullness. We will see, I believe, with the glorified and perfected eye the revelation of God in light, and we will know about God. We will have an instantaneous awareness, and sense of knowledge of the fullness of God as much as we have capacity for it. So, when it says "Blessed are the pure in heart, they shall see God," they shall see God with the glorified eye and they shall see God with the glorified mind and soul as well.

And what about Christ? We'll see Him, too. We'll see Him, too. First John 3:1 and 2, it says, "See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called children of God, and such we are, for this reason the world doesn't know us because it didn't know Him." They can't understand, comprehend us, they don't know who we really are any more than they understood who He was. "Beloved, now we are the children of God." That's true, present tense. "But it has not yet appeared what we shall be." We're now children of God, but you haven't seen anything yet. We know that when He appears we shall be like Him because we shall, what? See Him as He is, or just as He is. The day

will come when we see Christ and we'll be like Him. It's incredible.

Jonathan Edwards wrote, "There will be doubtless appearances of a divine and inimitable glory and beauty in Christ's glorified body, which it will indeed be a refreshing and blessed sight to see. But the beauty of Christ's body as seen by the bodily eyes will be ravishing and delightful, chiefly as it will express His spiritual glory." Edwards goes on, "The majesty that will appear in Christ's body will express and show forth the spiritual greatness and majesty of the divine nature. The pureness and beauty of that light and glory will express the perfection of the divine holiness. The sweetness and ravishing mildness of His countenance will display His divine and spiritual love and grace. It is an intellectual view by which God is seen. God is a spiritual being, and He is beheld with the understanding. The soul has in itself those powers which are capable of apprehending objects, and especially spiritual objects, without looking through the windows of the outward senses. This is a more perfect way of perception than even by the eyes of the body." So, Jonathan Edwards sensed that we would see. But beyond just seeing we would know in the depth of a redeemed and perfect soul. When we see Christ, when we see blazing light revealing God, we'll be overwhelmed and eternally awed by what we see. But when in our minds we understand that glory and comprehend that glory, we will be ravished with delight and spend forever and ever being exposed to the reality of that glory.

Let me close with a verse that I want you to turn to. It's in the Psalms and it's Psalm 17. And just a simple verse, but oh what a profound heart's desire. Verse 15, "As for me," says the Psalmist, "As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness." That's his hope for eternal life. I'll see You at Your face in righteousness. If he was not in righteousness, he would not see His face and live. "I will see Your face in righteousness," and then this, "I will be satisfied with Thy likeness when I awake." Can I just grab that one thought? I will be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness," the Authorized says, I like it better that way. I will be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness. Can I ask you a question? What satisfies you? What really satisfies you? New clothes? New job? Promotion? New house? New car? Satisfies you when you've got enough money at the end of the month to pay the bills? What really satisfies you? A great meal? Fun time? A vacation? The Psalmist says I'll be satisfied, but I'll be satisfied when I see Your face and I'm like you. Is that your ultimate satisfaction? Should be, to know God, to see His blazing glory, to know Christ, to see Him, to be like Him, to gaze on Him, to know Him.

Heaven will provide for us that sight of God and the Lamb, an undiminished unwearied sight since God is infinite and Christ is infinite they are infinite glory and beauty, and there will be infinite facets of that infinite glory and beauty to bring us infinite and eternal delight. Is it any wonder then that Peter wanted to stay on the Mount of Transfiguration and make a house and live there? Is it any wonder Paul said to die is gain when he saw the third heaven? The best part of heaven is to be with Him, to be with Him.

Fanny Crosby put it this way, "When my life work is ended and I cross the swelling tide, when the bright and glorious morning I shall see, I shall know my redeemer when I reach the other side and His smile will be the first to welcome me. Through the gates to the city in a robe of spotless white He will lead me where no tears shall ever fall, in the glad song of ages I shall mingle with delight but I long to meet my Savior first of all." I long to meet my Savior first of all. She was blind, you know, and the first person she ever saw was Jesus Christ. What will be our relationship to the Lord in heaven? We'll be with Him and we'll see Him. I hope that's your ultimate satisfaction. Let's pray together.

Thank You, Father, again for the time we've had tonight. What a joyous time. Thank You for the wonderful shining faces of the precious little ones, for the thrill of knowing they're learning Your Word, memorizing Scripture, setting their little hearts toward heaven. Thank You for the promise You've given us that we do not just have hope in this world but we hope, we have hope in the world to come. And we long for the day when our life work is ended and we cross that swelling tide, when the bright and glorious morning we see the day when we know our redeemer. We've reached the other side and His smile is the first to welcome us. What a joyous thought. May we be satisfied with nothing less, nothing less. Amen.

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