

The Perfection of Heaven

Scripture: Psalm 16:11; 1 Corinthians 13:12

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It's well beyond the finite capacity of our minds to comprehend the perfection of heaven. The best we can do is attempt to understand it in terms of this life. All that's good and God honoring here will be perfected in heaven; everything else will pass away.

In heaven there will be no sin, suffering, sorrow, or pain. We will never do anything to displease God. There will be no temptation because the world, the flesh, and the devil will all be conspicuously absent. There will be no persecution, division, disunity, or hate. In heaven there will be no quarrels or disagreements. There will be no disappointments. Prayer, fasting, evangelism, repentance, and confession of sin will cease because the need for them will cease. There will be no weeping because there will be nothing to make us sad. With sin and its effects erased forever, it will be a life of unimaginable blessing!

We will then know *perfect pleasure*. In Psalm 16:11, the psalmist addresses God: "In your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore." In heaven, everything that now makes us groan will be done away with. We will find ourselves in the very presence of God, where the purest and truest kind of pleasure is possible. Whatever pleasures we have known here on earth while living under the curse of sin will seem trivial, paltry diversions compared to the pure delights of heaven. When our souls are made new we will finally be able to glorify God perfectly and enjoy Him perfectly, as He intended. Since nothing is better or greater than God, the pure enjoyment of Him must be the very essence of bliss.

In heaven we will also have *perfect knowledge*. Paul writes, "Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12). Since we are known comprehensively by God (Psalm 139:1–3), this must mean that in some sense we will have comprehensive knowledge. It cannot mean we will have absolute omniscience, for omniscience is one of the incommunicable attributes of God. To embrace all knowledge, one would have to *be* God. But it does indicate that our knowledge will be as complete as we could ever desire. We will have no more unanswered questions, no confusion, no ignorance, and no more need to walk by faith rather than by sight.

We will live in *perfect comfort*. We will never experience one uncomfortable moment. In Jesus' account of the beggar Lazarus and the rich man, Abraham says to the rich man in hell, "Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish" (Luke 16:25). Hell is agony; heaven is eternal consolation.

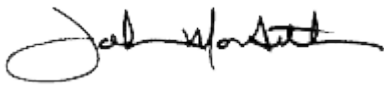
We will finally know *perfect love*. First Corinthians 13:13 says, "Now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love." Why is love the greatest of virtues? Because it is

eternal. In heaven all our hopes will be realized. “Hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?” (Romans 8:24). And all that we have laid hold of by faith will be ours to enjoy forever. Faith will be swallowed up by sight. But we will love perfectly and will be loved perfectly for all eternity. John 13:1 says Christ loved His disciples *eis telos*—literally, “to the end,” to utter perfection. That same love will engulf us forever. And we will finally be able to love perfectly in return.

We could summarize by saying that heaven is a place of *perfect joy*. Our joy in this life is always mixed with sorrow, discouragement, disappointment, or worry. Sin, grief, and sorrow inevitably dampen happiness. An honest look at life in this world produces more tears than real joy. Our lives here begin with the joy of childbirth, but are marked by trials throughout and inevitably end in the sorrows of death and separation. In heaven things will be different. Heaven is a place of undiluted joy. At the end of the parable of the talents in Matthew 25, the master tells the faithful steward, “Well done, good and faithful servant. . . . Enter into the joy of your master” (Matthew 25:23).

Jesus’ choice of that terminology indicates that one of the dominant characteristics of heaven is joy. Best of all, it’s an unending and never-diminishing joy. It *must* be, because heavenly perfection is never altered.

Heaven is a place of utter perfection, but that perfection isn’t limited to the mental and emotional realms. It is also a real place where real people will live in real bodies. And that’s where we’ll pick it up next time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John W. Stott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

(Adapted from [The Glory of Heaven](#); all Scripture references are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted.)

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