

**BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE**  
**James M. Duncan, Pastor**

**JULY 25, 2021**

**WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES AND WE BELIEVE ABOUT HEAVEN**  
**LUKE 16:19-26**

I have been doing this series of messages on “Why We Believe What We Believe.” Today I am speaking on What the Bible teaches us about Heaven and Next Sunday I will speak on Hell.

From our Scripture passage in **Luke 16** Jesus shares with us about two real men and what happens at death. Here we are given a clear picture of the most basic truth, that there are only two possible destinations after death: **Heaven** and **Hell**. Each is just as real and eternal as the other.

Randy Alcorn states in his book entitled “Heaven” “...**Heaven is not our default destination**. No one goes there automatically. Unless our sin problem is resolved, the only place we will go is the true default destination of... Hell.”

The Bible teaches that before the ascension of Jesus Christ there was a place that the souls of men and women went to at death. This place is composed of three compartments; (1) **Paradise or Abraham’s bosom**, (2) The **Great Gulf** fixed and (3) **Hades**. Abraham’s bosom or paradise is the place where the souls of the believing dead go, a place of comfort. Between **Paradise** and **Hades** scripture tells us that there is a **great gulf fixed** (v. 26). The unbelieving souls in Hades remain there (in an intermediate Hell) until a particular point in the future at the Great White Throne Judgment when Hades gives them up and all its inhabitants are judged and passed into the lake of fire. This judgment is told in **Rev 20:13-14**. Every believer who died before the ascension of Christ went to Paradise. Their position remained unchanged until Jesus ascended to the Father. In the Old Testament when a believer died, their bodies went into the grave and their soul and spirit went to Paradise. But when Jesus died on the cross, was buried and he rose again, on the day of his ascension something changed (**Ephesians 4:8-10**).

Jesus emptied Paradise and took all the believing dead with him to the third heaven. There is no longer an intermediate Heaven. Having established what happens to the believer at death I want to take a few moments this morning to briefly address three questions concerning Heaven, (1) **Heaven: What Is It?** (2) **Heaven; What Will We Do When Get There?** (3) **Heaven: How Do We Get There?** So First . . .

**I. HEAVEN: WHAT IS IT?**

“Home” is used to describe Heaven for a reason it is more than just a metaphor. It describes a real, actual physical place. It is a place that we will share with our loved ones who have gone on before us and those who will follow after us, it is a place of comfort, security and refuge. I want to briefly address four questions concerning Heaven.

1. **What will we look like?**
2. **Will we know each other in heaven?**
3. **Will we remember our lives on earth?**
4. **Will those in heaven know what is happening on earth?**

If Heaven is like home, then we need to understand that it is not what is in our house but whom is in the house that makes it a home.

**II. HEAVEN: WHAT WILL WE DO THERE?**

John Eldredge in his book “The Journey of Desire” states “... *nearly every Christian I have spoken with has some idea that eternity is an unending church service... we have settled on an image of the never-ending sing-along in the sky, one great hymn after another, forever and ever, amen. And our heart sinks, Forever and ever? That’s it? That’s the good news? And then we sigh and feel guilty that we are not more ‘spiritual.’ We lose heart, and we turn once more to the present to find what life we can.*”

I believe that we will be worshipping but that is not all we will be doing, one of the things we will be doing in heaven is continuing to learn (**Eph 2:6-7**). The word translated “**show**” means to reveal, in a progressive ongoing way.

**III. HEAVEN: HOW DO WE GET THERE?**

The sobering news about Heaven is that it is not true that all roads lead to Heaven. Jesus said, “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (**John 3:3**)

No one goes to heaven automatically or by accident. It is a **conscious choice**. Jesus said of himself “*I am the door; if anyone enters through me he shall be saved*”(John 10:9) In **John 14:6** “*I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*”

**Have you put your total faith  
and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ  
for He is the only way and door to heaven?**