

## Picturing Heaven

### Past, Present, and Future

- Satan and his angels formerly had free access (Job 1:6 – 12, 21:1 – 8, Zechariah 3:1 – 2, Revelation 12:9 – 10).
- After Jesus returned to heaven, Satan was exiled from heaven to earth (Revelation 12:7 – 17).
- Jesus cleansed the original tabernacle with His blood and completed His sacrifice (Hebrews 9:11 – 12).
- When the universe is destroyed, there will be a new heaven and new earth (Hebrews 12:26 from Haggai 2:6, Isaiah 65:17, 66:22 – 24, 1 Corinthians 15:35 – 58, Revelation 21:1, 2 Peter 3:7 – 13 )

### Inhabitants of Heaven

- Not all inhabitants of heaven have stayed (the devil and his angels).
- Not all those who wish to enter will be allowed (Matthew 25:32 – 46).
- The spirits of the faithful are in heaven now (Ephesians 2:6, Revelation 6:9 – 11, 7:9 – 17, 14:1 – 5).
- When creation is released from decay, the physically dead faithful will return with Jesus to collect the physically alive faithful (1 Thessalonians 4:13 – 18) and all will receive a new body of a different type (1 Corinthians 15:35 – 58).

### Eternal (everlasting) Life

- Matthew 19:29 Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or land for My name's sake shall receive a hundredfold and inherit eternal life.
- John 3:15, 36 Whoever believes in Him should have eternal life.
- John 4:36 Gathers fruit for eternal life.
- John 5:24 He who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life. Also John 6:40 and 6:47.
- John 5:39 You search the Scriptures because in them you think you have eternal life.
- John 6:54 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life.
- John 10:28 [They follow Me] and I give them eternal life.
- Romans 2:7 Eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality.
- Romans 5:21 So that grace may reign through righteousness to eternal life
- Romans 6:22 – 23 The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- 1 John 3:15 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.
- 1 John 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.
- Revelation 21:27 The contrast is between those who are written in the Book of Life versus the profane, abominable, and lying. Therefore, those who are written do not have those characteristics. They are mutually exclusive.
- Revelation 21:7 – 8 gives a longer list of attributes of those who will not enter versus those who overcome.

## Summary

- The passages must be taken together, not in opposition to one another.
- The definition of faith must include overcoming through the Spirit.
- John wrote so that we would know that we have eternal life.
  - Evidence
  - Self-deception versus fellowship
  - Sin versus being like Jesus
  - Outside thinking versus inside thinking

## Questions

- What would the final heaven be like if our spirits were not transformed?
- Will those in the final heaven have the ability to make choices?
- Are our characters changed on resurrection day?
- Although no person or spirit or temptation or experience is strong enough to force us away from faith (John 10:29, 1 John 4:4, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Romans 8:38 – 39 *et al*), we have the ability to choose to reject faith (Galatians 5:4, Hebrews 3:12, 6:4 – 6, Romans 11:20 – 23, Revelation 3:5, *et al*). Will people without faith be in the final heaven?
- Do we know that we will not choose unbelief in the future? How can we have security? How can we know that we have eternal life, as John wrote?
  - Matthew 6:34 Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.
  - Philippians 4:4 – 8 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say, rejoice. Let your reputation for reasonableness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but with everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy, meditate on these things.
  - If I trust God to get me through, then I have faith and will get through. If I am worried about falling short, I lack faith and will fall short.