



April 26, 2015 Heaven #3 / Colossians 3:1

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God..” (Colossians 3:1, NIV)

INTRODUCTION

This 3rd in the series on heaven asks: “will I recognize people in heaven?” This simple “yes” or “no” question reveals some amazing realities about our eternal home. David Smith asserted that we will recognize people in heaven.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- (1) Heaven is not just “Jesus and me.” It is a community of people.^(a) **Is there anyone you hope to meet in heaven?**
- (2) In Genesis, God communed with Adam in perfection yet still designed a woman for companionship and relationship.^(b) David Smith said this shows how God uses other people to shape and influence us. **Share an example from your life of God using someone along with the Holy Spirit to redirect, shape, or influence you.**
- (3) Revelation 21:4 says that Jesus “...will wipe every tear from their eyes...” That seems to suggest a forgetting of troubles of this life. However, later on in Revelation 21:12-14^(c) we see that heaven’s gates are named after the 12 tribes of Israel and that its foundations are named after the 12 apostles. This indicates that memories will be intact in heaven (otherwise these names would have no meaning). **How do you see these truths fitting together? How can we have no sorrows, but still retain memories of this life?**
- (4) The 2 greatest commandments (Matt. 22:37-39)^(d) suggest that one way we love God is by loving people. **How do relationships in this life help you experience God?**
- (5) Earthly relationships have eternal consequences. How this idea of eternal relationships tie-in with the idea of “being heavenly minded makes us the most earthly good?” Are there any current relationships you need to change? Is there a need for forgiveness over a past relationship that cannot be made right?
- (6) David Smith mentioned the idea of having memories without guilt and shame attached to them. How would the removal of these things increase your joy in heaven?
- (7) **Alternative questions.** Read I Thessalonians chapters 4 and 5. Discuss any insights you make as a group. Or as an alternative, read only 1 Thess. 4:13-18^(e) where the Apostle Paul assures us about loved ones who have passed on. Verse 18 says these truths are meant to be an encouragement to us. **Have these verses ever encouraged you in a time of loss? How can you encourage one another with these truths?**

CONCLUSION

The life of the believer in Jesus is a life of truth. The Bible over and over anchors truth in memories, in history, in people. Heaven will be a place where truth is more real to us, not less. That is why we will recognize people in Heaven.



Scripture references for 3rd study in Heaven series (all taken from NIV):

- (a) “And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.” (Revelation 21:3)
- (b) “The LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’” (Genesis 2:18)
- (c) “It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. ¹³ There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. ¹⁴ The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.” (Revelation 21:12-14)
- (d) Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’^[c] ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ (Matthew 22:37-39)
- (e) “ Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. ¹⁴ For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵ According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.” (I Thessalonians 4:13-18)