



## Introduction

Last Sunday: Prophecy, Current Events, Eternal implications

This Sunday: Implications realized (Eternity – Heaven, Hell)

Topical vs Expository

Today's GOAL: Challenge your understanding / Thoughts

ROCK YOUR MIND! There is a lot here – so get ready!

Bereans! Readiness of Mind/Searching Scripture

Before we go on – Happy New Year – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Year

Do you have a resolution? Is it demanding? I'll tell you mind... I will

write 2019 when I fill out paperwork and NOT 2018! Think I can make it?

One resolution we should all make is to be in HIS Word and on our knees in prayer much more than we already are.

To that end.... Let's Pray

**[Forward after prayer]**



TITLE: "Is Heaven Your Destination?" – Each of us are on a path – that path has a destination.

What is yours? **Q:** Do you believe Heaven the Default setting? **If so why did Jesus talk about HELL more than anyone else?**

**Qs:** Who do you think is going to heaven?

As Bible believing Christians we're saddened how many people in the world think you can achieve salvation simply by being a good person. We know the only way to the Father is through the Son. Yet I ask again... Who do you think is going to heaven?

Are all your friends and family going? How about your neighbors and coworkers? Scripture shows... the words of Jesus declares... that Heaven is NOT the default setting.

Matthew 7:13-14 teaches us: *wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are **few** who find it.*

Matthew 7:22-23 " <sup>22</sup> Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' <sup>23</sup> And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Philippians 2:12 - *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;*  
EXAMINE yourself regularly, and plead to & for those who do not walk with Christ. **The time is short and Hell is for real!**

**[Forward after statement]**



So what do you think about when you think about heaven?  
What images comes to mind? Where did that image come from?

How much do you draw on Hollywood?

How much do near death experiences factor in?

I don't intend to step on anyone's sacred cow (**Pun intended**) but they  
May not be a good reference. David Guzik said while he would not  
contradict that which he has not witnessed, he **takes pause** with any  
report that isn't similar reports in scripture. That may be good for us  
too.

**[Forward after statement]**

## Is Heaven Your Destination?

### How are we to think about heaven?

1. We are to set on mind on heaven
2. We are to forget those things behind, reaching forward to what's ahead.

How are we to think about heaven? [\[click\]](#)

#### **We are to set on mind on heaven**

**Colossians 3:1-4** - If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. [\[click\]](#)

#### **We are to forget those things behind, reaching forward to what's ahead.**

**Philippians 3:12-14** - Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. <sup>13</sup> Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

## Is Heaven Your Destination?

### How are we to think about heaven?

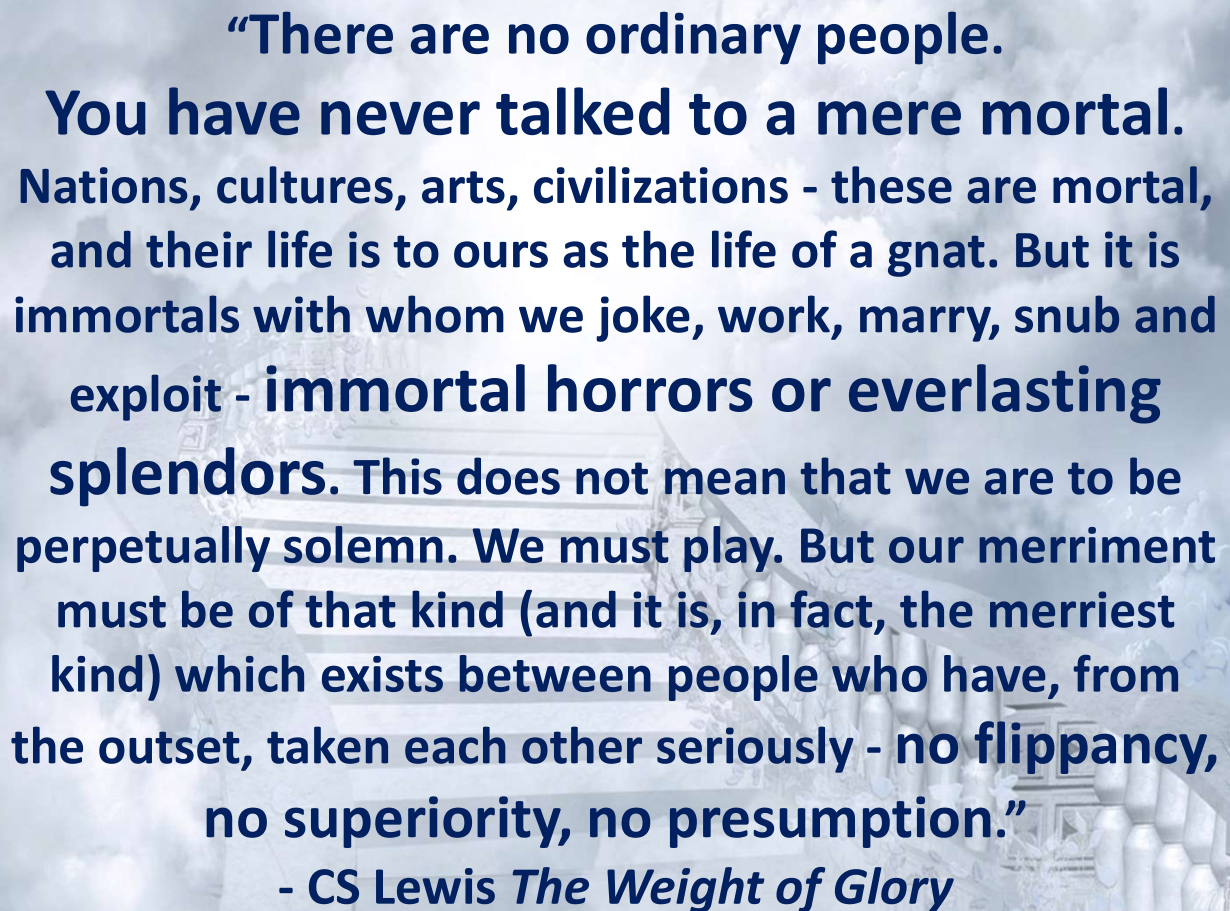
1. We are to set our mind on heaven
2. We are to forget those things behind, reaching forward to what's ahead.
3. Understand we are different, with different citizenship.

### Understand we are different, with different citizenship.

**Philippians 3:17-21** - <sup>17</sup> Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. <sup>18</sup> For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even **weeping**, *that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ*: <sup>19</sup> whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame—**who set their mind on earthly things.** <sup>20</sup> **For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,** <sup>21</sup> **who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.**

J.C. Ryle: “I pity the man who never thinks about heaven”.

Randy Alcorn: “I pity the man who never thinks **accurately** about heaven” **[click]**



**“There are no ordinary people.  
You have never talked to a mere mortal.  
Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal,  
and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is  
immortals with whom we joke, work, marry, snub and  
exploit - immortal horrors or everlasting  
splendors. This does not mean that we are to be  
perpetually solemn. We must play. But our merriment  
must be of that kind (and it is, in fact, the merriest  
kind) which exists between people who have, from  
the outset, taken each other seriously - no flippancy,  
no superiority, no presumption.”  
- CS Lewis *The Weight of Glory***

Keeping our mind on things above, looking for things to come – how should our perspective be affected now?  
Consider the words of CS Lewis.

## Is Heaven Your Destination?

### What do we know about heaven?

1. No more tears, sorrow, or death! No crying or pain.
2. God will dwell with man!
3. Our Redeemer will physically stand on the earth, as will we looking upon Him!

### So what DO we know about heaven? [click]

#### 1. No more tears, sorrow, or death! No crying or pain

Revelation 21:4 - And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, **for the former things have passed away.**

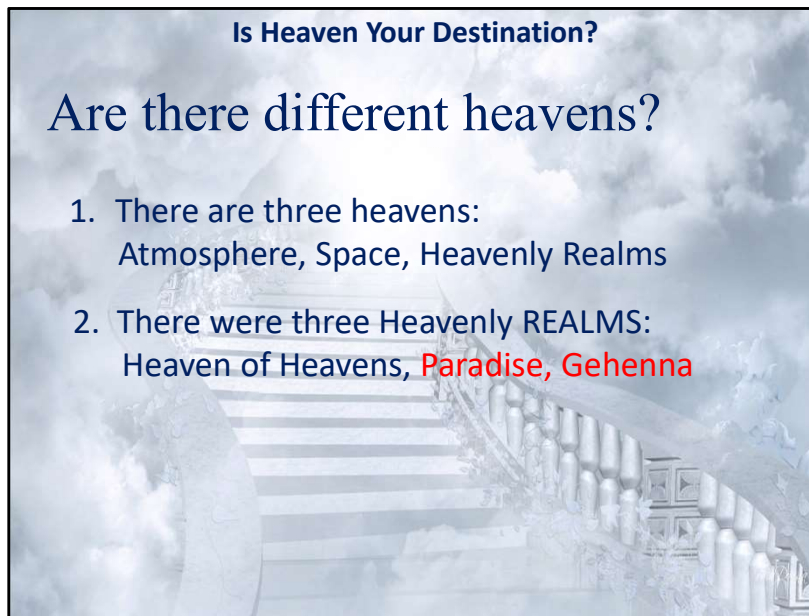
[click]

#### 2. God will dwell with man!

Revelation 21:3 - And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. [click]

#### 3. Our Redeemer will physically stand on the earth, as will we looking upon Him!

**Job 19:25-26** - For I know *that* my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; And after my skin is destroyed, this *I know*, That **in my flesh** I shall see God,



**Here's a fun question: Are there different heavens?**

**1. Three heavens: (common Jewish and ancient understanding)**

2 Corinthians 12:2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—such a one was caught up to the third heaven.

Islam has 7 heavens – not judo-Christianity [\[click\]](#)

**2. Within the Heavenly Realms are three divisions:**

Genesis 28:12 (ladder), Deuteronomy 10:14 (H & HoH belong to Him) and 1 Kings 8:27 (HoH can't contain you)

1<sup>st</sup> Temple period SHEOL/Hades/Hell (in red) was “primarily a place of ‘silence’ to which all souls go”

2<sup>nd</sup> Temple period developed the distinction between **Paradise** (the bosom of Abraham, described in the 4<sup>th</sup> Maccabees) and Gehenna. Historically Gehenna is a small valley in Jerusalem where kings of Judah sacrificed their children to Moloch. It was said to be cursed. Rabbinical teachings defined Gehenna destination of the wicked.

There is/was a great chasm between the two.

**Paradise** “tonight you will be with me” – not HoH.

NOW and FUTURE? Paradise? Ps24, Gehenna > LakeOfFire, Heaven > New Earth?



## Is Heaven Your Destination?

### Are there different heavens?

1. There are three heavens:  
Atmosphere, Space, Heavenly Realms
2. There were three Heavenly REALMS:  
Heaven of Heavens, Paradise, Gehenna
3. Satan is currently in the Heavenly Places  
*gr – epouranios*  
**Ephesians 1:3; 1:20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12**

### 3. Satan is currently in the Heavenly places (epouranios)

**Eph 1:3** Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

**Eph 1:20** which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly places,

**Eph 2:6** and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

Check out the transition....

**Eph 3:10** to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,

**Eph 6:12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but **against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.**

**REV 12:7-10** And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

## Is Heaven Your Destination?

You are made of Body, Soul & Spirit

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to **the division of soul and spirit**, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

(Heb 4:12 NKJV)

So if Heaven is a more complex realm than we imagined, how about the nature of man?

We know from scripture we are made of body, soul and spirit.

Have you given any thought to this?

Our body is physical and needs no explanation except that due to the fallen sin nature of man it is for now in decay.

However, do you understand the distinction between Soul and Spirit?

HEB 4:12

*The Soul and Spirit of Man*

*Soul and Spirit Have Similarities & Differences*

*Scripture refers to:*

- *The Soul being created, being alive after death*
- *The death of the soul in Hell (not the spirit)*
- *The Spirit is given, and formed (not created) and then returns to God from where it came*
- *The Spirit leaves at death*

**Soul and Spirit EXPERIENCE Similarities**

- "...I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. (Job 7:11)
- And Mary said: My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. (Luke 1:46-47)

**Soul and Spirit Have Differences**

**The soul is created and can be destroyed**

- From the dust of the ground, He gave "the breath of life; and man became a living soul". (Gen 2:7 KJV)
- So Zedekiah the king swore ... "As the Lord lives, who made our very souls, I will not put you to death...." (Jer 38:16 NKJV)
- For You have delivered my soul from death. (Psa 56:13 NKJV)
- Let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins. (James 5:20)

**Scripture refers to the soul being alive after death (not the spirit)**

- (Rachel) And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-Oni; but his father called him Benjamin. (Gen 35:18)
- (Elijah) cried out to the Lord and said, "O Lord my God, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him." Then the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived. (1 Ki 17:21-22)

## Is Heaven Your Destination?

### *The Soul and Spirit of Man*

#### *Soul and Spirit Have Similarities & Differences*

##### *Scripture refers to:*

- *The Soul being created, being alive after death*
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- *The Spirit is given, and formed (not created) and then returns to God from where it came*
- *The Spirit leaves at death*

#### *The spirit is given and returns upon death*

- God the LORD ... **gives breath unto the people upon [the earth], and spirit to them that walk therein** (Isa 42:5 KJV)
- Thus says the Lord, who ... **forms the spirit of man within him.** (Zec 12:1)
- It is **the Spirit who gives life**; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. (John 6:63)

**It looks as though the spirits function is life itself.** This is why there is no mention in scripture of it actually dying. How can life itself die? After death the spirit leaves the body and returns back to where it came from, which is God Himself.

- Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: **and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.** (Eccl 12:7)

**So we have souls created and spirit given, souls live on, spirits return to God. So consider this:**

- And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, **‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’**” Having said this, He breathed His last. (Luke 23:46) What happened?

***The Spirit of Jesus went back to God / His Body went into the grave / His Soul went to Hell (Acts 2:31 Ps & 1Pt).***



Intermediate heaven?

Before Christ the righteous went to paradise (but separated from God), Those who reject Christ will still go to Gehenna, that hasn't changed. So where do we go now? Wherever it is, we will be with Christ.

We are promised this by

**2 Corinthians 5:8** We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. [\[click\]](#)

### **AT THE FIRST RESURRECTION**

**Transformed: 1 Corinthians 15:53** For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

**Gathered: 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be **caught up together** with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall **always** be with the Lord.

**John 14:2-3** <sup>2</sup> In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.

**Isaiah 26:19-20** <sup>19</sup> Your dead shall live; *Together with* my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; For your dew *is like* the dew of herbs, And the earth shall cast out the dead. Take Refuge from the Coming Judgment <sup>20</sup> Come, my people, enter your chambers, And shut your doors behind you; Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, Until the indignation is past. [\[click\]](#)

## Is Heaven Your Destination?

### Intermediate heaven?

1. At death we will be with Jesus
2. At the first resurrection we will be:
  - \* Transformed/Gathered to His Father's House
  - \* Accompany Him on His triumphant return
  - \* Reign & Rule w/Him in Millennial Kingdom

Describing our Lord's triumphant 2<sup>nd</sup> coming

**Zechariah 14:5** <sup>5</sup> .... Thus the LORD my God will come, *And* all the saints with (Him) You.

**Revelation 19:13-14** ...His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. **[CLICK]**

Matt/Mark & Luke "rulers over much"

Is 32:1, Dan 7:17-18, Rev 20:4-6 – Saints possessing the kingdom, Reign and Ruling (Stillwater Ok)

This kingdom too will end as declared in

1 Corinthians 15:24 Then *comes* the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father.

And finally our ultimate destination approaches! **[CLICK]**

## Is Heaven Your Destination?

### *THE DAY OF THE LORD*



From Genesis we know God promised not to again destroy the earth by water, and we have the rainbow as proof. But did the flood really destroy the earth (the ark did settle back down after awhile). Was the destruction just a cleansing? The final destruction God promises will be by fire. But will it still be the earth? There will be a New Jerusalem come down from the Heavens to the New Earth. But what happened to the old? **[click]**

**Revelation 6:14** Then the sky receded **as** a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

**2 Peter 3:10** But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

The scenario pictured neither is found in scripture, nor does it contradict scripture. I find it interesting to consider this



possibility.

## Is Heaven Your Destination?

Great White  
Throne  
Judgement



Book of Life



**After the earth is destroyed Revelation tells us of The Great White Throne Judgment**

**Revelation 20:11-15** <sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. <sup>13</sup> The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. <sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. <sup>15</sup> And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake

**of fire.**



### Now we come to our ultimate destination

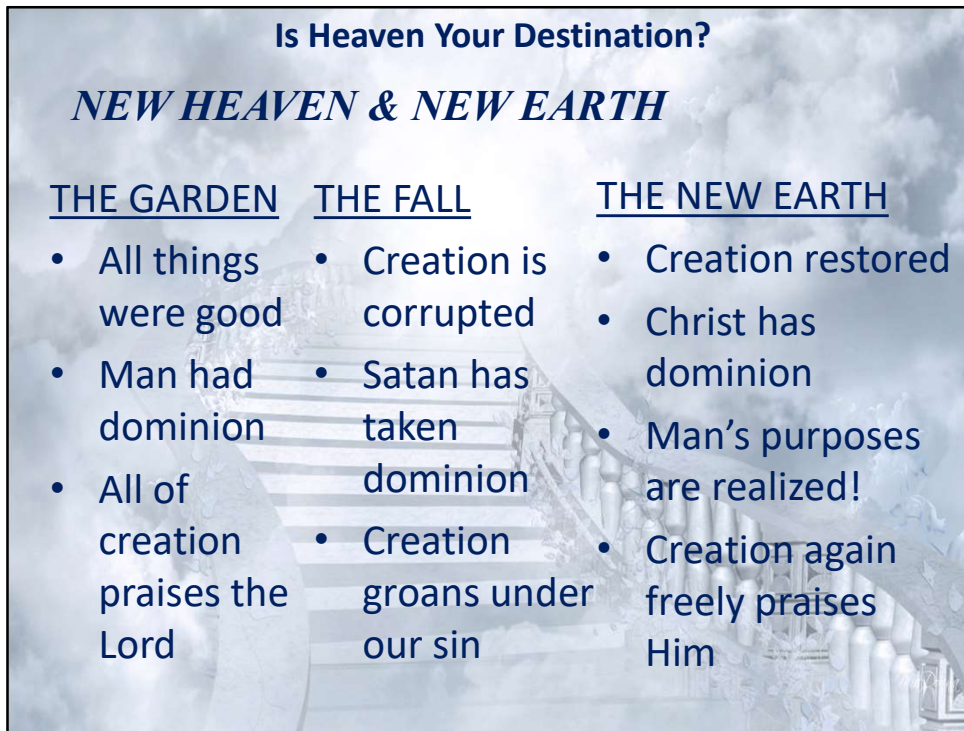
**REV 21:1-4** Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. <sup>2</sup> Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, **“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be their God.*”** <sup>4</sup> And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

## Is Heaven Your Destination?

“The best of life on Earth is a glimpse of Heaven; the worst of life is a glimpse of Hell. For Christians, this present life is the closest they will come to Hell. For unbelievers, it is the closest they will come to Heaven.”

— Randy Alcorn, Heaven

How will life differ when we finally enter our permanent home? Randy Alcorn, author of the book *Heaven*, which I recommend, offers this perspective.



**To imagine our new home we need to take what the spirit has reveled to us in His word, and make some simple comparisions.**

**The Garden was THE original plan – We fell – Christ has redeemed**

**Psalm 148** - Praise to the LORD from Creation

Creation – the curse (sharks predators) - Cosmos

Creation restored – All of it – it was a creation of God not a product of sin?

**1 Corinthians 2:9** But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” **WHY DO BELEIVERS STOP HERE?**

**1 Corinthians 2:10** But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit.

The prophets received revelation from the spirit.



Part of receiving that which has been revealed is to Destroying the Myth of Sin!

Ambition (accumulate stuff – most toys), Gratification (selfishly satisfying every want), Happiness (state of being-fleeting), Fun (Self focused Excitement – as if righteousness is boring)

**[CLICK]**

GOD created you for His purpose,

**Psalm 16:11** *You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.  
Peace that surpasses all understating, unspeakable Joy*

Q: Did sin create: **Play** (otters/puppies): Sports, Hobbies; **Music**, Drama, Art, **Humor**, **Curiosity**/Exploration?

Even in a resurrected flawless state, I don't think I'll be a runner, my wife will be. Why? Because that is how HE made us!

In our resurrected state I will enjoy preparing meals and discovering new things that blow my mind.

Some will be the ultimate extreme athletes

You people now say "This is as good as it gets" – WRONG We haven't yet begun.

We will be flawless after resurrection, but unlike God, we will still be finite. A finite creation worshiping an infinitely loving God who will never cease to show us more!



NJ - Very precise description. Construction, the material, the size, the gates etc

Revelation 22:2 "...the tree of life (pl), which bore twelve fruits, each **tree yielding its fruit every month**. The leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.

Revelation 2:17 "... To him who overcomes I will give some of the **hidden manna to eat**. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a **new name** written which no one knows except him who receives *it*." '

Revelation 21:24 And **the nations** of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. [glory – worship, honor – tribute/production]

Revelation 22:3 "And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, **and His servants shall serve Him.**"

Matthew 5:10-12 Great Reward for our sufferings

1 Corinthians 3:8 "Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive **his own reward according to his own labor**.

2 Corinthians 9:6 "Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Revelation 22:12 "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render **to every man according to what he has done**.





Returning my original question  
Is Heaven your ultimate destination

If so – is your mind set to that? Does the thought of it excite, delight and inspire?

If it doesn't – Get on your knees into prayer and into His Word.

If not, or you're not sure if you'll enter the narrow gate on the difficult path, get with PB, myself or any of church leadership and let's work through that together. You're not alone. Christ paid far too much for YOU to leave Heaven on the table

As we pray, will the worship team come up and the elders pass out communion.

Let's pray