

## WHAT IS HEAVEN LIKE?

### A. Opening Questions

1. Are you sure you are going to heaven? (1 John 5:13).
2. Are you looking forward to going to heaven? (2 Cor. 5:2,4,8; Phil. 1:23).
3. Would you be happy if the Lord came today? (1 Thess. 4:17,18).
4. Is there anything you would very much like to do or complete or accomplish before you finish this present life? (Phil. 1:24; *Little Flock* #46-Appendix).
5. Do you think heaven will be more enjoyable than your present life on earth? How would you rank one's expected enjoyment level in heaven, on earth (now), and in hell?
  - a. (1) Heaven, (2) Earth, (3) Hell?
  - b. (1) Earth, (2) Heaven, (3) Hell?
  - c. (1) Hell, (2) Earth, (3) Heaven?

### B. What Is Heaven Like?

1. Singing (Rev. 5:9; 14:3; 15:3; compare 1 Chron. 25:1-7 with Heb. 9:23).
2. Variety (Rev. 21:19-21; 22:2).
3. Knowledge (Jer. 31:34; 1 Cor. 13:12).
4. Service (Luke 19:17,19; 1 Cor. 6:2,3; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 7:15; 22:3).
5. Enjoyment of God's creation (Isa. 11:6-9; 65:25; 1 Cor. 3:22; Eph. 1:10,11,21-23; Rev. 4:11; 21:7,10; 22:1,2).
6. Holiness, no sin, all like Christ (Isa. 6:3; Rom. 8:29; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 4:8; 21:8; 22:15).
7. Reconciliation, unity (John 17:21-24; Eph. 4:4-6; Col. 1:21,22).
8. "We shall all be changed" (1 Cor. 15:51-54).
9. No tears, death, sorrow, pain, night (Rev. 21:4,25).
10. With Christ, seeing His face, hearing His voice, walking and talking with Him (Gen. 3:8; John 17:24; 2 Cor. 12:4; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 1:10-18; 5:6-14).

### **C. Beginning to Enjoy Heaven Now**

1. Lay up treasure in heaven (Matt. 6:19-21; 1 Tim. 6:17-19).
2. Make wise and diligent use of all (wealth, possessions, spiritual gifts) that God has entrusted to us (Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 16:11,12; 19:11-26; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6,14).
3. Be content (1 Tim. 6:6,8; Heb. 13:5).
4. Seek reconciliation—now! (Matt. 5:23,24; 6:14; 18:15; Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:16).
5. Show love, grace to one another—now! (John 13:34; Eph. 4:29,32; 5:2,25; Col. 4:6; 2 Pet. 3:18; 1 John 4:11).
6. Serve God and one another—now! (Psa. 100:2; John 12:26; 13:14,15; Gal. 5:13; Col. 3:23,24; 1 Thess. 1:9; Heb. 12:28).
7. Be holy and like Christ—now! (Rom. 6:11; 2 Cor. 3:18; 7:1; Eph. 5:26; 1 Thess. 4:3,4; 2 Tim. 2:21; Heb. 12:10; 1 Pet. 1:16).

### **D. Finding Hope through the Truths Concerning Heaven**

1. Increasing dangers of war, violence in school and on the streets, catastrophes (Matt. 24:6-8; 2 Cor. 11:23-27; 12:1-10; 2 Tim. 3:1-5,13)
2. Persecution for righteousness' sake and for Christ's sake (Matt. 5:10-12; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:7; Rev. 2:10).
3. Joblessness, homelessness, poverty, hunger (Matt. 6:25-34).
4. Divorce, abusive parents, without friends, no suitable marriage partner in sight, health problems, emotional problems, depression (Psa. 23:5; 68:5; 102:3-5,12-22; 146:9; Prov. 18:24; John 15:15; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:4,25).

## WHAT IS HELL LIKE?

### A. Contrasts Between Heaven and Hell

**Hell:** Weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 24:51).

**Heaven:** Singing (Rev. 5:9; 14:3; 15:3).

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**Hell:** Outer darkness (Matt. 8:12; 22:13).

**Heaven:** No night (Rev. 21:25); the Lamb is the light (Rev. 21:23); variety of color (Rev. 21:19-21).

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**Hell:** Lake of fire (Rev. 19:20; 20:10,14,15; Luke 16:24).

**Heaven:** Lamps of fire (Rev. 4:5); pure river of water of life (Rev. 22:3).

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**Hell:** Intense thirst (Luke 16:24).

**Heaven:** Water of life (Rev. 22:17); twelve kinds of fruit (Rev. 22:2).

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**Hell:** Naked (2 Cor. 5:3).

**Heaven:** Clothed upon with a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44), our house that is from heaven (2 Cor. 5:1,2,4).

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**Hell:** Preceded by supper of the great God, with birds of prey doing the feasting (Rev. 19:17,18).

**Heaven:** Initiated by marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9).

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**Hell:** Companionship of Satan, the beast, the false prophet, the abominable, murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, liars (Rev. 19:20; 20:10; 21:8; 22:15).

**Heaven:** Companionship of God (Matt. 5:8; John 14:2; Rev. 4:2); of Christ (1 Thess. 4:17; John 14:3); of angels (Rev. 5:11,12); of fellow believers who comprise a holy, glorious Church, without sin, spot, wrinkle, or blemish (Eph. 5:27; Rev. 21:27).

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Which is more appealing to you? Weeping or singing? absolute darkness or great light? a lake of fire or a river of life? intense thirst or a variety of fresh fruit? being naked or being clothed with a new body fit for heaven? being feasted upon by vultures or partaking of a marriage supper? having the company of all that is abominable or the company of Christ?

### B. What People Believe About Hell

1. My neighbor believed that Timothy McVeigh (Oklahoma City bomber) deserves to go to hell but doesn't comprehend that *we all* deserve to go to hell.
2. Timothy McVeigh, talking about his impending execution, said that he will "improvise, adapt, and overcome" if it turns out that there is an afterlife. He also said, "If I am going to hell, I'm gonna have a lot of company."

3. Letter to the *Baltimore Sun*: “I truly believe that the worst punishment for someone such as Timothy McVeigh would have been a sentence of solitary confinement with no contact with the outside world.... Dying is only a needle stick to sleep—some punishment!”

### C. What the Bible Says About Hell and Eternal Judgment

“Unquenchable fire” (Matt. 3:11,12).

“Broad is the way that leads to destruction” (Matt. 7:14).

“Outer darkness ... weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 8:11,12; Matt. 25:26-30; Luke 13:28).

“... Shall cast them into a furnace of fire ... wailing and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 13:37-42; 22:11-13; 25:26-30).

“Everlasting fire ... everlasting punishment” (Matt. 25:32-46).

“Hell fire ... worm dies not ... fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:43-48).

“In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments ... cool my tongue ... tormented in this flame”(Luke 16:19-24).

“Shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on Him” (John 3:36).

“Those who have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28,29).

“Those who ... obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish” (Rom.2:5-9).

“The wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience” (Eph. 5:5,6).

“Everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord” (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

“Tormented with fire and brimstone ... for ever and ever” (Rev. 14:9-11).

“Cast into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:15; 21:8).

### D. What Do YOU Believe About Hell?

If we *really* believe in hell, let us act as if we believed. Proper doctrine without love, compassion, and action is a cold, useless thing, as offensive to God as to the world.