

Heavenward Bound

2002051

Topic # 0295

Introduction:

- A. Spend time wondering: “Who am I?” “What is my purpose in life?” “Why am I here?” “Where am I going?” “What is life all about?”
 1. I am convinced Christianity gives us answers to these questions. Gospel of Christ can help us know “who we are” and “where we are going” in this life.
 - B. Read Phil. 3:8-17. The testimony of Paul helps us answer these questions.
 1. Who was Paul?
 - a) 3:8 – a person who possessed extreme desire to “know” Jesus.
 - b) “My Lord” shows the warmth of Paul’s affection for Jesus – suggesting a close, personal communion between the two.
 - c) This is also expressed in v. 10.
 2. 3:9 – desired to be found in Christ – having been made righteous through faith.
 3. 3:11 – so that he could obtain the resurrection from the dead.
 4. As Christians we have become God’s created children. Like Paul, we have been made in His image to enjoy fellowship with Him.
 5. It is through the gospel that we can enjoy the same fellowship with Jesus that Paul did.
 - C. Where was Paul headed?
 1. Phil. 3:12-14 – *heavenward*. NIV.
 - a) On a mission. Nothing was going to keep him from going there.
 2. Christians today should feel the same way. We are being drawn to heaven through the gospel of Jesus Christ!
 3. Heaven is what the gospel is all about! It is the reason we are here today! It should be the purpose behind our living!
 4. Without it what use is there in serving God?
 - D. Today’s lesson should remind us of the ultimate goal in our life. Ask:
 1. Who am I? AM I a Christian? Do I have the right to be called His child?
 2. Where am I headed? Is heaven my ultimate destination?
- I. We must choose heaven & choose it without reservation.**
- A. FOA, God is on our side! He wants us in heaven w/Him! He is for us!

1. Jhn. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 3:9
 2. Heaven is worth everything! It is worth whatever it takes to get there?
 - a) Whatever we might choose to have instead of heaven is a poor choice.
 - b) But is a fact – we must choose between heaven and many other things.
- B. Heaven is for those who **choose** to go there.
1. Not everyone is heaven bound!
 2. If it is to be our home – there is to be certain decisiveness about the matter!
 - a) Mt. 5:6 – hunger/thirst after righteousness – does this describe us?
 - b) We must long to be with God w/a passion that will not be denied!
- C. To get to heaven requires **discipline**!
1. Heb. 12:1-3 – keep our mind on where we are going!
 - a) devil throws out discouragement; temptation; sin
 - b) Life throws out detours/curves that can cause us to waste valuable time.
 - c) Must not let these things rob us of our destiny! Determine they will not! Prov. 4:25-27.
 2. To best understand discipline – look at **Jesus**.
 - a) His destiny was the cross. NOTHING would deter Him from it! Look to a passage talking about Jesus.
 - b) Isa. 50:7 – *set face like flint*. Denotes courage; **firmness; resolution**.
 - c) Likewise, we must resolve with absolute certainty that we ARE going to get to heaven!
 3. It will require that we do not do anything dumb so our place in heaven will not be jeopardized.
 - a) Many sins are like that.
 - b) Temptation says no consequences; no problem; no one will know. Some do this and regret it for life!
 4. 1 Cor. 9:27
 5. The will God has given us is powerful! But it needs to be protected; nurtured! It can be easily damaged or destroyed!
- D. Here are two passages that should fill us with hope!
1. If we decisively & honestly place ourselves under God's protection – there isn't a power anywhere that will keep us out of heaven!
 2. John 10:28-29; Rom. 8:31-39
 3. Having heaven as our goal is the most empowering thing that we can experience!

II. Heaven is the logical end of a growth process.

- A. Gary Henry: *heaven will be populated with people who have grown toward God. Those who have allowed God to conform their character to His!*
- B. 2 Peter 1:1-4
 - 1. **God** wants us to be with Him forever! He wants us to be just like Him! He wants us to share in the goodness of His character!
 - 2. See also 1:5-11. Stress 1:10-11.
 - 3. Here's the point: Heaven will NOT be our home if we are not putting this passage into practice!
 - 4. Our character must be **growing** closer to God!
- C. God is not going to "inflict" heaven on anyone who has no desire to be with Him or be **like** Him!
 - 1. Every **deed**; decision; **choice** we make in life either moves us closer to God or farther away from Him.
 - 2. We cannot expect to spend our lives making choices that draw us away from God and then expect to wake up in heaven one day!
 - 3. We must do as God pleases! We must desire to become more like Him!
 - 4. Heaven is for those who want what God wants!
- D. If we truly want what God wants for us then we can **KNOW** that heaven WILL be our home!
 - 1. 1 John 5:13

Conclusion:

- A. Who are we? Where are we going?
 - 1. Think we can see how the gospel of Christ answers these questions!
 - 2. The person who knows who he is & where he is going is the person who has gotten his act together!
- B. To know that I am God's created child & that I am headed to heaven should give meaning and significance to everyday!
- C. If you are a faithful Christian – be thankful for what that means to you. Col. 2:6-7. Let God guide you through whatever life may hold & bring you to where He is.
- D. If you are not a faithful Christian – take God seriously!
 - 1. If not, lost eternally!
 - 2. Continue to drift from one meaningless thing to another.
- E. Not a Christian? Now is the time to become one! 2 Cor. 5:14-15
- F. INVITATION