

Resurrection – An Eternity With Christ  
Luke 20:27-40

For me, the most exciting moment that will ever take place in all of my existence will be that moment when all of life here on earth is called to a close and I am given the great and blessed privilege of entering into the eternal presence of our Lord in heaven.

Yes, dying in this life is a fearful thing. God has made it to be that way. It is an unknown and mysterious pathway that our minds can't comprehend.

But for those of us who have received Christ as our Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit gives us enough confidence to accept and to look forward to the mysteries of that pathway. Because we know that joy unspeakable is just one step inside that pathway, and that it is there that we will enjoy the same "resurrection" that the Lord Jesus enjoyed.

And over the past two weeks or so, we have been carefully considering some of the possible outcomes that will take place when we do find ourselves suddenly standing there in the eternal presence of our Lord and as He reveals to us what our eternity is going to be like.

And may I pause at the beginning of our study today and give us some encouraging thoughts about heaven and about what our eternity with our Lord will actually be like.

Firstly, heaven is obviously not as some people imagine, a place where we will float around on some clouds, playing our harps. And neither will we have wings as the angels do. That is all foolish imaginations.

No, heaven is a very real place with a very real and "physical" existence with very "physical attributes". And no, not "physical" in the same manner of understanding that we have now, but there will still be a form of "physicality" to all things in eternity, just different.

We're told in the Book of Revelation that at the very end of time, the earth and the heavens as we know them will be completely destroyed and a new heaven and a new earth will be created. There in Revelation chapter 21 we read,

<sup>1</sup>Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I 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 the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. <sup>4</sup>He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."  
<sup>5</sup>And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new. (Revelation 21:1-5)

Did you take careful note of the words, "a New Heaven and New Earth". That is more than just a "clue" folks. Those are plain words meant for us to understand. God gave them the same names, "Heaven" and "Earth" to say to us that they will be much like the first ones, with most all the same attributes and provisions, except that the "New Heaven and the New Earth" will be incorruptible and eternal.

And we're told here within these words, and also in other places in these scriptures that the New Earth will have not only a New Jerusalem but also other cities with houses and streets where the events of daily life will take place. But praise be to God, our daily life then will be without the usual difficulties and stresses and failures that we are so accustomed to in this life, no more failures, no more tears, no more pain and suffering, no more death.

Let me just say this again so that none of us has reason to misunderstand. The new heaven and the new earth will be real places, more real than the one we live within today, real places with real people and real daily activities of life.

I recommend that you read a book by Randy Alcorn entitled "Heaven". As you read his scriptural accounts about heaven, which will include the new earth, you'll find that yes, heaven, and eternal life with our Lord is worth whatever difficulties we might endure here in this life as we give our hearts to Christ.

And best of all, take note of those words that I just read for us in verse 3,

<sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. (Revelation 21:3)

Oh Dear Christians, God Himself is going to come and live with us in our new heaven and new earth. Isn't that the most wonderful "Good News" we could ever hear.

But then also, as I think about all the many blessings that we as the beloved children of God will receive as we live there with Him in heaven, I must confess that I cannot imagine what it will be like for those who are not His beloved children, who have not received Christ Jesus as Savior, what their eternity will be like. Their future in their eternity will be so very, very different from ours. The suffering of eternal hell that awaits them is terrifying . . . terrifying.

And while perhaps most of those people don't let such thoughts enter their minds, I'm sure that there are some, perhaps many who do. And no doubt, they shudder with fear.

One might ask, so if they do fear, why don't they simply turn and receive Christ as their Savior. And the answer is, I don't know. I just don't know! I wish I could understand, because some of those very ones are people that I love dearly. And I want desperately for them to give their hearts and lives to Christ in Salvation. But they won't, and it breaks my heart.

In this passage that we have been studying here in the Book of Luke chapter 20, we find a whole group of people, the Sadducees, who want to believe that when a person dies, they simply cease to exist, that there will be no resurrection, that there will be no life of any kind after this one that we are now living, and especially that there will be no recompense.

And yes, there are also many, many people in our own day that have similar beliefs, or at least, similar hopes.

And again, why would some people have such hopes, that at the moment of their death they would simply cease to exist?

We said in an earlier study that it seems that for many of them their reasoning and their hope is simple, that if there is no further existence after their death then there will also be no possibility of future consequences and no recompense for any of their actions and behaviors while they lived this life. And their fears of those consequences and recompenses are very valid fears.

Let's pause and again read these words given to us here in Luke chapter 20 beginning in verse 27 and we'll talk about them. Listen!

<sup>27</sup> Then some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, <sup>28</sup> saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. <sup>29</sup> Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. <sup>30</sup> And the second took her as wife, and he died childless. <sup>31</sup> Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children, and died. <sup>32</sup> Last of all the woman died also. <sup>33</sup> Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife." <sup>34</sup> And Jesus answered and said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. <sup>35</sup> But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; <sup>36</sup> nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. <sup>37</sup> But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' <sup>38</sup> For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him." <sup>39</sup> Then some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well." <sup>40</sup> But after that they dared not question Him anymore. (Luke 20:27-40)

As we continue with our study about the resurrection today, may we say again just a few of the foundational truths that we find plainly given within these scriptures!

First, may we say again that the resurrection is not one of those "gray areas" of scripture that gives cause for wonder or debate! Not at all! There is simply too much "black and white" explanation written about it within these words for us to have very many questions at all.

And granted, yes, we must first be willing to fully accept these scriptures as being inerrant, infallible truth. And we recognize that there are many, especially those who refuse to accept Christ as their Savior and Lord, who do not trust that these scriptures are truths given by our Lord. In their desperate need to believe that there will be no accountability or retribution for sinful behavior while in this life, they resort to inventing their own, more preferred, "alternative endings".

These scriptures give a description of such desperate people. They are described as being "poor, wretched, naked and blind".

Do they not know, can they not see that to simply make up a lie and then live by it does not make their lie come true! Sooner or later, there will come a time of reckoning.

And all their alternative endings will fade into the foolishness that they really are. And those dear souls will be sorely disappointed for all of eternity.

But for those of us who do believe and accept that these scriptures are the inerrant, infallible truths of God, we will find within them chapter after chapter of plain and simple words that clearly declare to us all the wonderful truths about the resurrection, explaining exactly how it will take place.

Some of the more plainly given truths are those in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 that we studied last week. And I invite you to read those precious words again.

And then, also last week, we concluded with the words of the Lord Jesus, in the final chapter of the bible, Revelation 22 where Jesus said,

<sup>12</sup> "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done. <sup>13</sup> I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." <sup>14</sup> Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. (Revelation 22:12-14)

Folks, this day will surely come! For those of us who have breathed our last, and our spirits having been taken into paradise and our bodies having gone back to the dust of the earth, we will be raised and will join with Christ at His coming. And for those who remain here and alive at His coming, they too will be caught up into the clouds with Him and will join the brethren who have been resurrected from their graves.

Listen to the way that God explains about that in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4!

<sup>13</sup> . . . . we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. <sup>15</sup> For this we

declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17)

And again in 1 Corinthians 15, we read . . .

<sup>50</sup> I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup> Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. <sup>53</sup> For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup> When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Corinthians 15:50-54)

How more "plain-spoken" can God be!

It does not really matter what men might think and say. When all is said and done, God still remains the Almighty, omnipotent God who is sovereign over all. And He will have the final word in all that will take place. And He surely will bring both His love and His justice to bear upon all men.

For those of us who have received Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord, we will have eternal life with Him in heaven. But for those who have rejected Him, they will have eternal death in the burning fires of hell.

And again, as He declared to us in Revelation 22

<sup>12</sup> "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done. <sup>13</sup> I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." <sup>14</sup> Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. (Revelation 22:12-14)

He surely is coming soon and He surely will bring His recompense with Him.

Now, before we bring our study about the resurrection to a conclusion, may we consider a final few thoughts given to us by the Lord Jesus in Matthew chapter 25. Turn there and read with me . . .

Here in these words, Jesus first gave two parables. The first, the Parable of the Ten Virgins" strongly reminds us that we are to be ever-faithful, ever-vigilant, prepared at every moment for the coming of the Bridegroom.

The second parable, the Parable of the Talents, strongly reminds us that there surely will be a time of accounting for all that we have done in this life, especially in our handling of the special Spiritual Gifts that God has entrusted into our care.

And then, in verse 31 of Matthew 25, (follow along with me), there we read, <sup>31</sup> "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats.

<sup>33</sup> And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: <sup>35</sup> for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

<sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? <sup>38</sup> When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? <sup>39</sup> Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' <sup>40</sup> And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.'

<sup>41</sup> Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: <sup>42</sup> for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

<sup>44</sup> Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' <sup>45</sup> Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.' <sup>46</sup> And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (Matthew 25:31-46)

These words speak very clearly and plainly about all the many things that we will have done while in this life, as well as for all those many things that we should have done, but didn't do. And they speak especially about that very special day when each of us will be called to account and to stand in judgment before the Almighty God for each of those things.

This is the "Great White Throne Judgment" spoken about in Revelation chapter 20. Listen, verse 11,

<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. (Revelation 20:11-15)

Here, and in Matthew chapter 25, we find that we will be held accountable for the "works" we have done, and for the "works" that we should have done, but did not do them while in this life. Does that mean that our "works" can provide a means of salvation for us? No, not at all! But our works do reveal the evidence of our salvation that the Lord Jesus spoke about there in Matthew chapter 25, that "that which we did for the least of the people around us, we did, or didn't do for Him. And He will use that evidence as He judges us by those "works".

Simply put, if you and I have received Christ as our Savior and Lord, our salvation should be able to be clearly seen within the works that we do.



But with that being said, the Parable of the Talents and the similar parable, the Parable of the Minas, both also speak of accountability and judgment that takes place on beyond the initial "White Throne" judgment.

For those of us who have truly received Christ as our Savior, those sheep that will go off to the right hand and into heaven, Jesus will have a second accounting for us.

Yes, we will be in heaven and we will experience the eternal joy and benefits of being there. But once we are there in heaven, there will be additional special rewards and benefits that will be given to those who have been truly faithful with the "Gifts" God had given to them.

We're told about that in the Parable of the Talents and in the Parable of the Minas. There we're told that the Master will give special further rewards to the servants who have proven to be the most faithful in their works.

In each of those parables, we find that some of the servants were more diligent and faithful than others. What will that mean for us, for you and me, as we take our position before the Master and give an account for the gifts He has entrusted unto us?

I must confess that I really don't know, simply because, we will already have received and been guaranteed an eternity of unimaginable bliss in the realms of heaven. How can the best get any better? It cannot! But then again, somehow it can! For those who have been more diligent and more faithful during this life, they will receive a greater honor in heaven. Listen again to some of those words given in Matthew 25, beginning in verse 19.

<sup>19</sup> After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup> So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' <sup>21</sup> His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' <sup>22</sup> He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' <sup>23</sup> His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' (Matthew 25:19-23)

Yes, these are mysterious words, words that give us a brief glimpse into the events that will take place in the eternities of heaven. Words like these and then those words in the Parable of the Minas speak about cities and they suggest all sorts of work and activities that our Lord will appoint us to be doing over the eons of eternity that are ahead of us there in heaven. Exciting possibilities and all of them good, really, really good.

And again, the question I asked a moment ago, "How can the best get any better?" It can't! But then again, somehow it can!

To stand in glory and to receive these special rewards of glory and honor from the One who loved us and gave Himself for us will be worth our pushing on forward every day of this life and giving all that we have in our service to the Lord Jesus.

And we must! We must!

We should never allow enough to be enough. We should always be giving more and more of ourselves, using those special gifts that God has entrusted to us, gaining more and more souls for His kingdom, producing more and more fruit.

Folks, I really do look forward to that special day of my resurrection, when I stand before Jesus. Am I afraid? Not in the least! He is trustworthy with my eternity, and I will be excited to see Him.

And Yes, I do so hope that He will say those very special words to me . . .

<sup>23</sup> . . . 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' (Matthew 25:23)

Pray with me.