

Heaven is Wonderful...

July 3, 2022

Introduction

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ Online Ministry. Services are presented on YouTube, Facebook and our website one week following recording. This week's message is titled Heaven is Wonderful. Thank you to Rhonda, Dave, Barb and Don for being part of the video and to Robin for helping to plan and lead singing. The scripture reading is Isaiah two, one to five.

Welcome & Announcements

Good morning and welcome. And let's start out with a few announcements. Today we have a very special birthday, not today, but this week. Our dear friend John is going to turn 92 this week. I hope I have that right. I think I do. Maybe it's 93, but I'm pretty sure it's 92. So that's pretty exciting for him. Camp Omagh is holding a family barbecue July 3rd, starting at 3 p.m. with swimming, singing and supper--, swimming, singing and supper. So you're welcome to join that.

Gloria died on June the 22nd, and her memorial will be here on July the second at 11 a.m. and if you would like, you can come an hour early for visitation. And Gloria requested that you wear your favorite clothes, your favorite colors and dress as living flowers or wear an item or anything of your favorite color to that. Those are our all of our announcements. And I would like to pray right now. Dear God in heaven as we worship today, we pray that that our worship we want to worship you with our hearts, with our minds, with our souls and with our whole being. And we pray that we can do that. We pray specially today for Jim, and we pray also for for Barbara, who have both lost lost spouses in the last month. And we pray that at this time we pray that you will give them strength and give them hope and and that they will maintain their faith and be the your people in their circumstances. And we pray that that's true for all of us, that we will all continue to grow in faith and grow to be more like you each day in Jesus name. Amen.

Communion

The Gospel of John First chapter, verse 14, the word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only who came from the father full of grace and truth. One of the early writers of church ideas, Augustine referred to the Lord's Supper as visible words and we have some teachers in the audience. I almost said old teachers, but we'll just say teachers.

[audience shout] Former teachers!

One of the methods used is an object if you can see something, a picture, or an object you can associate with it. And you can learn here we have in front of you visible words so we have these physical, tangible, simple items with we have them in our hands. We're going to taste we are trying to grasp or remember the promise of God and His grace through Jesus Christ. Now there is a mystery in what we're about to do. Also, we each have our own understanding we each bring our own individual burdens, griefs, sorrows, our experience of the last week and beyond. That connect to these things that we have the visible, tangible, simple items connect us to Christ who are all different, and the

supper reaches each of us differently one week to the next. It's never really the same so a communal act that with this mystery may not be completely solvable or completely understood, but it's a faith expression we're always trying to grasp the variety of different impact and meanings and significance. This Lord's Supper has. There was a line that jumped out at me from an old poem by Robert Browning. The poem is Andrea Del Sarto and the line which you could probably all repeat. A man's reach should exceed his grasp or what's a heaven for? We should always be seeking God, reaching maybe never understanding completely, but seeking reaching God.

Now God always exceeds our finite and natural grasp. But there, here, with this remembrance and these emblems which is more than a memorial, but a present communication with God through Christ we are renewing our spirit through His Spirit and refreshing our spiritual needs here's a verse in Revelation one verse eight I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty Let's pray Father in Heaven, Almighty God help us to receive with Thanksgiving these emblems of Christ and body and His blood. Renew our spirit, strengthen us that we may continually seek after you and your ways, Almighty God through Jesus, we pray.

Reading

Well, the Scripture reading is coming from the Old Testament, and it's from Isaiah chapter two, verses one to five, and it says The Mountain of the Lord. This is what, Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. In the last days. The mountain of the Lord's Temple will be established as chief among the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many people will come and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways so that we may walk in His path. The Lord will go from Zion the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples they will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation nor will they train for war any more. Come, O house of Jacob. Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Message

Good morning, everyone. There is a fundamental truth, and that is that God is coming back to this earth and that we will see His coming and as the Scripture says, and then there will be no more sorrow, no more crying no more pain, no more death and a new creation will be ours, the marriage, if you will, of heaven and earth becoming one that may be new to some.

But for those of us who've been really paying attention to scriptures in the last few years, listening to Right and a few others, heaven is not just the end of all things, but it's a new creation. Some of you recognize the name D.L Moody, and in his book he says this The book about heaven he said, When I was a boy, I thought of heaven as a great shining city with vast walls and domes and spires with nobody in it except white robed angels. Ever thought of that who were strangers to me. But by and by, my little brother died and I thought of a great city with walls and domes and spires. And one little fellow that I was acquainted with he was the only one I knew at the time. Then another brother died, and there were two that I knew were in heaven. Then my acquaintances began to die in the flock continually grew, but it was not till I sent one of my own little children to my heavenly parent God that I began to think that I had a little in myself. A second child went a third, a fourth. And by that time I had so many acquaintances in heaven that I no longer saw walls and domes and spires. I began to think of

the residents of the celestial city as my friends and my home. And now so many of my acquaintances have gone there that it sometimes seems to me I know more people in heaven than I do on Earth.

Heaven, as N.T. Wright said, is wonderful, but Jesus, Isaiah, Paul, John, Matthew and others remind us that Heaven isn't the end of the world. That God promises over and over and over again in Scripture that heaven and Earth will become one. The joining together as one that God will restore everything. There will be no more divide but a new reality. And the Bible is replete with Scripture saying the very same. In Acts is written. Chapter three 19th through 21. It says this Repent then and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out. The times of refreshing may come from the Lord and that He may send the Messiah who has been appointed for you. Even Jesus Heaven must receive Him. Listen now until the time comes for God to restore or everything, as He promised long ago through His Holy Prophets, Jesus, John, Paul, John, Peter, Isaiah, Joel, Amos, Nahum, Zephaniah. They all talk about the restoration, the recreation, the liberation, the renewal of all things. And here are just a few in the book of Isaiah, chapter 65, 17 through 19.

He says this. See, I will create new heavens and a new world the former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind, but be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create. 65 and 22 Isaiah as the new heavens and the new earth that I will make will endure before me. So will your name and descendants endure. And then not only Old Testament writers, but certainly New Testament writers, Jesus himself and Peter reminds us in second Peter, three but in keeping with God's promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness dwells. And please notice this extraordinary amazing promise of Jesus for all of us in the Book of Revelation, he said, this picture in your mind, if you can, because we will see this. I saw the holy city the new Jerusalem. Listen, now coming down out of heaven from God prepared as a bride, beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard the loud voice from the throne saying, Look, God says dwelling place is now among the people and he will dwell with them. So different than the what do I was taught going up? What are you going to do up there? I don't know. Just float around or something. I don't know. It's not what Scripture says. It's never what Jesus said. Even the Old Testament writers do that. It's the coming together the uniting, the marriage of heaven and earth where we see one another. And I'll talk about this just a moment. We will see people whom we love. And we'll see them as God sees them. We'll see Him, we'll see Jesus, we'll see the Holy Spirit, we'll see our loved ones. They will be His people. Let's be personal. We will be His people. And God Himself will be with us and be our God. And He will wipe every tear from our eyes because there will be no more death, no mourning no crying, no paying for the order of things has passed away. And the one who is seated on the throne, God said I am making everything new. And then he says, Write this down. Don't forget it. These are trustworthy and true. And does anyone believe that God does not tell the truth? He speaks the truth. This is our future. Ephesians 1:10 God purposed in Christ to be put into effect when the times reached their fulfillment to bring unity to everything, to all things in heaven and earth. Under Christ. Colossians one, 19 and 24. God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Christ and through Him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on Earth or things in Heaven by making peace through his blood shed on the cross. You see, when Jesus died and shed His blood forgiveness of sins is offered to us.

But there's so much more than that. It's the reality of being with Him in a new relationship. If heaven on earth becoming one, we're going to see our loved ones again. I'll talk about that in just a moment. The promise given some 800 years before Jesus was born talks about the new heavens. Believe it or not, Isaiah. 66, 22. As the new heavens and the new Earth that I will make will endure

before me, declares the Lord. And then first John. Three, two dear friends. Now we are children of God. What we will be has not yet been made known. We're looking forward to that. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall see Him as He is our promise. Romans 11 and if the Spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead, which He did, is living in you. So question does the Holy Spirit live in you? Yeah. Well, if the Spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, and He does live in us, He who raised Jesus from the dead will also give life to your our mortal bodies because of His Holy Spirit, who lives in you, transforming us on a daily basis.

I have a lot of friends who are preachers. One of my favorite preachers of all time is Dale Pauls. A brilliant, brilliant man. I may have told you this about Dale. Any time he would preach the night before he was preaching and if it was in his home congregation, he would do it. And if he was preaching in another congregation, he would still do it. He would stand up behind the pulpit on Saturday night and he would preach his sermon out loud to absolutely no one except to God and to Jesus and the Spirit. And he wanted to hear what he was saying so that the next day it might be clear. Brilliant man. And he wrote this tiny article filled with scripture that gives you some insight into his spirit. Here's what he says.

God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. John three That Jesus came not to judge the world, but to save the world. John 12th. And that the Lamb of God takes away the sins of the world. John What I have learned, he said from Scripture that Jesus Christ is the atoning sacrifice for our sins but not only for our sins. Listen now, but for the sins of the whole world. First, John, to and that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting people's sins against Him Second Corinthians five, 18 or 19. I have learned from Scripture that we are to call no person impure or unclean. No one no Acts ten, 28, and that when Jesus is truly lifted up from the Earth, He will draw all people to himself. John 12:32. I have learned from Scripture that one day the Earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Isaiah 11 nine. And that one day God intends to bring all things in Heaven and on earth together under Christ. Ephesians 110 that one day, a great multitude that no one could count from every nation, tribe, people and language will cry out in a loud voice. Salvation belongs to our God. Revelation seven, nine and ten. And that one day the glory of the nations will be brought into God's New Jerusalem. The Kings of the Earth will bring their splendor, splendor into it in the leaves of the tree of life will bring healing to the nations. And I have learned that the living God is the Savior of all people, and especially those who believe in amazing Scripture and first Corinthians 16, Paul says, This is for each one of us. Now, Paul says, We will all be changed. We will be imperishable because death has been swallowed up in victory. No more death where no death is your victory, where no death is your sting. But thanks be to God, he gives us the victory to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our sweet, amazing, wonderful Gloria has passed. We'll see her again, will be with her again and she'll be with us. The Apostle Apostle Paul says there's a natural body and a spiritual body, and we eagerly await for our adoption. The redemption of our bodies will never die. We are we will live even though we die. We shall live the redemption of our bodies. God will not throw away our bodies, but he gives us the glorious body in a new heaven on earth. It's all difficult to comprehend. But we will live with God will live with Jesus. Will live with the Holy Spirit, and we will live with our loved ones. And we will have time finally we'll have time. Imagine spending time talking with God for as long as you'd like. Imagine spending time with Jesus for as long as you'd like. And the spirit amazing. Think about meeting Peter for the first time. Can we go for a walk? Can we have a chat? Think of John. Think of your favorite

characters think of our grandparents whom many of us have lost a long, long, long time ago. I know what I want to say to my grandparents. Tell me everything. Just tell me everything. Tell me where you were born. Tell me what life was like. Tell me everything. And they will be able to talk to our grandparents, our parents and our babies that left this earth way too early. God's promise of comfort is gloriously wonderful. Isaiah said that the entire earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, just as the waters cover the sea.

And we can't forget. We can't forget the animals. The animals. Have you ever thought about animals living in heaven? A new creation? The Bible talks about animals and how they all get along famously. Really listen. Isaiah Chapter 11, six through nine, the wolf will live with the lamb. Doesn't say the wolf will eat the lamb. It's not there. No, no more enmity between ferocious animals and cute cuddly kittens. The leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion in the yearling together and the little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together and the lion will eat straw like the ox. Infants will play near the hole of a cobra. Young children put their hands in the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. No longer, Jeremiah says, will they teach their neighbors or say to one another, You need to know the Lord because everyone will know the Lord from least of them to the greatest, says the Lord.

This is our reality. So let me close with these words. I think it's good to say to one another what I say is said to his people, Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord God has amazing things waiting for us. Amen

Closing Prayer

Let us pray. Dear God in Heaven. Thank you so much for the opportunity we've had to be here today and to be here with people that we love and people that we care for and people who care for us. Thank you, God, for the opportunity we have to offer our selves a living sacrifices to you. And we pray that this week that will be something that that we can do. And we pray that you'll give us opportunities to serve you and opportunities to be your people and to reach to be more like you each day. And, and that we will that we will be who you would want us to be. In Jesus name. Amen.

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