



“1 NUMBER CHANGED EVERYTHING” “The Greatest Possession”

John 3:16

December 29, 2013 AM Worship

Heaven's Immediate Benefits (John 10:10)

- Purpose
- Protection
- Power
- Perspective

What Heaven is Not

What Heaven Is and Its Eternal Benefits

John 11; John 14:1-6; Revelation 21

- It is a Place
- It is a Person
- It is Peace
- It is a Position
- It is Permanent
- It is His Presence
- It is Perfection

Our Response:

1. Where are you today? Is Heaven expecting you? Is the light on? If not, you can take care of that today! Ask Jesus Christ to come into your heart and life and save you right now. Remember it is as simple as **ABC!** **Admit** to God you are a sinner, **Ask** for His forgiveness, **Believe** Jesus is God's Son, **Confess** Him as Savior & **Commit** Your Life to Him as Lord (the Boss).
2. Maybe you have made that decision, but never have made it public. He is calling you to step out and take that next step that He asks us to do. Be baptized.
3. In order for you to grow and be all that the Lord is calling you to be, you need to be plugged in to a church. If you do not have a church home, and God has called you to be a part of **Petal FBC**, then step across the line today and join! We need you and you need us!
4. Are you walking in that purpose, protection, power that the Lord provides for His children to walk through this daily life?
5. Some of us that are believers have gotten way to comfortable on this earth, lulled to sleep into thinking we are at home, at ease in Zion. We have lost our perspective... Where do you need to have God's perspective in your life right now? Where do you need to be living with heaven in view?
6. Finally, most of us already know the truth of John 3;16, but my final question is who will be in heaven because of you and me? Who will you share with this coming year? In what ways can you plug in and start serving and going to help connect others to the Gospel?
7. Folks, we are not home yet and there is a war that is raging right now for the souls of men, women, boys and girls. Will you join in the fight?

JOHN 3:16 THE NUMBERS OF HOPE

“The Greatest Possession”

John 3:16

December 29, 2013 AM Service

FOR GOD - *THE GREATEST GOD*
SO LOVED – *THE GREATEST LOVE*
THE WORLD - *THE GREATEST NUMBER*
THAT HE GAVE – *THE GREATEST GIVER*
HIS ONLY SON – *THE GREATEST GIFT*
THAT WHOEVER – *THE GREATEST INVITATION*
WOULD BELIEVE IN HIM – *THE GREATEST BELIEF*
SHALL NOT PERISH – *THE GREATEST EXCLUSION*
SHALL NOT PERISH – *THE GREATEST EXCLUSION*

We have come to the end of our journey of this 26 word parade of Hope, perhaps the most important Scripture if not at least the most precise to put the gospel in a nutshell. The 26 Greatest words that changed my life and has changed many of yours. I hoped you have enjoyed this journey, that is made more you aware of God’s great love for us, his sacrifice and His desire for you and I to accept and experience that which He offers. I am praying that we will see the fruit to come from this series of messages. I believe there are some even here today that need to respond to what you have heard and experience. I urge you to do it today. I do hope also that it has challenged us to have a deeper desire to share with others this amazing and life changing message, God loves the world and He loves them and died for them too!

This morning, we come to the greatest possession we could ever have. The only thing we can relate to is our possessions here on earth. Can you think, what is your greatest possession? We can list all kinds of things here can’t we? None of them bad (I hope!). But the question follows quickly behind, when you die what will happen to the possession. It will be passed down to someone else, it will be sold, it will be given away, it will be left alone untouched, it will be discarded because the person who gets it does not find the same value in it that you did, it will be spent, it will be invested, it will buy something, but the bottom line is that you will not take it with you. No U-haul’s behind any hearse.

So let's consider then that greatest possession, the last two words of John 3:16, eternal life. That is our greatest possession for it will last as the Bible says forever. And that eternal life translates into the exact opposite of what we talked about last week, hell for this is heaven!! For the child of God this is great news, and for those looking for hope, for the Savior this is great news, you and I can have eternal life. *Aionios - eternal* is found 17 times in John's Gospel, 6 times in 1 John and 8 times in Matthew, Mark and Luke. We are engineered, wired of the stuff of eternity. Eternal The life of God Himself. Thus this great sentence, which summarizes the whole Gospel story, begins with God and ends with everlasting life which is life with God. It begins with the One who had no beginnings and ends with the One who had no end!

There will be both immediate benefits and eternal benefits.

Immediate Benefits (John 10:10) Just to mention a few...

- **Purpose** – We have a reason to get up every morning, a reason to live.
- **Protection** – We are protected in more ways than we know, but our lives are protected to get us to eternity.
- **Power** – To live day to day, to walk through this journey called life and boy do we need that in our daily lives.
- **Perspective** – This is not our home, this is not all that there is. We are called to see life from God's perspective, not ours.

What Heaven is Not

See Lucado's Introduction.

We hear these people talk about dying, and do you never notice, very few of their stories say they even went to hell, only heaven, warm and fuzzy feeling. Remember, most Americans believe in heaven and think they will go there because they have been good in this life. Folks, heaven is way beyond what they are describing, they haven't seen heaven as I understand the Bible to be. Maybe they got a glimpse I don't know, but it was only that.

What Heaven Is and Its Eternal Benefits

John 11 John 14:1-6, Revelation 21

- **It is a Place** – It is real, it is not some pie in the sky. It is a place where we will never be more alive than then. The Bible describes it.
- **It is a Person** – Eternal life, heaven it is Jesus. Being in the presence of Jesus for eternity. It is joy unimaginable.

- **It is Peace** – that peace that passes all understanding, everything that can trouble us, death, divorce, depression, disease, despair, all of it will be wiped away. Peace that we really cannot comprehend.
- **It is a Position** – We become joint-heirs with Jesus, can you imagine. On this earth we are his adopted children, but that all changes when we claim our eternal inheritance. We also we receive our rewards for how we have lived this life here on earth. We will have a place of serve too.
- **It is Permanent** – Oh, I wish this moment would last forever we often here people say. Can you think of that kind of moment? Wishing it would never end. Multiply times a million and we get a glimpse of what heaven will be like, except it will never stop. Nothing can ever again get in our way of Jesus.
- **It is His Presence** – We won't just talk about His Jesus, having to rely on the Holy Spirit, we will literally for the rest of eternity be in the presence of Jesus!!
- **It is Perfection** – Sin is gone, evil is banished, we are perfect. Everyone will love everybody. No race, language, color, nationality, economic status, nothing can separate us from God's love nor from each other. It will be perfect!

Finally heaven is home. Can you remember coming home from a vacation, maybe you lived away from home?, coming home for Christmas or the holidays. I can remember those times vividly, college days, single days living in Alabama. Calling Bryan at the radio station. I'll be home for Christmas. The longing to get there, the joy and anticipation, the relief of finally getting there, and the joy and peace of being with my family.

And now it's not quite the same and though that's hard it's a great reminder of something very important that we all need to remember...

Church Family, we need to be reminded as good as the life can be at times, we sometimes get lulled to sleep and distracted into thinking that we are at home. It is not! We are not home yet. The Bible tells us that we are aliens and strangers in this land, pilgrims bound for another place. That place, heaven, home! Remember, we are not home yet.

SONG: Not Home Yet by Steven Curtis Chapman

Closing Illustration: John Todd (Lucado's Book)

The light is on, you are already expected!

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