

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

July 14

2024

## Some Thoughts Concerning Heaven

My friend, the hope of spending eternal life in heaven is for real (Titus 1:2), and I do not know anyone who does not want to spend eternity there. So, with that thought in mind, let's examine some thoughts concerning heaven.

### Heaven Is The Hope of The Christian.

In writing to the saints in Rome concerning a believers eternal reward, Paul penned, *"For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance"* (Romans 8:24-25). So, you see, Christians do have the hope of heaven, even the apostle Paul himself did (Ref. Titus 1:2). Therefore, we as Christians need to be constantly mindful of this hope we have, which will not disappoint (Romans 5:1-5), and as Paul informed, we need to eagerly wait with perseverance for our eternal home in heaven.

### Heaven Will Be The Eternal Abode of The Righteous.

When we think about heaven, we need to realize that only the righteous will spend eternity in heaven (Matthew 25:46). Therefore, we all need to strive to be faithful hearers and doers of God's word (James 1:21-25). For by doing so we will be blessed, and we will someday hear Jesus say, *"Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundations of the world"* (Matthew 25:34).

### Heaven Will Be Worth The Cost of Discipleship.

If we want to spend eternity in heaven, we are going to have to count the cost of discipleship. In Matthew 16:24-26, Jesus said, *"If anyone desires to come after Me, let Him deny Himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"* My friend, I venture to say that we would agree that there is nothing, and I express nothing, in this world worth losing our souls for. Therefore, deny self, take up your cross, and follow Jesus!

### Not Everyone Will Make It To Heaven.

Did you know that not everyone will inherit an eternal home in heaven? You see, Jesus said, *"Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven"* (Matthew 7:21). Likewise, the apostle Paul gave a stern warning when he wrote, *"...in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power..."* (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). Now think about that, and know as Jesus, and the apostle Paul, both clearly state, only those who do the will of God will make it to heaven.

### Heaven Is A Prepared Place For A Prepared People.

The kingdom of heaven was prepared from the foundation of the world (Matthew 25:34), and the fact of the matter is, heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. So, now the question is, are you prepared? If not, why not get prepared: Hear the word of God (Luke 11:28; Romans 10:17), Believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God (John 8:24; Acts 8:37), Repent of your sins (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30), Confess Jesus Christ (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:9-10); Be baptized into Christ for the remission of your sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27-29), and remain faithful unto death (1 Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10). Once more, heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people, and God desires for all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of truth (1 Timothy 2:4). My friend, these are just a few thoughts concerning heaven. I hope you find them to be beneficial, and I likewise hope that you making preparation to spend eternity in heaven!

✍️ Brad Phillips

## A Strong Church

Over the years, much has been written on how to build a strong church. And, no doubt, much of what has been written is good, scriptural, and should be applied. The Apostle Paul has given an inspired formula for a strong church in Romans 15:14: "Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with knowledge, able also to admonish one another." We would do well to constantly keep before us this passage.

A strong church is one that is "full of goodness." To be full of goodness is to be characterized by the excellence of the inner person which manifests itself in a quality of life that is attractive to others. A striving for moral excellence should characterize every member of a congregation in order for the church to be strong. Churches composed of members who are of questionable moral character are weak churches. Preachers who shy away from strong teaching on moral issues for fear such would diminish their numbers in attendance are making their contribution to the weakness of the church. The strength of a congregation is not to be equated necessarily to the number in attendance at its services. A congregation with thirty-five members who are full of goodness is more honorable in God's sight than one of several hundred members who are not.

A strong church is one that is "filled with all knowledge." This means that strong churches are not made up of people who are ignorant of the Bible. This is true because "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). One simply cannot have a strong faith based upon a weak understanding of the word of God. Our age is an age of shortcuts and convenience, but there is no shortcut to acquiring a genuine knowledge of the Bible. Nothing will take the place of honest, diligent study and meditation of the scriptures. We must study to be approved of God and to save our souls (2 Tim. 2:15). Paul knew that he could not expect to help build a strong church at Rome out of people who were too lazy to study and meditate on the word. Let us not make the mistake of thinking that

we can allow emotional excitement, entertainment, or anything else, to substitute for the truth of the gospel.

A strong church is one made up of members who are "able also to admonish one another." That this might be true, two things are necessary: (1) sufficient knowledge of God's word in order to communicate it to another, and (2) the disposition or desire to do so. One cannot teach what he does not know, and one cannot know the Bible if he has not studied it with great interest. But all the knowledge in the world will not make a strong church unless those possessing that knowledge are of the disposition to communicate it to others. How sad it is that many members of the church do not have enough zeal to admonish their brethren or to encourage sinners to obey the gospel of Christ. Zeal without knowledge is just as bad as knowledge without zeal (Rom. 10:1-3; Lk. 12:47-48).

Let us all do our share (Eph. 4:16) so that the congregation will be a strong church.

*R. J. Evans*

### Belleville church of Christ

5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258

Website: [www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

#### Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study ..... 9:30 a.m.  
Sunday Morning Worship ..... 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday Evening Worship ..... 4:00 p.m.  
Wednesday Bible Study ..... 7:00 p.m.

#### Evangelist

Brad Phillips ..... (765) 720-2816