What Happens Next - **wk 3 – Heaven – Bringing it down to Earth**

**The Bible teaches we were created with an eternal soul. At death the soul separates from the body. The last couple weeks…**

**Hebrews 9:27 Just as people are destined to die once, (X reincarnation, ghosts) and after that to face judgment, 28 so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.**

**Where do we go? Some say heaven. But what is heaven? Play Music. Is it a place on earth, family, a love? We dream of what a place like that might be like… most have little idea. \*\*\*What will heaven be like?**

**Many faiths have a heaven… but they are not all the same…**

**Let’s see what the Bible says about it….**

**Five Myths about Heaven**

**1. “Heaven is what we make life here” - it is not a real place**

**Many say it’s what we make life here. Is it a hope of the weak? Wishful.**

**What do you think? Recent studies show… (Barna Research Poll)**

###### “What happens immediately after you die?” 61% heaven - / 15% purgatory, then heaven / 5% - reincarnated / 4% end of existence / .5% - hell

**“Heaven is a real place, where people live forever w/ God after they die?” 76% Americans / 78% - of church goers**

**“How do people get into heaven?” 6% - Be good / 34% - Believe in God /**

**57% - Believe in God and be good / 3% - you must be born again.**

**Most people either believe in a Heaven or want to believe in it.**

**How can we believe in a place we have never seen?**

**The Bible refers to “Heaven” 582 times in 550 diff. verses a literal place**

**Jesus talked a lot about the kingdom of heaven. His desire to see us there was the reason for His death – Jesus says Heaven is real!**

**2. “People become angels in Heaven”**

**Influenced by movies and traditions… “It’s a wonderful life”**

**Matthew 22:29 Jesus replied, “Your mistake is that you don’t know the Scriptures, and you don’t know the power of God. 30 For when the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage. In this respect they will be like the angels in heaven. (Misunderstood, simply means we will not marry)**

* **Angels - special created beings designed for special purposes**
* **You will not be an angel you will be a glorified human**

**3. “Heaven is not as beautiful as earth”**

Movie, Michael - he is sad to go to heaven… “I’m going to miss this…”

**Rev. 21-22, describe the new city of Heaven, Zion as beautiful & magnificent**

**Most descriptions of heaven are with human eyes and use earthly things to describe what has never been seen before…**

**John (Revelation) - uses earthly images, shapes, colors, & materials, to describe. We can’t be sure if literal or his best approximation.**

**Ezekiel 1:25-28 - Heaven described with words like - “likeness” and the “appearance of” and “it looked like”**

**Earth is just a glimpse into the mind of God and His creative power Whatever experience and beauty there are here, it most assuredly will be greater than we can imagine in Heaven.**

**James 1:17 - Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.**

**If there is anything good here – it’s from God - given to enjoy, a glimpse- Creation is good! (Rev 22 - earth is restored) beautiful colors, animals, mountains, beaches, It's going to be awesome**

**Baby in a mother’s womb can’t fathom the experiences outside of the womb. If you could communicate to the baby the wonders of the mts. And the awe of a sunset, the beauty of a field full of flowers, the wonders of the sea... A baby would never be able to connect or comprehend it until they get here and see it for themselves. Meanwhile the baby is content & happy. Likewise, we will never be able to comprehend the wonders, awe, & beauty of heaven until we get there.**

**Heaven will blow your mind – it’s like nothing we could ever imagine.**

**1 Corinthians 2:9 However, as it is written: “What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived” - the things God has prepared for those who love him 10 these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.**

**4. “Heaven will be boring”**

**Some feel in Heaven “There will be no meaning in life – or anything to do. Some says it’s the bad things that make the good things so good. Without sadness there is no joy without pain there is no relief…**

**Two common pictures of heaven we are given our whole life:**

**- Floating around on clouds with harps and eating grapes**

**- Standing and singing songs for the rest of eternity**

**Shows the puniness of our thinking we sometimes have.**

**Psalms 84:10 Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere.**

**Psalms 16:11 …you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. (you'll love it!)**

**WHAT WILL HEAVEN LIKE? If you go…**

**1. You will have no regrets**

**Revelation 21:1 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (No sorrow, crying, pain, or death…)**

**What if I’m bored or sad that my friends / family are not there?**

**Isaiah 65:17 “See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create…**

**No remorse or sadness for those not there.**

**You won’t be disappointed!**

**2. You will be made New (New bodies - New hearts - New minds)**

**Philippians 3:20-21- Christ followers are called 20 …citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives, we eagerly wait for him to return as our Savior. 21 He will take these weak mortal bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power that he will use to conquer everything, everywhere. (no more sickness)**

* + **Healthy body – healthy minds – healthy hearts**

**We won’t be angels… we will be us with a unique immaterial body.**

**With a new glorified body of flesh to be given at the return of Christ.**

**(1 Cor 15:35-58, 2 Cor 5:1-10, Rev 22, 1 Thes 4, Rom 8:11)**

**1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. (You / they - will be known as you – without our sinful nature)**

**We will know our loved ones in Christ - they will know us.**

**The way they were meant to be. The things we love about them will be there and more!**

**3. You will go to incredible parties –**

**Celebrations – you will have a blast!!**

**Matthew 8:11 And I tell you this, that many will come from all over the world and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven. (food / music / family / friends / laughter…)**

**Revelation 19:6-9 - The marriage supper of the Lamb (explain)**

**We will be able to enjoy eating meals without calories!!!**

**Jesus after His resurrection – enjoyed his friends and food**

**4. You will be learning new things about God and the universe**

**I like to learn stuff, read and discover. You’ll access to the creator**

**"in Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" Colossians 2:3 "who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?" Ro 11:34**

**God is the "the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity" Isaiah 57:15**

**It will take eternity "to comprehend what is the breadth and length and depth and height, of the love of Christ" Ephesians 3:18-19**

**We will never stop learning and growing in understanding**

**5. You will be given rewards and responsibilities**

**Those that make it to heaven will be judged and rewarded according to how they lived their life in Christ. (Rev 20, 22:3-5, Matt 4:10, 5:12, 25:23, Lu 6:23, 1 Cor 3:14,9:18, Rom 3:21-26, 2 Cor 5:10, Gal 4:7, Heb 6:10, Is 11)**

**Won’t just be with God but will “reign” with Him**

**I Timothy 2:11 This is a trustworthy saying: If we died with Him, we will also live with Him; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with Him…**

**Reign over what? The new heaven and new earth**

* **There will be new areas of responsibility and things to do**
* **Things we will love and cherish and they will remain fresh**

**This life is more like the job interview for eternity**

**Luke 19:17 ‘Well done!’ the king exclaimed. ‘You are a trustworthy servant. You have been faithful with the little I entrusted to you, so you will be governor of ten cities as your reward.’ (Principle of responsibility given in Heaven to those who are responsible with their gifts and understanding on earth)**

**6. You will learn to truly worship in the presence of God**

**Our very being and all we do will glorify God. It will not be an event or experience that we get weary of. We will be in everlasting awe!**

**Revelation 4: (heavenly beings representing the four corners of the earth and the nations - 7 …** **Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, 8 Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty who was and is and is to come…**

**Fresh ability to see God brand new every time you see Him**

**Revelation 7:9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”**

**Multi-cultural beautiful diversity worshipping together!!!**

**Revelation 19:6** **Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a vast crowd or the roar of mighty ocean waves or the crash of loud thunder: “Praise the Lord! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. 7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him.**

**To know the God who made you, who poured His life out for you. To stand before Jesus, God in the flesh… we will worship**

**7. We will be with Jesus (Revelation 19:7, 2 Corinthians 11:2)**

**This surpasses all other things in heaven and on earth!**

**To be with and know our savior – that is enough!!!**

**We will be happier & more thankful than we could ever dream possible.**

**We shall touch and taste, rule and reign - move, run, laugh, & celebrate**

**Never have reason to cry! Heaven will be anything but boring!**

**Psalms 84:10 - Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere.**

**1 Corinthians 2:9 However, as it is written: “What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived” - the things God has prepared for those who love him 10 these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.**

**One more myth - 5. “Being Good will get you to Heaven”**

**Not everyone will go to heaven… not even if we are good**

**If you ask the avg person – do you think you’re going to heaven they would say – I think so. Why? I am a pretty good person. Eternity!?!?**

**I think so. 5 volunteers. (Signs / total Evil & ultimate Good) 1- best person ever? 2- most evil person. 3 random people – which way do they go? Now where would you put yourself – based on your works? (Sign – hell / Heaven) Where should this sign go? Yet, the Bible says it is here – everyone has fallen short.**

**Everyone has offended me – everyone has broken my commands…**

**Everyone on earth has sinned and fallen short of God’s glory. (Romans 3:23)**

**Romans 3:10 “There is no one righteous, not even one; 11 there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. 12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.” That is why Jesus died for everybody’s sins…**

**But I go to church – I am a good person!**

**Matt. 7:21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.**

**Titus 3:4-5 …we are not saved by our works of good deeds**

**Isaiah 64:6 …all our righteous acts are like filthy rags**

**Ephesians 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not from yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.**

**That is what the Cross of Christ is all about! Jesus left Heaven, became a man, and went to the cross for you! So, that you might find your home in Heaven and on the way there - find your hope from this life.**

**TRUTH: Deep in our hearts we will never be satisfied here on this earth**

**There will always a void in us that longs for something deeper**

**Like an uncomfortable visit with family you don’t know. You just want to go home. Likewise, this world is just an uncomfortable visit…**

**No matter what we get we still wonder, “Is that all there is?” Hoping that something will satisfy this aching for more. There is nothing that will ultimately satisfy our hearts apart from Christ.**

**Longing for another time, something that was lost: nostalgia of the good old days, childhood memory, a lost love, a yesterday when troubles were gone…**

**This is the desire to get back “the Garden” - back to where we walked with God - But don’t look back - look forward…**

**Heaven’s where every possible dream is found & every hope is fulfilled**

**A place where I will know and love my God as He is, where I will see the one who died for me and be enraptured by the presence of God and will forever live in meaning and purpose**

**John 14:2-6 - “Don’t be troubled. You trust God, now trust in me. 2 There are many rooms in my Father’s home, and I am going to prepare a place (mansion?) for you. If this were not so, I would tell you plainly. 3 When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. 4 And you know where I am going and how to get there.” 5 “No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We haven’t any idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?” 6 Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.**

**Many of you will be with me (maybe neighbors) some of you may not. But don’t take my word for it…**

**John 3:5-7 – Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the Kingdom of God (Heaven) unless he is born again.” Explain**

**The Bible tells us that apart from Jesus Christ you will not find your home in Heaven… If it’s not Heaven, then where? Hell**

**A day is coming when we will all die. I will, you will. Q - we all have to ask ourselves - Can I trust God with my life? This one and the next**

**But God - my sin, my failures, my mistakes, regret, my fear - How? Jesus says, "that's why I came - the cross was for you - for you to be able to walk with me again in the cool of a new garden**

**Jesus turned his death into life – for you!**

**1 Corinthians 15:54,55,57- …Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” How we thank God, who gives us victory over sin and death through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

**You can begin or renew your relationship with him right now… Prayer**

**Statistic sources:**

**George Barna Report 1997**

**Time/CNN Poll, Time,3-24-97**

**USA Today, 6-20-97**

**Teen Quest march 1993**

**Book sources:**

**The Glory of Heaven, John F. MacArthur. Crossway Books, 1996**

**Heaven Your Real Home, Joni Eareckson Tada. Zondervan Publishing house, 1995**

**2 Peter 3:11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives 12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. 13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.14 So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.**