

Thinking about heaven

You might ask, "Clark, are you planning on leaving soon with these last articles you have presented" ? Well, not really. I have not had any signs or anything. But if I do depart soon, THAT'S OK... See you then!

Seriously, I am posting this as I will not be able to write for a while because I will be on the road. I pray it is an encouragement.

2 Corinthians 5:8 says "We would prefer to be out of here". All true believers should feel this way. God put in all mankind the sense that he will live forever somewhere. This inner knowledge has shaped civilization. In the pyramids of Egypt, for example, the embalmed bodies would have maps placed besides them as guides to the future world. In AD 125 a Greek named Artisides wrote: When a Christian passes from this world they rejoice and escort the body with songs of thanksgiving as if they were setting out from one place to another near-by. Is that not the way it should be? Do we have the mentality of the early church in reference to Eternity? That is why they won the world for Christ.

In 1952, Florence Chadwick, who was the first female to swim the English channel both ways, tried from Catalina island to swim to the California coast line. She swam for over 15 hours until she became exhausted. A thick fog had come in and she could not see a thing. She felt that she couldn't go another stroke and called out to the rowboat to pull her in. As she looked out of the boat the fog cleared a little and she could see the shore just before her. She cried out if only I had known I could have continued but I was blinded by the fog. She lost the opportunity to make a world record by just a few feet.

So many are like Florence in the Christian walk. All they see is the fog in their life. How many will say, IF I HAD ONLY SEEN! HEAVEN is not a myth. It is a magnet that pulls us in the right direction of home. A home that Paul describes as better by far (Ph.1:23). Please brethren, no matter how rough things get keep your eye's on the Heavenly Shore. Draw strength each day and you will make it. Col 3:2 says, "Set your minds on things above and not on earthy things".

A cartoon showed a man on a cloud with a halo and white robes. He was looking very bored and there was a caption under him that said. "I wish I had brought a magazine." Please believe me, this will not be the case. The world feels that way but it's a deception. It is always said in our street evangelism by people that if there is not sex in heaven they do not want to go. My response is that God has something a million times better than sex for us in Heaven. If He was the one who made sex to begin with for being used in a proper marital context for enjoyment, I know everything in heaven will be much better than here, so couldn't He replace the pleasure of sex with a pleasure much greater? Heaven will be a place where all our pleasures will be greater: our taste,

our health and energy. Every thing about us will be really alive, not tired and not boring or frustrated.

How come we talk so little about heaven? Satan opened his mouth to blaspheme God and also to blaspheme His dwelling place and all those around him. Many do that today by denying God's gift of Heaven and living for the few meager scraps they get here. I feel that is why many turn to Alcohol or do drugs as they try to substitute Heaven for a fleeting pleasure of the flesh. The devil was evicted (Is.14:12-15). I wonder if he's mad because 'we' get the place he was kicked out of?

What a better strategy for him to whisper to us, "Oh, you are deceived and have been deceived as there is no place called Heaven with a loving God. Paul told us to set our mind on it! That should be clear enough. If we believe the devil's lies we will set our minds on this life. Christ Himself warned us against this. We must have a fixed mind on the next life if we truly want peace of heart and assurance.

Many Christians have no motivation to take anyone with them to Heaven as it is not a reality for them. Their motivation for evangelism is 'zero' and their spiritual life only a little higher. **THE CHRISTIANS THAT DID MOST FOR THIS WORLD WERE THOSE WHO THOUGHT MOST OF THE NEXT WORLD.** All the martyrs and great testimonies of Christ of the past were occupied with Heaven on their minds. They could have only done their great deeds knowing God had a place prepared for them. That all earthly heartache and pain would not be where they are going. In Foxes Book of Martyrs, a sister is imprisoned and her baby is in the next cell crying to be fed. She was told to deny Christ and she could go in and feed her child. The cries got less and less until the baby died. She knew he was in a better place and she told her torturers that Christ had prepared a place for her child where it would never thirst again. In a rage they heated up a grill and roasted her alive. This women knew who she believed in and this Spirit won the world to Christ.

Many are so ineffective. 'Why'? Because they do not think anymore of Heaven. The fog is too important for them. To lose our soul and gain the whole world... what a loss! I had a friend and his whole life was making money, and he was good at it. But even with his many millions of dollars he would get so upset over losing something of little value. He shopped at Walmart and was always afraid of losing some insignificant thing. Our flesh is like that. We can be losing our soul and are worried about our lettuce patch drying up in the back yard. I feel God does that, many times, to show the world, 'in all their intelligence', that they are really fools. If we want to please God we must have the right priorities. Heaven should be on top of the list.

**AIM AT HEAVEN AND YOU WILL GET EARTH THROWN IN.
AIM AT THIS EARTH AND YOU GET NEITHER.**

The devil knows the importance of this principle. We see how it is used among the Muslims to forsake all that is earthly and give their life for an eternal place of dwelling.

We are feeling this today as a culture and it is a deception. The devil always takes the truth and perverts it for his own ends. But heaven is not a myth or a place of sexual perversion as the Muslims teach. For the faithful it is more real than where we exist today.

HIS SERVANTS WILL SERVE HIM DAY AND NIGHT. They will reign forever. Rv.22:3-5

The best we can imagine is that Heaven is a garden, city and a home. All require maintenance. May I say that this may be a part of our service to God? I know this, it will be joyful whatever it is. It sure won't be like working at Home Depo or for UPS. I know we will feel accomplishment to the max in anything God gives us to do. I would like to be a gardener amongst many trees. What about you?

Could we have goals, plans and share ideas? Maybe so, at least it is a neat thought, NO? For sure, there won't be any lawyers, dentists or undertakers. There also will be no toil or corruption. I can't wait.

And guess what? Don't be shocked, as heaven is only an intermediary place until the end of time and God really lays it on us with the New Earth and New Jerusalem. Yep! That's right! There is no end to what God has prepared for us. Read: Rev. 19-2, it's all there!

When I go to the grave I can say my work here is done. But I cannot say my life is done. Why? My life will really start the next morning. THE TOMB IS NOT A BLIND ALLEY BUT A THOROUGH FARE. Let's march Boldly and Confidently toward our goal. Jesus, Heaven and Eternity!

Love ya!
Clark