

Biblical Answers to Difficult Questions: What are Relationships in Heaven Like?

July 10, 2022

Matthew 22:23-33

Reasons why teaching like this is important: 1) It is a question most frequently asked by believers to our pastor. 2) Seems to be one area of understanding of Scripture few know. 3) Our relationships on earth are littered with hurt and pain.

FACT 1: Heaven as it is now is the Intermediate Heaven. A new heaven and earth are coming, Rev. 21:1-27. FACT 2: You will be who you are now: same identity, history, but in a resurrected body, 2 Kings 22:20 "Fathers," Matt. 17:1-13 "Moses and Elijah," people knew them.

7 Pairs of Related Ideas:

1) **Husbands & Wives:** V23-28, in the context of the Law and the need to provide an heir to for your brother from Deut. 25:5-6. Jesus corrects the Sadducees, V29. They don't know the Scripture or the power of God, they are unbelievers. Jesus is I AM from Ex. 3:6. Jesus is the God of the living, V32. Sadducees didn't believe in the afterlife and only held to the Torah (First 5 Books of the OT) so Jesus didn't bring them other evidences. But Jesus says in V30, we will be like angels. They don't marry, don't reproduce, are not in families, have no sexual ways. Paul says in 1 Cor. 7:29-31, those married will be as though they weren't married, time is short and marriage doesn't continue forever.

Marriage is necessary now for the man: for companionship & help. For the woman: provision, protection, & companionship. For both: to be fruitful and multiply and bear kingdom citizens. Heaven's bliss is not diminished by the absence of marriage, 1 John 3:1-2. In heaven, companionship, protection and provision won't be necessary.

2) **Joy & Reunion:** in reference to people we know well: 1 Thess. 4:13-18: V13, we are not those who have no hope. V14, Jesus will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep. V16, there will be a resurrection of those who have died. V17, we will be reunited with them in the air AND always be with the Lord. V18, this is a comfort that there will be a reunion. Paul is going to rejoice when he gets to see the Thessalonian saints again in heaven, 1 Thess. 2:19-20.

3) **Friendship & Togetherness:** What about those I kind of knew? Rom. 1:6, we are a part of the universal church. Forever, we worship together (Rev. 7:9-10 & Rev. 19:1-10), will return together with the bride of Christ (Rev.21:9-14), will experience the New Jerusalem together, reign with Christ together (Rev.20:4-6, 21:22-27), and will travel with Christ all together.

4) **Heroes & Villains:** What about those we never met? Men and women of faith from history. Matt. 8:11-12, dining with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob – and Jesus. There are many heroes. What about villains such as Manasseh (2 Kings 21, 2 Chron. 33: 10-17)? Paul will be there who held the coats of those who murdered Stephen (Acts 7:54-60).

5) **Advantages & Benefits:** of relationships in heaven. 1) Time: no lack of time for millions of new friends. 2) Purpose: to serve the King of kings and worship Him. 3) Substance: Ps. 16:11, pleasures forevermore. 4) Restoration: of all things, relationships included (Rev. 21:1-8).

6) **Holiness & Justice:** Will loved ones missing heaven ruin heaven? We will agree with God and praise His righteousness and justice, Rev. 19:1-10. They will not be loved ones anymore, Rev. 18:20, Matt. 7:13. No more delusions about those who fell away from the Lord. God is the God of comfort and restoration, 2 Cor. 1:3, Rev. 21:4.

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- 7) **Harmony & Union:** 1 Cor. 15:44, our bodies will be changed in the resurrection. Back to Matt. 22:23-28: If seven brothers all set out to obey the Lord's command and the wife was barren but faithfully honored her husband – then all seven brothers and the wife will enjoy fellowship in heaven. Ps. 116:15, precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His people. Jesus stood to welcome Stephen, Acts 7:56.

Further Discussion and Application

We as believers can have great confidence in the Lord that He will come again and gather His people. What Scriptures come to mind when thinking about your future home in heaven? How do those promises strengthen and encourage you during the toughest of times?

The promises of 1 Thess. 4:13-18 are a blessing for us to know that whether having died on earth or remaining at the Lord's coming, at that moment we will always be together. What joy is there in knowing that the day is coming when sorrow and pain will be no more?

God's justice and holiness will be demonstrated at the 2nd Coming of Christ and Great White Throne Judgement. Why is it necessary to trust God that those we loved on earth that aren't present in heaven is just and right? How does that truth help us understand our helpless state apart from Christ?

There are going to be heroes and villains in heaven. How does God receive glory from the good, bad, and ugly that receive eternal life through Christ? Why does that give us great confidence to accept the Lord's sovereign control and power over us and all things?

What truth struck a chord with you this week? How can you worship the Lord in a greater way knowing the greatness and wonder of God is unfathomable and how unsearchable are His ways?