

Choose to Be at Home with God

Lesson #8

Scripture: Philippians 3:20 “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;”

Introduction:

While working at the power plant I meet this guy who was from Kentucky. His name was Mike Warford. The first thing you noticed about ole Mike was that this was one of the biggest guys I have ever meet.

He stood probably 6’8-9” and around 350 lbs. But he wasn’t fat...it was all muscle. Anyway he was a very kind person who would do anything to help anyone.

But this guy was really known for one thing. He was a living example of being homesick all the time. It didn’t matter what conversation you were having somehow he would relate it to some thing that had or was going on in Kentucky.

He made it a priority to keep up on all the current news from Kentucky and made sure that all of us knew about it too. I think he was just reminding himself of where he came from and eventually where he would return.

Transitional Statement:

Church, spirituality is lived out in much the same manner. Have we reached the point where we have a constant longing for our heavenly home? Is heaven on our minds every minute of every day. Is it our tendency to forget that we are only pilgrims here?

Lesson:

I. One of the most basic first steps of spirituality is to understand that this earth is not our home.

A. Earth is just a temporary journey for us.

1. Hebrews 11:13 *“All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.”*

a. The Greek also uses the word pilgrim with the word strangers here in order to emphasize the idea that the faithful should live as foreigners.

b. Travelers living mobile in tents and ready at any moment to move on.

2. Not putting down any permanent and inseparable roots
 - a. Hebrews 11:8-10 *“By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; 10 for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.”*
 - b. Hebrews 13:14 *“For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.”*
3. 2 Peter 3:10 *“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens (Physical) will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.”*
4. 1 Corinthians 15:19 *“If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.”*

B. God wants us to have the understanding that heaven is our home.

1. Because it represents God’s dwelling place Revelation 21:2
2. It represents the spiritual realm of the book of Ephesians

C. God wants us, to desire to be with Him.

- a. We see this desire in Paul’s life:

-Philippians 1:21 *“... to live is Christ and to die is gain.”*

-2 Corinthians 5:8 he says, *“...I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.”*

II. Spirituality inches forward understanding that heaven is waiting on our arrival

A. John 14:2-3 *“In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”*

B. Jesus has prepared a place for us there

1. He along with God and surely many of the saints and loved ones that have preceded us are anxiously awaiting our arrival.

C. We are not some after thought of God and we won’t show up as surprise visitors.

D. There is already a room there with your name on it.

III. Spirituality sets the north on our compass as the throne room of God.

A. Isaiah gives some description of God's presence.

Isaiah 6:1-3 *"In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. 2 Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one called out to another and said, " Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory."*

B. John also saw a vision of God's throne room

Revelation 4:1-5 *"After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, " Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." 2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. 3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads. 5 Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;"*

C. Not a place of fear

a. But one of grace...Hebrews 4:16

IV. Heaven is the ultimate gathering place of the saints

A. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words."

V. Heaven is so grand it can't really be explained

A. Revelation 21:10-23

"And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. 12 It had a

great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. 13 There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. 16 The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. 17 And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. 18 The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. 19 The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; 20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

22 I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.”

VI. The hope of heaven steers us:

- A. Toward commitment
- B. It gives us purpose in all struggles
- C. It calls out the best in everyone
- D. It motivates us in seeking others for the journey of faith
- E. It enriches the worship of God
- F. It builds a bridge over the river of death

Conclusion:

Do you live homesick for heaven?

2 Corinthians 5:1-2

1 The Temporal and Eternal

For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, NASU

Matthew 6:19-21

19 " Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21 for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.