

## WEEK 10: TEN QUESTIONS TO DIAGNOSE YOUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH DO YOU YEARN FOR HEAVEN AND TO BE WITH JESUS?

Php 1:21 For to me **to live is** Christ, and to die is gain.

Christians repeat this verse often, as it seems to have such a “spiritual sound” to it.

**Is this really true in your life today? Is there a growing desire in you to be in heaven?**  
Do you really think that heaven is gain over what you currently enjoy in this life on earth?

### I. YEARNING FOR HEAVEN INDICATES SPIRITUAL GROWTH

- A. Paul says that “all creation”, “groans” for heaven.
  - 1. Ro 8:22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.
  
- B. includes all Christians → Ro 8:23 And not only the creation, but **we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit**, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
  
- C. Holy Spirit gives the knowledge of what awaits when we leave this world.
  - 1. **groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons**
  - 2. **redemption of our bodies**—redeemed finally from the sin in which it lives
  - 3. To look forward to that time is part of Growing Spiritually in our Christian life.
  
- D. Growing in the wisdom of Christ, we envision more of what it will be like and we desire more and more to be face to face with Him.
  - 1. 2Co 5:2 For in this tent we **groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling**,
  
- E. Holy Spirit in us will continually work to cause us to groan for heaven
  - 1. 2Co 5:5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.
  
- F. Not that we are not joyful now . . . 2Co 5:6 . . . **we are always of good courage**.
  - 1. But we also know that “. . .while we are at home in the body **we are away from the Lord**,
  
  - 2. 2Co 5:8 Yes, **we are of good courage**, and **we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord**.
  
- G. “groan for ”?
  - 1. “Redemptions of our bodies”
  - 2. “Be in presence of the Lord”
  - 3. “Live in heaven forever”
  - 4. “Enjoy fellowship with other believers”

### II. WHAT DOES YEARNING (GROANING) LOOK LIKE NOW?

- A. Not a sadness of where we are at today— what we have now has been given to us by God and His gifts are good.
  - 1. Ps 118:24 This is the day that the LORD has made; **let us rejoice and** be glad in it.

B. David Brainerd, disciple of Jonathan Edwards & missionary to North American Indians (from his diary 1742): *“Saturday, June 12. Spent much time in prayer this morning, and enjoyed much sweetness. Felt insatiable longings after God much of the day. I wondered how poor souls do to live that have no God. . . . I longed exceedingly to be dissolved and to be with Christ, to behold His glory. Oh, my weak, weary soul longs to arrive at my Father’s house.”*

1. Anticipation is an encouragement to the heart and the soul.
2. Dissatisfied with all that is in the world, but still the Holy Spirit gives joy just in the anticipation and groaning.

C. As the growing Christian steps more and more into the promises of God in Scripture, the more of heaven we will see, and the more we will yearn for what it describes.

D. **God has given a built-in dissatisfaction with the world in the born again believer.**

1. No longer love the world.
2. Less and less drawn to the things of the world.
3. Desire to know more of Christ.
4. Yearn more to be with Christ.

### III. GROANING FOR HOLINESS

A. **Wear and tear on our human bodies** can very much create a desire for relief.

1. Even those of the world desire some type of eternal rest.

B. **Cares of this world**, can cause earning for a time when it can all stop and lay it all down.

C. Groaning for things that the world longs for is not necessarily demonstration of spiritual Growth.

D. Novelty of Seeing Jesus, is curiosity that which attracts you to heaven?

E. Growing Christians long for the “holiness of heaven”

1. Not just the rest, but complete rest from sin – holiness.
2. Not just the person Jesus, but to be in the presence of their sinless Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ!

F. Growing Christians become more and more burdened by sin in this world– they desire the pure sinlessness of God’s kingdom.

1. To join the choir that . . . [Rev 4:8 ¶ . . . day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”](#)

G. **Growing Christians desire the Holiness of heaven more than the rest, the relief, or being with loved ones.**

H. Jonathan Edwards: *“But neither a . . . longing to be in Heaven, nor longing to die, are in any measure so distinguishing marks of true saints, as longing after a more holy place.”*

I. Increasingly grieved for sin in the world, in others around them, in their own life.

1. Desire relief from its temptations; Relief from its consequences.
2. Broken and mourning over sin are those that will possess heaven and be comforted
3. [Mt 5:3 ¶ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.](#)

**J. Long to be in a Body Redeemed from sin**

1. Soul is made new at salvation, given an a new nature.
2. Flesh continues in this world unredeemed.
3. More we see our sin as against a holy God, as the cause of the death of Christ, as the victory of Satan himself in our lives, the more we will continue to look forward to the time when it will be taken away.
4. This is the hope that brings joy to the repentant heart of a growing believer.

K. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: “ *Do you ever look forward to being in heaven? . . . The person who looks forward to death simply wants to get out of life because of his troubles. That is not Christian; that is pagan. The Christian has positive desire for Heaven, . . . What is it we look forward to when we get to Heaven? What is it we are desiring? Is it the rest of Heaven? Is it to be found there, thank God; but that is not the thing to look forward to in Heaven. It is the face of God. “Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.” . . . to stand in the very presence of God— “To gaze and gaze on thee,” Do we long for that? Is that Heaven to us? Is that the thing we want above everything else?”*

**IV. GROWING CHRISTIANS GROAN FOR HOLINESS OF HEAVEN**

- A. More we grow in knowledge and understanding of God, more we desire to be less like the world and more like Christ
- B. Growing Christians long for the holiness of heaven and the face of God above all else.
- C. Paul: **2Co 5:2 For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling,**
  1. **Php 1:23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better;**
  2. Paul did not hate his life on earth, but to be with Christ was **very much better**
- D. Only True Joy/Happiness/Satisfaction a growing Christian will ever have, is when they are with Christ in heaven.
- E. Jesus spoke of where our treasure is so will be our heart.
  1. **Mt 6:20 "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.**
- F. NOT to deny our legitimate love and desire and longing for the blessings God has given us on earth.-->Marriage, children, success all are desires that God has graces us.
- G. But as we grow more and more in the wisdom and knowledge and holiness of Christ, we will groan more and more for the absolute holiness that will only be when we are face to face with Christ

**V. GROANING CHRISTIANS WILL BE GROWING CHRISTIANS**

- A. Growing Christians groan more for heaven, but also groaning Christians will continue to grow as Christians.
- B. **Growing Christians will Rejoice and Seriously Seek Things of Christ**
  1. Have been born again through Christ, will continuously seek to be more like Him
  2. **Col 3:1 ¶ Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.**

3. Transformation will continue in their hearts and mind—> Col 3:2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.
4. Col 3:5 ¶ Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. . . .Col 3:8 ¶ But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.
5. Desire to be with Christ, “seated at the right hand of God” will continue to grow.

#### C. Growing Christians will grow in Reflection about Heaven

1. Richard Baxter (Puritan pastor) so longed for heaven, he meditated on it during his day.
2. Regularly thinking about what is to come in eternity will help us to de-tox and de-stress of the events in this life.
3. Earth is not our final destination—> home that Christ has prepared, “for that is very much better;” (Php 1:23)
4. Our minds are busy—> putting the best thoughts in it will result in the best desires for what it thinks about.

#### D. Growing Christians Prepare Themselves to Being in Heaven

1. As we groan to be in heaven we will groan to be more like Christ
2. We do not know what we will exactly be like when that occurs, but we know that we will be like Him! (1 Jn 3:2)
3. And we make ready for when that would occur—> 1Jo 3:3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.
4. Yearning and desiring for Christ’s return is affected by this hope.
5. It is not just something that wish for, it is something that they know is a reality and continually prepare themselves now.
6. Longings for holiness that awaits in heaven increases the joy of walking in holiness now.
7. J. I. Packer (paraphrased): “*Hope of a holy heaven motivates holiness now.*”
8. Do you have this hope? Has it affected you? Are you making preparations for what you are groaning and hoping for?
9. If so, then you are Growing Spiritually.

- E. 1Pet 1:13 ¶ Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; 16 because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."