

THREE STEPS TO HEAVEN

Text:

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” (Revelation 21:1-4)

Question: Where will you spend eternity?

Introduction:

1) Heaven is described in God's word.

(1) Read text

(2) “And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,” (Revelation 21:10, also see following verses)

2) It is a place where the wicked will not dwell.

(1) “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” (Revelation 21:8)

(2) “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.” (Revelation 21:27)

3) A land with no more earthly woes & sorrows. “And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” (Revelation 21:3)

4) God, “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” (Revelation 21:3.)

5) A place of sweet communion with God, “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” (Revelation 21:4.)

6) God desires all to go to heaven, “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (2Peter 3:9)

(1) Has done His part in preparing it,

(a) “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

(John 3:16)

(b) "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:4)

(2) But man also has a part, "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." (Acts 10:34-35)

7) We will note our walk to heaven in three steps:

I. OUT OF SELF

1) **Must deny self** (contrary to some philosophies), "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24)

2) **Give ourselves to the Lord. His cause**, "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." (2 Corinthians 8:1-5.)

3) **Put off the old man**, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:" (Colossians 3:9-10)

4) **Willing to give up things**, "Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" (Matthew 19:27)

5) One who steps out of self is making Christ his Lord - ruler, master.

(1) Doesn't lean to own understanding, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6)

(2) "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jeremiah 10:23)

(3) "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

6) Some have not been willing to take this first step.

(1) **Rich young ruler**. "The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." (Matthew 19:20-24)

(2) **Felix**. "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and

judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." (Acts 24:25)

(3) **Will you?** "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:" (Hebrews 9:27)

II. INTO CHRIST

1) Always important to be in the God appointed place at the God appointed time.

(1) **Ark**, "And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in." (Genesis 7:16)

(2) **House with blood**, "For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you." (Exodus 12:23)

2) New Testament age must be in Christ.

(1) "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2Corinthians 5:10)

(2) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:" (Ephesians 1:3)

(3) "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:1)

(4) "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." (2Timothy 2:10)

(5) "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place." (2Corinthians. 2:14)

3) One is baptized into Christ.

(1) "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:3-4)

(2) Before one can be baptized into Christ he must believe. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16)

(3) And repent. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38)

III. INTO GLORY.

1) Must die or be transformed.

(1) "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," (1Corinthians 15:50-51)

(2) "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:" (Hebrews 9:27)

(3) (Israel had to cross Jordan).

2) Must die in Christ. "And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." (Revelation 14:13)

3) At the judgement the righteous will go into everlasting life. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
(Matthew 25:46) (Beautiful city of God).

CONCLUSION:

- 1) Three basic steps to heaven: belief, repentance, baptism.
- 2) Have you taken first step, second step? If you haven't - you are not ready for third step.
- 3) Have you gone back into self - from Christ? Come back out of self!