

The Hope of Heaven

Marian

Scriptures:

John 14:2-6

2 Peter 3:9

John 16

Revelation 21 and 22

Do you ever wonder what Heaven is like? When I was young I thought little of Heaven, because it seemed that life on earth would go on for ever. Now I am old I often wonder what it will be like. But do we have to wait until we pass through the doorway of earthly death to begin our eternal life with Jesus? I think not. I believe it begins the moment we turn to Him in repentance and receive salvation through His precious sacrificial blood

We all know and love John's description of Heaven in Revelation 21 and 22, but my search through the Gospels revealed that Jesus said very little about Heaven but often spoke about eternal life. However, He gives us glimpses of Heaven. In John 14:2-6 He says,

"In My Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you and if I go.....I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, you may be also."

Thomas questioned Jesus, saying "Lord we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus replied, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Throughout his years in the Ministry, my husband Tony often quoted these words of Jesus when leading a funeral service for souls who had died in Christ. Many times I've witnessed the great comfort these words brought to the mourners. Jesus made a wonderful promise when He said, "I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, you may be also." (John 14:3) When Jesus spoke of His Father's House He not only gave a glimpse of the special place He has prepared, but promises He will come and take us with Him as we pass through the curtain of earthly death. Our dear Lord does not leave us alone, but draws nearest when we need Him most.

Searching through the gospels also revealed that Jesus spoke twice as much about eternal judgement – the place we call hell – than He did about eternal life with Him. I believe this is because in His love for all people, He would be less than loving if He failed to bring warning. It is not His will that any should perish, but that all should have eternal life with Him. (2 Peter 3:9)

This side of Heaven Jesus hasn't promised us a life without trials. In John 16 Jesus warned His disciples that they would have tribulation, but to be brave for He has overcome the world. I love that chapter and would urge you to read it all. Jesus speaks so thoughtfully and tenderly, knowing His precious disciples who have made so many errors, who had failed to understand, will come through to the place where Holy Spirit opens their eyes – these are the ones who will spread the good news of the gospel into the whole world. One of my favourite verses says ,

“Therefore you now have sorrow, but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice and your joy no one will take from you.” (John 16:22)

Those beautiful words He speaks to us today. There will be times in life when we feel great sorrow and we wonder how we can bear it. But Jesus promises that one day we will see Him face to face, and our joy will be complete – beyond the pain, sorrow and grief we pass through in this world.

Many years ago when I was a young Christian meditating upon the Lord I began to pray words that were rhyming, so I wrote them down and have many times prayed these words. I thought it would be an apt prayer for the end of this devotional, and I pray that you might be blessed and encouraged too.

PRAYER:

Help me to trust You Lord day by day,
Teach me, please teach me how to pray,
Lead me and guide me all through life's way
With You for ever, I want to stay,
Help me to trust You Lord day by day.

Help me whenever with trials I meet,
To turn and to kneel at my Saviour's feet,
Jesus, Your Name to the soul is so sweet,
Jesus, my Saviour, I know You will greet
My soul with Your love when with trials I meet.

Help me to thank You Lord for everything
As I journey through life help me always to bring
Praises and thanks to my wonderful King,
To You loving Jesus I always will cling,
Help me to thank You Lord for everything

Help me, please help me when life's end is near,
Fill me with courage and take away fear.
Deep in my soul, let me listen and hear
Your voice saying, “Trust in Me”, calmly and clear.
Help me, please help me when life's end is near.

When I enter Your Kingdom, and faith becomes sight,
I'll fall on my face in Your Presence, Your Light,
Unworthy, made worthy, and now robed in white
Through the blood of the Lamb, whose goodness shines bright.
With Your Heavenly hosts, in Your Praise I'll unite.

AMEN

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGAdaGbmFFs>