April 19/20, 2008

Study Questions
Is Heaven on Earth?

Life After Death Series

I Corinthians 15, Romans 8, Revelation 21

Pastor Bryan Clark

Opening Discussion

1. Review what you've learned about life after death so far in this series. What adjustments have you made in your thinking about this subject?

2. How significant is the physical bodily resurrection of Jesus to our concept of Heaven? Why?

3. Many Christians hold strong views of Heaven that simply cannot be sustained from the Scriptures. Can you identify what some of those might be?

Bible Study

1. Read I Corinthians 15:39-58. A misguided theology of Heaven begins with a false premise that although we are physically here we will be a disembodied spirit after death. This view is far more Gnostic in its orientation than biblical. Is the contrast Paul makes in I Corinthians 15 between body and spirit or natural (corruptible) versus spiritual (Heavenly or incorruptible)? Does the text affirm we will be disembodied spirits or have resurrected bodies? How does that compare with 15:20-23?

2. Read Romans 8:10-11. How do these verses correlate to I Cor. 15?

3. Read Romans 8:18-25. What is all creation eagerly anticipating? What do you think this means?

4. Read II Peter 3:10-13. At first glance this text may seem to conflict with the Romans 8 idea of creation being redeemed. However, words like burned and destroyed don't have to mean annihilated. Notice in 3:6 Peter refers to the earth being destroyed by the flood of Noah. Clearly the world wasn't annihilated by the flood. Fire often refers to judgment as in I Corinthians 3:12-15. If the earth will someday be annihilated, what is it eagerly anticipating in Romans 8?

5. Read Acts 1:11, 3:21, Phil. 3:20-21. Is the focus on us going to Heaven or on "Heaven" coming to earth? What's the difference between a theology of

escapism and a theology of redemption as it relates to how we live our lives today?

6. Read Rev. 21:1-4. Compare the language with 2 Cor. 5:17. Notice also the bride and bridegroom language. Compare that with Eph. 1:10. In what way was Jesus the model for the new Heaven and new earth?

Application

1. One of the most exciting applications of a right view of Heaven is in understanding our work today done in Jesus name is not in vain (see I Cor. 15:58). An annihilation view of the earth produces an escapism mind-set, why bother? A redemption view understands that in some mysterious way what we do today as citizens of Heaven on earth will carry over to that which will last forever. What does that mean to you?

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