

Week 12 - Final Restoration
The Joy of Being In Christ, Forever!

? What do you think of when you hear the words “Heaven” or “heavenly”?

? Why is it helpful to think about Heaven when we need to live our lives as Christ followers now on Earth?

1 Corinthians 15:50-56 (NIV)

⁵⁰ I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— ⁵²in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised

imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

⁵⁵“Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?”

⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

? What imagery comes to mind when you read vs. 53? Why?

? In what way does the law allow sin to have power (vs. 56)?

? What hope do we have despite the power of sin?

Hope’s Elder Statement of Faith

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We believe that the end of all things in this age will be the beginning of a never-ending, ever-increasing happiness in the hearts of the redeemed, as God displays more and more of His infinite and inexhaustible greatness and glory for the enjoyment of His people (Ephesians 2:6-7; Psalm 16:11; 1 Corinthians 13:12, 2:9).

? Why is it difficult for us to let go of the “perishable”?

Exodus 33:18-23, 34:4-7 (NIV)

¹⁸ Then Moses said, “Now show me your glory.”

¹⁹ And the Lord said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. ²⁰ But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.”

²¹ Then the Lord said, “There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. ²² When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. ²³ Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen.” ...

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⁴ So Moses chiseled out two stone tablets like the first ones and went up Mount Sinai early in the morning, as the Lord had commanded him; and he carried the two stone tablets in his hands. ⁵ Then the Lord came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the Lord. ⁶ And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.”

? Scripture does not hide Moses’s imperfections nor the depth of his relationship with the Lord. What do you think compels Moses to make this request of God? What holds you back from making seemingly “big requests” of God?

? What does God’s protection of Moses in this passage say about human limitations compared to God’s incredible personhood? How does it affect our perception of why God sometimes tells us “no”?

Heaven is not here, it's There. If we were given all we wanted here, our hearts would settle for this world rather than the next. God is forever luring us up and away from this one, wooing us to Himself and His still invisible Kingdom, where we will certainly find what we so keenly long for.
~Elizabeth Elliot, *Keep A Quiet Heart*

? Where do you feel the most discontentment in your life? What is your response to those feelings?

? In what ways is holy discontentment a good thing? How can we discern the difference between holy discontentment and earthly discontentment?

Revelation 21:1-5, 22-27 (NIV)

¹ Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

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²² I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. ²⁵ On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. ²⁶ The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. ²⁷ Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

? How does this description of the way believers will interact with God contrast with how Moses could in Exodus 33-34?

? What are the promises to believers in this passage? Which of these promises excite you the most, and why?

? What does the term “restoration” mean? How will that be reflected in Heaven?

? Where do we see glimpses of restoration while still on Earth?

? How do we live in the tension between a longing for total restoration and the reality of brokenness on Earth?

? In what ways does having an understanding of Heaven and the restoration we will find there impact your desire to share this hope with those around you? What might that look like?

For Discussion And Accountability

? What perishable thing do you feel called to release your hold on this week?

? How can we live intentionally with the hope and joy of Heaven in mind?