

# Heaven and Hell

Part 1- Introduction, or What Do We Really Know About Heaven?



# “Heaven” is not a unique concept

- Virtually every civilization holds at some level a belief that we will live forever *somewhere*
- The details of each had an influence on framing the ethos or priorities of the culture
- All cultures seem to bear a God-given sense of the eternal- utter atheism is incredibly rare



# Difficulties in Understanding What Heaven is like

- Limited knowledge-Our relative blindness
- Wrong perceptions not based in scripture
- The twin deceptions of Satan
  - About Heaven
  - About Hell



# Limited knowledge

- We simply can't see it in advance
- God only gives us some knowledge of Heaven-not exhaustive
  - Through Creation
  - Through Scripture
- The illustration of the culture of blind people, trying to describe their land



# Wrong perceptions

- Floating around on clouds
- Strumming a harp
- Nothing to do
- Endless praise choruses
- Unbelievably clean
- BORING
- Result: People don't get excited about Heaven!





# What does the Bible actually say about Heaven?

- 2 Corinthians 5:6-8 *“So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, <sup>7</sup> for we walk by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup> Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.”*
- Revelation 21:4 *“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”*
- Job 19:25-26 *“For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God”*



# Other Huge misconceptions

- That Heaven is the default destination
- That where we go upon death is where we will be for eternity



# Is Heaven Our Default Destination?

- Matthew 7:13-14 *“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. <sup>14</sup>For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”*
- Because of sin, Hell is our default destination, NOT heaven
- THIS is why Jesus came



# How Satan Deceives Us About Heaven

- That Heaven isn't so great
- That Heaven is where we naturally go, even without faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ
- That Hell isn't so bad (all our friends are there, endless partying)
- Or, that Hell doesn't even exist (even some Christians believe this)



# Heaven, and Heaven Again

- “Intermediate” Heaven
- The centrality of the final Resurrection
- The New Heavens and the New Earth- The “Eternal State”
- Why This Is Important- We were MEANT to have bodies, not just spirits



