

*What Will Heaven Be Like? (Part 1.)*

Eye has not seen; ear has not heard; our minds cannot even imagine, what God has in store for those who love Him. (1 Corinthians 1:9) Yet, by the virtue of Hope, we and the saints before us cannot / could not, help trying to visualize the glories to come. Without some vision it is hard to hope for heaven. God, indeed, has given many little snapshots to feed our hope. The Saints and Fathers of the Church have in prayer and the Holy Spirit explored God's revelation in this matter.

What is heaven? Where is heaven? What time is it in heaven? What will my resurrected body be like? Will heaven be different after the general resurrection of our bodies? Will we all have equal rewards in heaven? Will I have fellowship with my friends and relatives in heaven? Will I grieve over loved ones who do not make it there?

Well, we can't give complete answers to all that in one page but we'll try to touch on some of it. Heaven is where God is. Jesus after the resurrection went there and assumed the body of His mother Mary to be with Him. Catholic theologians and philosophers tell us heaven is, at least in a mystical way, an actual place and not just a state of being. Purgatory might possibly be a state of being since only spiritual souls are there, but heaven must be a place. We make two opposite mistakes about heaven. It is not in outer space like a distant planet and it is not in inner space like in our mind. Its existence does not depend on our awareness. Where is heaven than?

St. Paul tells us resurrected bodies are spiritualized. This does not mean they are spirits. Our ancestors in heaven right now are spirit/souls, awaiting the resurrection of their bodies at the end of time. Humans are incomplete without their bodies which will come back to them, and us, at the resurrection of the dead. The Bible tells us even the world itself will die and rise again, sinless and fully mature. Our earth and all of physical creation, is simply an immature un-resurrected reflection, in the image and likeness of heaven. Heaven is a real place outside the physical limitations of this universe, yet the perfect master plan for it. Oh, oh. We ran out of space. Look for part 2. next week.