

Our Heavenly Home Prepared by Our Loving Savior

John 14:1-3

We live in a transient society. People are always moving. The average American will move about 12 times in their life time.

So far, in the 65 years of my life, I've lived in 17 different "houses" or apartments. I can still visualize each of these in my memory—Some of the places I lived hold precious memories... and some, not so pleasant.

- Detroit, MI
- Wayne, MI (two places).
- Livonia, MI (Two places- Margareta St. / Floral St.)
- Milwaukee, WI (college)
- Tampa, FL
- Plymouth, MI (two places). I was saved in a boarding house in Plymouth, MI called the Nelson Hotel in 1967. A few months later I got married to Barb and we moved into an apartment in Plymouth.
- Dearborn Heights, MI (Cherokee St.)
- Redmond, WA
- Barton, VT
- Lynnwood, WA (three places)
- Port Orchard, WA (two places)

➡ A house doesn't make a home. Some of the houses and apartments I've lived in were only *dwelling places*, while others were places I would call "home."

I have many fond memories during the five years we lived in Barton, Vermont. Those were the formative years of raising our four daughters.

Today, our daughters have families of their own, but Barb and I "keep the light on" for them to come home any time.

I have at least one more change of residence yet to come. That will be my last one when I move from my earthly home to my heavenly home.

In our text, Jesus tells us we will be **with Him** forever. Over and over again the Bible refers to the Christian being WITH THE LORD:

- Jesus prayed, “*Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, BE WITH ME where I am*” (John 17:24 cf. 14:23).
- In Revelation 3:20, Jesus says, “*Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he WITH ME.*”
- Jesus told the repentant thief on the cross, “*Today shalt thou be WITH ME in paradise*” (Luke 23:43).
- Paul assures us that death is “*to be absent from body and to be present WITH THE LORD*” (2 Cor 5:8).
- Paul again tells us when the Lord comes in the “rapture” the dead in Christ will rise first and we will be “*caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD*” (1 Thess. 4:17).

I’m not exactly sure what heaven is going to be like. The Bible says, “*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*” (1 Cor. 2:11). I do know this much: HEAVEN IS TO BE WITH JESUS! The great Puritan preacher, Richard Baxter, said it this way:

My knowledge of that life is small
The eye of faith is dim:
But it’s enough that Christ knows all;
And I shall be with Him!

Heaven will be... (5 things)

I. A place of Ultimate RESIDENCE (John 14:1-3).

A few years ago I read about a Philadelphia law firm that sent flowers to an associate in Baltimore when he opened a new office. However, because of some mix-up at the florist, the banner on the flowers read, “*Deepest Sympathy.*” When the florist discovered the mistake too late, he gasped, “Then the flowers sent to the funeral said, ‘*Congratulations on your new location!*’”

I hope that funeral was for a Christian, who is now in heaven!

➡ You will reside someplace in eternity. Either in heaven or in hell.

II. A place of Ultimate RECOGNITION (1 Cor. 13:12).

- Peter recognized Moses or Elijah as they were transfigured with Christ in Matthew 17, although he never met them.
- A. A woman in Tony Evans' church asked him, "Pastor, will we know each other in heaven?" He smiled and answered, "I would say that we won't really know each other *until* we get to heaven!" Amen!
- B. On this earthly sphere, we only have partial knowledge of each other. We only see the tip of the iceberg of who someone is. In heaven, all the masks will come off. We'll see each other face-to-face, with no secrets between us. Our communication will be perfect without any misunderstandings. (Perfect knowledge)

III. A place of Ultimate RELATIONSHIPS (Heb. 12:22-23).

- A. In heaven, our relationships will not be limited by time or boundaries of territory. We will fellowship with saints from every period of history and every walk of life.
- B. Who would you like to talk to who has gone on before you?
 1. A departed loved one?
 2. A missionary like David Livingston or Hudson Taylor?
 3. A preacher like D.L. Moody, Billy Sunday, or C.H. Spurgeon?
 4. A Bible character?
 - I would like to ask Paul, "What did you do in Arabia after you got saved? What was that thorn in your flesh?"
 - I'd like to ask Noah, "How did you dispose of all that animal dung in the ark for 150 days?"
 - I want to ask Elijah how he survived traveling in that fiery chariot through outer space without a space suit?
 - I'd like to ask Jonah, "Tell me about the time you spent in the whale's belly?"
 - I'd like to ask to Lazarus how he felt when he had to leave paradise after being there for four days, only to come back die all over again later.
 5. Of course, imagine what it will be like to have Jesus answer all the questions you wonder about now? "Lord, why did You

create mosquitos and spiders? Why did this happen to me?
Why did I have to go through that trial, or suffer that illness?"

IV. A place of Ultimate REST (Rev. 14:13). Not inactivity!

V. A place of Ultimate REALITY.

- A. Heaven is a real prepared place just as hell is a real prepared place (cf. Mt. 25:41).
- B. It has a real location—Paul went there and came back to tell us (2 Cor. 12:2-4).
- C. It has real walls, streets, foundation, gates, etc. (Rev. 21:10-23; 22:3-5).
- D. The best part is Jesus will be there (Rev. 21:3).

SUMMATION: The ultimate question: **Why** would Jesus want us to be with Him forever? **Why** would God go to such lengths to make a way for us to be with Him forever? **Why** would He prepare such a beautiful eternal home for us in heaven? The answer is: Because HE LOVES US!

When you love someone, you want to be with that person. In the 45 years Barb and I been married, the longest we've ever been apart was for a couple of months during our transition from Vermont to Washington. It was one of the hardest times in my life.

In Charlotte Brontë's novel, *Jane Eyre*, the lonely heroine never lived in a place she could call home. She eventually began a relationship with her employer, Edward Rochester, that flourished into love. When she had to leave for a few weeks to visit a dying relative, he didn't want her to go, fearing she might not return. She assured him, "***Wherever you are is my home.***"

Can you say that about Jesus—Where Jesus is, is your home? If so, it will be obvious in your life now (Mt. 18:20).

Heaven is a gift for anyone who has been born again (John 3:3). Have you been born again into God's family. Receive Christ as your Savior today (John 1:12).