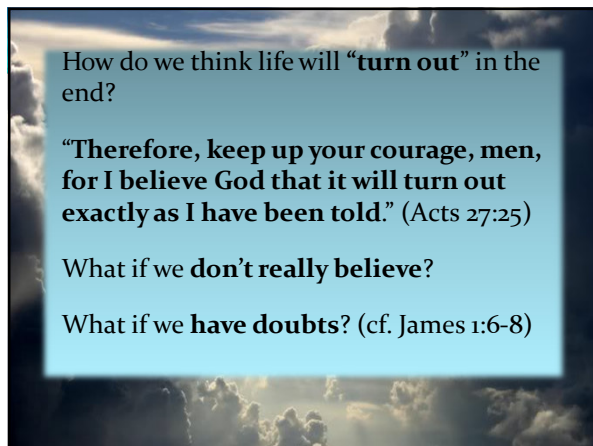




A Hope Of Heaven

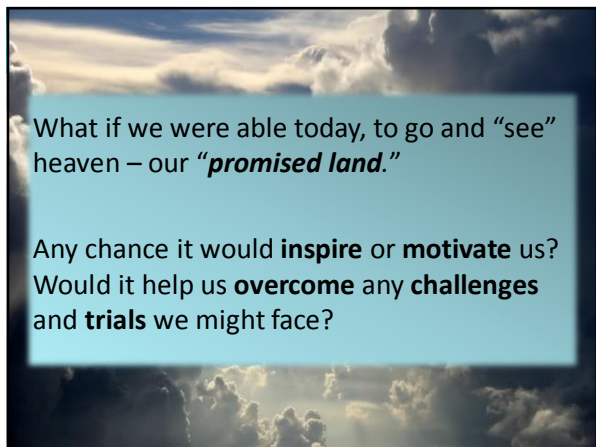


How do we think life will “**turn out**” in the end?

“Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told.” (Acts 27:25)

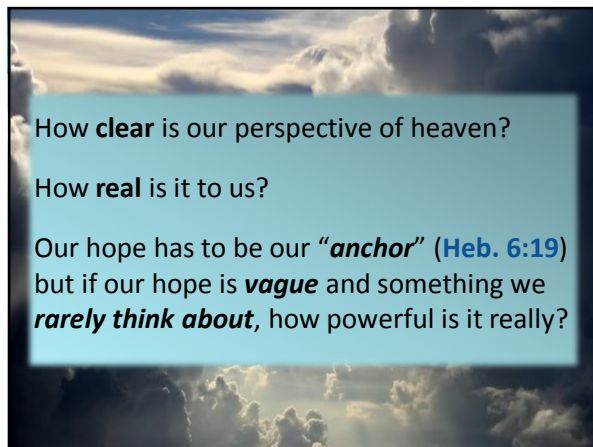
What if we **don't really believe**?

What if we **have doubts**? (cf. James 1:6-8)



What if we were able today, to go and “see” heaven – our “**promised land**.”

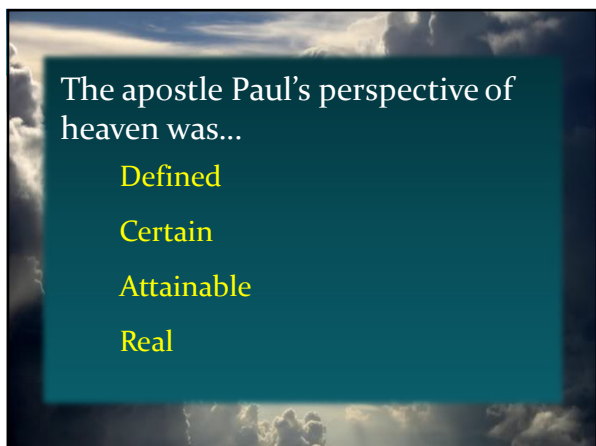
Any chance it would **inspire** or **motivate** us? Would it help us **overcome** any **challenges** and **trials** we might face?



How **clear** is our perspective of heaven?

How **real** is it to us?

Our hope has to be our “**anchor**” (**Heb. 6:19**) but if our hope is **vague** and something we **rarely think about**, how powerful is it really?



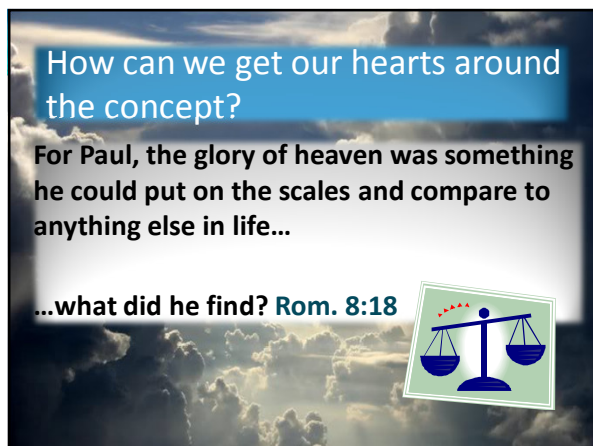
The apostle Paul's perspective of heaven was...

Defined

Certain

Attainable

Real



How can we get our hearts around the concept?

For Paul, the glory of heaven was something he could put on the scales and compare to anything else in life...


...what did he find? **Rom. 8:18**



*"For I **consider** that the sufferings of this present time are **not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."** Romans 8:18*

"Consider" – "Reckon" (ASV, KJV) which means...

- **"to take an inventory, i.e., estimate"** (Strong)
- **"Count, compute, or calculate"** (Thayer)




2 Corinthians 4:17

Momentary Light Affliction < **Eternal weight of glory**

"Beyond all comparison" – "more exceedingly" (ASV)

From the Greek word **"huperbole"** meaning "a throwing beyond others; supereminence – superiority" (Strong, Thayer and Vine)



How strong was Paul's longing for heaven?

Philippians 1:19-26

"To live is Christ, to die is gain"

*"...having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is **very much better**..."*

To Paul the reward of heaven was **something to be "laid hold of"** (Philippians 3:13-14)...

- Defined as:
 - **"to take eagerly, seize, possess"** (Strong)
 - **"to lay hold of so as to make one's own"** (Thayer)

Paul knew what was he was **"pressing"** on towards.

How strong was Paul's longing for heaven?

The closer he got, the more real and certain it became.

2 Timothy 4:8,

*"... **the crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, **will award to me on that day.**"*

We can't wait until our dying days...

Paul's prayer for his brethren is that we grow in our ability to **"see" (now)** what God has in store for the faithful and obedient.

Ephesians 1:18-19

How is our spiritual vision?

*"I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened" so that you may **know**:*

1. *"The hope of His calling",*
2. *"The riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints",*
3. *"The surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe."*
(Ephesians 1:18-19)

Challenges?

Focusing all of our heart and soul and mind on **what can't be seen**.

And if we can, **holding on** for what would appear to be a long way off.

How do we acquire a **true & accurate** (i.e., biblical) **perspective of heaven**?

What Is Heaven Like?

Unlike anything we know of in this life:

1 Peter 1:3-4, *"...born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is **imperishable** and **undefiled** and **will not fade away**, reserved in heaven for you"*

What Is Heaven Like?

- Not a "state" but a place.
- Not physical, but a **spiritual** place.
- Defined by **what is there**.
- Defined by **what is not there**.

What Is Heaven Like?

Defined by what is there:

Describing the indescribable...

1 Cor. 2:9, *"Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him."*

What Is Heaven Like?

Revelation Chapter 21

What has been covered in chapters 12-21?

- The **war against the saints** & the church.
- The **punishment of the wicked**.
- The **destruction of Satan** and his servants.

The concluding issue - the **reward of the righteous** & the **glory of the faithful**.

Revelation Chapter 21

Vs. 1 – “A new heavens and a new earth”

Use of this phrase:

- 1. God’s own people.**
Isaiah 65:17-19, 25; (cf. 2:2-4)
- 2. What God has promised after the 2nd coming and final judgment.**
2 Peter 3:10-14; Rev. 21:1-2

Represents a **divine changing of the order.**

Revelation Chapter 21

Vs. 2 – The holy city, new Jerusalem

“**New**” – new in kind, superior to that which preceded it.

“**Coming down out of heaven**” – of a divine origin, not built by men.

A “**lasting city**” (Heb. 13:14)

Sought for by the patriarchs of old. (Heb. 11:10)

Revelation Chapter 21

Vs. 3 – The tabernacle of God is with men.

“**Pitched**” by God and not man.

Heb. 8:2; 9:11

God shall “**dwel among them**”.

Perfect fellowship w/our heavenly Father.

We shall “**see His face**” (22:4).

cf. Gen. 3:8; Ex. 3:6; 1 John 3:2

Revelation Chapter 21

Vs. 4 –

Defined by what is not there:

- No **tears**,
- No **death**,
- No **mourning**,
- No **crying**,
- No **pain**.

They’ve passed away.

Revelation Chapter 21

Vs. 7 - Defined by the **permanent adoption into God’s family**. Rom. 8:14-17

Vs. 8 & 27 - Defined by **those who are not there**:

Vs. 10–26 - Defined by **the most beautiful elements human language can convey**. (vs. 18-21)

What Is Heaven Like?

Revelation Chapter 22

An allusion to **the garden of Eden**, in the beginning... before sin.

Life without the curse. Gen. 3:14ff.

The serpent, the earth, & all mankind.

Deut. 28:15ff, all who turn away from God.

In Christ, **the curse of the law** could be taken away. **Gal. 3:13.**

Revelation Chapter 22

Perfect life with God.

Lost in Eden - Restored in Heaven.

The **"river of life"** – Gen. 2:10

The **"tree of life"** – Gen. 2:9; 3:22; Rev. 2:7

Theme of these ch's– the **abundance of life.**

"Book of life" (21:27); **"water of life"** (22:1);
"tree of life" (22:2)

Revelation Chapter 22

The Tree Of Life

- Immortality given by it. Gen. 2:9; 3:22
- Sin prevented man from access to it.
- Immortality must now be found in a different tree.

Acts 10:39; Gal. 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24

What Is Heaven Like?

- **A transformed spiritual body.**

Phil 3:21; 1 John 3:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:42-44

- **A place of rest** (Rev. 14:11, 13; Heb. 4:1-11) –
 - What does that mean? (Josh. 11:23; 21:44-45; 23:1 – cf. Acts 9:31)
 - Freedom from conflict & struggles. Prosperity.
 - Did not mean cessation from all activity.
- **Eternal** - timelessness vs. eternal amt. of time.

What Is Heaven Like?

- **A home** – a place to belong. We talk about "going home." 2 Cor. 5:6-9
- **A city** – part of a community of faithful believers – the "great cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1-2).
- **A garden** – a place to work and serve.

What will we do in heaven?

We will serve our heavenly Father without distraction. Rev. 22:3

We are to be **"rulers over many things"**
Matt. 25:23

We will rest from our labors

Enter In Thou Good & Faithful Servant

We've got to **believe** to enter that rest (Heb. 3:19-4:11)

Rev. 22:14 – need our **robes washed by the blood of the Lamb.**

Only to those who **endure...** (Heb. 10:35-39)
2nd Peter 1:11 – entrance to be **abundantly supplied.**