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## JOHN 14:2-7

John Series: Get a Life in Jesus

[PRAYER] I find it fascinating, Lord, that you are omniscient, all-knowing. That you know everything about everything. Which means on a personal note you know about our own lives and what we're thinking about in our hearts. You still love us. You're faithful to us. You know what's coming up this week with the test that some of these young people are experiencing in their classes. You know those answers to those test questions. So Lord, we ask that you would empower young people as they study to remember and to take hold of the facts and the information that they're learning. We also know, Lord, that you know about their future. We know that today a lot of young people experience anxiety about whether they'll be able to manage the tasks of the future. We know that you have answers and we can trust you. And Lord, we know that you know about the people around us in our lives and you know what's going on in their hearts. We can't see that many times, but we know that you know that and sometimes you reveal things to us that can be instrumental in our passing on of grace to them. So Lord, I pray for each of us, young people, older people, that you'd give us wisdom to listen to you. I pray for parents as they work with their young people that you would give them guidance and spiritual insight into the hearts of their kids. Lord, we thank you for truth. And we thank you that you've given us your word so that we can know about some things – know about you, know about ourselves more, we can know our place in this world. So Lord, today as we open your word we do so with a sense of gratitude and anticipation to learn more about what you have for us. Use our time in your word today to impress upon us what you would have for each us today. Take the information that you know about our hearts and take the information from your word and tie them together in a way that allows us to take Jesus home into our lives. In Jesus' name, amen.

I don't know if you were intrigued by the news this week when Elon Musk was describing and announcing how he's taking this group of people to Mars. He's on this plan to launch SpaceX and SpaceX will take this group of people to Mars. I find that to be rather fascinating. Imagine that you got a space on that spaceship and you know it takes a good seven months of travel to go from our planet to the planet of Mars.

But let's say you prepare for that rocket and you get everything done that you need to do to get a space on that rocket ship and you're sitting there seatbelt in and you say to yourself, "Wow, I didn't think to look up anything about Mars. I wonder what it's like." Well that would be so silly, right? If you're going to Mars, that's going to be your new home. You'd want to know what Mars is all about. So it would be easy to get on a rocket ship and commit yourself to this whole program and not know about the details are about this planet of this new home that you'd be going to.

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I think that's what happens to many of us as Christians. We make the commitment to Christ, but we don't know where we're going when it comes to heaven. We don't know about heaven. All we know is that anecdotal stories about things we hear or the movies that we watch or the books that we see which talk about someone who died and they came back to life and their experiences while they were dead. From that we extrapolate these things about heaven and what it must be like. But I would suggest that God has given us His word and it tells us more about heaven than we know. There's a lot of God's word that describes heaven and what it's all about. I think if we understood that, we'd be more eager to go there.

I like the story of the evangelist who goes into the restaurant and he says to a guy, "Do you want to go to heaven?"

The guy says, "Yes."

"Okay. Go stand over there." He goes to the next guy and he says, "Do you want to go to heaven?"

He says "Yes."

He says, "Okay, go stand over there." He says to the next guy, "Do you want to go to heaven?"

And he says, "No."

"You don't want to go to heaven when you die?"

He says, "Oh when I die. I thought you were getting a group together to go now."

See, I think this illustrates a problem that people have because they think, "Well I don't want to go to heaven. It's just for something when I die. I don't need it right now. Save it for when I die because there's no other alternatives for me. I'm going to heaven. I know that. I'm a Christian. So I'll think about heaven then." But I think there's much value and understanding more about what heaven is all about for our own lives.

One young man said, "I don't think I want to go to heaven." Why? He says, "Well I go to mass every week and it is boring. And if that's what heaven's like, I don't want to be a part of that." I've got to tell you, heaven is not boring. I think it's a sin to bore young people in church anyway. But I think that if we knew more about it then I think we would be excited about heaven and eager to go there.

One nine year old said, "One thing I like about heaven is you don't have to do any homework unless your teacher is there too." But I think that understanding facts about heaven not only helps us know about where we're going, but it helps us to live together right now in a world where life is a challenge. Because life is a challenge and God wants us to live in this world in a way that's most productive. We need to know about heaven because it's going to affect the way we live now.

We're in a series of the gospel of John and I entitled it "Get a Life." But I want to share with you a passage of scripture that's not in our book of John yet. We'll get to there in just a moment and we'll read it together. But this is what Paul says will happen to you if you know more about what's yet to come and heavenly things. He says – *Since then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above where Christ is, seated at the right hand on God. Set your minds now on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ*

*in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, you will also will appear with him in glory.*  
There's tremendous value to understand more about heaven because when we understand heaven it helps us to live now in our daily lives more effectively.

So I'm excited to share with you some of the things we're going to look at today. In order to do that, let's go to God's word in our passage in John 14. Today we're going to look at our passage, John 14:2-7. I'm going to ask you to stand. Open your Bibles. Read it out of your Bible, or turn on your Bible, or however you get to your Bible, and read it along as I read this. If you don't have a Bible with you, you can certainly read on the screen.

Starting in verse 2, Jesus is speaking and He says this: *My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.*"

*Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."*

You may be seated.

I want to point out from this passage, first of all, that heaven is a place. It's not a state. It's not a state of being. Because there's some people that have this idea that when you die you're kind of in this state of being that's maybe rather pleasant, but you're not kind of existing or you're existing in this kind of eternal state. I want to suggest that it's a place because that's what the Bible says. In fact look at the terminology here that describes heaven. It says – *I'm going there to prepare a place for you.* It's a physical place. In fact in Revelation 21:1 it talks about *a new heaven and a new earth.* It's a place. It's an actual place where you're looking around, where you're walking around, where you're seeing things. And because it's a new heaven and a new earth, the implication is that it has some kind of similarity to what we see now as we look at the heavens, the skies, and we see the earth there. There must be some similarities.

However, the fact that we live in a broken world now makes it very different than the new heaven and new earth because sin entered our world and has corrupted the earth that we live in now. But imagine being in an earth or a new earth that isn't broken by sin, that doesn't have weeds, for example, or doesn't have disease. Heaven is a new place. But it's a place. It's a place. In fact Jesus describes it as a home that has different rooms. He says – *I'm going to take you to be with me that you may be where I am.* So all of these words indicate an actual physical place.

I want to describe that place. Because if we understand this place a little more, I think it's going to give us a better picture of what heaven is going to be like. It's going to be a new world for us. A new amazing place it will be.

I was thinking this week about scuba diving. When I was younger and lived in Hawaii, I scuba dived (or whatever you call it). It's just an amazing experience. You go out a couple hundred

yards off shore and you drop down about 30-60 feet. In the midst of that you're seeing fish, and I'm telling you, seeing fish like you've never seen before. So you just stare at this purple fish, and then comes along this orange and black. Then comes this long really skinny one that's hard to see. He's almost transparent, but he's long and skinny with this big mouth. They call him a trumpet fish. Then there's another one that's yellow with a black nose on him. You're seeing all of these fish. Then comes a swarm.... What do you call them a bunch of fish together? Oh yeah. A school of them. Yes. A school of them combined. They come right by you and you're going, "Oh this is so amazing to see this." And of course then there's sea turtles and there's the rays that are going along and then there's the coral reef and the things that are in there.

So you come out of the water there with your fins and snorkel and backpack and all that stuff on. You take it all off and you try to describe that to someone. What was it like? It's just one of those things that's so hard to describe because it's such a different world when you're underwater.

I think heaven is going to be just this different world that's hard to describe. But we're going to try to use our imaginations today. I want to answer some basic questions that I think many people are asking. But I don't want to just go to Wikipedia today. I want to go to God's word where we're going to find some real answers to some real questions. So let's look at what the Bible has to say. I want to do this by giving you a whole bunch of questions to ask.

Question #1: Will we become angels when we die?

The answer is no. So those little cartoons that you see with people who get to heaven and they have little wings, that's a cartoon. That's not really what's going to happen. The answer is no. In a number of places we see that we have our own identity, which we'll talk about in just a moment. Paul says – *We are confident and would prefer to be away from the body and with the Lord.* We have the same person. We are not angels. Angels are angels. God is God. Animals are animals. And people will be people in heaven. Okay? So we don't become angels when we die.

Question #2: Will we have emotions in heaven?

Well the answer is yes and no. It's interesting as we see some of the passages in the Bible, it's talking about experiencing positive emotions. Here's just one where Jesus says – *Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.* So there will be laughter in heaven.

I know there's a lot of jokes about heaven and some of the jokes are where a man dies, goes to heaven, he's standing before the pearly gates with St. Peter. Okay, it's not going to happen that way. St. Peter does not manage this little gatekeeping place to see whether you can get in or not. Okay? That's not in the Bible. But we like those kind of jokes because they give us some kind of way of describing heaven.

So I like the joke about St. Peter who's there and there's this one guy on earth who was really rich and trying to figure out a way of how he could get something to heaven. So he figured out a way that he could take one suitcase with him to heaven. So he gets up there to St. Peter and he's figured out and he has this one thing he's going to take. What does he take? He decided he was going to take gold because that's like the universal asset that you can use anywhere. So he gets up there to St. Peter and St. Peter says, "Okay, I see you brought your suitcase. What's in it?" He opens his suitcase and Peter laughed. He said, "Look! He brought pavement!" I don't know if

there's anything we could take from earth that we would enjoy in heaven because heaven is such an amazing place.

And yes, there's going to be laughter in heaven. There are some emotions that won't be there, according to Revelation 21:4. It says – *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.* Wow. I look forward to heaven. No more crying. No more pain. And people who have emotional challenges now will be relieved of their brokenness and they will experience the positive emotions that God designed for us in our hearts to enjoy. That's part of what it means to be in heaven.

Question #3: Will we maintain our own identities?

The answer is yes. Jesus says – *I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day that I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom.* In other words, you are going to be there. If you are a Christian, you are going to be in heaven. And when you're in heaven, you're going to be you.

You have that unique identity, that unique personness. Now there's not physical male, femaleness, but part of you is male or female. That identity part of you will be there. There will be nations and tribes. That means your ethnic background will be with you in heaven. So there is this diversity that exists in heaven that's amazing. Your identity will be you when you're in heaven, but it won't have the brokenness. So there's this sense of the real you, the true you will be not only available for you to see and understand, but others will experience it as well.

Question #4: Are there rewards in heaven?

Oh yes, there are rewards in heaven. Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount – *Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.* That's just one. There's verses about crowns that come and we could do a whole study about rewards that come in heaven that are based on earthly kind of activities that we do now. That already we are starting to get a little bit of perspective here on how a heavenly understanding can affect an earthly lifestyle.

If your goal is pleasure here on earth, then you're making a big mistake. I've already said this about young people that sometimes young people believe that their goal in life is to have fun. It's a dangerous proposition, because that is not the goal of young people. The goal is to be on a mission toward adulthood, okay, but discipleship for Christ. There's this period of adolescence that's very important and that goal is not pleasure, it's something much bigger than pleasure. You're on a mission during adolescence to prepare for adulthood. But we're talking about all of us that there's a sense in which pleasure can't be our goal here. We're building eternal pleasures. That's what we're investing in, so it's going to affect the way you live now. There's some sacrifices that we make now in our lives and we do that because we know that are investing in eternal benefits or eternal rewards. Heaven is going to be a great place.

Question #5: Will we have bodies in heaven?

Yes. I think that you're going to be amazed when you get to heaven at how you look. I'm not sure what that means yet because beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

I know that when I lived in Kenya they always were criticizing the Americans because we were trying to lose weight. Because our perception of beauty is thin-looking, where their perception of beauty...and in fact if you have money in Kenya then you can afford food, so you're fat. So someone who's fat they look very attractive in Kenya.

Now I have no idea what that's going to mean when we get to heaven, but I do know that you're going to have a body because that was the concern of the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 15. What about our loved ones? Are they going to be there? The ones who have died already? We're waiting for Christ to come back again. What about the ones who have died already? So Paul says the dead in Christ will rise first, wanting to encourage them about that. And he says in 1 Corinthians 15:16-17 – *For if the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.*

There's this idea of a bodily resurrection, so we will have bodies, new bodies, and we can understand more about these bodies from looking at Jesus Christ Himself. Because after He rose from the dead, He got a new body. Just from the few stories we can see, we learn a little about this resurrection body. He was able to be with the guys on the road to Emmaus. He just appeared there. And then He was at dinner and then He just disappeared. Then He kind of goes through the walls or somehow He transports Himself into a room that is locked to talk to His disciples. Sounds like a kind of interesting body to have. We could imagine that. I mean if you watch Star Trek you can imagine that kind of idea. But this is real stuff in the new heaven and the new earth and our bodies are different. Jesus still ate and drank with His resurrection body. Interesting. Yes, we'll have bodies in heaven.

Question #6: Will there be animals in heaven?

The answer is yes. Let's just look at a passage giving a glimpse in Isaiah about the end times he says about the heaven – *The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling will be together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will graze with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play by the cobra's den, and the toddler will reach into the viper's nest.*

I know you parents are getting a little concerned there about your children. But I think the point of the passage here is that yes, there will be animals and they are safe. You can go up and pet a bear in heaven. That there will be a wolf and you can be there with the wolf without feeling any sense of danger. I love animals, so seeing the various kinds of animals that will be in heaven is a fascinating thought. Animals in heaven. Yes. I'm hoping I'm creating an imagination in your mind that you can see a little bit more about heaven than you imagined before.

Question #7: Will we eat and drink?

The answer is yes. Jesus says – *I bestow on you a kingdom, just as my Father has bestowed one on me so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

This is a story about when you get to heaven. First of all, I want you to see that you are eating and drinking. There's a feast. There's a special feast, the wedding supper of the Lamb. And that's

a special meal. But there's this idea that there are trees in heaven and you can go and just take a piece of fruit (I'm imagining) off that tree and eat it. And the delight that will come because it doesn't have any pesticides, yet it's whole and beautiful and tasty. Yes, there's eating and drinking in heaven.

But I want you to see also what we're going to do – *sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel*. So there's this work... We'll talk about work in a minute. Are we going to work in heaven? I know some of you are concerned about that. But we're going to come to that in a minute because the answer is yes.

But first let's ask this. Question #8: Will we learn or investigate in heaven?

Yes, you will. In Ephesians 2 it says – *And God raised us up in Christ and seated us in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus in order that in the coming ages he might display the surpassing riches of his grace, demonstrated by the kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*

God's grace is so big. I know you experience it now. You experience it in salvation. You experience it when you need the grace to get through an exam or you need to deal with a friendship or something. You're experiencing God's grace there. But I've got to tell you, this is where you walk into a part of heaven and grace is so big you're going, "Wow. That is amazing." And you go into another part of heaven and you go, "Whoa." Jesus is saying let me show you, let me display for you, let me help you and experience God's grace in amazing forms.

When you get to heaven, it's going to be amazing because you're going to see God's grace in new ways than you ever imagined before. It's just so big and so interesting and so intricate and powerful. That's why he says it's *surpassing riches of his grace*. Surpassing riches of His grace. Wow. We're going to see that and we're going to learn and we're going to investigate when we are in heaven.

Question #9: Will we work in heaven?

I know some of you are saying, "Oh no. We're going to work in heaven?" I think that's maybe because you don't like your work. But this is going to be work that you love because this work is satisfying and fulfilling. Notice he says – *No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be within the city, and his servants will worship him.*

Do you know the church is a taste of heaven? When we come together and fellowship together and enjoy relationships, we're getting a taste of what heaven is going to be like when we spend time together in those relationships. When we worship the Lord together, we are getting a taste of what heaven's like when we worship the Lord. You'll have a job to do and that's worship in heaven.

But notice in Matthew 25 it says in the parable – *Well done, good and faithful servant! You've been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master.* He's talking about being faithful here and doing what God wants us to do and being reliable and responsible now so that when we get into that eternal state, when we get into that place where we're in heaven then He's giving us responsibilities. That means you're going to help God run the universe. That's what we're going to do. You're going to sit on thrones and

judge. You think video games are fun? You haven't seen anything yet! Can you imagine handling the joysticks of a star that's going through space or an asteroid that's going along? We are going to have plenty to do. And the job that we have is going to be so satisfying and fulfilling for us in heaven.

Question #10: Is there marriage in heaven?

Oh you've heard the verse. Right? This is the verse. *At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given like marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.* Some of you are looking at that and saying, "Oh good. I'm not going to be married in heaven." Others of you are looking at that and saying, "Oh man. I really love my spouse. And there's no marriage in heaven? That's really disappointing."

Well let me explain what's happening here in the passage. You'll see when you read the rest of this verse in context. Now I'm taking a lot of verses here and I would encourage you to go back and look at them in context. But let me share with you the context of this particular verse. Because the Sadducees who didn't believe in the resurrection wanted to trick Jesus by asking Him a question that would show that the resurrection is absurd. That if one spouse died and then this person married another person and that spouse died and married another person and they'd go on, then who's going to be married together? He says it's just ridiculous to think about.

That's when Jesus says that the resurrection people neither marry nor be given in marriage. They'll be like the angels. They won't be angels. They'll be *like* the angels. Angels don't get married, but there is going to be marriage in heaven. There is one person that we're all married to and that's Jesus Christ. In the midst of that marriage, you'll have all of your needs that are satisfied in marriage met in that one person.

That is just so amazing that the needs that we find. God designed our world. He said – *It is not good for man to be alone.* So He made woman. And then there's this unity that takes place in marriage that's just so beautiful that we see here on earth or can be so beautiful. When we get to heaven those human relationships are nothing compared to the magnificence of being married to Jesus and knowing Him and having all those needs satisfied that we would have in marriage. But we still would know those other people. They have identities.

The beautiful thing about marriage is that people in heaven are not broken with sin. So you might have had a lot of disagreement with your spouse when you were on earth, but when you're in heaven that person is still a person that you know. In heaven you'll know that person, but not with all of the brokenness. Your brokenness will not hinder your ability to know them. Their brokenness will be released and so there will be this sense of closeness that you'll experience with people that's refreshing and encouraging. Yes, there's marriage in heaven, but not quite the way we look at it.

Question #11: Will we meet people in heaven?

Yes. You're going to meet people. Jesus says in Matthew 8 – *I say to you that many will come from the east and the west to share a banquet with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.*

I can hardly wait to talk to Lazarus and Mary and Martha. That will be a real fun conversation. I'm kind of intrigued about David and all of his strategic warfare kind of things. I'm going to be interested in him. And he was also quite an artist with his music that he created. So I think I'm going to sit at his table for quite a bit. Charles Spurgeon will be there. That guy was really deep in his theology and I'll enjoy talking to him. Isaac Watts wrote songs that were songs that we still sing today. We're going to meet people and we're going to enjoy them. We're going to sit and talk to them. Wow. It's just going to be a lot of fun to enjoy the people.

I'm looking forward to seeing some people that I haven't seen here on earth for a while. You know we moved away from Hawaii and moved to New Jersey many years ago. I still have contacts with some of those people, but I long to be with them and talk to them. Some of those Christian friends I'm going to sit and talk to them when I get to heaven.

You know one person I'm really going to enjoy is my dad. My dad's in heaven. He beat me there. My dad said when he passed away, he told all of us as kids when we were growing up, "When I die, I don't want a funeral. I want a party. I want you guys to celebrate." So we did. We had a party when my father passed away and we celebrated, just as he had said. We enjoy the fact that we are going to see him again in the kingdom of God and we're going to enjoy him together. What a privilege to meet people in heaven.

Question #12: Will we have a home?

Here's where we come back to our passage for today. In John 14 it tells us about this home. He says – *My Father's house has many rooms.*

Now the idea of house has to do with spaciousness. It's big. This is a huge house. But then He says it has many rooms, which gives an impression of an individuality. That there's a sense of privacy. I know some of you aren't people person here, but I think you'll be more a people person when you get to heaven. But the idea is there can be times when you get alone apparently and go to your room. Your parents won't tell you to go to your room, but you'll go to your room. There's this sense of privacy that exists.

There's this house. It has rooms. That we're connected. I hope your room is next to mine. In fact I hope we we're going to have a wing, the Calvary Chapel Living Hope wing, where we can hang out together and enjoy and actually do some of the worship that we've been practicing together. So yes, we will have a home. It is a physical place that you're going to when you get to heaven.

Question #13: Is heaven the destination of all people?

Well let's continue to read in our passage to discover that the answer is no. He says in verse 5-6 of our passage today in John 14 – *Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"* And Jesus made it really clear. *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

This is a really important piece of information. Young people, you will come into contact with lots of different religions in our world. There are lots of them. There are lots of religions in our world, but you need to understand that the Bible does not tolerate other religions. The Bible is

exclusive. The Bible says there's only one way to heaven. There's some people who come to this subject of religion in our culture today and say, "Well they're all trying to get to the same place. There's just different pathways to get up the mountain in order to understand God." I want to tell you, there are a lot of pathways, but they're not all going to the right place. There's only one pathway that's going to heaven and that's through Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Jesus said – *I am the way, the truth, and the life.*

So if you're here today and you have not accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you want to make that commitment to Christ that gets you onto the path. When you get to heaven and stand before Peter at the pearly gates (if you want to picture that) and you were asked the question, "What do you have that entitles you to get into heaven?" you can't say to God, "Well if you look back on my life, God, you'll see that my good works balanced out my bad activities." No. That's not how God measures whether someone comes into the kingdom or not. He measures whether someone gets into the kingdom if they say, "I'm a sinner. The only way that I can get into the kingdom is because I know Jesus Christ as my personal Savior." So if you haven't made that commitment, you'll want to make that today.

Really we're talking about heaven, but you have to know there's another alternative if you don't choose heaven and that's hell. We're not spending our time talking about that right now, but it's a terrible, bad choice. And that's the default for people in general. That's the default. It's only when you choose Christ as your Lord and Savior that you're heading into this direction so that you know the way and you know the truth and you know the life that is Jesus Christ Himself. Heaven is not the destination for all. It is only the destination for those who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Question #14: Will heaven be boring?

Definitely not. If your imagination about heaven is sitting on a cloud playing a harp, well that's fine. Maybe that's one department you can go to in heaven and sit on a cloud and play a harp if that's your thing. I don't think I'm going to be doing that. I've got other choices of things I'm going to be involved in and I'm going to make those different choices.

1 Corinthians 2:9 describes this a little bit when he says – *What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived.* And we can use our imagination to try to think about what heaven is like. But the reality is we can't even picture what this is all about in our lives.

Now I'm studying about heaven this week and I'm getting excited to share this with you. How am I going to share this idea of heaven? Because what I really want to do is not only broaden your knowledge, but I want to give you an excitement to go there, to be there, to understand what it's like. If we can get a glimpse of how magnificent heaven is, it will change the way we live today and tomorrow.

And then it happened this week. I went over to visit my friend Ed Miller, who many of you know. Ed is on a traveling trip all over the United States and he happened to be home. He had just come from a trip where a part of that he visited Zion National Park in Utah. It's a national park that's beautiful. So I walk into his house and I said, "Is Ed here?" Here's what Ed does. He

jumps off the couch. He says, “Scott, you’re not going to believe this. This is the best national park that exists out there. It is so amazing. When you come in you’re on the canyon floor. And you’re looking around over the top you can see snow-capped mountains over there. And you turn over here and there’s this waterfall happening over here. And then if you look at the canyon wall itself, it has different colors of the wall. It’s just so amazing to look at all the different things as you just glimpse around all of this. It’s stunning. And then you see the people. There’s climbers climbing up the rocks over on this side and there’s other people hiking up the trail cutting back and forth on the canyon wall. This is so amazing.”

You know what I’m thinking? I’m thinking, “This is a guy describing what I need to describe to you on Sunday morning about heaven.” His passion for Zion National Park is what I need to share with you because the excitement he had... He said, “Let me show you a video.” I’m looking at the video and he says, “This video doesn’t... That’s not what it looks like. It’s much better than that.” That’s what he’s saying to me. And I’m saying this is what heaven’s going to be like. We’re just getting an idea of what it looks like right now. When we get a glimpse of heaven now, it helps us to live our lives today.

Let me share one more story with you. Florence Chadwick, an amazing woman, in 1952 she takes off on a... She’s a swimmer. She’s the first woman to cross the English Channel both ways. Not at the same time. One time and then she goes the other direction. She crossed the English Channel. Her task in 1952 is to cross from Catalina Island to the California shore. The first woman to ever do this. But it was a very cold and foggy morning that she’s swimming and she’s getting so tired and exhausted. So she tells the people in the boats, “Take me out. I’m done. I can’t make it this time.” So they take her out, she’s got a towel wrapped around her as the fog is lifting and she sees that the shore is a half a mile away. Her words are these: “If I could have seen the shore, I could have kept going.”

That’s the same thing that’s true about our own lives. If you get a glimpse of what heaven is like, if you understand the shore, it’s there. It will help you to live in the challenges that you’re experiencing in your life. The discouragement or the despair or the lack of hope is all remedied by an understanding of what heaven is. When we get a glimpse of it, we can keep going today because God has something better for us. He is prepared a house that has rooms and it’s a new heaven and a new earth and an astonishingly amazing... I can’t use enough words. I just don’t have enough imagination to do that. But it’s such a great place for us to be.

I trust that God will challenge your heart. If you’re not saved today, you want to get saved. Because it’s not just heaven and eternal life. It’s right now that you’re able to experience something that’s majestic. If you’re discouraged today, you want to focus on heaven and what God wants to do in your life to encourage you today and every one of us in our lives need to realize as we go to work tomorrow or we go to school tomorrow that we would have our eyes set on heavenly things, not on earthly things.

Let’s pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we are so grateful that you gave us a glimpse of heaven, that you allow us to share that as a church. Lord, we just consider it a privilege to be part of a fellowship.

Thank you. I thank you for my friends here who share in the struggles that my wife and I experience, that we don't walk this path alone. Certainly, Lord, we know we have you and when we trust in you. We're also grateful for the people that we share that with. So Lord, I pray for each of us as brothers and sisters for you that as we stand here, you would speak to us and help us to see more clearly what you want for us today. Speak to us during this time of worship. We ask in Jesus' name, amen.