Thinking About Heaven

(specifically, our citizenship in heaven)

As we enter yet another election cycle, we are faced not with voting our traditional political party, but voting for individuals and ideas that reflect of Christ-like values. We need to be reminded that we are citizens of heaven and should vote the values of heaven. We are to seek those things which are above and not on the things of earth.

We cannot pray* "Thy kingdom come"** ***and then vote for the kingdom of darkness. We need to be reminded that we all will give an account to God for the vote that we cast and the people we vote into positions of authority who will pass and uphold laws that are God-honoring. Whomever you vote for, be sure they are moral people who love righteousness and hate iniquity.

There are no perfect candidates, only those who represent you biblical convictions. Vote wisely. Vote your conscience. God is watching.

Colossians 3:1-4 "If you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above and not on things on the earth. For you died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you will appear with Him in glory."

"Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other" to George Washington, but it was actually said by **John Adams** in an October 11, 1798, address to the militia of Massachusetts

And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." -- — George Washington

Philippians 3:17-21

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

John 14:1-6

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me. 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."

Revelation 21:4-5

'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." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Revelation 22:1-5

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

* * * * *

I've been thinking about heaven lately. As we see the world around us falling apart, and our own culture becoming more like Sodom and Gomorrah, it's a good thing to *"set our affections on things above and not on things on this earth."* I was inspired recently by my colleague, Bill Rudge, in his monthly newsletter in which he alliterated some of the glories of heaven. Here are some highlights:

> ***"Just think! All sickness, disease, injuries, and disabilities will be nonexistent. Broken bones and broken hearts will be forever healed. Thorns and thistles will never again pierce our skin. Hunger, thirst and poverty will be forever forgotten. Never again will we experience tragedy nor grieve the loss of a loved one.***
>
> ***Anxiety and addictions will disappear. There will be no worry, fear, guilt, jealousy, gossip, lies, envy, bitterness, revenge, lust, greed, anger, hatred, profanity, fighting- the list goes on…Nothing will harm our peace and joy. Never again will be experience phobias, insecurities, rejection, separation, prejudice, betrayal, exclusion, abuse, heartache or humiliation.***
>
> ***No one will require a hospital, surgery, physical therapy, injections or pills. There will be no financial worries and no debt. There will be no need for air conditioners or heaters. There will be no need for bathrooms; no offensive smells, sights or sounds; no coughs, colds, or allergies.***
>
> ***There will be no crime: burglaries, muggings, rapes or murders. There will be no more war or need for weapons of any kind. There will be no orphanages, hospitals, doctors, rest homes, nursing homes, funeral homes or cemeteries. Jails, prisons, or psychiatric wards will not exist.***
>
> ***There will be no natural disasters, no storms, no floods, hurricanes, droughts, heat waves, wildfires, landslides, avalanches, blizzards, volcanic eruptions or tsunamis.***
>
> ***We will have new perfect bodies, beautiful bodies, no pain, no disease, no weaknesses, and no tears. We will feast at the table of the Lord and never get overweight. We won't get tired. We won't wear out. We probably won't sleep, and definitely we will never die."***

In fact, God says heaven is beyond our wildest dreams and expectations.

"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for them that love him." (1 Corinthians 2:9)

"In your presence is fullness of joy; and in your right hand are pleasures forever." (Psalm 16:11)

Reading **Revelation 21:4-5** and **Revelation 22:1-5** reminds me of a Gaither children's song.

Gaither children's music, "The Won't Be Song."

Gaither children's music, "The Won't Be Song."

I'm makin' my list, I just want to see, what won't be botherin' me,
I'm making my list of won't be's, in heaven.
I'm checkin it twice, I just want to find, what's nice,
I'll leave the rest behind. I'm making my list of won't be's, in heaven

There won't be … politics to fuss about,
There won't be…tires that flat, for me to change.
There won't be…traffic jams, to slow me down.
And there won't be taxes, and there won't be bills, that I can't pay.

I'm checkin it twice, I just want to find, what's nice,
I'm checkin it twice, I just want to find, what's nice,
I'll leave the rest behind. We're making our list of won't be's, in heaven

There won't be…tummy aches, to bother me
There won't be…a runny nose, for me to wipe
There won't be…seeter bites, for me to scratch
And there won't be…spinach, and there won't be…teachers, that aren't my type

I'm checkin it twice, I just want to find, what's nice,
I'm checkin it twice, I just want to find, what's nice,
I'll leave the rest behind. We're making our list of won't be's, in heaven

Hey kids, now it's your turn…name some things that you don't think will be in heaven…
There won't be…___
There won't be…___
There won't be…___
There won't be…___, dah, dah, dah, dah.
Dentists, doctors, shots, baldheads, hearing aids, glasses, toothaches, headaches, migraines, zits, leg cramps, tiredness, etc.

Let me illustrate some of the glories of heaven this morning to remind us of what awaits us in heaven.

90 Minutes in Heaven by Don Piper

If you've never had a chance to pick up the book, *90 Minutes in Heaven* by Don Piper, I recommend you get a copy. Don Piper had a terrible traffic accident and was pronounced dead at the scene. After 90 minutes he came back to life and tells the story of what he saw in heaven during those minutes. We had the privilege of having Don speak at Grove City Alliance Church and two service at Slippery Rock University to packed out crowds. Here are just a few things he reported seeing in heaven:

(Read from his book page 21-36)

Thinking About Heaven

1. **<u>What Is It?</u> John 14:2-3 Dwelling place of God, where His throne is, and where myriads of angelic beings serve Him continually. It is a place where Jesus is preparing a place for us where we will dwell eternally.**

2. **<u>Where Is It?</u> It is "Up" Gen 11:7 "Let us go down", 2 Kings 2:11 Elijah was caught up to heaven, Psalm 14:2 The Lord looks down from heaven, Mark 6:41 Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven, Acts 1:9-11 This same Jesus who was taken up to heaven, 2 Corinthians 5:1 we have a building fom God, eternal in the heavens. 1 Thess. 4:17 we will be caught up together with them in the clouds. Rev 4:1 I beheld a door open in heaven and a voices saying come up here.**

3. **<u>When Is It?</u> 2 Corinthians 5:8 "To be absent from body is to be present with the Lord 2 Corinthians 15:51-54 we shall be changed, in a moment, in a twinkling of the eye, at the last trumpet. John 14:3 I will come again and receive you unto myself.**

4. **<u>Why Is It?</u> Galatians 1:4 He gave himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age. Luke 11:4 to answer our prayer, "Deliver us from evil." Hebrews 2:14-15 to destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who for fear of death were all their lifetime were subject bondage.**

5. **<u>What Will We Be Like?</u> Philippians 3:21 Who will transform our lowly body to be like unto His glorified body. (Immortal, perfect, restored to the image of God.)**

6. **<u>Who Is It For?</u> 1 Corinthians 2:9 Eye has not seen nor ear heard…the things that God has prepared for those that love him. John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosover believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**

Heaven Songs

Dwelling in Beulah Land – C. Austin Miles
1 Far away the noise of strife upon my ear is falling,
Then I know the sins of earth beset on every hand;
Doubt and fear and things of earth in vain to me are calling,
None of these shall move me from Beulah Land.

Refrain:
I'm living on the mountain, underneath a cloudless sky;
I'm drinking at the fountain that never shall run dry;
O yes! I'm feasting on the manna from a bountiful supply,
For I am dwelling in Beulah Land.

When We All Get to Heaven
1 Sing the wonderous love of Jesus;
sing His mercy and His grace.
In the mansions, bright and blessed,
He'll prepare for us a place.

Refrain:
When we all get to heaven,
what a day of rejoicing that will be!
When we all see Jesus, w
e'll sing and shout the victory!

2 While we walk the pilgrim pathway,
clouds will overspread the sky;
but when trav'ling days are over,
not a shadow, not a sigh! [Refrain]

Heaven is a Wonderful Place
Heaven is a wonderful place
Filled with glory and grace
I wanna see my Savior's Space
'cause Heaven is a wonderful place

A Mansion Over the Hilltop
I'm satisfied with just a cottage below
A little silver and little gold
But in that city where the ransomed will shine
I want a gold one that's silver lined

Chorus: I've got a mansion just over the hilltop
In that bright land where we'll never grow old
And some day yonder we'll never more wander
But walk on streets that are purest gold

Though often tempted, tormented and tested
And like the prophet, my pillow is stone
And though I find here, no permanent dwelling
I know He'll give e a mansion my own

Don't think my poor or deserted or lonely
I'm not discouraged 'cuz I'm Heaven bound
I'm just a pilgrim in search of a city
I want a mansion, a robe, a crown

What a Day that Will Be

What a day that will be
When my Jesus I shall see
And I look upon his face
The one who saved me by his grace
When he takes me by the hand
And leads me through the Promised Land
What a day, glorious day that will be (in the second person)

There'll be no sorrows there
No more burdens to bear
No more sickness and no more pain
No more parting over there
But forever I will be
With the one who died for me
What a day, glorious day that will be

What a day that will be
When my Jesus I shall see
When I look upon his face
The one who saved me by his grace (but when he)
When he takes me by the hand (takes me by the hand)
And leads me through the Promised Land
What a day, glorious day that will be
Oh, what a day that will be

Heaven Songs

Dwelling in Beulah Land – C. Austin Miles
1 Far away the noise of strife upon my ear is falling,
Then I know the sins of earth beset on every hand;
Doubt and fear and things of earth in vain to me are calling,
None of these shall move me from Beulah Land.

Refrain:
I'm living on the mountain, underneath a cloudless sky;
I'm drinking at the fountain that never shall run dry;
O yes! I'm feasting on the manna from a bountiful supply,
For I am dwelling in Beulah Land.

When We All Get to Heaven
1 Sing the wonderous love of Jesus;
sing His mercy and His grace.
In the mansions, bright and blessed,
He'll prepare for us a place.

Refrain:
When we all get to heaven,
what a day of rejoicing that will be!
When we all see Jesus, w
e'll sing and shout the victory!

2 While we walk the pilgrim pathway,
clouds will overspread the sky;
but when trav'ling days are over,
not a shadow, not a sigh! [Refrain]

Heaven is a Wonderful Place
Heaven is a wonderful place
Filled with glory and grace
I wanna see my Savior's Space
'cause Heaven is a wonderful place

A Mansion Over the Hilltop
I'm satisfied with just a cottage below
A little silver and little gold
But in that city where the ransomed will shine
I want a gold one that's silver lined

Chorus: I've got a mansion just over the hilltop
In that bright land where we'll never grow old
And some day yonder we'll never more wander
But walk on streets that are purest gold

Though often tempted, tormented and tested
And like the prophet, my pillow is stone
And though I find here, no permanent dwelling
I know He'll give e a mansion my own

Don't think my poor or deserted or lonely
I'm not discouraged 'cuz I'm Heaven bound
I'm just a pilgrim in search of a city

I want a mansion, a robe, a crown

What a Day that Will Be

What a day that will be
When my Jesus I shall see
And I look upon his face
The one who saved me by his grace
When he takes me by the hand
And leads me through the Promised Land
What a day, glorious day that will be (in the second person)

There'll be no sorrows there
No more burdens to bear
No more sickness and no more pain
No more parting over there
But forever I will be
With the one who died for me
What a day, glorious day that will be

What a day that will be
When my Jesus I shall see
When I look upon his face
The one who saved me by his grace (but when he)
When he takes me by the hand (takes me by the hand)
And leads me through the Promised Land
What a day, glorious day that will be
Oh, what a day that will be

Finally Home, by Don Wyrtzen
"But just think of stepping on shore-And finding it Heaven!
Of touching a hand-And finding it God's!
Of breathing new air-And finding it celestial!
Of waking up in glory-And finding it home!"