

FAITH CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

13820 Seal Beach Blvd

PO Box 3444

Seal Beach, Ca 90740

Rev. Gwyn & Ginny Vaughn, Lead Pastors

Rev. Sheri Leming, Executive Pastor – Gary Leming, Business Administrator

Church Phone 562-598-9010

GV2fca@aol.com

www.fcachurch.net

Vol. 26 No 8

“From the Pastor’s Desk”

August 2018

LET’S TALK ABOUT GOING TO HEAVEN

“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you.”

John 14:2

It seems to me that people are not as engaged in talking about going to heaven as they were in the past. Maybe that is due to their prosperity and satisfaction with this life or perhaps it is because we have become so “earthly conscious” that the thoughts of going to another place are either: foreign, strange, mystifying, or misguided. Probably some do not like the thoughts of heaven because, in this present time, the only way to get there is through death, and most people therefore try to ignore or avoid the subject altogether.

As for the believer, the promise of our Lord that He has gone “*to prepare a place*” for them should at least awaken something in the soul with anticipation that whatever the place that He has gone to prepare is surely something better than what we are experiencing here. After Christ departed the early believers often found themselves in the minority, considered as outcasts of society, therefore suffered the loss of employment, arrested, and falsely accused so naturally Christ’s promise of a “**place**” for them for whom the world was not worthy was most assuring and encouraging.

I just wonder if we have become too “settled-in to this world” that we have lost sight of what our Lord has promised and therefore no longer talk about it. I grew up in an age when the people enjoyed singing songs about heaven. It was nothing unusual or strange. It put a smile on people’s faces when the subject was brought up, and even a shout of praise for what our Lord has promised. Today, if you bring up the subject people seem to sit there in stony silence.

It seems like the enemy of our souls has been so busy keeping people’s eyes transfixed on the “happenings on the ground that they have forgotten to keep their eyes and hearts and minds fixed on the events that one day will take place in the eastern skies. But like the words of the song entitled “Heaven,” the words went like this:

*“In childhood I heard of a heaven, I wondered if it could be true,
That there were sweet mansions eternal, up there somewhere beyond the blue,
I wondered if people really go there, then one day sweet Jesus came in.
And I got a vision of heaven my soul in all heaven I ‘ll spend.”*

The problem with us dwelling so much on what we want down here, is that we are not spending time enough making the proper preparations to go to the place our Lord has been preparing for the past two thousand years. C.S. Lewis said, “**Read history and you will find that Christians who did the most for the present world were those who thought most of the next.**”

God spared a prophet from a burning pot of oil in order that He might permit him to be marooned on the Isle of Patmos. But God’s purpose was to allow him to eavesdrop on the activities of heaven; to give him enough information to foretell events which would soon follow here on earth, not only in his days but in the years to come as well as to inform us of all those things which would happen on the earth’s final day.

What was God’s purpose in all this? Surely, God had a purpose. Much of the information has been rather hard to understand. I am not sure that the writer understood everything that he wrote concerning what he saw in the third heaven. He just knew that God showed him something to write about and to pronounce a blessing upon all those that did take the time to read it for their own edification. Since that time the Church has developed much anticipation not only as to what would befall mankind in the later days, but also to be reminded of the place which Jesus promised to all who love Him, that He went away to prepare a place for them.

HEAVEN IS A REAL PLACE, NOT A FAIRY TALE

Jesus said, “*I go to prepare **a place for you** and if I go will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am you may be also.*” John 14: 2 This statement made by our Lord was as true as anything He taught His disciples and multitudes. These were not idle words. It is not just a state of mind, a figment of some translator’s imagination. Jesus said, “*If it were not true I would have told you.*” (vs.2)

When you read God’s Holy Word you will find in the Old Testament that heaven is referred to 1865 times in the Old Testament and 316 times in the New Testament. If the Scripture talked about heaven that many times then we need to be talking about heaven, even so much more as we see the signs of the time appearing that we were told to look for. We ought to be talking about heaven; we ought to be testifying about heaven, we ought to be preaching about heaven, we need to be singing about heaven.

I noticed in my home, especially when I shared with the family about going somewhere, the more eager our children were about where we were going, the faster they made preparation. Just mention Disneyland. They got ready a lot faster for that place than they did in getting ready for school. Joie and Darrel Green with Ginny and I, whenever we went to their church to minister, often got the chance to sing a song about “*feeling mighty fine, cause heaven is on our mind.*” When people get heaven on their mind, they have a reason to start feeling mighty fine. Maybe the reason the world is so polluted with drugs and alcohol is because they do not have heaven on their mind.

Heaven is a place, which is “UP”. In the Paul Epistle to the Church at Thessalonica, Paul said that a day would come when “*...we which are alive and remain **shall 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.*” (1Thess. 4:17) The heavens have always fascinated me. Just consider the size of the universe, which according to modern day scientists, continue to expand bigger and bigger each year.

I have often wondered if those stars and planets in that expanding universe are a part of what our Lord is preparing for us. Unconverted humankind will never see “*that place called heaven*” in the flesh because it will require a “**new body**.” Even if our “astronauts” land on a few planets prior to the coming of the Lord doesn’t mean that they will see the “Kingdom” as Jesus has prepared it; only God can open one’s eyes to see such sights (2 Kings 6:15-17) But if we are impressed with the development of the universe, just think about what heaven is like.

In August I want to invite you and your friends to come and hear a series of messages which I have been preparing when I will be talking about heaven. I am instructing our musicians to sing about heaven this month. I want our people to start thinking about heaven. I want them to start singing about heaven. I want us all to start preparing ourselves for heaven. Why? Because when we do this, something happens to us.

The Apostle John has written: “*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*” Now that tells us a little bit about heaven. Then in the next verse John said, “*And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*” 1John 3:3

You see when that “*hope of heaven*” dwelleth within our hearts and expectations it helps to bring about a cleansing in our behavior, practices, conduct, speech, decision making, etc. I think some of us need a real stirring in our souls. We need to start thinking about other things than politics, making money, retirement, longevity, and our aches and pains....and start dwelling on that “*place called heaven.*” Why? Because it will do much: it will “*purifieth*” our thinking, decision-making, and negativism.

Let’s bring some of those songs back to the church about heaven like: “*When we all get to Heaven, what a day of rejoicing that will be,*” “*In the sweet bye and bye,*” “*It won’t be very long when here we cease to roam.*” “*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.*” Yes, let’s start talking about heaven...at least it will lift our spirits, attitudes, and hopes in Him who has redeemed us.