



BEACON

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“Shall We Know Each Other in Heaven?”

Guy N. Woods

This is truly a question of more than merely curious interest. Every thoughtful person who has suffered the poignant pain of parting from those near and dear and has tenderly laid their physical forms to rest in the tomb is vitally and absorbingly interested in the implications that this question raises. He knows he shall see them no more in the land of the living. They have passed beyond the door of death to return to this world no more. The moment of parting at the grave, however forbidding the thought may be, becomes the hour of final separation if there is no future recognition. Soon, we, too, shall divest ourselves of the mortal robe with which we are clothed here and join the teeming millions of our race who have lived and loved and at last gone to take their places in the silent halls of death.

On the morning of the resurrection day, we shall rise to stand in judgment and to hear the pronouncement of our eternal destiny. If there is no recognition, we shall be among total strangers. Every memory we now possess will have been obliterated, and every bond severed. As strangers, we shall enter heaven and live there forever and ever.

If a careful study of the sacred writings should lead us to such a conclusion, it must be acknowledged that it will significantly alter our conceptions of heaven and the abode of the sainted dead. Whether fully aware of all the implications attached to the matter or not, our hope of heaven

and the expectation of future bliss have been conditioned on the understanding that some wondrous day, we shall be privileged to gather up the sundered threads of this existence so rudely severed in death, and in the company of dear loved ones and valued friends gone on before, enjoy the ineffable bliss of paradise forever and ever and ever. Are we prepared for such a conclusion?

Our whole being instinctively and unhesitatingly shrinks away from such a supposition. We are, in the first place, unwilling to accept the conclusion that heaven will be peopled with those who are utter strangers to them here, that every vestige of memory will have been obliterated there, and that we shall never again be privileged to see and know those we have loved a while and lost here. Second, we find ourselves unable to visualize a place of perfect happiness as heaven is alleged to be, thus stripped of what is surely one of its sweetest joys and most fondly anticipated delights.

The view is opposed to reason (a) because it ignores one of the heart's most deep-seated and well-recognized desires: a glad reunion with precious loved ones on the golden shores of the heavenly city. (b) The wisest, greatest, and best of all ages have confidently looked beyond the somber curtains of death and thought that there is such a place as the Scriptures reveal heaven to be. Whose soul does it not go wild at the prospect of seeing and knowing illustrious prophets,

priests, and kings; of being associated with the great and wise and good of all ages; of sitting at the feet of Peter, Paul, and the Lord? And when, to this, we add the wonderous prospect of seeing our dear loved ones in their immortal state, no longer weary and sad and worn and sick, no longer clothed in bodies weak with pain and ravaged by disease, but arrayed in the imperishable splendor which shall ever characterize the good, the pure and the blest, who can avoid the conclusion of the peerless apostle that it is “very far better” there? No. The hope of a glad and happy reunion “just over there” is not a cruel delusion, a vain and empty fantasy. Those who silently weep in loneliness may take comfort in the fact that their sorrow is not in vain, like others who have no hope.

Deceased

“By grace are ye saved through faith” (Eph. 2:8). Here is another short statement in which the whole story is told. The entire system of man’s salvation is told in this short statement. “By grace” is God’s side of human redemption. “Through faith” is man’s side of human redemption. God’s part is “by grace,” and man’s is “through faith.” We repent because we believe; we confess that faith in Christ and are baptized into Christ. So, what God does for man is “by grace,” and what man does is “through faith.” So “by grace are ye saved through faith” tells the whole story.

E. M. Borden, Deceased

Preaching and Singing

Perry B. Cotham

It is generally understood that the songs we sing in the worship should be Scriptural—that is, they should not teach any false doctrines or convey any thought that is out of harmony with the teaching of the Word of God. It would be as wrong to sing a song teaching false doctrine as for a man to preach a sermon and include false teachings.

In a song we teach (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). We are not as careful as we should be regarding the songs we sing. We get in the habit of singing a certain song, regardless of what it says. One does not have to sing a song teaching premillennialism to teach false doctrine.

A few days ago, I attended a Gospel meeting. The preacher made a wonderful talk about being saved by believing but pointed out from James 2:24 and other Scriptures that it is not by faith only. He used Abraham as an example. I thought he clinched his points well and made it so clear that all honest people could understand. The invitation song following this fine sermon was “Rescue the Perishing.” (When the leader started on this song, I

thought it was not a very fitting song exhorting people to obey the Gospel of Christ. But I had not selected the song.) Soon, the leader came to the second stanza, and there were the words concerning Christ: “He will forgive if they only believe.” I immediately thought of the sermon just delivered. “It is not by faith only. Faith must be expressed in the acts of obedience demanded by the Lord. The faith that saves is the faith that obeys,” etc. But the congregation said: “If they only believe.” If the preacher had stated in his sermon that the Lord forgives if we only believe, the brethren would have said: “That does not sound right to us.”

Another example: I was in a meeting recently for one of the good churches in Texas, a church known for its soundness, one that has sponsored debates with the sectarian world in its building. It was the evening service. A large crowd was present, including many visitors. The song leader selected the song “Tell It to Jesus.” In the last stanza of this song there were these words: “For Christ’s coming kingdom are you sighing? Tell it to

Jesus alone.” This songbook was published by one of our *loyal* brethren, not a premillennialist. But I have been preaching that the kingdom has already come and that it has been in existence for nineteen hundred years, and during the lifetime of the apostles, people were translated into it (Col. 1:13), that John was in it (Rev. 1:9), and that people were receiving it (Heb. 12:28). It is true that during the personal ministry of Jesus our Lord taught His disciples to pray, “Thy kingdom come”; but after the day of Pentecost, following the resurrection of Christ, I do not read where any apostle or inspired man ever prayed for the Lord’s kingdom to come, or taught anyone else to pray so. Nothing is said about the coming kingdom after Acts 2. I am not praying for the Lord’s kingdom to come. I am not even “sighing” for it to come. It **has** come! I would like to see the kingdom (church) grow by more people obeying the Gospel and becoming members of it. I rejoice to hear of the growth of the church, not only at home but abroad, and I think it is fine for us to pray for those who are preaching the Gospel of Christ throughout all the world, but we are not to teach from the pulpit or in songs that the kingdom of Christ has not come yet.

In some hymnbooks published by our brethren, corrections have been made to these songs. The first song says, “He will forgive if they truly believe” (which is correct) or “He will forgive if they trust and obey.” In the second song, the words are, “For Christ’s coming, are you daily sighing?” Or “For Christ’s spreading kingdom are you sighing?”

Check the songs sung at your place of worship—see if they teach error.

Deceased

Editor: We do not “Tell it to Jesus,” our instruction is to pray to the Father, not Jesus (John 16:23).

We cannot be too well informed in worthwhile things or afford to “drop out” in any line of useful knowledge or accomplishment simply because we have an ambition to specialize in one certain branch of learning or work. The always popular and much-appreciated individual is the one who can lend a hand at many things.

Author Unknown

What Is a Grandmother?

This is third grade youngster’s answer to the question—

“A Grandmother is a lady who has no children of her own, so she likes other peoples’ little boys and girls. A Grandfather is a man Grandmother. He goes for walks with boys, and they talk about fishing, tractors, and things like that.

“Grandmothers don’t have to do anything much but be there. They’re old so they should not play hard or run. It is enough if they drive us to the supermarket and shop and then put us on the ‘pretend’ horses at the grocery store and they have lots of dimes ready. If they take us for a walk, they slow down for the pretty things, like pretty leaves, butterflies, and flowers.

“They never say, ‘hurry up’ and usually they are fat, but not too fat to tie kids’ shoes. They wear glasses and funny underwear. They can take their teeth out and chew with their gums. It is better if they don’t typewrite. They don’t have to be smart, only answer questions like why dogs hate cats, and why God isn’t married. They don’t talk baby talk like visitors do because it is too hard to understand. When they read to us, they don’t skip pages, and they do not mind if it is the same old story they are reading again.

“Everyone should have a Grandmother...especially if you do not have a TV, because Grandmas and Grandpas are the only grownups who have lots of time.”

Author Unknown

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Beacon

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Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Bill & Peggy Crowe

Nancy Travis

Orville & Linda Worley

Carla Burleson

Bill & Pam Busch

Heather Stark

Phyllis Brantley

Please Remember

March 29

Fifth Sunday Dinner after the morning service. Singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.

Weekly Services

Sunday

Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship Service — 10:00 a.m.

Afternoon Worship Service — 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

Bellview Church of Christ

Bishops: Paul Brantley

Michael Hatcher

Bill Busch

Minister: Tim Cozad