

# For Heaven's Sake

## Overview

My Sermon Title today is .. For Heaven's Sake.

And I have to tell you, that every once in a while I'm guilty of saying that wonderful expression, and I don't know why we say it. I don't know where it comes from, but I thought it was kind of handy because this morning I want to talk about heaven.

Back in the 70s, there was a young couple that I heard about and it's a long story. I'll make it extremely brief. I went to visit him because he ended up in the hospital and it turned out that he had lung cancer. I didn't know that when I first met him. And I went very early one morning. I was awakened early in the morning, five o'clock in the morning, and by five thirty in the morning I was at his bedside and he was awake. He was sitting up and he said, Oh Pastor Forrest, what are you doing here this morning? So early. I said I believed that God woke me up. And I said, He told me to come here and visit you. Oh, he said, that's nice. I said, well, it's going to get better because you're going to give your heart to Jesus this morning, Malcolm. And he did. And his wife did. And his brother there. And his sister-in-law. And his mom. And his dad. And a host of others.

It was just, it was just a trainload of what God did. And glory be to Jesus, not to anybody else. But he succumbed to that cancer. And I would go to visit him in his home. He actually stayed in his home until his very last day and was cared for by his beautiful wife Helen. And we still at times keep in contact with Helen. But I remember I went every morning to his house. He and I were the same age. We were only a couple of months off. So I was cratering inside. I was a young father. He was a young father. He had two very little ones. The little girl was still in rompers. You know, like, is that the right word? Diapers? And such a young family. I was brokenhearted. And so I would go in every day. I carried my Bible with me, of course, and I would read him scriptures about how God answers prayer. Divine healing. I told him the story of my wife's healing. April, I related this story again yesterday in a little town south of here standing outside a little restaurant where I met these people for breakfast. I told them the story of April's healing. And they were absolutely astounded.

It's a glorious story. She was down to 80 pounds. She was wasted. The doctors gave no source of hope whatsoever. But Jesus visited that room. And a doctor chased me down over 40 years later and said, I want to talk to you. How's April? Her healing took place in Hamilton. I was pastoring in Vancouver. The doctor was in Vancouver. Somehow he tracked me down. He said, I went to his house he was very elderly at that time. And he said I'm Presbyterian. And I believe in miracles. And he said I want you to know your wife, April, is a walking miracle. Such a glorious story. And so I was telling Malcolm various things from the scripture and little stories to kind of encourage him. I was praying the prayer of faith. I remember one morning I went in and he was sinking lower and lower. I went in one morning carrying my Bible sat down by the side of the bed. I opened up my Bible. And he said, Pastor David, can I ask you a question? I said, of course you can. He said, why aren't we talking about heaven? I say, well, I'm here to talk about healing.

Do you know why? And he said I want to talk about heaven. And I think you know why. He said, Pastor, it's okay. He said I've given my heart to Jesus. And he said you haven't told me about heaven. You're only fixated on me staying here. And staying here, of course, is what I want to do. But it's obvious to me. And it needs to be obvious to you. God has another plan. Will you talk to me about heaven? So browbeaten, I opened up the scriptures to him. And I had the most wonderful visits with my buddy, Malcolm Tennant until he went to heaven.

It's occurred to me that many, many people, maybe some are sitting right here today, there are things that you don't know about heaven. There might even be some misconceptions you think you know, and maybe you don't. And I told April this morning very early, I said, I doubt I'm going to get all the way through. This is going to be at least a two Sunday sermon. And I'm just going to apologize. I know it's Christmas. I like to preach about Christmas. I like to preach about Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter, Happy Halloween, or whatever turns your crank. But you know what? I have to preach what inspires me. And I'm happy about Christmas, whatever I'm going to Christmas guy, but something's driving me to think about heaven. And well, we'll find out. So henceforth, the Apostle Paul said, 2 Timothy 4, 8, henceforth, in other words, soon there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day. And not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearance.

I want you to notice something. This is what I mean about do we have a clear understanding and do we have some misconceptions. There are, there's a crown for those who have earned a crown. There will be crowns to bless you and to say, well done. This is not that crown. And it's obvious it's not that crown because he closes with not only me, but you also who have loved his appearance. So that brings me back to an earlier word. Henceforth, there's laid up for me a crown? No. The crown. And you know what? It's not following, is it? No, I'm on another page. I don't know how you fix it, but anyway, it's not my friend's fault up there. It's this wonderful stuff that the government says we have to learn how to use. So henceforth, there's laid up for me the crown, the crown of righteousness. If it said there's laid up for me a crown, somebody could say, well, there's 44 different crowns and you get this one and maybe you get that one. No, no, no. It's the crown because this is the crown that every one of us is going to receive. After all, it comes to all those who love his appearance.

So we're on our way to heaven and there's a song that I mentioned to my buddy here and I said, do you know this song? He said, no, but you're going to teach me and maybe I'm going to teach everybody, but this is a song I was raised on and if you know it, you could chime in with me. Okay, give it a try. It's a highway to heaven. None can walk up there, but the pure in heart, it's a highway to heaven walking up the king's highway. If you're not a walking, better start while I'm talking, walking up the king's highway. Christ, watch right beside me. You and angels are there to guide you walking up the king's highway. A highway to heaven. None can walk up there, but the pure in heart, it's a highway to heaven walking up the king's highway. I'd like you to all meet the smartest guy on this side of Kansas or some other place that I've never been. We are so close, aren't we? Look, thank you. Thank you. When he, he's got a code that came in and when the code works, you'll see it up there, but it's, huh? Yeah, but it's not there. Oh, you'll be able to get it up there. Okay. Thank you, Lucas. I wish I knew all the stuff that these guys know and then I could help him. So there's a crown of righteousness, the crown that comes to each and every one of

us. And so when I was a young guy, we used to constantly sing songs that were a reflection of our theology, constantly. The hymns were a reflection of what we know that we know that we know.

And then besides what we know from the Word of God, there's our personal experiences. Now, I know you're dying to know who's up here in the stream, but if you look closely, somebody looks familiar. That's my mom and my dad. And they say, I look like my mom, except I grew up here and she shaved her off. So, my dad, I come from a family that really loves the Lord. And so I want to talk about heaven in this way.

Well, we can learn scripture. We can learn the concepts of the Lord. We can get our theology straight, but it is ever so helpful when we come across people who can tell us stories that kind of bring a heartbeat that causes a race through the veins that not only have we heard it up here, but we hear it through here that somebody says, I've been there. And when I told you about April's healing, I find that that's a helpful thing for people because they say, okay, okay. I mean, who's going to deny to my face that God heals the sick? You're not going to get away with it because I was there. And so I want to talk to you about my father's mother, my grandmother, who I loved and adored with all my heart. The day came when my mom and dad said it was a Sunday evening. They said, we got to go to the hospital and your grandma's not well at all. I was, I was brokenhearted. I stayed up half the night when my mom and dad came in. My dad went immediately to the bedroom. I had not yet seen my dad cry and I didn't see him cry for many years thereafter. He went to his bedroom to be alone. But my mom came and she cradled me into, her arms and she said, David, your grandma's gone to be with Jesus. Well, I wept and I wept.

I was so hurting. And my mom knew she needed to encourage me. So she said, David, let me tell you what happened when Jesus came for Grandma Forest. She said the family was all around. So my dad had brothers. They were all there. He had a couple of sisters. The whole family was there. And she said everybody was standing around. She said I was there too. Our nurse came into the room and said, family, I'd like you to step out into the hall because there are some things that I need to do with your mother. So mom says that they all moved out into the hallway and they're chatting away. And then the nurse reappeared from the room and she said, it's okay to go in. But I want to just, I want to warn you about something. When people are at this stage, when, when their minds are shutting down, different things are taking place, she said, they're not accountable for what they say. And so she said, don't you worry about what your mother's saying because it's not her fault. She doesn't know what's happening to her. That's all. She just doesn't know.

Well, that put the whole family on edge. What's grandma? What's mom saying? And so I'm sitting there looking at my mother as she's telling me your grandmother was saying things and it put the nurse off. So they all got in the room and they could see my grandmother's mouth moving. And she said, your daddy went over and got down close. God is your right down to her lips. And she was whispering. And my mom held me ever so close that my mom was weeping as she said. She says, your grandma wasn't saying something bad. She said, your grandma wasn't with us. She was already halfway on her way to be with Jesus. She was talking to Jesus. She was

saying, Oh God, Oh Jesus. Oh, Jesus. Oh, Jesus. Do you know what the Word of God says about the passing of some of you like my grandma? I can't speak about your grandma. I'm talking about my grandma. It says Precious in the sight of the Lord is the passing of grandma for us. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death or the passing of his saints. My dad and I were down in Montreal looking after some affairs of our home. My dad was constantly being taken to the hospital. He was in rough shape. His heart was giving out. He had several things going wrong. And every time that he went into crisis, one would call 911. Some kind gentleman would come, and take him to the hospital. And the same thing happened every time according to my mom. She would go in there and she'd be by his bad side. And my dad didn't like hospitals. That's where I take after my dad. He didn't like hospitals. He didn't like them, he didn't want them probing him. He didn't want them touching him. And he would say to my mom, Marian, I don't want to be here. Take me home. Dad, you know I can't take you home. You're here because your heart's acting up. They've got to get you all settled down. They'll probably change your pills. They'll do something to kind of get your heart settled. No, I want to go home. I want to go home.

This is the story that I heard. I was in Montreal and I got a call. Dad, your dad's gone. It was a call from my son. He said, Dad, I was there. I was there. I said, tell me what happened. He said, well, grandma and I were standing there. And he said Grandpa was so weak. He just didn't have a voice. He was so weak that he was limp. And so he says, he started whispering, trying to say something. And the only word that he could get out, they were lip-syncing. They were watching what he was saying. And he was saying, home. And my son told me, and then my mother confirmed it later. Tears were running off of his eyes and flowing down onto his pillow. He kept crying out, home, home, home. And my mother apparently replied and said, Daddy, you know I can't take you home yet. You've been to this rodeo before. You've got to wait for the doctors. They've got to get you settled. And my dad's eyes are rolling. He said, home, home. My son then bent down really close. He says, Grandpa, you know you can't go home yet. And with that, my dad apparently lifted his finger like this and pointed not to the light fixture. But he pointed upward like this and he said, home, home.

My son turned to my mom and said, Grandma, he wants to go home. My mom stepped over then. The story is related to me. And she now came down very close to him and said, Daddy, you want to go home? He just blinked his eyes to say, yes. Oh, I know what you want. You want me to let you go. You're asking permission. He smiled and she said, okay, Dad, I'm going to miss you. But I'll see you in the morning. She said, bye, Daddy. And she kissed him. And Dad drew his last breath. Death has no terror when you know you're going home. I don't know how people manage life. Do you know what's the greatest fear of all people? They don't care about bankruptcy. They don't care about a flat tire. They really don't care about the economy. Everybody on the planet fears death. They just do.

But when you know Jesus, you know the one who says, in my father's house, and he reminds us because of Calvary, because of the salvation plan, his father is now our father. So he really meant to say, in your father's house, there are many bungalows. There are many mansions. There are many places. And I'm going there to prepare a place for you. Now, it's a few weeks ago. So I've been working my way towards this. This is going to take a while to bring out what I see about our future and about how it's all to work. So I shared with you a few weeks ago about

the Jewish wedding back in those days. How a young man would come, and he would speak to the parents of a young gal, and he'd say, I'd like to ask for the hand of your daughter. I think he wanted more than her hand. And so they would sit and they would negotiate the bride price. That's what it was called the bride price. And it was just an acceptable thing. Still going on in many, many countries of the world. You pay what's called a dowry. It's kind of like, listen, buddy, I raised her, I fed her, I educated her, I clothed her, I did all that. You can give me a little bit of that money back. I don't know what the thought is, but you have to buy the bride. And still, it was in the Jewish path. And so the young man would come and he would offer, and then the dad say, that's not enough for her. However, it would work out. And when they would come to an agreement. They would have visitors come in who were not family members who would be people just from the town, and they would be witnesses so this is a big deal.

They needed witnesses to this act. And the way that they would confirm and seal the witness is they would take a cup and they would drink. Remember the night that Jesus was betrayed, it says, and he took a cup and he said, I want you to drink of this cup. He was sealing the deal with them. He was sealing the deal. He was saying, tonight, I'm going to be betrayed. And tomorrow you'll weep. I'm paying the price. When the deal was sealed, the proposed groom now goes home for a whole year and he prepared a house. He prepares a place in his father's house where you'll take the bride. Ring's a bell, doesn't it? And it would take a whole year to prepare a place for his bride. And at the end of the year, and by the way, during that year, she was to prepare herself for the coming wedding. She'd sit and talk to her mom. She'd learn how to bake. We got some Italian shares. I don't know what mung cake looks like. I have just been told that I look like mung cake. Maybe they mean angel food. So she'd learn how to bake a cake and how to make Italian spaghetti haha.

And so during that year, she would be getting ready and getting herself ready. And she would make sure she wouldn't go down into the village and have some young guy approaching her, whatever. No, she was totally committed now because she's halfway married. It's halfway done. When Jesus died on the cross, you were on his mind. And when you gave your heart to Christ, the deal was sealed and you drink the wine to celebrate that the deal sealed, but you haven't gone to the house yet. Jesus is there preparing a place for you. And when the house is ready, the father will permit the son. Yes, he feels good about it. Son, go and get your bride. And the groom would come to the bride's house and there'd be our great tumult and celebration. They'd be playing tambourines and they'd be singing He is Lord, but they'd singing it very fast. And so he would take his bride to his house, they'd go into the bride's chamber and he would come out after a while and he'd say, we really sealed the deal. They really did. And they would celebrate the consummation.

We're going to be one, and then they would go into a banquet hall where the food was prepared and they'd have a marriage supper in honor of the bride. You and I, according to the book of Revelation, are encouraged to get ready for the marriage supper of the lamb, it's who we are. The marriage supper of the lamb, we are the bride. Jesus, the lamb is the groom. And so this is the preparation that we're going through where my daddy was on his way. He wanted to go home. But then there was my mom, who several years later, again, I missed it. My son, my son's always there. One of these days my son's going to show up at my house. I'm going to say, does the Lord

tell you something's happening today? He shows up and somebody dies. So at any rate, my son was there and he told the story about being with my mom. And my mom wanted to go home. She didn't want to just see my dad. She talked about Dad. And she talked about Jesus. She wanted to go home. She wanted to go home. And so my son tells the story. He's alone with my mom in a nursing home in Hamilton. She's been to the hospital so many times. She's got, you know, heart failure. She can't look after herself and she's suffering. And she said to my son one morning when he was there, Davey, how do I do it? He said, Grandma, what is it you want to do? She said I want to go where your Grandpa's gone. I want to go to be with Jesus. I want to go home. But I don't understand. How do I get there? What do I have to do? You see, she's remembering what happened to my dad. My son said, Grandma, I don't know. He said it's got to be Jesus that takes you home. But he got out his Bible and he started reading some scriptures with her and he prayed with her about going home. Then I forget what it was. But he said I got to go down to the front office and get that for you.

So he went down on an errand to the front office of the nursing home when he came back. My mom had gone home. I'm not afraid to die. My mom and dad are already there. But I want to talk about that part of it too. So your mom and dad are there. But I could take it to the graveside in the village of Hagersville, Ontario. And there's a grave marker. And basically, it says, right here under this soil is David's father and his mother. So how do I convince somebody that my mom and dad are there? But the word of God says absent from your body, present with the Lord. So it's a story. First of all, I've already told you a little illustrative story that I learned from a lady, a pastor's wife from Seattle, Washington. She told, tells the story, it's a precious story. I hope it's in print somewhere. She tells the story of her grandson visiting her and they had this little habit that when Granny was entertaining anyone of her grandchildren, she always saw it to it that it was usually a summer visit.

And on this one occasion, this little fellow, I don't remember his name, doesn't matter now. But his soil clothes were by the side of his bed. He'd gone and had his bath. Now Granny had prayed with him his prayers before he went to sleep. And after she prayed with him, she gave him a little kiss and tried to say good night. And he said, Granny, I have a question for you. What's that? She says, well, my friend, he says, my friend, Tommy and I, we talk about things, you know. And the one thing that Tommy tells me, and I don't want to believe it, Granny, but you're the one who knows everything. I know you know. My friend, Tommy says that when they die, they put you in a box and they dig a hole and they bury the box with you in it. He said, Granny, it's going to be dark in there. It's going to be cold in there. There's not going to be any food in there. Granny, I'm afraid. Tell me, tell me it's not true. They don't put you in a box.

Well, this dear grandmother, she's telling us the story as I'm sitting part of a grand audience. She said, what a place to be in. My little grandson wants me to promise him they'll never put him in a box. When I found this picture on the Internet, I was intrigued. Two little boys standing over, over a coffin. Don't you have to wonder what kind of a conversation they were having? And I got to tell you, everybody's afraid of the box. Granny tells the story. She got inspiration. And she said, oh, look what's on the floor there. He rolled over and looked on the floor and he said, oh, they're my clothes, Granny. What are they doing on the floor? Well, they're dirty and you told me to put them there. Yes, I did. Now, what do you think I'm going to do about that? And he said, well, Granny,



you know what you're going to do. You're going to put them in the washing machine, aren't you? She said, of course, I am. She took a hold in his little hand and said, now, are you afraid of the water in the washing machine? Oh, Granny, you're not going to put me in the washing machine. Well, we got to put something. No, he said, Granny, you'll put my clothes in the washing machine. You won't put me in the washing machine. She said, oh, that's right. And she said, and that's what the box is all about. This little body that you live in, she said, it's going to wear out. Mine's much older than yours and mine's starting to wear out already. And the day will come when my body just is not inhabitable anymore. And she said, my body will just go into a deep sleep. And the box is the best place to put it for safekeeping for another day. But not me. I'll be going to heaven. And that's the same with you. When the day comes, they won't put you in the box in the ground. They'll put your clothes, your body that you've been living in. That's what goes in the box. But you go to be with Jesus. She told of how this little kid sat up with a start. He said, are you sure about that granny? She said, absolutely. I've given my heart to Jesus, and I know that you did too. So you're on your way to heaven just like I am. He says, what about? What about my friend Tommy? Well, she says, Tommy needs to give his heart to Jesus, and he doesn't have to be afraid of the box either. I tell that at every funeral that I'm at, if there's little one's present, there's a little one present here today. I hope that story helps that little one as well. We don't have to be afraid of the box. The box is just a place to put our belongings.

The Bible says that absent from the body, present with the Lord. I've shared this point with you. You are also a triune being. You are comprised of a soul, a spirit, and a body where all three part beings. Your body is that part of you that relates to the physical scene, the world of sense and touch, and life. That's your body. But within your body is your soul spirit. I said that right, soul spirit. You know the word of God says, the spirit and the soul cannot be divided with one exception. You know this verse. The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword dividing soul from spirit. Only the word of God can separate soul spirit. Now your soul is also a three-part comprised of your mind, your emotions and your will. I won't be labored at that point right now. The bottom line is that when you pass on when you die, your soul spirit goes to be with the Lord, and your remains are put in a safety deposit box called the grave. And it is a safety deposit box. And that's why we regard the world over. We regard the grave as a sacred place. That is normal.

Do you know that in Kenya when someone passes away and they're far away from the place where they were raised and everybody in the historical Kenya, everybody was raised on a farm. And the farm would be divided up between the sons with the father's passing. So the farm, the farms got smaller and smaller as they got divided among sons and grandsons, sons, and so on. But it was always regarded as your homestead. And it was always regarded as a high priority. You don't get buried very far from home. And so someone will pass away in the city of Nairobi and there will be people coming from way up country to collect the remains of the departed to take them home to bury them in a place where they are sacredly guarded and looked after. When Joseph was about to pass away, he told his sons, God's going to take you out of Egypt someday and don't you leave my bones here. And when the children of Israel harnessed up and they headed out of Egypt that glorious night, they took the bones of Joseph and they found a place to properly bury him.

And so you see, the grave is a very, very important factor in terms of our sense of guarding it and taking care of it. Somebody right now is saying, okay, what happens to the ashes and so on. And my mind's changed a little bit along these roles. I wrote an article about how I just couldn't think about the idea of a Christian and burning, what's the word, help me, that cremation. Yeah. So there's so many Christians are opting for that and I got to back away and leave things alone. So what do you do about the ashes? I'm not going to go there. All I can tell you is that the body, to the Lord is sacred. Okay. So much so that our future life with the Lord in heaven is going to be just like Jesus.

So Jesus died on the cross, put in the grave. Three days later, he arose. And when he arose, he came out of the grave. The stone had been rolled back, but you need to know the stone was not rolled back. So Jesus could get out. The stone was rolled away so that the disciples could get in. There'd be no question. He's not risen. He's alive. So that means that Jesus could pass from the grave and come out. Jesus suddenly appeared to the disciples in the upper room. Jesus suddenly appeared to the two men on the road to Emmaus. Suddenly appeared, ended up in their house, broke bread with them, and He was gone. That's the kind of resurrected body you're going to have. And the scripture says in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, the dead shall be raised. Now, wait a minute, absent from the body present with the Lord, what's with the Lord is your soul spirit. You're in a, you're in a kind of a, a different kind of a zone. You don't have a body. Do you know that in the scripture that Paul talks about, all of creation has been groaning. Paul said in Corinth, we're confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

Then he, and Psalm 139, all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. God knew your departure date before you were born. James, come now, you who say, today or tomorrow, we'll go into a little such and such in a town. We're going to spend the year there and we're going to end up with a lot of profit. Yet you don't know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you're a miss that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead, you should be saying, if the Lord is in it if it's God's will, we'll do this and we'll do that. So be careful what you boast about. But the word of God says, precious in the sight of the Lord is the passing of His saints, the passing of your soul spirit to go to be with Him. There's another way of putting that in another translation and it says, the Lord cares deeply when His loved ones pass. Lord cares. Four things I want you to know in the brief time I have that believers will be taken into the presence of Christ in heaven. At the moment that you pass as we used, we like to use that word. We don't like the word die. Okay, we're not going to die. We're going to pass it along.

I remember hearing a story once that a little child had heard someone say in the house, someone had visited and they said, oh, I miss your little dog. I forget what his name was, but he is always a little guy and he's not around. And the lady of the house said, in the presence of the youngster, oh, we had to put poor little Teddy down because he wasn't doing that. We had to put him down. A couple of weeks later, some friends are there, and little girls running around the house. And the lady excused herself from the guests and said, you'll just have to excuse me for a few minutes. I've got to put my little girl down for the night. The little girl didn't want to go anywhere. We've got to be careful about the words we use, don't we? Just going to put you



down. Believers are taken into the presence. Believers will go to be with Jesus. I know that I know, I weep when I think about this. I think about the praise and the worship that's going on in heaven right now.

My dad was never a great singer. I never heard my dad sing. I think he was lip-singing. My mom was a beautiful soloist, but my dad never sang. It was because probably he was this flatter, flatter than a pancake at Shrove during the Lenten season. My dad couldn't sing. But I'm going to tell you what, in heaven, he's singing. How can you be there with a couple of million saints? Moses is over here. Jeremiah is over there. Are you sure they're all there, Dave? They're there, beloved, but they're there without bodies. But there's still acknowledgment. They're still there. They're just in this process. The word of God calls it, they're asleep in the Lord. But the Lord's going to descend with a glorious shell and is going to say, wake up and come on with me. And at that moment, the first thing that'll happen is the graves will empty. The bodies that were decayed and turned into dust will suddenly take form again, rising up. And at that moment, the spirits of the saints are coming with Jesus. Jesus doesn't come down and touch the earth. That's called the Second Coming. I'm talking about the Rapture. Jesus will come down and I'm going to say, halfway. From halfway from where everyone is coming from, he's going to show him, say, Daddy says, bring me right home. And the dead in Christ shall rise. I speak over every grave that I stand over. Oh, death where is your sting? Oh, grave where is your victory?

And I always say, we're standing on miracle ground. The day's coming when this body will take on incorruption and it will rise. And what happens is that body will be revitalized like the body of Jesus and as that body of sins up into heaven, it will be reunited with your soul spirit. And the Word of God says, and so shall we be with the Lord. What does that mean? And so shall. Your soul spirit reconnects with your body and in that state, so shall you be with the Lord forever. Truly, I say unto you, Jesus said to the thief on the cross, in the millennium, you'll be with me. No, maybe in a couple of years. What did he say? Today? He said to a thief, today, today, you will be with me in paradise. If you do that for a thief, you're not very good-looking, but he'll still take you into account. He'll take you to be with him. Today, tomorrow, whenever it is, whoever you are, He'll take you to be with Him. And on two different occasions, Paul spoke of death as something that would usher him into the presence of Christ.

So the second thing I want to bring to your attention is that heaven is a place of resplendent glory. You say, oh, yeah, I'm looking forward to the streets paved with gold. I don't think you're going to give a lick about gold when you get there. I don't care how glitzy you are enamored with gold and silver and all a flashy and whatever. When you get there, Moses is going to be right there. Hey, Mo, look at the gold. And he's going to say, is that all you came up here for? No, we sing a song, I shall know Him. I shall know Him. As redeemed by His side, I shall stand. I shall know Him by the prints of the nails in His hand. Sing this with me. 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, when He takes me by the hand and leads me through that promised land. What a day, glorious day that will be.

Highway to heaven, none will walk up there, but the pure in heart. Paul said I want you to notice, having the place of resplendent glory. Paul says that departing this life to be with Christ is better.

Philippians 1, 23. And that he would prefer rather to be absent from his body. That's not a death wish. He's just saying, my time is up. Are you afraid, Paul? Oh, no, I'm looking forward to it. I've enjoyed every moment of life. He's preached a thousand to people. He's seen people healed. He's seen so many things transpire, but it's enough. His time has come. And so he's looking forward, and he prefers to be first to be absent from the body so he can be at home with the Lord. Second Corinthians 5, 8. Please notice that being in heaven with the Lord is referred to as being home. My daddy said I want to go home.

The third thing about heaven, you need to know when in heaven we will be, we will continue to be looking forward to the resurrection of our bodies from the dead. I'm talking about heaven now, my mom and dad. Their soul spirit is with the Lord. They are aware of the spirit world, but they will be longing and groaning for the reuniting of their person, their soul spirit with their body. So your disembodied existence is not God's ultimate and final plan. You're not going to look like a lit wick on a candle for eternity. You're going to look, well, I don't know. Is it Tursky? I don't know if you'll still want that great mustache when you get there and I. I guess there will be a barber up there to clean you up, I suppose. The word of God says we'll be known as we are known. We'll be known as we are known. As great as it will be to be in heaven after we die, God still has something greater in store because we are resurrected from the dead so that we will live soul and body forever in the new heavens and the new earth. Number three, we find in Romans 8 verses 20 to 24. For the creation was subjected to frustration. This is what it says in the Word. Creation was subjected to frustration. God's creation is frustrated not by its own choice, but by the Will of the one who subjected it. That was Adam and Eve. Bless their pointed heads. In the hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage, its bondage to decay, it wants to be brought to the freedom and the glory of the children of God. And we know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up until the present time.

Not only so, but we ourselves who have what Paul calls the fruit, the first fruits of the Spirit. What are the first fruits of the Spirit? When you're reading the word of God, it's good to know what these words mean. You now have the first fruit. You've got the first right apple off the tree. You've got what's called a divine deposit. You've got the earnest of what the apostle calls the earnest of your inheritance. It's just a deposit. I want all of heaven now. You can't handle all of heaven now, bunkie. You're such a little being. You can only take a tiny spoonful. But when you get there, the fullness of all and all, you'll see heaven as it is. The word of God says, we know not what we shall be when we get there, but we know that when we see him will be transformed by his very likeness, by the glory of Jesus, we shall see him as he is. Gonna be glorious.

The whole of creation is groaning like it's in childbirth right until now. Not only so, but we ourselves who have the first fruits, that's salvation. We've grown inwardly, the apostle says, and we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship. Oh, now there's our work. I'm saying, what's this all about? When you give your heart to Christ, you're redeemed. And there's a promise. There's what's called the hope, the hope of the resurrection, the hope of heaven. Okay. What's this adoption? That's when your body and your soul spirit are united. So right now you are birthed into the family, but there's another level of closeness with the Lord. You're not only birthed by the Spirit, but at that time you're being adopted, you'll be called heirs and jointers with Christ. You'll be called that in its glorious reality when you get home. For in this hope we are saved, but hope

that is seen is no hope at all. You can't see it now. It's invisible to you who hope for what they already have. So we have this hope. We've been born again for way waiting for our adoption to the fullness of the sonship.

And number four, at the moment of your death, believers will be made perfect and cleansed from sin. We're not perfect yet. Trust me. Oh, ask April. She'll tell you. No, don't ask her. She's a little too honest about that. But when we're caught up to meet the Lord, we're suddenly perfect, cleansed from all sin, 2 Corinthians 5, 8. Absom from the body, present with the Lord. People say if God loves people so much, how come He's not going to let them into heaven unless they have a password? How come, like, if God loves everybody, why don't you just open up heaven for everybody? For the same reason, April would not invite all the farmers of the area, especially the ones who work with livestock to come walking in with their barn boots on and tramp through the house. She just washed the floor. She just got it clean. And you're going to come in with your boots and dirty up the place. She'd have to change the very nature of the house. What's the Forrest house like? Well, it's fine, but everybody, every Tom, Dick, and Harry goes in there and messes the place up. It's always dirty. It's always filthy. But April's got over it. And she says, well, she can handle it. Nay, nay. Don't you see? There has to be a transformation. There has to be a... Can you imagine Hitler in heaven? He'd be gassing the Jews up there. Hello?

There's no room in heaven for sin and for filthiness and for rot. That's what redemption is about. Cleanse us up and get us ready. The Word of God says that Abraham was declared righteous because he believed. That's all it says. Abraham believed when he was in the Ur of the Caldees and God said, follow me, and I'll take you to a land that'll be yours and you're going to raise up a nation. And the whole world is going to know your name. They sure know his name right now. God made a promise and it says, God did that for him because he believed. Do you believe it? And if you say, I believe in Jesus, are you living it? Are you living that way? If you believe in Jesus, you've got to believe him. You've got to believe that he died on the cross for you. You've got to believe that his death on the cross was absolutely essential, and necessary. You've got to believe that you've got to forsake your sin. That's why Jesus said to the man who came in at night, that man was so knowledgeable in the Word of God. John 3, this old gentleman came to him and said, what's this all about? And Jesus said, don't be surprised when I tell you, you can't go to heaven the way you are. You've got to be re-birthed. You've got to have a whole new life. Don't be surprised, marvel not that I say unto you, you must be born again.

I dare to say this, there was a lady, some of you are going to catch on. There was a lady who attended our church the first few months that I was here. She gave her heart to Christ and she thought, oh, it was well. I don't think I was clear enough and plain enough, maybe when she gave her heart to Christ. She was here fairly frequently and several of you people knew her before she ever showed up. But the day came from this pulpit, I said what Jesus said to that man in John 3, don't be surprised no matter what your pedigree, no matter what church you were raised in, doesn't matter whether you're a sprinkled one, you're a four and somebody gave you a holy biscuit while you're five and gave you a candle to light to some saint when you're a six and then you went to confirmation and then you got a nice brand new dress and you always went at Easter and you always went at Christmas and you always gave a dime to the homeless guy in the street, don't matter honey, marvel not, these things will not cleanse you from sin. You can't

get the spots off a leopard, marvel not, you must be born again. That lady walked out and never came back again. She said you don't talk to me like that. I don't want to be born again. I just want to go to heaven all right. No honey, it's not all right. You have to surrender your heart to Jesus. Abraham believed and righteousness was accounted to him. What's that righteousness? God gave him an invisible robe of righteousness.

What's that about Pastor Day? I'm finished. I am, I am. When you are clothed with the robe of righteousness, you're not perfect. You know, after God accredited to him righteousness, Abraham fearing the Egyptians knowing the power of the Pharaoh claimed that Sarah was his sister. He told a little colored lie. I don't think it was a white lie. Abraham was not the perfect person. God promised him that he'd be the father of many. His lovely wife Hagar, no, his lovely wife Sarah came along and said, I can't bear children. I don't know what to believe all of these promises. Here, take my Egyptian helper, my house cleaner, and you have your way with her and that's how you get yourself a son. He listened to Sarah instead of listening to God. He wasn't perfect. How did God feel about that? Watch this. When God looked at the failures of Abraham, he couldn't see them. Why? Because Abraham was wearing a robe of righteousness. You see, God when he tuned you in, and he'd bestow upon you a robe of righteousness, He's already preparing you for the little things. The little mistakes you made. Pastor did this. That means I don't have to confess whatever. No, we're to confess our faults with one another and get right with God. We can't live a double standard. We can't live two and three in four different ways. You can't live like this on Monday and then do this on Tuesday. You can jump as high as you want on a Sunday during a service, but it's how you walk on Monday, honey. You can't go two ways. There is a time to repent of the altar and the Lord said, if my people, and my His people, if my people, my saints, my redeemed, the people that I've written on the palm of my hand, if my people will humble themselves, seek my face and turn from their little white lies. That's what it says. If my people will humble themselves and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven.

But until you pray that prayer, the Lord doesn't toss you out. He doesn't dismiss you because you make an error, because every one of us, every one of us is guilty of error. Absolutely every one of us. There was a time when our churches railed against people if they smoked a cigarette butt. I preached in a brand-new church in Sarnia some years ago. I called their building a holy cow. It was a brand-new building. I got up on a Sunday night stop. Holy cow! This is perfect. I said, how are the sinners going to feel in here? I said I hope the sinners do come. In fact, I said this. I said, I hope a hopeless drunk comes up and he throws up beer and wine all over your altar and leaves an ugly stain. I said, what a glorious moment when a man comes and gives his heart to Christ.

And I said, you know what? I know it's a good church when I see cigarette butts in the church garden. Oh no, we couldn't handle that past today. Oh no, come up from among them, chase all those people away. No, it should be a house, not for the holy, but it's a house to invite people to come and confess Jesus and have bestowed upon them a robe of righteousness and look forward to not being put in the box but being set free from a body that's starting to hurt. My eyes are seeing cross-eyed these days. Actually, that kind of works well. There are twice as many people here now. I'm cross-eyed. I am. I'm cross-eyed right now. Oh, two tepers. That's too much. Back to one. That's good. And so you see, our bodies start to break down. Everything starts to break down. Don't you get worried about it? You know what it means?

The speed limit is changed. You know what that means honey. The speed limit's changed. You can't go as fast as you used to. What it means is you're soon going to have to come to a stoplight. Don't worry about the stoplight. That's the doorway to heaven. Precious in his sight is the passing of his saints. Don't you be afraid of death? I've got to go. I've got to give this up. May God Himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept, blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. First, that's thelonians. Don't live careless. Don't get excited about that robe of righteousness. That's a privilege. But don't you take advantage of it? Just be thankful that God doesn't punish you for every error. You have to be singing amazing grace every day. Ephesians 5, 27, present. He wants to present His bride, a radiant church without stain, without wrinkle, without blemish, holy and blameless. That's who we are. That's how He sees us. He sees us in/through Christ.

Heavenly Father, I'm not in a hurry to go to heaven. I'm certainly not afraid of it. We all want to go to heaven. Everybody wishes it may be tomorrow, but not today Lord. We all like another hour with our grandkids. We'd all like to be able to brew another cup of coffee. Maybe enjoy kicking up the fall leaves again and catching a little bass in a stream in the spring. We love the daintys and the precious bounty of life. We love to walk in the cool fresh air of the spring. We love to see the little crocus is poking their way up even up through the snow. We love every bit of it. Life is delicious. We love every moment and we tend to cling on to it, Lord, but in reality, there's a groaning in the Lord. What's in heaven? What causes us to groan is, I want to see Jesus. I want to see Jesus. Right now I'm looking through a stained glass window. I'm looking through a glass darkly. It's hard to make out its features.

I want to be embraced by Jesus. I want to see the nail scars in his hands and know that all the eternal marks will never be obliterated. A signal that I'm always welcome in heaven because the price has been paid for me, part of his bride. Lord Jesus, I pray that none of us will be afraid of the box. We weren't designed for a box. It's a safety deposit box where our remains will be still for some time. But then suddenly, this old rusty, worn out turned into a dust body. My ears are going to stand up one more time. I'm going to hear, David, arise. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for that day when my body will arise and be united with my soul spirit. And so shall I, with my family, with my loved ones, with my heroes. So shall I be with the Lord. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for the privilege of walking with you, and being known as a child of God. Amen.