

HEAVEN

*God's Eternal Glorious
Home For Believers*



Barry McGee

© June 2021 Barry McGee
Printed by Permission

Published by
Redding Community Bible Church
rcbchurch.org

Contents

Introduction	4-5
Heaven is a place	5-9
Heaven will one day be united with a “renewed” earth	9-13
Jesus Christ: The One Who makes heaven <i>heaven</i>	13-17
How can heaven be better for some than it is for others?	17-21
Conclusion.....	21-22
Notes	23

INTRODUCTION

There is hardly a more thrilling and encouraging biblical truth than that of “heaven.” While Christians can certainly think too little of heaven, it is impossible for them to think too much about it. Maybe you’ve heard someone say of another, “He’s so heavenly minded he’s no earthly good.” According to the Bible, such a sentiment is entirely false. However, it is very possible for someone to be so earthly minded that they are no heavenly good! You see, Scripture commands believers to be heavenly minded.

Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. *Set your mind on the things above*, not on the things that are on earth (Colossians 3:1-2, italics mine).

So, what comes into your mind when you think of heaven? David and Elizabeth Heller wrote a book that compiles some ideas children have of God, heaven, and angels. Here are a few their humorous thoughts:

- What is heaven? Brandy, age 7, says, “It’s where girls get turned into angels . . . and then God tries to do the best He can with the boys.”
- What are some things you can do in heaven that you absolutely can’t do on Earth? Sebastian, age 10, says, “Kiss an angel good morning.” (Sebastian, though, isn’t married to my wife, Terri. ☺)
- Will heaven be boring? Duncan, age 9, says, “Before I can answer that I need to know how long the sermons are in heaven.”¹ (Boo! Hiss! ☹)

Seriously, few things are as important as what comes

into a person's mind when they think of heaven. A believer's life in "the here and now" is to be thoroughly flavored by their thoughts of heaven. Their present endurance through adversity and sorrow is to be strengthened by the hope they have of "the hereafter" (Revelation 21:3-4). Their present sacrificial participation in the growth of Christ's kingdom is to be motivated by the prospect of "eternal rewards" (1 Corinthians 3:12-15). They are to ruthlessly battle against sin in their lives on the basis of their "heavenly citizenship" (Philippians 3:17-21).

However, right here at the outset we must acknowledge our inability to *fully* describe heaven. There must be a certain humility about us as we approach this high and lofty theme. As Jonathan Edwards once said,

To pretend to describe the excellence, the greatness or duration of the happiness of heaven by the most artful composition of words would be but to darken and cloud it, to talk of raptures and ecstasies, joy and singing, is but to set forth very low shadows of the reality, and all we can say by our best rhetoric is really and truly, vastly below what is but the bare and naked truth.²

That said, though, the Bible still has much to tell us regarding heaven. We can know *something* of its nature and reality. So where shall we begin?

HEAVEN IS A PLACE

As a beginning point, we should first understand that heaven is currently a real *place*. Heaven isn't a

state of mind. Heaven has a location. It is a place. In his “Miscellaneous Observations,” Jonathan Edwards describes heaven as,

The *place* of God’s eternal residence, and the *place* of the everlasting residence and reign of Christ, and His church, will be heaven Heaven is every where in Scripture represented as the throne of God, and that part of the universe that is God’s fixed abode, and *dwelling place*, and that is everlastingly appropriated to that use (Italics mine).³

How can we know Edwards is right? How can we know for certain that heaven is a specific place. We can conclude it is for at least several reasons. First, Scripture specifically tells us that heaven is God’s special home. Solomon asked God for the following in his prayer of dedication for the temple,

Listen to the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this *place* (I.e., the temple); hear in heaven Your *dwelling place*; hear and forgive (1 Kings 8:30, italics mine).

Notice how Solomon draws together the temple, a specific tangible place, and heaven, God’s dwelling place. To deny that heaven is a place would be to deny that the temple is a real place. Also, in Psalm 33:13-14, the Psalmist writes,

The Lord looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men; From His *dwelling place* He looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth (italics mine).

Sounds pretty clear, doesn’t it? However, someone might object, saying, “Yes, but, didn’t Solomon also pray, ‘Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot

contain You, how much less this house which I have built' (1 Kings 8:27)? So, if that's the case, how can God have a specific dwelling place when such a location could not begin to contain Him?" Good question. It is true. God's essence (His being) certainly cannot be confined to any one place. He is Spirit. There is no place where He is not (I.e., He is "omnipresent," see Psalm 139:7-10). However, just because He cannot be confined to any single place, it doesn't follow that He cannot have a specific location where His glorious presence is revealed in a unique way. To give you a crude illustration, I myself am listed on our church's website where any person around the world with Internet access can see my picture and hear my voice. In a certain sense, I am all around the world (frightening thought ☺). However, I still have as my "dwelling place" our home in Palo Cedro, CA. Thus, if this kind of thing can be true of me, how much more, in an infinitely more glorious way, can God be present everywhere, while also having a specific home in heaven?!

Another reason we can conclude heaven is a place is because Jesus Christ is presently there. Remember? When Jesus rose from the dead, He didn't rise as some ethereal disembodied spirit, but as the physical Jesus! As He Himself told the disciples,

See My hands and My feet, that it is I myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have (Luke 24:39)!

And, as the Book of Acts is careful to tell us, it is this *physical* Jesus, who ascended up into heaven (1:9,11),

that “heaven must receive” (I.e., hold, contain) until He returns (3:21). So, not only are we told heaven is God’s special home, it is also Jesus’ residence as we await His return.

If this is not enough, a third reason we can know heaven is a real place is because heaven is the believer’s ultimate home. In John 14:2-3, Jesus told the disciples,

In My Father’s house are many *dwelling places*; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare *a place* for you. If I go and prepare *a place* for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also (John 14:2-3, italics mine).

“Dwelling places,” here, doesn’t have the idea of “mansions,” but of “rooms.” It isn’t some house miles removed that Jesus is preparing for the believer, but a *room* just down the hall from the Father. As J.C. Ryle wrote,

It is, in a word, home: the home of Christ and Christians. This is a sweet and touching expression. Home, as we all know, is the place where we are generally loved for our own sakes, and not for our gifts or possessions; the place where we are loved to the end, never forgotten, and always welcome. This is one idea of heaven. Believers are in a strange land and at school in this life. In the life to come they will be at home.⁴

Thus, heaven is a place. It is the longing of every true believer. In his book, *The Problem of Pain*, C.S. Lewis beautifully stated,

There have been times when I think we do not desire heaven but more often I find myself wondering whether, in our heart of hearts, we have ever desired

anything else. . . All the things that have ever deeply possessed your soul have been but hints of it—tantalizing glimpses, promises never quite fulfilled, echoes that died away just as they caught your ear.⁵

Someone might ask, though, “If heaven is a place, where is it?” If I could answer that question, I probably wouldn’t be writing this booklet. However, rather than heaven being far *far* off, just beyond the furthest star, there is every indication in Scripture that heaven is much closer than we might assume. For example, in 2 Kings 2:11, we are told of Elijah the prophet being taken up by a whirlwind into heaven. Also, besides telling us of the disciples watching Jesus ascend into heaven, the Book of Acts testifies that, at his martyrdom, Stephen “gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God” (7:55). Therefore, could it be that heaven is actually much closer than what we might think—veiled from human eyes until God grants us the capacity to see it?! Amazing!!!

HEAVEN WILL ONE DAY BE UNITED WITH A RENEWED EARTH

We’ve all seen the pictures—scenes of “winged” saints, like angels, floating around on ethereal clouds strumming their golden harps. Such a view is a common misconception regarding heaven. Why? First, the Bible never confuses humans with angels. They are two different kinds of beings. When Jesus said, “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are

given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven (Matthew 22:32),” He was simply denying that people will be married in heaven. Jesus wasn’t saying people would become like angels in any other regard. Also, the Bible doesn’t picture heaven as an ethereal “cloudy” spiritual existence. As the late New Testament scholar, George Ladd, wrote,

Biblical thought always places man (in the very end) on a redeemed earth, not in a heavenly realm removed from earthly existence.⁶

Yes, presently speaking, heaven is removed from an earthly context. But, there is coming a time when it won’t. The day is coming when it will literally be “heaven on earth!” How can we know this?

To begin with, while we are told in the Bible that the present earth and heavens (I.e., stars, planets, etc.) are to be destroyed by fire (I.e., not obliterated, but purged by fire), we are also told believers are looking forward to a “renewed” earth. In his second epistle, the Apostle Peter specifically states,

The heavens will be destroyed⁷ by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for *new* heavens and a *new* earth, in which righteousness dwells (3:12-13, italics mine).

Don’t mistake Peter. He’s not saying such things will be “new” in terms of “kind,” but “new” in terms of “quality.” In other words, the present earth and heavens will be “renewed!” There is going to be a massive overhaul to beat all overhauls!!

Also, as Paul speaks of the creation in Romans 8:19-21, we see this exciting picture:

For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him Who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

The word translated *anxious longing* “is an especially vivid word that literally refers to watching with outstretched head, and suggests standing on tiptoes with the eyes looking ahead with intent expectancy.”⁸ Thus, Paul pictures the creation *longing* for its own deliverance—its own emancipation from slavery! Remember, through man’s fall into sin, not only did mankind come under God’s curse, but the creation *itself* came under the curse (Genesis 3:17-19). Never before had thorns and thistles, earthquakes and hurricanes, viruses and disease existed. However, there is coming a time when the creation will be renewed and be a blessing to “the redeemed” in every regard! There is coming a time of which the Lord says, “Behold, I am making all things new” (Revelation 21:5).

“But,” you say, “this isn’t making sense! You’ve said heaven is currently a place, and yet, now you are saying the earth will be renewed and will become the heavenly home of redeemed man. How can this be? Aren’t the two separate?” Yes, for now, heaven and earth are distinct from one another. But there is coming a time when heaven, God’s special home, will come down and be joined to a renewed earth. Revelation 21:1-3 tells us as much:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them.”

This “new Jerusalem” is also referred to as “the holy city” in 21:10. In other words, this is “heaven’s capital city”—the place Jesus Christ has been preparing that comes down “out of heaven” to be joined to a renewed earth. Therefore, in a mysterious glorious way, heaven (God’s special home) and the renewed earth will be joined for all eternity—literally becoming heaven on earth!!

While there will certainly be differences in the age to come—no sun, no moon (God’s glory being the source of light, Revelation 21:23), it seems there will be significant similarities to life here as we know it. Then possessing their resurrected glorified bodies (1 Corinthians 15:50-57), believers will apparently have meaningful physical labor to be done (Isaiah 65:21-22). There will be eating and drinking and rejoicing (Luke 22:18; Revelation 19:9). It will be the full, yet greater restoration of what was lost when Adam and Eve were first put within the Garden of Eden!

As an illustration, I will personally never forget my first experience of going to “Disneyland” as a ten year old boy. From the moment I walked through the entry gates, I felt I was in a *magical* world. Literally run-

ning from exhibit to exhibit (“Jungleboat Ride,” “Bear Country,” “Tom Sawyer’s Island,” etc., etc.), I didn’t stop until I was utterly exhausted—having massive blisters on both the palms of my feet! My first time at Disneyland was euphoric, exhilarating, and filled with joy! I hated to see it end. However, in an infinitely greater eternal way, heaven will be that truly magical place on a renewed earth, belonging to God, that believers will never *ever* have to leave!

JESUS CHRIST: THE ONE WHO MAKES HEAVEN *HEAVEN*

Of course, as good as all this might seem, heaven will not be heaven without Jesus Christ. Jesus is the One Who makes heaven *heaven* for the believer! Without Him, the longing of a believer’s heart would go eternally unsatisfied. Do you believe this? In his book, *God Is The Gospel*, John Piper powerfully states,

The critical question for our generation—and for every generation—is this: If you could have heaven, with no sickness, and with all the friends you ever had on earth, and all the food you ever liked, and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed, and all the natural beauties you ever saw, all the physical pleasures you ever tasted, and no human conflict or any natural disasters, could you be satisfied with heaven, if Christ was not there?⁹

If you answer yes to that question, you have good reason not to assume you are a believer in Jesus. However, please don’t get me wrong. I certainly do not want to come across as harsh or judgmental.

The clear biblical truth is, when a person is born again (I.e., receives spiritual life from God), their heart is transformed into a person who loves and longs for Jesus Christ. The Apostle Peter said as much in his first epistle,

And though you have not seen Him (Jesus), you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory (1:8).

Notice that Peter did not say, “you *maybe* love Him . . . and *maybe* rejoice (in Him) with joy inexpressible.” No, his point is that believers *DO* love Christ and *DO* rejoice in Him! In other words, there are not two categories of believers: those who love and rejoice in Christ, and those who don’t. There is only one kind of believer!

And let’s be sure we understand this. This longing for the Person of Christ is also a longing to behold (be thrilled with) God’s glory emanating from Jesus. What is God’s glory? His glory is His majesty shining forth in His manifold infinite perfections. It is His incomparably great excellence. In today’s language, it is His *radical awesomeness!!!* And Jesus, being eternal almighty God Himself, is the embodiment of that glory (Colossians 2:9).

What is thrilling is Jesus also desires that believers see Him and behold His glory! In other words, Jesus delights to put His majesty on display for them—that they would be caught up in the ineffable experience of delighting in and being satisfied in Him. How can we know Jesus really desires this? Because,

This was one of the last things He requested from God the Father before He (Jesus) went to the cross,

Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, *so that they may see My glory* which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world (John 17:24, italics mine).

Amazing! What Jesus mentions here is the great hope of all believers—the “Beatific Vision” (Latin, *visio Dei*). That is, the direct immediate experience perfected souls will have in beholding God in the Person of Jesus Christ! The “Beatific Vision” is what Jesus was getting at when He said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). When will believers have this experience? When they see Jesus! Yes, while there is a true *spiritual* perception all Christians presently have of Christ’s glory (see 2 Corinthians 3:18), such a perception is only partial during this life. Believers see as “in a mirror dimly” (1 Corinthians 13:12). But, in heaven, they will behold His glory “face to face”!!!

I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb (i.e., Jesus) are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb (Revelation 21:22-23).

Therefore, dear reader, I hope you get the sense that this desire to behold Christ Jesus is not a “take it or leave it”/optional thing in the Christian life. In 2 Thessalonians 1:10, Paul tells us that Jesus will return for the very purpose “to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among *all* who have believed.”

Just think of it, the believer's fellowship will eternally be with the One Who possesses all the infinite perfections of God. All His perfections will eternally be brought to bear on the believer for their good. The love that Christ has for a believer will never wane or grow weary. His infinite wisdom will be forever creative in astounding a believer with His excellent works. Christ's unbounding gladness will forever fill a believer's heart with joy and happiness (see Jeremiah 32:39-41). In other words, a believer will never grow weary of Christ, but will instead be eternally and increasingly thrilled with one revelation of His greatness after another. Is it any wonder the psalmist exulted,

In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand
there are pleasures forever! (Psalm 16:11)

Do you see it then? Do you see how Jesus Christ is the One Who makes heaven *heaven* for a believer? Remove Jesus from heaven and heaven immediately ceases to be. That being the case, the question must be asked, are you, dear person, ready for just such a heaven. J.C. Ryle wrote,

But alas, how little fit for heaven are many who talk of "going to heaven" when they die, while they manifestly have no saving faith, and no real acquaintance with Christ. You give Christ no honor here. You have no communion with Him. You do not love Him. Alas! What could you do in heaven? It would be no place for you. Its joys would be no joys for you. Its happiness would be a happiness into which you could not enter. Its employments would be a weariness and burden to your heart. Oh, repent and change before it be too late!¹⁰

That is the sentiment of this booklet precisely—that all who read these pages would be prepared for heaven! “To be made fit for heaven is to have one’s heart in heaven. It has often been said that heaven is in the saint before the saint is in heaven.”¹¹ At the risk of over-repetition, Jesus is the One Who makes heaven *heaven* for the believer. The person who is ready for heaven is the one who knows and loves Christ Jesus. If anyone does not love the Lord, they are to be accursed (1 Corinthians 16:22). Do you love Jesus Christ? Do you love Him because He gave up His life and died for sinners that they might be freed from the penalty of sin? Do you love Him because there is no more excellent person than Jesus, Who rescues the lost from the pit and crowns their lives with good things? Do you love Jesus because He first loved you? Dear sinner, no one has ever loved your soul more than Jesus Christ! How could a person reject such love? May we look to Him, cast ourselves on Him entirely, and love Him!

HOW CAN HEAVEN BE BETTER FOR SOME THAN FOR OTHERS?

Last, someone might ask, “If heaven is perfect and the joy experienced there by the saints is perfect, is it possible heaven will be better for some than it is for others?” Well, if we take seriously what the Bible has to say of eternal rewards, then we must acknowledge that, in some way, such rewards entail increased blessedness. But how can that be?

Now, while it is absolutely true that all who go to heaven receive certain gifts in *common* from God

(eternal life, Matthew 25:46; the “crown of righteousness,” 2 Timothy 4:8; enjoyment of God Himself, Revelation 21:3), it is undeniable that the Bible speaks of *additional* rewards in the hereafter. This is Paul’s very point in 1 Corinthians chapter 3,

For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay straw, each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. If any man’s work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss (I.e., not the loss of eternal life, but the loss of prospective additional rewards); but he himself will be saved (I.e., have what is common to all believers), yet so as through fire. (vv. 11-15)

The meaning of this passage is apparent. Some believers invest in the expansion of Christ’s kingdom in a very painstaking and sacrificial way. There are others, by comparison, who do not make such a costly investment of themselves—their time, spiritual gifts, money, etc. Thus, on the day of evaluation, there will be those who receive *additional* rewards, while there are others who only receive what is common to all believers.

For those who say we ought not do what we do for the prospect of receiving heavenly rewards, such logic betrays the very point Paul is making, doesn’t it?! Isn’t Paul trying to motivate believers to go for it in living for Christ?! I believe he is. Also, to say we ought not to seek heavenly rewards would appear to

contradict the very thing Jesus told us to do:

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, . . .
But store up for yourselves treasures in
heaven” (Matthew 6:19-20).

Do you see it? Jesus doesn’t merely *suggest* we “store up” heavenly treasures (I.e., heavenly rewards). He *commands* that we store up such things! How, then, could the pursuit of such treasure be wrong? It isn’t.

However, some might say the idea of additional rewards violates the biblical principle of grace—that is, the “all-important” truth that a person is saved solely by God’s grace (not by their own merit), and, what they experience in the hereafter is entirely owing to grace (Ephesians 2:8-9). Some argue that to be motivated in what we do by the prospect of rewards is to revert to a “works” mentality—where we are trying to earn God’s benefits.

What shall we say in response to this? Yes, it is very possible to revert to a wrong mindset regarding these things. Any time we think that we’ve got to perform the Christian life in our own strength—that we’re the one’s who must carve out an eternal niche for ourselves—that we want others to marvel *at us* in glory, we are in error. However, when we recognize ourselves as the powerless sinners that we are—that any strength we have to live the Christian life comes to us from the Holy Spirit through faith in Christ Jesus—and that all glory in the end will rightfully belong to the Lord, then, such eternal rewards should be thought of as “rewards of grace”, or “gracelets”!! Thought of rightly, it is as though God has given

believers His “heavenly Visa card” to go through this life doing good, pursuing obedience, and, in the end, He rewards them for what they had done. It’s all grace, you see?!

But, we still haven’t answered our question: “How can heaven be better for some than it is for others?” Well, for one thing, the Bible certainly speaks of individuals being rewarded with honorary responsibilities or extraordinary privileges in the age to come (see Luke 22:28-30). In the parable of the talents, Jesus noted that the following will be said by Him to those who exhibited faithfulness during this life:

His master said to him, “Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master” (Matthew 25:21).

So, it certainly seems those who honored the Lord through their faithful service will themselves be honored by Him for all eternity. When George Whitefield was once asked whether he expected to see John Wesley in heaven, he responded,

I fear not, for he will be so near the eternal throne and we at such a distance we shall hardly get a sight of him.¹²

Perhaps another way of answering this question is found in comparing believers figuratively to containers of varying sizes. In Romans 9:23, Paul speaks of believers as “vessels of mercy.” The background of a “vessel” was that of a clay pot. With that image in mind, could it be that, like varying sizes of pots, believers will have *varying capacities* for containing the joy they will experience in the Lord in heaven? Some, because of having lived

very little for Christ, may end up having a “thimble-like” capacity of joy in the Lord. Others, on the other hand, who had lived radically committed lives for Christ, might have a “swimming pool” kind of capacity for joy.

In Psalm 37:4 we are told, “Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart.” What are the desires God grants such a person who delights in Him? God *Himself*, for He is the one the person is delighting in. Therefore, could it be that the rewards in the age to come will themselves be varying capacities to enjoy God? While all believers heaven will be filled to the brim with overflowing joy—where there will be no jealousy whatsoever, not all will have the same capacity for containing that joy. As Jonathan Edwards stated, “The saints are like so many vessels of different sizes cast into a sea of happiness where every vessel is full.”¹⁴

That’s about as close as I can come to answering our question. But I ask, if this is the truth of the matter, how is *your* eternal capacity for containing “joy in the Lord” being currently affected by how you are living for and delighting in Jesus Christ? Are you treasuring and obeying Him with all your heart and soul, or, are you cherishing Him hardly at all? Could it be your *eternal* heavenly capacity for rejoicing in Him is being affected by how you are living for Him today?! Think about it.

CONCLUSION

When a person stands back and tries to wrap their mind around what the Bible says of heaven, they are

indeed staggered. Our best attempts to describe heaven certainly pale in comparison to what will be the reality. However, we must conclude that RIGHT NOW COUNTS FOREVER!!! How we live our lives today reverberates down through eternity! The thought is radical, isn't it? If we repent of sin and believe in Jesus Christ today, we will be with Him forever. Conversely, if we continue to resist His authority and reject Him, we will *never* escape His wrath . . . forever! But, if we experience His grace and delight ourselves in Him daily, our capacity for being filled with His eternal joy will become greater, and greater, and *greater!*

As has become apparent in this little booklet, Jonathan Edwards was a man who meditated much upon heaven. As a young man, Edwards composed 70 resolutions that served to guide the remainder of his Christian life. One resolution, in particular, summarizes what I think should be a proper response to what has been written in this booklet:

Resolved, To endeavor to obtain for myself as much happiness in the other world as I possibly can, with all the power, might, vigour, and vehemence, yea violence¹³, I am capable of, or can bring myself to exert, in any way that can be thought of.¹⁵

Therefore, dear reader, may we think all the more upon heaven. May our longings for beholding the glory of God in the face of Christ grow all the more intense. And may we strain with all our might to gain as much of that heavenly happiness as we possibly can! The hour is hastening on. He is no fool who carefully lives his present life in view of eternity!

NOTES

1. David & Elizabeth Heller, *Angels Must Get Their Wings By Helping Little Angels Like Me: Children's ideas of God, heaven, and the angels*, Kensington Books Pub., pp. 1, 20, 86
2. From an unpublished sermon by Jonathan Edwards on Isaiah 3:10. Quoted in John Gerstner, *The Rational Biblical Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 3, Berea Pub., p. 544
3. Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Banner of Truth Trust Pub., Vol. 2, p. 630
4. J.C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: John*, Vol. 3, James Clarke & Co. Pub., p. 57
5. C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, Simon & Schuster Pub., pp. 130, 131
6. George Eldon Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John*, Eerdmans Pub., p. 275
7. It seems apparent that Peter does not have the idea of “obliteration” in mind here when he speaks of the heavens and the earth being “destroyed” by fire. Comparing verse 6 of that same chapter, we see that he also speaks of the earth being “destroyed” by the great flood. The idea of “obliteration” is certainly not the point there. Thus, the idea in 2 Pet. 3:12 seems to be one of purging or purification.
8. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Romans 1-8*, Moody Pub., p. 452
9. John Piper, *God Is The Gospel*, Crossway Books Pub., p. 15
10. J.C. Ryle, *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties, & Roots*, Charles Nolan Pub., p. 384
11. John Gerstner, *Ibid.* (compare note #2), p. 541
12. George Whitefield's quote is found in Arnonld Dallimore's, *George Whitefield: The life and times of the great evangelist of the 18th century revival*, Vol. 2, p. 353
13. When Edwards says “violence” here, I believe we are to take him as thinking of the ruthlessness, indeed the *violence*, with which a Christian is to deal with indwelling lust and sin in their life. Every serious believer knows that the fight for purity and obedience can indeed be fierce and *violent* at times (see Matthew 5:29-30; Romans 8:12-13).
14. I could not recall where I read this quote from Edwards, but I am fairly certain he said it.
15. Jonathan Edwards, *Ibid.* (compare note #3), Vol. 1, p. xxi, resolution #22