**Longing for Heaven**

**Introduction**

1. Heaven is the ultimate goal.
2. We long to get there. But what does it mean to long for heaven?
3. It is more than just a strong desire for. It is a desire that leads to action!
4. If we are longing for heaven then we are longing for… 🡪
5. Longing for the truth.
6. Jesus is the truth.

* **John 14:1-6** – Jesus has prepared a place for us to be with Him in His Father’s house.
  + The disciples asked how they can know the way. Jesus said through Him – the truth!
  + To long for heaven is to long to be with Jesus. To long to be with Jesus is to long for the truth.
* How do we experience the presence of Christ? – **Hebrews 1:1-2** – Christ is with us via the word!
  + The only way to heaven is through obedience to His word – the truth! 🡪

1. Our place in heaven is conditional upon our obedience to the truth.

* **2 Thessalonians 2:13-15** – Salvation is through belief in the truth.
* **Proverbs 23:23** – When we find the truth we should not compromise it or exchange it. We must secure it, and keep it as it is.
  + **Jude 3** – Contending for the faith is an example of longing for the truth. Anything that threatens the integrity of the truth must not be tolerated. Otherwise, are we truly longing for heaven – longing for the things of God?

1. Longing to please God.

* **Galatians 1:10** – Paul recognized God as the only one that is important to please.
* **Acts 5:29** – Peter was told not to teach in Jesus’ name.
  + **2 Corinthians 5:6-11** – Paul’s desire was to be at home with Christ. In longing for this, He recognized He must long to please Him.

1. Longing for purity.

* **1 John 3:1-3** – As children of God we have the hope of being as Christ is when He comes again.
  + We are children of God – but our physical appearance does not show the glory that will be revealed in us **(cf. Romans 8:18**).
    - Jesus was pure, holy, glorious, but the world didn’t see it – they saw a man without *“form or comeliness”* that had *“no beauty”* (**Isaiah 53:2**).
    - Those who are the *“children of God”* are the ones who purify themselves in conformity to Christ’s standard of purity! ***We have a fleshly body but we live in the spirit! (cf. Romans 8:9)***
  + When Christ comes again, our identity will be apparent to all! – (cf**. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52** – we shall be changed.)
  + Therefore we long for purity! In order to be with God we must draw near to Him. James says to do that we are to purify ourselves – **James 4:7-8**

1. Longing for what is not seen.

* **2 Corinthians 4:16-18** – As Christians, our focus is on spiritual – eternal – things! Our treasures are heavenly.
  + For this reason, persecution does not tear us down, rather it builds us up because we have hope in something better!
  + **Hebrews 11:13-16** – Speaking of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Sarah and their willingness to go to foreign lands because their home was not anywhere on earth. Moses did not fear the wrath of the king because of his faith in God (**cf. v. 27**).

1. Longing for rest.

* **Hebrews 4:9-10** – The Hebrew writer speaks of a rest for God’s people. This implies that God’s people are working!
  + God set a task to perform and after He finished in 6 days He rested. God has required work for Christians and when we get to heaven, then we rest (cf. **Ephesians 2:10**).
  + The rest is also from the struggle against the flesh – **Galatians 5:16-17**
    - We are expected to endure through this struggle, and ultimately succeed through the strength given though Christ.

**Conclusion**

1. Are you longing for heaven?
2. Are you standing for the truth, trying to please God, purifying yourself, looking toward the unseen, and working so hard that you desire rest?
3. God will grant you these things if you long for them (**cf. Matthew 7:7-8).**