

The Brighton Light

BRIGHTON ARP CHURCH

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What Is Heaven Like?

Last Thursday evening, I preached a sermon on Luke 23:39-43, where we looked at the two thieves who died alongside Jesus. Very famously, Jesus promises one of the men (the penitent thief) that he would be with Him that day in Paradise.

The word “Paradise” means “garden.” It is intended to refer to the Garden of Eden, where Adam and Eve at one time enjoyed the presence of God. In Isaiah 51:3, the picture of such a garden is a promise given to the people of God:

Indeed, the Lord will comfort Zion;
He will comfort all her waste places.
And her wilderness He will make like Eden,
And her desert like the garden of the Lord;
Joy and gladness will be found in her,
Thanksgiving and sound of a melody.

Paradise is also meant to be a reference to heaven. There is, of course, much speculation about what heaven will be like. J.C. Ryle, in his book *Holiness*, describes the sufficient view of what heaven will be like from the Scriptures, and found in Jesus' own words to the second thief:

This you may gather from our Lord's words to the penitent thief: 'This day shall you be with Me in paradise.' And you have an expression very like it in the Epistle to the Philippians, where Paul says he has a desire to 'depart and be with Christ' (Phil. 1:23). ... Believers after death are 'with Christ.' ... I cannot describe what kind of place paradise is, because I cannot understand the condition of a soul separate from the body. But I ask no brighter view of paradise than this—that Christ is there. All other things, in the picture which imagination draws of the state between death and resurrection, are nothing in comparison of this. How He is there, and in what way He is there, I know not. Let me only see Christ in paradise when my eyes close in death, and that suffices me. Well does the psalmist say, 'In Your presence is fullness of joy' (Ps. 16:11). It was a true saying of a dying girl, when her mother tried to comfort her by describing what paradise would be. 'There,' she said to the child, 'there you will have no pains, and no sickness; there you will see your brothers and sisters, who have gone before you, and will be always happy.' 'Ah, mother,' was the reply, 'but there is one thing better than all, and that is, Christ will be there!'

Likewise, the Puritan Thomas Watson writes about heaven:

Those whom the world scorned, Christ will take by the hand and openly acknowledge as His, openly acknowledging them to be precious in His eyes. ... Christ will vindicate them and clear their innocence. ... The saints shall be fully crowned with enjoyment of God forever; they shall be in His sweet presence forever. The banner of God's love will be eternally displayed. The joys

of heaven shall be without intermission and expiration, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

To be in heaven is to be with the Lord Jesus, and that is more than enough for the Christian.

Prayer List:

Bennett, Mary F – Shut in	McCain, Ken – Health Issues
Billings, Richard – (Denise’s Dad) Cancer	McCain, Kenny – Health Issues
Boswell, Charles - Cancer	Bridges, Lucille – Health Issues
Boswell, Mike – Health issues	Pugh, Kaleb – (Laura Kiphart’s grandson)
Bryant, Ty –Heart	Williams, Sandy – (Huffman family)Cancer
Rochell, Bobby – Cancer	Wilson, Glenda – Bone Cancer
Goulder, Martha Jean – Shut In	Winford, Sherry – Health issues
Hopper, Claude – Shut in	Yarbro, Ina – Health issues
McCain, Pat – Health Issues	Landrum, Zoan – Covington Care
Molder, Jerry – Health Issues	
Rivercity Reformed Presbyterain Church – Church plant in Little Rock Arkansas	

Military

Donahoo, Tim	Starnes, Austin	Hill, Debra	Billings, Tyler
Dooley, Rod	Heathman, Matthew	Young III, Robert "Trip"	

Missionaries

Coad, Jim & Gala	Rebekah Carson	Brunson, Andrew
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APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1 Haley Alsbrook	29 Allison Kate Scott
2 Linda Huffman	30 Ashley Goulder
14 Lisa Smith	Lucille Bridges
21 Sherrie Wells	
Zane Hill, Jr.	
23 Jordan Goulder	

NURSERY ATTENDANTS

April 1	Alton Woods
April 8	Haley Alsbrook
April 15	Ashley Goulder
April 22	Brooklin
April 29	Helen Woods

April Menu

April 4	Ham, green beans and corn
April 11	Hoagies
April 18	Lasagna and salad
April 25	Family Night

Cost: \$3.00 person
\$10.00 Family

Upcoming Events

PLEASE NOTE: If you have any ideas or suggestions for the church website, please contact Chris Gravley, webmaster, at 901-674-3851 or e-mail at chris_gravley@bellsouth.net.

THE DEACON OF THE MONTH is Nick Goulder. If you have any requests for the deacons, please contact Nick at 901-451-3206.

PLEASE NOTE If anyone is sick, in need of prayer or a visit, please contact Milton Murphy 901-476-2808.

PLEASE REMEMBER: The Sunday Night Bible Study at 6 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE The Men's Ministry will be having a Men's Retreat. More information to follow.