

Welcome to Grace Notes. We've been discussing the subject of Heaven. On our last program we found that Heaven IS a real place, where God the Father and God the Son reside. We learned that Jesus made THE way for us to go there by His death and resurrection, and that we must make the choice by believing in His finished work at Calvary. Scripture taught us that when Jesus comes again, there will be a new Heaven and earth with no sin and no sadness. We'll be in the very presence of Christ and be able to see His Glory. We, too, will receive back the Glory we were originally created to have before sin entered the world. But, the question arises, what happens to us if we die before Christ returns? Stay tuned as Barbara Sandbek explores this subject.

One of the most fascinating things I ever learned in math was the meaning of 'infinity'. Somehow, I knew innately that there was such a thing, even before it was described. Why? Because our soul is built for eternity.

Our soul, and eventually our body, will spend eternity in one of two places...Heaven or Hell. When we accept Jesus, our JOURNEY to Heaven begins immediately, as Jesus said in John 5:24...

I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me HAS eternal life and will NOT be condemned: he HAS crossed over from Death to Life.

Our ENTRANCE into Heaven occurs when we die. Ecclesiastes 12:7 says our body turns to dust and returns to the ground from whence it came, but our spirit returns to God who gave it. There is no time lapse. Jesus said to the believing thief on the cross..."TODAY you will be with me in paradise."

What do we have to look forward to as we pass from this life?

In Luke 16 it says that when the beggar Lazarus died, the angels carried him to Abraham's bosom. (That's a Jewish designation for heaven).

He wasn't escorted, he was carried!

It is written in Psalm 91:11-12...He(God) will command His angels concerning you, to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their HANDS, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

Psalm 116:15 says...

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Jesus paid such a high price so we could be with Him. Luke 15:10 says that there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repents. I figure that if the rejoicing is in the PRESENCE of the angels, it has to be Jesus who is doing the rejoicing! How much more will He rejoice over our entrance into His house.

During the last week of my Godly father-in-law's life, he spoke few words and moved very little. I remember at one point, though, he sat up, pointed to the sky, and said, "Jesus". God had given him grace to die. He'd carried his cross and done his job...it was time to rest in the arms of Jesus.

*** COME MORNING ***

I sang at the memorial service for a 26-year-old man who had been in a coma for five months. He was married and had two young children. I always like to say something before I sing, to make the lyrics more effective. But what could I say this time? Here's a man who hadn't even entered the prime of life, and who had just a few days before started a diary in which he wrote a prayer...

"Father, please forgive me for not believing You could use me because of my weaknesses."

I prayed for a word. God gave me many.

God didn't have to tell us about Heaven. He could have just said, "If you believe in Me, I'll be with you in life and help you not be afraid as you go through the valley of the shadow of death". But when God does something, He does it up right.

For the non-believer, death presents a 'permanent parting' from loved ones, but for the believer, it is but a 'planned pause' in the journey of life. What a comfort to know we'll see and know our loved ones again because of our Savior's work at Calvary.

When we're born into this world, we have a new body, but sin takes its toll on it as we go through the dust-to-dust process. When we're 'born-again', we not only get a new spiritual being, we're guaranteed that we won't have to check into the new Heaven with the same body we checked out of earth with. I pictured this young man, who had been full of tubes, and scared from needles and knives, in his new body, with no ailments..no defects.

It occurred to me, though, that according to John 20:19, when Jesus came back to earth in His resurrected body, His disciples knew who he was by the scars in His hands and side. We'll have perfect bodies in Heaven because Christ's perfect sacrifice made it possible, yet He'll wear His battle scars for eternity.

I wrote this poem for the funeral.

NO SCARS IN GLORY

By Barbara Sandbek

**There are so many burdens here
I'm smothered by the hurts, the tears
Crowded in with thoughts that bring me pain.
I've failed in things I try to do
Sometimes I want to say, "I'm through"
And those I've trusted let me down again.**

**But I'll have no scars in glory
'Cause He'll wear them for me.
I'll have a body that will not be marred.
For Jesus bore my sin and shame
And when I call out His Dear Name
I'll know Him by the presence of His scars.**

**The day is dreary...road is long
I just can't wait to be at home
Where all my problems I can lay to rest.
I'm grateful for the hope He brings
And to it I will surely cling
I'll be there in my Savior's arms at last.**

**And I'll have no scars in glory
'Cause He'll wear them for me.
I'll have a body that will not be marred.
My Jesus bore my sin and shame
And when I call out His Dear Name
I'll know Him by the presence of His scars.**

What a Savior...what a hope...what a heaven...

Just as Christ's body died and rose again, so will ours.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:14 Paul writes...

We believe that Jesus died and rose again, so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

Verse 16 continues...

For the Lord, Himself will come down from heaven with a loud command with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead IN CHRIST, will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Our journey to Heaven will be complete when our soul is reunited with our body on the great Day of Resurrection.

***** LOOK UP YOU'RE GOING HOME *** 2:52**

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