

A Theology of Heaven

Part Two: "The Present Heaven"

Basic Tenets

1. Our eternal home (heaven) will be a new (renewed) earth
2. There will be a physical, bodily resurrection of the dead
3. The "present heaven" is not the eternal state

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Defining Heaven

"Heaven" – the abode of God; His unique dwelling place

- "Eternal Heaven" – the New Earth; the eternal state
- "Present Heaven" – heaven as it exists now until the fashioning of the new earth

The Present Heaven

1. The dwelling place of believers who die before the resurrection
 - The place of conscious existence apart from the body in Christ's presence
 - It is not our final state or home
 - It is "very much better" than this present life

The Present Heaven

2. A place of provisional blessedness
 - the absence of sin or suffering
 - immense comfort, joy, satisfaction
 - unhindered fellowship with Christ
 - living in the immediate presence of God

The Present Heaven

2. A place of provisional blessedness

And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom!"
And He said to Him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with me in Paradise."
(Luke 23:42-43)

The Present Heaven

2. A place of provisional blessedness

➤ *Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus*

- a condition immediately following death
- "Abraham's bosom" – picture of reclining with Abraham at a banquet
- "he is being comforted here" (16:25)

Revelation 6:9-11

And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw beneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they had maintained;
and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

Revelation 6:9-11

And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told to rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, should be completed also.

The Present Heaven

3. A place of anticipation

- Longing for God's perfect judgment of those on earth
- Resting in anticipation of the future fulfillment of God's promises

The Present Heaven

Conclusion:

- As great as it is, it is not final or complete
 - the present state of believers in heaven is not their final state
 - the present heaven is not the final dwelling of believers