

Dear Friend,

I think there should be more teaching on the reality of heaven and hell. Those are both real places. There is truth to that old saying, "There is a heaven to gain and a hell to shun." We know that those who have already died in Christ are right now in heaven because the apostle Paul said, "to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." [2 Cor 5:8].

We tend to think that we, as Christians, will live forever in heaven, but the truth of the matter is, God never designed man to live in heaven. He designed man to live on earth ... forever. Because of Adam's sin, this earth is corrupted. It is not at all like God originally created it. Mankind will not live on this earth forever. God is going to make a new heaven and a new earth. The apostle Peter wrote about it in:

2Pe 3:9-13 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (10) But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (11) *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,* (12) Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? (13) Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Heaven, for now, is a temporary residence of paradise where all of those who have died in Christ are living until the day when God dissolves this present earth and this present universe and creates a new universe and a new earth. That earth is going to be great. The book of Revelation tells us that on that earth there will be no more tears, nor death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain. Righteousness will dwell there. What a wonderful promise from the Word of God. [Rev 21:4]

How will God populate that new earth? Will God make a new Adam to populate it? In truth, the Adam of that second world already lives. His name is Jesus Christ. Jesus is the second man, the last Adam:

1Co 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

Here is the amazing truth ... the population for that new earth is already being birthed ... now ... before that new earth is even created. The last Adam, Jesus Christ, is called the "first born from the dead." [Col 1:18} He is the head of a new species of human that did not exist before. He is quickening the spiritually dead species of Adam to new life ... one at a time ... as people hear and believe the gospel. They are "quickened" to new life. The people who will populate the new earth are those who have been "born again." They no longer belong to the spiritually dead species of Adam but have been born again into the new species of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah!

The last Adam is populating the new earth ... NOW! If you have been born again, you are born of Christ and you belong to this new species that will inhabit the new earth. If you pass away before the new earth is created, there is no reason to fear. You will dwell temporarily in heaven with the Lord and with your saved loved ones until the day you will come down with the Lord to dwell in the new Jerusalem on the new earth.

Everything of this present earth, everything stained by the sin of Adam, will perish in a fervent heat. Even the elements shall be dissolved. That means the very atoms will come apart. What foolishness to live our lives on this earth for the things of the world when nothing ... absolutely nothing of this world will remain. We are to live for Christ in everything we do. Our witness as believers in Christ is so important. The only thing we will take into that new heaven and new earth will be the people that we loved and witnessed to while we were alive on this earth.

1Pe 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

Your friend and co-laborer,

GARY