



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS – May 12, 2024

Sermon Series: Now What?
Sermon Title: 'What's Heaven like?'
Scripture: Luke 23:43, Isaiah 25:6-8, Revelation 7:9, Revelation 21:1-4 and John 14:2-4
Preacher: Rev. Dr. Bryan Eckelmann

Theme/Concept: The Resurrection gives us the assurance of Heaven -- but what's heaven like? We MUST use our imagination, since we cannot understand an existence we have never experienced. So, we'll (briefly) consider five imaginations of Heaven - Paradise (Luke 23:43), Banquet (Isaiah 25:6-8), Worship (Revelation 7:9), New (Revelation 21:1-4) and House (John 14:2-4).

Icebreaker: (if with a small group) What is the most beautiful place you have ever seen or visited?

Reflections on the sermon: What points stood out most to you from the sermon?

Scripture Passages: (New International Version)

Luke 23:43

⁴³ And Jesus replied, "I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Isaiah 25:6-8

⁶In Jerusalem, the LORD of Heaven's Armies
will spread a wonderful feast
for all the people of the world.

It will be a delicious banquet
with clear, well-aged wine and choice meat.

⁷There he will remove the cloud of gloom,
the shadow of death that hangs over the earth.

⁸He will swallow up death forever!

The Sovereign LORD will wipe away all tears.
He will remove forever all insults and mockery
against his land and people.
The LORD has spoken!

Revelation 7:9

⁹After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands.

Revelation 21:1-4

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. ²And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

³I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. ⁴He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever."

John 14:2-4

²There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? ³When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. ⁴And you know the way to where I am going."

Reviewing the Scripture:

1. What visual image of Heaven do you gain from Jesus' response in Luke 23:43?
2. What are the different ways that the beauty of Heaven was described as a meal in Isaiah 25:6? Who will this feast be for?
3. What will happen to death? (Isaiah 25:8) How was this promise fulfilled in the resurrection of Christ? (1 Corinthians 15:54-57)

4. What additional promises are made in Isaiah 25:8 and how do these promises reflect God's tender mercy?
5. What did John see after seeing the revelation of the 144,000 sealed servants of God? (Revelation 7:9)
6. What were the people, that John observed, wearing and holding? (Revelation 7:9) What was the significance of their attire?
7. Do you sense that the throng of people referenced in Revelation 7:9 was worshipping? Why or why not?
8. How did the voice from Heaven describe the new world to come? (Revelation 21:1-4)

Going deeper:

1. What do you imagine that Heaven will be like? Which of the several descriptions of Heaven from the Bible verses above resonate most with you?
2. How does the prophecy of the divine banquet in Isaiah 25:6-8 provide hope for the future?
3. How might the themes of Isaiah 25:6-8 influence your prayer life?

4. How do you feel when you think about the Lord preparing a place for you in His house? In what way is Jesus preparing you to be with Him?

Closing prayer:

Dear Lord-

Thank you for the promise of Heaven. We look forward to a place where death will be no more and you will dry our tears. Although we cannot truly fathom the beauty of Heaven, we thank you for giving us an inkling of how wonderful it will be. Help us live joyful lives in anticipation of the great promises that await us.

In Jesus name, AMEN