My Heavenly Home – A New Start
October 26, 2025

This morning we continue our sermon series on "My Heavenly Home." Our focus today is how heaven will be "A New Beginning" for everyone who goes there. Our sermon focus verses are (Revelation 21:1-7) Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son. (Revelation 7:12) "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"

There are certainly many wonderful things we experience in this world. The family God has given us. The friends we enjoy. The health we have. The blessings in our lives. The smiles and laughs and joys that we experience are all wonderful things. And for all the incredible blessings we experience here in this world, we owe a heartfelt thanks to our gracious God, who gives them to us. But as you think about life in this world, there are also many things that make life hard. Despite all the wonderful blessings our God gives us, our lives are also burdened with hardships. We struggle. We hurt. We cry. And as you reflect on the difficulties of life, what are the most difficult things of all? Is it loneliness? Is it the deep hurt caused by someone we love deeply? Is it the betrayals we've experienced? Is it a relationship that seems irreparably broken? Or maybe it's the financial stress of wondering how we will make it? Perhaps it's the challenge of trying to find the right job that will supply our needs. Or maybe it's not finding a job, but enduring the one that we have? Others might argue that the worst thing in life is the struggles of our bodies. Our bodies can become ill, sometimes seriously ill. They begin to break down over time and cause us all kinds of issues as we age. Sometimes our minds don't think properly. Addictions can affect us in the worst of ways. Still others will say that the worst thing about living is the fact that someday we have to die. And dying is never pleasant. Perhaps something else comes to mind in regard to making life particularly challenging? Maybe it's a crime. Or unexpected loss, whether of property or loved ones. Or possibly it's the deterioration of morality, and culture, and our nation.

So what are the most difficult things in life? Almost certainly the answer or answers to that question will vary for each of us. In fact, the answers would probably cover an incredibly wide spectrum. Yet as varied and different as the answers would be, there is a common theme to them all. There is one thing that ties all of the difficulties of this world together. The common denominator to all of this world's struggles is sin. My sin, your sin, everyone's sin. The fact that every single human-being is born in sin, and lives with a sinful nature all of their lives. And not only does this sin taint every human, but it corrupts

everything else around us too. Sin permeates this entire world and it changes all of creation in a negative way. It affects nature. It infects our bodies. It brings sickness, and disagreements, and unmet needs, and struggles of all kinds. And ultimately, sin brings death. And not only does our sinfulness affect us periodically, but all too often our sinful mistakes affect us the rest of our lives. Certainly, where there is true repentance over our sin, there is immediate and complete forgiveness from God, praise be to God. But unfortunately when we disobey God, sometimes the consequences of that sin can linger for the rest of our lives.

Our sins can break up marriages or friendships. They can scar others irreparably and sometimes those we scar are our dearest loved ones! Our sins can cause us to lose our jobs, or our possessions, or our health, or the respect of others. They can even cause us to lose our freedom if we find ourselves arrested. Our sins can profoundly affect our self-esteem. They can even affect our faith and our relationship with the Lord. There are all kinds of lingering effects that our sins can bring into our lives. These earthly consequences can last for as long as we live in this world. It's just another hardship we can find ourselves enduring in this world. Much of our unhappiness we have brought on ourselves is because of the sin in us. Additional unhappiness is brought to us through the sin of others. And even more unhappiness comes from the effects of sin on this world.

I say all this, not to be overly negative. And not to bring you down. But rather to underscore the point that this world isn't as wonderful a place as some folks would like to think it is. Yes, there are great blessings in it from God. But there are also great hardships and a lot of suffering as a result of sin. Of course, this is not the way the Lord intended it to be. When he first made this world and put Adam and Eve in it, it was a perfect world. There was no sin, and no effects of sin anywhere. Not even a hint of it. All was perfect, and glorious, and wonderful, and incredibly joyful. It was heaven on earth. But there was the possibility that this heaven on earth could be lost. And, of course, it was lost when Adam and Eve disobeyed God. That changed everything. It changed Adam and Eve and all of their descendants. Suddenly all people were doomed to sinfulness. And their sin changed all the rest of Creation too. Everything was corrupted. Everything was off-kilter. Everything was tragically tainted. God could have simply obliterated everything and started over. It's perhaps what we would have done. But we aren't God, and God made a different choice. God made a loving and gracious choice. God showed mercy instead of retribution. Instead of crushing Adam and Eve for their sin, God promised to send his Son to be crushed in their place!! It was preposterous. It was ludicrous. It was unimaginable. And yet, that was God's promise. And when Jesus was born, God was keeping that wonderful promise. And when Jesus died, God was exhibiting a love that has never before or will ever again be duplicated.

That should have been me on that cross. It should have been you. It should have been the sinners of this world. It should have been us suffering the separation from God the Father's presence. It should have been us enduring the horrors of hell. And yet, it was God's own Son who endured it all. It was Jesus who took the place of you and me and all people. It was Jesus who bore the penalty for our wrong-doing. And why? Why would God the Father send his Son to such a cruel fate? Why would God the Son agree to go? There's only one reason. It was love. It was love, which moved the Lord to show mercy and grace. It was a pure, and holy, and boundless, and unimaginable, and unmatchable love. It was

love for you. Love for me. Love for all people. It was love that brought the Lord to make the greatest sacrifice that could be made. It was love that moved God to take our place and make atonement for our sins. It was love that brought us forgiveness. It was love that saved us. It was love that secured a place for us in heaven, a paradise that would never ever be tainted by anything wicked.

One day a pastor was visiting a lady in the hospital. As the visit was wrapping up, she said to him “I have a question for you. What work of humans will be in Heaven?” "None, my dear lady,' he replied. “Oh, yes, there will be. Can you tell me what?' she persisted. “No, I cannot. But will you please tell me?' said the pastor. “Yes, sir,” she replied. “The one work of humans that will be present in heaven will be the prints of the nails in the hands and feet of the Lord Jesus Christ.” How incredibly insightful that elderly lady was. And yet, those nail prints in Jesus’ hands and feet are of no credit to humans. Rather those nail prints are an eternal testimony to the love and sacrifice of Jesus. When we see those nail prints in heaven, we will be overwhelmed with wonder. We will be astonished that Jesus came to earth to receive them for us. And we will be astonished that because of Jesus we are now in heaven. Yet those nail prints will be evidence of why sinners like us can be present there. And they will be the reason that in heaven we sinners will have a new start.

Listen again to what God revealed about our heavenly home through John’s Revelation John writes: (Revelation 21:3-5, 7) And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."... He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

That’s our heavenly home. That’s what we have to look forward to. When we die, our gracious God brings our souls to heaven and gives us a brand new start on everything. When we enter heaven, we leave behind every single frustration of this world. We leave behind the difficulties of life. When we reach heaven, we leave behind our loneliness. And the deep hurts. And the betrayals. And the broken relationships. In heaven, we leave behind financial stress, unemployment, and job dissatisfaction. We leave behind crime, and unexpected loss, and immorality, and sin of every kind. We leave behind the struggles of our bodies, illness of body and mind, addictions of every kind, and we leave behind death. In heaven, we leave behind all the lingering effects of our sins here on earth. Those consequences of our mistakes no longer cling to us. They’re all gone. In heaven, everything will be new. Describing that heavenly home, the almighty Lord says, (vs. 5) "I am making everything new!" (vs. 4) There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.

Think back now to our Gospel reading for today. Jesus’ friend Lazarus had become sick. His sisters, Mary and Martha, sent word to Jesus begging him to come and heal him. But Jesus had another plan. Jesus wasn’t just going to heal Lazarus. Jesus was going to raise him back to life, and that after being dead for 4 days! When Jesus arrived there at Lazarus’ grave, he wept. Some have wondered why he cried. The Jews thought it was from sorrow, because they said, "See how he loved him" (John 11:36). Yet why would Jesus weep, if he

was going to call Lazarus back to life? Some have suggested that perhaps Jesus wept because it was necessary to call Lazarus back from the joys of heaven. And if that was the case Jesus knew exactly what Lazarus was experiencing in heaven, how everything was new and wonderful for him there. And so Jesus cried because he realized that Lazarus had to come back to the struggles of life in this sinful world. That may, or may not, have been the reason Jesus cried. We're not told. But it certainly underscores the differences between life in this world and life in the world to come for believers. Here we have many blessings, but there is much suffering too. There in heaven we will have many blessings as well, but perhaps the biggest blessing of all will be that there is no suffering there. It will be a new start. You know, every day we wake up we are given a new day by the Lord. We tend to take this for granted, but none of us are guaranteed another day here in this world. So every day we wake up, may we recognize the fact that God has given us another day to live for him, to love him, to serve him. But the morning we wake up in heaven, that will be the greatest "day" of all. For at that moment we will realize that we are given an eternal "day" a new start on forever and every bit of our sin, suffering and death are completely gone.

A little girl was walking with her father one night under the starry sky. Looking up, she said, "Father, I have been thinking. If the wrong side of Heaven is so beautiful, what will the right side be like?" Oh, the right side of heaven will be wonderful! Incredible! Glorious! A place of unimaginable joy that will last forever! It will be a place where all that is bad is banished and where perfect holiness exists. It will be a fresh start for all who enter that glorious place, a new start that will bring wonders that will last forever. And when we get there, by God's grace through Jesus our Savior, we will never ever want to come back because we are enjoying a new start to everything and it will be wonderful!