My Heavenly Home – A Real Place
October 19, 2025

This morning we begin a sermon series called “My Heavenly Home.” In this first sermon in the series, we will discuss how heaven is a real place. Our focus verse for this morning’s sermon is (Isaiah 37:16) "O LORD Almighty, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. (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!"

Here are the lyrics to a well-known song, at least to the adults who are present. Listen to these words, and tell me if this isn’t a place you might like to live. Who can take a sunrise, sprinkle it with dew. Cover it with choc'late and a miracle or two. The Candy Man, oh the Candy Man can. The Candy Man can 'cause he mixes it with love and makes the world taste good. The Candy Man makes everything he bakes … satisfying and delicious. Now you talk about your childhood wishes, you can even eat the dishes. Oh, who can take tomorrow, dip it in a dream. Separate the sorrow and collect up all the cream. The Candy Man, oh the Candy Man can. The Candy Man can 'cause he mixes it with love and makes the world taste good. The song, of course, is “Candy Man.” It was sung by Sammy Davis, Jr. and the song was in the original “Willy Wonka’s Chocolate Factory” movie. And doesn’t it sound like a wonderful place to live? Any sweets lover would love to live in that place. But even those who don’t have a “sweet tooth” would be very interested in living in a place where tomorrow can be dipped in a dream, and where sorrow is turned into cream.

But there’s only one problem. One substantial problem. One insurmountable problem. The place in the song, and the place in the movie, aren’t real! Willy Wonka’s magical world doesn’t exist. And maybe that’s the way we view heaven too? Heaven sounds so wonderful, so magical, so incredible, that it just couldn’t be true. Heaven must be a fairy tale because it doesn’t seem possible that anyone can really live “happily ever after” one day, does it? And that’s exactly what Satan would have us think. Satan wants to deprive us of every bit of hope and joy that he possibly can. And Satan would also tell us that there is no way a holy God would make such a wonderful place for sinners like us. We have sinned too many times. We have disobeyed God too many times. We have turned away from God’s ways and done our own selfish, evil things too many times. Satan would have us believe that God would never make such a lovely place for us. Satan would have us think that heaven is all make-believe. And when we listen to Satan’s lies, we add yet another sin to our long list of sins.

Because God tells us in his Word that heaven is real. And whenever we disregard God’s Words, we are disregarding God. And God doesn’t take kindly to being disregarded. Furthermore, God doesn’t lie. What God says in his Word is true, is true. What God states as a fact, is a fact. What God announces exists, must exist. So this truth of a heavenly home must be accepted, no matter what Satan and our stumbling faith would have us believe. “But,” you ask, “how do we know? It sometimes seems so unlikely. So improbable. So questionable. So unlike anything we know. Is heaven really real?” And, some might ask, “What can you tell me about heaven to prove it’s really there?”

I can only tell you what the Bible tells you. And, granted, that is precious little and much of that precious little information is beyond understanding. (Which is probably why God doesn't tell us more! We can't comprehend the concepts of heaven while here in this world) One pastor said this at a funeral for one of his members. "I cannot tell you much about the life to come. I cannot prove it to you, for I have never been there. But I have a friend who has and I trust that friend." That really sums it all up beautifully. We believe in the life to come in heaven because of the testimony of our Friend, Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ loves us so much he left that glorious heaven behind and came to earth to endure unimaginable horrors. Jesus was determined to make a way for sinners like us to enter that heaven and live there forever with him. So Jesus came to earth, and he suffered and died. He took our sins upon him and endured the agony of the penalty our sins deserved. Jesus took our place at the scourging bench, and on the cross to make atonement for our iniquity, to right our wrongs. And then he rose back to life on Easter morning, proving the penalty for our wrongs is paid in full. We are redeemed. We are forgiven. We are saved. Though we deserve to go to hell, we are headed to heaven, and all because of Jesus. He's the best Friend we'll ever have. The greatest God. The most wonderful Savior. Jesus loves us. He lived on earth for us once. He died for us. He rose back to life for us. He comforts and helps us every day of our lives. And Jesus, our best Friend, tells us heaven is real. Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus when he said these words. (John 3:12-13) I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven -- the Son of Man. And as Jesus told Nicodemus, so he tells us too. Jesus says, "I have been there in heaven. I helped make it. Before I came to earth, I lived and reigned there with my Heavenly Father and the Holy Spirit. Heaven is very real and it's very wonderful."

And that's what King Hezekiah said in the words of our focus verse. The Assyrian king, Sennacherib, had devastated the rest of the land. And he had threatened to level Jerusalem as well. So the good and God-fearing King Hezekiah prayed to the Lord that He would come to Jerusalem's aid. And in his prayer, Hezekiah said these words: (Isaiah 37:16) "O LORD Almighty, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. Basically what Hezekiah was saying was, "Lord Almighty, I know that you made heaven, just like you made the earth. Heaven is every bit as real as this earth is. In this life, we might not be able to see heaven like we see earth. We might not be able to experience heaven like we experience this world. But I know that heaven is every bit as real as earth is. And it is there, in heaven, that you, O Lord, sit enthroned between the [angels] Please, Almighty Lord, help your people" Hezekiah prayed. And God did. That night the angel of the LORD went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp, and Sennacherib withdrew what was left of his army. Sennacherib's boasts came to nothing.

Hezekiah knew heaven was real. And he knew that the God who made heaven was also real, and that he dwelt there. And so did the other believers of the Old Testament. Remember the words of our Scripture reading earlier today? (Hebrews 11:1-2, 13-16) Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed

them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had the opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country — a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. In other words, the writer of the New Testament book of Hebrews states that God's Old Testament believers believed God had a better place waiting for them. They knew that God had prepared a very special home for them in heaven. They lived their lives, NOT for this world, but for the world to come, which was just as real as this world, only far, far better.

And so it is for New Testament believers as well. Listen to this letter which was written to Dr. Charles E. Fuller by one of his parishioners. "Next Sunday you are to talk about Heaven. I am interested in that land, because I have held a clear title to a bit of property there for over fifty-five years. I did not buy it. It was given to me without money and without price. But the donor purchased it for me at tremendous sacrifice. It is not a vacant lot. For more than half a century I have been sending materials out of which the greatest architect and builder of the universe has been building a home for me, which will never need to be remodeled nor repaired because it will suit me perfectly, individually, and will never grow old. Termites can never undermine its foundations for they rest upon the Rock of ages. Fire cannot destroy it. Floods cannot wash it away. I hope to hear your sermon, but I have no assurance that I shall be able to do so. My ticket to Heaven has no date marked for the journey — no return coupon — and no permit for baggage. Yes, I am ready to go, and I may not be here while you are talking next Sunday evening, but I shall meet you there someday." What a beautiful letter! What a testimony of faith! This man knew heaven is real, just like the Old Testament believers did and, like them, he couldn't wait to get there! O, Brothers and Sisters, may we know it like that man knew it. May we believe it like the men and women of faith in the Old Testament believed it. Heaven is real. Absolutely real. As real as this world, but so much better!

At this time, I'm going to read a lengthy section from Revelation 21, the 2nd to last chapter in the entire Bible. I know many of you have Bibles on your phones. If so, please feel free to open your Bible app. I'm going to read to you Revelation 21:10-21 so if you are able, I encourage you to look up those verses now. The Apostle John is being given an incredible vision of heaven, and in these verses he describes what God shows him in that vision. (Revelation 21:10-21) And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long. He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits thick, by man's measurement, which the angel was using. The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald,

the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass. So why does God give us this precise description of heaven? Is it to show us the exact dimensions and make-up of the structure of heaven? No. That's highly doubtful. Almost certainly these measurements and descriptions are to be taken figuratively as is much of the book of Revelation. All the pictures of Revelation are absolutely true, but they are illustrated in a symbolic way.

So why then does the Lord go to such length to describe heaven for us? Well, God wants to show us how wonderful heaven is, in as picturesque a way as he possibly can, to help us grasp heaven's beauty. But there's another reason, perhaps an even more important reason God also gives us all this information, to show us that heaven is real. You measure what is real. You describe what is real. You experience what is real. Stadia and cubits were real measurements. Walls, gates, foundations, and streets are real things. Gold, gems, and pearls are real treasures. Heaven is real! And it is crucial that we understand this because we live in a real world. It's a world that engages all of our senses. We see, feel, hear, taste, and smell this world. Consequently, we very easily become enamored with this world. We very easily get totally wrapped up in life in this world, that we forget all about the life to come. We are constantly tempted to invest our everything in the here and now, which we will leave behind, and neglect our heavenly home, where we will live forever. May we learn to live like the men and women of old lived, recognizing that we are aliens and strangers here, and longing to reach our real home, our heavenly home. It's a very real place, and it's a place where we will truly live "happily ever after."

Who can take tomorrow, dip it in a dream. Separate the sorrow and collect up all the cream. The Lord can, oh the Lord can. The Lord can 'cause he mixes it with love and makes eternity real.