

# Dwelling in the House of the Lord... Forever

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[ 0 : 00 ] Take your Bibles once again and turn to Psalm 23.

And I've just chosen to kind of pick out a few things that have impressed me of late. And I told you last week I've been reading the 23rd Psalm quite a lot and over and over again. And I've preached from nearly every verse in this psalm over the years, numerous times. It's been kind of the text for funerals as well as other occasions. And tonight I want to have us focus on the very last, really the very last phrase of the psalm. Specifically, the house of the Lord and the idea or the promise rather of dwelling in the house of the Lord. How long?

[ 1 : 19 ] Forever, according to not only David here in Psalm 23, but in many other places in Scripture. So, really, I want to kind of talk about the foreverness of our salvation.

Now, we praise God for our salvation that we have in Christ. One of the things that we ought to do all the time, but especially as we kind of enter into a new year. And it's not just a new year of living, but it's also a new year with Christ and living for Him. And also placing all of our hope in Him and expectation in Him. Now, I don't want to be morbid, but this might be the last year of our lives. And, you know, it could be that some of us won't be alive at the end of this next year. It could be that we're all going to be gone before this year is over. And that's the one that I'm kind of hoping for. But the truth of the matter is, this is not all there is.

[ 2 : 28 ] In fact, in relation to the whole scheme of things that God has in store for us. And really, in relation to or in regard to our salvation as a whole.

This part of our salvation, our conversion and our life for Christ now, is just a small part of the whole.

Because our salvation, of course, extends on into heaven. And on into eternity. Eternity without end. And so, I want to just focus on the end of this psalm.

And focus on the foreverness of our salvation. Or heaven itself. So, I want to read the entire psalm again. Just because I love to read it.

And then we'll focus on the last verse. Really, the last part of the last verse. The Lord is my shepherd. Amen, by the way. Can you say that?

[ 3 : 30 ] This is David's testimony. Is it your testimony? The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside the still waters.

He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.

For you are with me. By the way, have you ever noticed the change here from speaking in the third person to now first person. First and second person.

You. Not he, but now you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil. My cup runs over. Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

[ 4 : 29 ] Dwelling in the house of the Lord forever. I was reading again just the other day about what someone said about Satan.

Just an observation about Satan. And not only about Satan, but about those who have believed his lies and are following the way of his bidding.

And they made this statement, Satan has no happy old people. Now think about that. Satan has no happy old people.

Now generally speaking, I think that is right. Satan has no happy old people. Now he has a lot of happy young people. Now think about it.

Think deeply into that. A lot of happy young people, but no happy old people. And here's the reason why. Satan always gives the best first.

[ 5 : 31 ] And then the worst last. That's how he operates. For example, the Bible says in Proverbs chapter 20 and verse 17. The bread of deceit is sweet to a man.

But afterwards his mouth will be filled with gravel. See, the best first and then the worst last. And so Satan always starts out sweet.

With him it always starts out sweet. Sin always starts out sweet. And always starts out good. Or seemingly good. The benefits of it and so forth. The pleasures of it and so forth.

So Satan always gives the best first. And the worst last. Probably most of us in this room remember the old beer commercials.

Milwaukee commercials. Do you remember those? And the one that all is just plastered in my mind. Is the scene of these guys, you know, out there on their bass boat.

[ 6 : 32 ] Out in the middle of the lake. And they may be doing some fishing. But it looks like they're just simply drinking. And they're just, you know, chugging down the beer. And one of them says what?

It doesn't get any better than this. Right? And I'm thinking that's good. But really the point is he's right.

It doesn't get any better. It just gets worse from there. And that's the way Satan works. Because, you see, Satan never shows you the drunkard in the ditch.

You know, drowning in his own vomit. Or with flies all over his face. Satan never shows you the dead, the carnage on the highway. Satan never shows you the homes that have been destroyed.

No, he always gives the best first and the worst last. Satan doesn't have any happy old people.

Okay? In fact, I also heard some years ago when Madeline Murray O'Hare.

[ 7 : 35 ] I don't know. Is she still around or did she die finally? What's that? She was murdered.

That's right. I do remember that. I don't know how long ago that was. Wasn't too long ago. But, you know, back in her heyday, you know, she was, you know, quite popular among some people.

Perhaps the most notable atheist that ever lived, at least in our generation. And anyway, as the story goes, she had planned, and I don't know if she went on with this plan, but to establish a kind of a home for aging atheists.

An old folks home for atheists. I mean, no believers allowed, just atheists. And I got to thinking about that. What do you suppose aging atheists would sit around and talk about for the rest of their life?

Can you imagine the conversation? Can you imagine the aging atheists? They're sitting around in their wheelchairs, and they're talking about how they passed on such good things to their children. You know, and to their society, morality and integrity and decency and spiritual integrity and openness. And can you imagine what kind of conversations they would have?

[ 8 : 51 ] I mean, do they discuss the good that atheism has done to the world? Now, they probably would. I don't know. But what would they have to talk about?

Aging atheists, you know. At the end of their lives, you would think that most of them would realize that really, what do I have now?

My life is now nearly over, and what is there? What is there to hope for? One preacher put it probably in the most course of terms you could.

He said, old atheists never really die. They just go to hell. That's pretty strong, but it's true. And they get to the end of their lives, and they have absolutely nothing.

No hope. No expectation. No good expectation. Nothing. No thought of anything in eternity.

Anything after this just comes to an end, and that's just all there is to it.

[ 9 : 51 ] What would aging atheists have to talk about at the end of their lives? Because, you see, Satan gives the best first, and then he saves the worst for last.

But, now I'm saying all of this to put this in stark contrast with Jesus. Jesus always gives the best last.

Now, notice I didn't say he gives the worst first. He gives the best last. Remember when Jesus was invited to a wedding in Cana of Galilee in John chapter 2, and, you know, they're there in the party, the celebration, the wedding feast is going on, and they run out of wine, and Jesus turns water into

wine, and so forth.

And so they start drinking the wine that Jesus had created out of water, and remember the kind of the, I don't know what you would call him, kind of the governor of the feast, or the master of the ceremonies.

He came to the host and said, I don't understand this. You know, most people give the best wine first, save the worst for last, but you have given, you have saved the best wine for last.

[10:59] It's such a picture of the way Jesus relates to us and his promises to us. That's the way he works. He always gives the best last.

Now, that doesn't mean it's not good now. Right? It doesn't mean it can't be good now. It means that it just gets better, that he actually saves the very best for last.

And that's what David is talking about here. It's good now, he says, surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. That's talking about the here and now.

And every believer, I think, has experienced this wonderful promise that goodness and mercy follows us every day of our lives. It's good now.

But the best, he saves the best for last. The best is yet to come. And that is what David is talking about here. The best is yet to come.

[11:59] And it is the house of the Lord forever. Now, I don't know when we'll experience that. Each of us will experience it, no doubt, at different times. We'll first experience it. We'll lead this life.

But if Jesus comes, of course, we're all going to go. And we're going to experience the house of the Lord forever. This is a marvelous ending to a great psalm.

This promise of heaven. The house of the Lord forever and ever. So what I want to do tonight is to give you three truths that we can glean from just this short little ending to the psalm.

Psalm 23. Three truths about heaven. About the house of the Lord. And so here's the first one. And these are so simple.

I mean, you can just see them right here in what David writes. The first one is the certainty of it. The certainty of heaven. Have you thought about that? You're not wondering if one day heaven will be, you'll be going to heaven?

[13:08] Hopefully you have a certainty about that. So, of course, it comes through your assurance of salvation to begin with. And we know that we're saved. And the Bible makes that clear. We can know that we are saved.

And should know that. And their salvation and assurance are really one and the same thing. I have assurance that I belong to Jesus. Because of his salvation and his grace and faith.

And I'm saved. And I have an assurance of that. And I'm certain about that. But I'm just as certain about heaven. I'm not all that certain about the specifics of what it's going to be like.

The Bible does detail some of those things. And details them in language that we can understand. And though it's going to be much better and greater and beyond anything we could comprehend with our minds at this point.

But I have a certainty of it. And so did David. What did he say? He said, surely. Now, he said, surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house.

[14:16] Surely goes with both those things. Not only the mercy of God here and now in this life.

There's a certainty of that. And we also know it by experience. But there is also the surely or the certainty is also attached to the ultimate end of it all.

And that is the house of the Lord forever. So David said, surely I will. Surely I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Forever. No ifs, ands, or buts about that.

One of my favorite passages in the New Testament. And I mentioned a moment ago that Psalm 23 is a, you know, a very typical passage or psalm that is used at funerals.

Well, this other one is also used quite often. And it's John chapter 14. And you remember where Jesus said to his disciples, do not let your heart be troubled. He said, believe in God, believe also in me.

[15:17] He said, in my Father's house are many mansions. Many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you.

And the point here is, it's real. It's a real place. A real thing. It's a sure thing. And Jesus says, if it were not so, I would have told you. But I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go to prepare a place for you, or really, literally, since I'm going to prepare a place for you, I will come again, praise the Lord, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, you may be also.

All right. So the certainty of it. It's a sure thing. Now, this place called heaven, then, is a real place. It's not a state of mind. It's not a kind of spiritual or some spiritual condition, although it is a spiritual place and a physical place.

It's not some psychic reality, you know. It's a real place. And really, we could say it's more real than Bartlesville. And anything else that we could find here on this planet or in this universe or in this created universe.

[16:36] It's a real place. And by the way, where is heaven? Where is it? Well, most of us say, well, it's up there.

Well, if you live in China, where is it? Well, I guess it's down there. Think about it. I mean, that's what we naturally do. We say heaven is up, up there.

And there's a reason why we say that. Because the Bible kind of seems to indicate that. And the Bible writers were inspired by the Holy Spirit, of course.

And so they wrote of Jesus coming down from heaven. And they also write of him being taken up into heaven.

And when they speak of it in that way and wrote it in that way, they knew what they were talking about. They weren't just using, you know, some kind of approximation or euphemism of any kind. This is what they were inspired to write.

[17:35] Now, think about it. And this is just kind of a sideline here in kind of a little rabbit we're going to chase here tonight. But think about it. There's one place on this planet that is always up.

Do you know what it is? North. No matter where you live on the planet, north is always, at least we think of it, is always up. South is down and north is up.

Now, just follow me here. This is kind of interesting. You might be surprised that the Bible, in a number of places, seems to indicate that heaven is northward.

Or, where am I? Northward. Northward. Okay. Yeah, Wes said this way. I say this way.

Well, Luana, you said this way. All right. North. Close. Close enough. Well, what difference does it make? Actually, what difference does it make if the pastor doesn't know his directions?

[18:44] And just ask my wife. I have no clue about directions. Anyway, the Bible seems to indicate that it is in the north. And I'll give you a few verses. It's Leviticus chapter 1 verse 11.

And this is when God told Moses how to make the sacrifice. And he said, when you go to kill the animal for the sacrifice, he said, and I quote, kill it on the side of the altar northward before the Lord. Isn't that interesting? Northward before the Lord. Now, I'm not saying... Now, let me say something here before I go any further. I'm not saying heaven is on this planet somewhere.

It's not at the North Pole. But the Bible seems to indicate the direction of it is northward. Psalm 75 verses 6 and 7.

And he's talking here about how and when he honors people. He's talking about God honoring people. And he says, for promotion comes neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south.

[19:54] But God is the judge. He puts down one and sets up another. Now, what's missing there? North.

He mentions us east and west and south. And then he leaves north out. And he doesn't mention that. Instead of saying north, he mentions God.

Just something for you to think about. You know, it's kind of interesting. And what's the point of it all? Really, the point of it is that heaven is a real place.

It's a place that really exists. And if we want to take these scriptures as literal, and there's really nothing wrong with doing that, then it's in the north.

It's northward. And it's the direction of heaven. And the Bible says it is above the stars of God. And the apostle Paul went there on one occasion.

[20:57] And he called it what? The third heaven. The third heaven. 2 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 2. All right. So above the stars of God, northward, in relation to our planet, northward, there is this wonderful place, and it is the third heaven, Paul called it.

So that means there is a first heaven and a second heaven and a third heaven. There are at least three heavens. No mention of any fourth or fifth or seventh as we've heard.

All right. So it's third heaven. And so someone has said that we see the first heaven by day. That's our sky. That's here. In our atmosphere.

And we see the second heaven by night. That would be the celestial, the stars, the planets, and so forth. And we see the third heaven by faith.

So the first heaven by sight, the first heaven by night, and the third heaven by faith. Apostle Paul knew that heaven was a real place, according to 2 Corinthians 12.2.

[ 22 : 12 ] Jesus knew and taught that heaven was a real place. David knew that heaven was a real place, and he was certain that he would dwell there forever and ever and ever.

And when a born-again believer in the Lord Jesus Christ dies, he or she just steps right on into heaven. And so someday, the days of your life, my life, if Jesus doesn't come first, they're going to come to an end.

I don't know when that's going to be. You don't either. But they're going to come to an end, and we're going to step right on in to heaven. I've heard about a little boy whose father went off to war, and he was so afraid because it's such a dangerous place on the battlefield, and he wrote him a little note.

And in the note, he said, Dear Daddy, I love you very much. I hope you live all your life. Cute. And I guess that would be a good thing for us to say to one another.

Hope you live all your life. But there's going to come a day when this life ends, and we're going to immediately go to heaven. Go to heaven.

[ 23 : 23 ] And so it's a certain place. It's a real place, and there's a certainty of it. And so let me just say a few things, and we'll move on to my second main point.

But let me say a few things about heaven, and some of which I've already kind of alluded to. First of all, heaven is a present place.

It's a present reality. The Scriptures say in 2 Corinthians 5, in verse 6, and then following, and we'll just kind of walk through this. Paul said, Therefore, we are always confident, our so certainty.

And so we're talking about the certainty of heaven. He said, We are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, that is in this flesh and blood body, while we're at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.

Remember what Paul said? And so right now, I live in a body. You know, we all live in bodies, and we think that our bodies are falling apart, and they indeed are.

[ 24 : 33 ] Eventually, they're going to just fall apart, totally. All right, so right now, I live in a body, but this body is not really me. Not the true me.

Praise the Lord. I'm just at home in this body. And you're at home in your body. I'm at home in the body, but I'm absent from the Lord in proximity in that sense.

All right? And so Paul goes on, For we walk by faith and not by sight. That is, I have not seen God, and you haven't either. You've not seen God, not yet. And he goes on and says, We're confident and willing, rather, to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

So Paul said, If I had my choice, I'd get out of here. I'd just leave this place and go and be with God. That would be his druthers, he said, to leave this body and be with the Lord right now.

But he said, I am confident that the very moment I die, I will be with Jesus. Now this is important because there are those who believe in what's called soul sleep.

[ 25 : 51 ] You know, when a believer dies, the believer is buried and his soul is asleep, as it were, in the grave until the resurrection. But Paul didn't believe that.

He said, I'd rather go right now. I'd rather go right now, but it'd be best for you if I stayed, remember? But I'm confident that to be absent from the body the moment I die is to be present with the Lord at that very moment.

Acts chapter 7, there's the story of Stephen's murder, remember? Deacon Stephen. They stoned him because of his faith in Jesus Christ.

But just before he died, he had a vision of heaven. God granted him a vision of heaven. And he's able to look into heaven. And behold, he said, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.

He was allowed to see that very thing. I don't think he was dreaming. It wasn't a vision. He looked into heaven. He was allowed to see into heaven. And the Bible says that they then drug him out, you know, of the city and they stoned him to death.

[ 27 : 04 ] And then the Bible says this about that. And they stoned Stephen calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

Not Lord Jesus, I'll just wait here in the grave until you come one day. Then receive me. No, receive me. Right now. Jesus told the dying thief there on the cross, he said, when?

Today. Today you will be with me in paradise. And I don't believe in an intermediate place, paradise. I believe paradise is heaven. So Stephen went straight to heaven when he died.

The thief on the cross went straight to heaven when he died. So heaven is not a future place. That's a future place in that we're not there yet.

It's future for us. But the moment we die, we go to heaven. We go right into heaven. Heaven is a present place. I'll tell you something else. Heaven is also a perfect place.

[ 28 : 11 ] It's a perfect place. And we all are familiar with Revelation 21 and its description of heaven. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. For the former things, and all those are former things, are passed away.

Passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful. It's a perfect place.

Because, you know, sometimes we think about heaven and we might even venture the question, you know, what's it going to be like? I know we've got a description, you know, the pearly gates and the gold streets and all of the gyms and, you know, all of those descriptions.

But we want to know, what's it going to be like? And I don't know. You don't either. So don't think you do. But the Bible says in 1 John 3, 2, it does not yet appear what we will be like.

[ 29 : 19 ] And so, you know, you don't know what it's going to be like. But the point is you don't have to know. You don't have to know. It doesn't really matter. Heaven is going to be, if we could just kind of say it in a very general sense, it's going to be the presence of everything that is good.

Now we have some good here and understand some good here. And God grants us some good here in our relationship with Him. And we have a foretaste of that. But in heaven, it is a place where everything, it's the presence of everything good and perfect and at the same time, the absence of all that is bad, all that is evil, all that is hurtful.

Someone has put it this way. Heaven is going to be all that the loving heart of God can conceive of. And all that the omnipotent hand of God can create and prepare for us.

So think of it. What a perfect place heaven will be. So not only a present place and a perfect place, but let me give you one other. Heaven is a purposeful place.

Now, don't get the idea, and I'm sure you don't think this, but we have this kind of vision in our minds, and it's kind of placed there by pictures we have seen and characterizations of heaven.

[ 30 : 42 ] But don't get the idea that when you go to heaven, you're just going to sit on a fluffy cloud for all eternity and pluck a harp, you know. Somehow God's going to give you some wings so you can kind of be there and just tranquilly, you know, on that cloud and just, I don't know, playing a harp or guitar or whatever.

It's not going to be like that at all. It's a place that's going to be very purposeful. We'll have things to do there. Now, the Bible doesn't describe it for us. It does not yet appear what we shall be like, remember.

But we, you know, our problem is we have such an earthly concept of what heaven is going to be like. In fact, there have even been books written about it, you know, about playing golf in heaven, all things.

And I guess, you know, the ultimate would be Jesus' caddy or something like that. Ridiculous. Now, I'm not saying there won't be golf in heaven. I don't care one way or another.

I don't care about golf. But some of you may and you say, well, it can't be heaven without golf. But I think you'll think differently once you get there. And so, you know, we have this earthly idea that heaven's going to be some big eternal resort area, you know, and all that goes with that.

[ 32 : 01 ] But the Bible says in Revelation chapter 7, therefore, are they before the throne of God? They, reference to believers, the redeemed, before the throne of God and serve Him, the Bible says, day and night in His temple.

You say, well, that doesn't sound very enjoyable. Well, it will be to serve Him. and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. So we're going to be serving the Lord and He's going to dwell with us.

And, you know, think about it. Every born-again child of God should have, and you ought to check yourself out here, but should have a desire to serve the Lord better and more effectively than we

can here.

and I felt that way. You know, every time I preach, I think, my goodness, I wish I could do a better job of that. Or, every time I pray, I think, what a weak, what a weak prayer life I have.

And, and serving God, you know, and we're so limited in, I think, in my ability and often ineffective in the results and at least results as we would tend to measure results.

[ 33 : 23 ] And, and yet it's going to be different in heaven. See, right now, we have this old, sinful, fleshly body that, that holds us down and hinders us.

But one of these days, we're going to be able to serve the Lord with nothing, absolutely nothing holding us back, nothing causing us to be ineffective.

David says, surely I will, surely I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever, the certainty of it. Now, here's the second thing, second main point that we can glean from what David says here at the close of Psalm 23.

Not only the certainty of heaven, surely I will, but also the company of heaven, the company of heaven. David said, I will dwell in the house of the Lord.

the house of the Lord. Now, when David says house of the Lord, he's not referring to a building. I know we've got this idea of mansions and so forth.

[ 34 : 30 ] He's not talking about that. He means literally the household of God. I will dwell in the household of God. And that's what Jesus meant when he said in John 14, in my Father's house, that is, household, are many mansions.

Now, that's the King James version. We kind of like that, but really the meaning of it is dwelling places, many dwelling places. And that seems to fit. That the Father's household, in the Father's household, are many dwelling places.

But the idea that we need to understand is there are people in those dwelling places. There will be a huge number, a numberless amount of people there in heaven that we will be dwelling with for all of eternity.

I mean, all of us, all the saints of the ages, all of us going there and being together in that place. It will be a wonderful thing. Now, think for a moment about the company of heaven.

I think I mentioned this before, but Mark Twain is famous for saying and saying very foolishly. He said, I'll take heaven for climate and I'll take hell for society. What a foolish thing to say.

[ 35 : 47 ] I mean, I'll take heaven for climate and I'll take heaven for society as well. You know, sometimes people will ask the question, when I get to heaven, will I know my loved ones there?

You know, those who died before me and went to heaven. And I think, yes, I think you will. And I don't have a lot of proof from scripture about that, except I could point to King David.

And remember, King David's son was a little son, little baby son, was very, very ill. And David mourned and grieved and fasted for him.

But he finally died. And then he got up and cleaned himself and went on with his life. And his servants thought, well, this is really strange. And while the baby's sick, you were fasting and so forth.

And now he's dead and you're acting like this. And what did he say? He said, I shall go to him. He cannot come to me. I can't bring him back again.

[ 36 : 46 ] But I shall go to him. That is the implication being, I will see him again. And I will know him. And I think we'll see all of our loved ones who died in Christ.

We'll know them. We'll see them. We'll know them. And, you know, it's going to be a wonderful reunion when we get to heaven and see all those who got there before us.

But don't, you know, we just don't understand the mysteries of God. But we do know one thing for sure. On the other side of death for the born-again believer is a place, a real place that has been prepared for us.

And we will go there and meet all those who have gone before us. And we'll meet the Lord there. And we will be there with them forever and ever and ever.

And there are going to be a lot of people in heaven that I would like to meet. Have you thought about that? You know, Adam will be there.

[ 37 : 57 ] Can you imagine meeting the first man ever created? Adam will be there. I heard someone say, you know, when I get to heaven I'm going to sit down with Adam for, you know, several thousand years and we're going to try to think up as many jokes as we can about the stupid theory of evolution.

And Moses will be there. How would you like to visit with him and get his more descriptions of the parting of the Red Sea? Now, he gave us a description.

In fact, Moses wrote it in the book of Exodus. But to sit down with him and just to talk with Moses for however long, who cares how long.

And David will be there, of course, and I'm sure that Jonathan will be the first one to say, would you just play some of those psalms you wrote? I've got the words, but I've never been able to find the tunes.

Could you give me the tunes? That would be something. Just have him sit down and play on his harp and sing the 23rd Psalm. Now, the 23rd Psalm has been put to music a number of times, different ways, different arrangements.

[ 39 : 06 ] But we don't know the original and wouldn't it be great to find that out and actually hear that. And the Apostle Paul will be there. And how would you like to sit down with the Apostle Paul, sit down at his feet, and sit there as he teaches the book of Romans?

The very book he wrote. You know, we may come and say, you know, I've had a lot of questions about the book of Revelation. Or how about the Apostle John? Say, John, you know, the book of Revelation has just really been confusing.

Would you just spell all that out for me? No, I'm just kidding. I don't know that we'll care about any of that once we get there. Because everything will be fulfilled, and that's all old history.

It's all past. Now we've started something brand new into the future the Bible hasn't even told us about, and one day we will experience. And of course, Peter will be there, and I think Peter will still be a very boisterous kind of big mouth kind of man as he was in life.

And I think the first thing he's going to say, didn't I tell you? Didn't I tell you? Joy unspeakable and full of glory. Would that be something? And so we're going to be there in heaven with all the saints of all the ages, and so think about the company of heaven and we've left out someone, the most important one, and that would be the Lord Jesus himself.

[ 40 : 27 ] And he will be there. And so he is what will make heaven heaven. And so listen again to what David said. He said, I will dwell in the house of the Lord, the Lord forever.

And that's what the Apostle Paul was talking about when he said, I am willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present in heaven.

No, he didn't say that. He said present with the Lord, with him personally. And that's what the prophet Isaiah was talking about in Isaiah chapter 33, verse 17.

He says, My eye shall see the king in his beauty. Now, that's what we'll experience when we go to heaven. Jesus prayed this for us in John 17.

He said, Father, I pray for them, those that you have given to me, that they may be with me where I am. Be with me where I am.

[ 41 : 28 ] That is the heaven of heavens. Just to see Jesus. Just to sit down with Jesus. Just to be with him. Paul said, Now we walk by faith and not by sight.

But one of these days, as believers, we will see Jesus. We shall see him. All right? Now, the certainty of heaven.

Surely I will dwell in the house of the Lord. The company of heaven. I will dwell in the house, the household of the Lord. And then, finally, thirdly and finally and quickly, the constancy of heaven.

David says, Surely I will dwell in the house of the Lord. Lord, how long? Forever. How long is that? It's forever. It's funny how you can't answer it any other way.

The constancy of heaven. You know, sheep, and this is a shepherd's psalm here. We're the sheep. He's our shepherd. We're the sheep of his pasture.

[ 42 : 37 ] But sheep, by very nature, are kind of nomadic animals. They just kind of wander. They're always wandering. And so, sheep need a shepherd. Of all animals, they need a shepherd to guide them and so forth.

Otherwise, they would just go helter-skelter just any way. And so, they need to be led by the shepherd and he leads them, according to David's psalm here, beside the still waters and in the green pastures and he leads them through the dark valleys and so forth.

And sheep, by their very nature, do not settle down and make a home. And so, we are the sheep of God's pasture.

And here's the idea. God never intended for us to settle down here on this earth. And we do settle, you know, in a sense. We have homes and we like to be settled in that sense.

But in reality, in the bigger picture, we're not settled here. And God never intended for us to settle here on this earth. The world is not our home.

[ 43 : 50 ] It really not. In fact, our citizenship is not here. It's in heaven, according to Scripture. And so, this world is not our home because it's just passing, it's passing away and not only that, but we're passing through.

The Bible says in Hebrews 11, starting with verse 8, by faith, and these are familiar words to you, by faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he would after receive for an inheritance, what did he do?

He obeyed and he went out. Now, listen to this. He obeyed and he went out not knowing whether he went or where he was going.

He didn't know. He didn't know because by faith he journeyed or sojourned, the King James says, in the land of promise.

And these are familiar passages. We also are familiar with the story and God leading Abraham and so forth. So, he sojourned. By faith, he sojourned in the land of promise.

[ 44 : 57 ] And so, the Bible doesn't use words that speak of settling down, taking up residence. It says that he sojourned in the land of promise, the land of Canaan.

Let me go on with the text. He sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles.

That's the word used in the King James. Tents or temporary dwelling places. He dwelled in a temporary dwelling place, in tents. With Isaac, that's his son, Jacob, his grandson.

The heirs with him of the same promise. Same promise that was given to him. Now, now listen to this. For he, and this is the famous part of the passage, for he, Abraham, looked for a city that has foundations.

Foundations whose builder and maker is God. God. He looked way beyond this world. He's not talking about an earthly city or an earthly dwelling place.

[ 46 : 09 ] He was sojourning. He was just passing through. always constantly looking for a city with foundations whose builder and maker is God.

That is, he was always looking toward heaven. heaven. Now, if that was what Abraham was doing and Abraham is, in this chapter in Hebrews, Abraham is placed up there before us as a man of faith, an example of faith, that if this was Abraham's kind of outlook on life, then it ought to be ours as well.

Not knowing when we'll find that city or that is when we will go to heaven, but always looking in that direction. And we ought to feel the same way Abraham felt about it.

One of these days, we're going to settle down. You know, we criticize people always fleeting around and moving here and there and we say, you know, you really ought to settle down.

Well, one of these days, we really are going to settle down. Permanently. In heaven. In a real place. In a place where the Lord is.

[ 47 : 23 ] And we're going to be with Him forever and ever. All of us are just temporary dwellers here on this planet. We're pilgrims.

That would be the best way to describe us. We're aliens. Foreigners. They're not a place on the planet that really is, strictly speaking, home for us.

We're aliens and we're always looking for home. And that home is heaven. That doesn't mean that we just keep our heads in the clouds and our eyes in the sky.

I mean, we have responsibilities here and we raise families and we work and we do things and we love people and we minister to people and we have a lot to do here.

And God gives us mercy and grace in order to do what we need to do here. But our sight is always beyond here to a place that has foundations whose builder and maker is God.

[ 48 : 26 ] And those of us who have given our hearts to Jesus are going to go to this place, this place of constancy. It's a place of constant joy, constant service, constant praise and worship, real praise and worship that is not hindered in any way, by our flesh, by any sin.

It's a constant, place of constant peace. Now, think about that. I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever and forever is a long, long, long time.

Thank you.