

ORDER FOR THE CORPORATE WORSHIP OF GOD
A Service of Celebration and Covenantal Renewal

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

INVOCATION

—Elder Jack Watkins

CALL TO WORSHIP

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth
And in Jesus Christ His Only Son, our Lord;
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, Born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, dead, and buried;

He descended into Hell;
The third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
And sits on the right hand of God, The Father Almighty;
From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy catholic church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting. Amen.

WORSHIP THROUGH SONG

Lyric sheets of today's music can be obtained from the ushers upon request

PASTORAL PRAYER

MINISTRY OF THE WORD, Part 1

—Scotty Smith

I. What Does God Show and Tell Us About the PRESENT of Heaven?

What happens when a believer dies? Do they "go to sleep" until Jesus returns? Do they go into a probation period to atone for past un-dealt with sins and prove they belong in heaven? Will I even know anybody in heaven? Will I know my dad and can we talk about things we never talked about in this life? Can I hope to know the children I miscarried in this life?

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:9 - Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. 5:1 Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. 2 Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, 3 because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. 4 For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. 6 Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. 7 We live by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

MINISTRY OF THE WORD, Part 2

—Scotty Smith

II. What does the Apostle Paul teach us about the present and future of heaven in this passage?

1. Paul longed to be with the Lord in heaven during his lifetime. This means he was convinced that as soon as a believer dies they are **immediately** "with the Lord." Therefore...
- There is no waiting, probationary or purgatory period between death and being consciously alive with Jesus (Luke 23:42-43; Phil 1:21-23; Rom 8:38-39)

- Paul is “**Paul**” in heaven, and you will be **you**, and we will enjoy perfect relationships with each other forever! **YES INDEED... we will know one another!** (Matt. 17:1-9; Heb 12:22-24)
2. Paul’s **deepest** longing and groaning was for the “day of resurrection” when Jesus returns to usher in the new heaven and new earth, which will include each believer receiving a new body to live in forever. Though he was excited about the “intermediate state”, he was most excited about the perfections of heaven which will only be experienced at the second coming of Christ.
 3. Paul also teaches us in this passage that the Holy Spirit gives us...
 - The assurance of our salvation and immediate life after death.
 - The guarantee of a new body and a new world
 - The passion to please the Lord as long as we are in this world. Indeed, there is life BEFORE death!

MINISTRY OF THE WORD, PART 3

— Scott Roley

III. How Can I Know for Sure I Will Go to Heaven When I Die?

2 Corinthians 5:17-21-Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

COMMUNION

Welcome to our celebration of the Lord’s Supper. All who confess Jesus Christ as their Savior are invited to be served. If you do not profess saving faith in Jesus, we ask that you refrain from taking communion and encourage you to prayerfully consider speaking with a Pastor or Elder. To receive the bread and cup—the body and blood of Christ broken and shed for you— please come forward to the nearest table and an Elder will serve you. Elders and Deacons are available to help guide you. If you cannot come to the table, please let a Deacon or Elder know and you will be served at your seat.

Sing Allelu (Ode 40)

Grace, pouring forth like a fountain flowing,
Our hearts open wide to sing Your praise,
And our sound becomes sweet with Your Anthems ringing
Praise to the name of the Lord

Sing Allelu, Sing Allelu,
We rejoice in your love, most High
Sing Allelu, Sing Allelu,
In Your light, You shine forever
Shine in us, O Lord, forever
We're the light to the world, Allelu.

Let us who are afraid, find refuge in Christ,
and redemption assured in His name
By day and by night, we delight in Your love
And forever your Word will remain

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Ode 40 (Original 1st Century)

1. As honey drips from the honeycomb of bees, and milk flows from the woman who loves her children, so also is my hope upon You, O my God.
2. As a fountain gushes forth its water, so my heart gushes forth the praise of the Lord, and my lips bring forth praise to Him.
3. And my tongue becomes sweet by His anthems, and my members are anointed by His odes.
4. My face rejoices in His exultation, and my spirit exults in His love, and my nature shines in Him.
5. And he who is afraid shall trust in Him, and redemption shall be assured in Him.
6. And His possessions are immortal life, and those who receive it are incorruptible. Hallelujah.

RESPONSE TO THE LORD THROUGH GIVING

—DEACONS OFFERING

We who drink of Jesus’ grace are to be those who offer a cup of cold water of mercy in his name.

BENEDICTION



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION:

1. What had the most impact on you today from our time in God's Word and God's worship? What was encouraging, convicting, and/or calling for more clarification?
2. Of all the Bible characters, who do you most look forward to knowing in heaven? Why?
3. Who are you looking forward to being re-united with, or reconciled with in heaven?
4. When did you come to experience the full assurance of your salvation?
5. Because the gospel is true and the guarantee of a new body and new world is yours, what might life BEFORE death become for you?
6. Close with a good season of prayer for one another.

A preview of the topics we will be looking at over the course of the next several weeks:

What Does God Show and Tell Us About the FUTURE of Heaven?

1. A New Heaven and a New Earth—the "New Creation" World of Perfect Peace and Righteousness. Rev. 21:1
2. A City Radiant with the Joy of Its Bridal-population. Rev. 21:2
3. A City Alive with Perfected Relationships and Redeemed Stories. Rev. 21:3-5
4. A City of Fulfilled Promises, Consummate Beauty, Perfect Society. Rev. 21:9-21
5. A City Whose Heart is Worship and Whose Landscape Is Illumined by the LORD Himself. Rev. 21:22-23
6. A City of Pan-National Culture and Poly-Medium Art. Rev. 21:24-26 (Read Isaiah 60 for the background to this image).
7. A City of Inviolable Harmony and Eternal Wholeness. Rev. 21:27
8. A Garden-City of Dynamic Life and Endless Delights. Rev. 22:1-2 (The Garden of Eden just hinted at this wonder!)
9. A City Liberated for the Intimate Knowing and Joyful Serving of God. Rev. 22:3-5a
10. A City Whose Citizens Live a Never-ending Story of Fullness and Fruitfulness to God's Glory. Rev. 22:5b

