

01012022. **The Big Picture keep the main things the main things**...time to firm up our boundaries.. our borders...

We are living in a complex society and we are complex individuals, which overwhelms adults and causes great anxiety in people especially young people; children....

The calming and safety needed are called boundaries...boundaries direct behaviorthey define us...what I believe what I don't believe...what I do ...what I don't do...what or who I let in and what or who I keep out...what I take responsibility for what I don't take responsibility for...what I allow ...what I don't allow...all those limits are boundaries...

There are visible boundaries....this building? the walls the pews the doors....**and there are invisible boundaries**....spiritual boundaries...personal boundaries...relationship boundaries...

For example healthy boundaries for children would include...household routines, predictability in our care takers, stability in parental emotions...etc. which give the child a way to find balance between complexity (uncertainty) and routines (certainty)...in their life..the same goes for us adults...

- **Without healthy boundaries** by that I mean overly restrictive boundaries or the opposite little to no age appropriate boundaries....

we end up pushing boundaries looking for relief, causing one to rebel,or confusion anxiety as we try to determine and set their own boundaries... to keep us safe and looking for a way to survive the uncertainty and danger of life of life... parenting ourselves

balanced boundaries enable us to experience stability in an environment that is safe one which we can return to finding

balance...a rock to hold on too...that helps us stay focused on the journey we ought to be on...boundaries give us direction which influences our behaviors keeping us on track. Enabling us to operate in the security of self control...people who are self controlled are secure in who they are ..for they live by boundaries...

Let me give you an example... A Therapist working in a penitentiary with a room full of lifers asked them ...”Outside of an imminent threat to your personal life or your loved ones lives, are there any words, mere words that a person could say to you that would cause you to get violent right now?” And the answer was unanimously yes!

Then she said ok follow up question...Will there ever come a time in your life where mere words spoken to you by another person to denigrate you or insult you in some way will be irrelevant to you? And if so when?

Now the answers were no longer unanimous, the answers were all over the place...

Then she started in on some reasoning...Guys did do you know, that there are some guys in this world so secure in how they view themselves, that you could say anything derogatory to them or about them and they will look you in your face and laugh ... you know why? They don't give a rip what you think about much less what comes out your mouth.

And if you're the type of person who can be walking down the street and some one can simply say something to you to get you to change the trajectory of your thoughts and your actions moving you toward violence...then you are not in control of you that person is...in that case you belong in here! Because others cannot trust you...because

your actions are in the control of others... you cause great anxiety in yourself and others... you have to be reparented

When I know where who I am and I know what is important to me and know the direction I am going... when these boundaries are established I become stable in complex, overwhelming anxiety filled world....

The first boundary to grasp ...is that this world is temporary...we are here for a season and a reason..and there is a destination we are heading towards while here...

COL 3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, *set your hearts on things above*, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² **Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.**

- The heart... the physical pumps blood/life to the body...the invisible heart of man pumps life to the soul and spirit, it sustains us...keeps us moving forward..

NLT PR 3: 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.

- **First boundary lean not on your own understanding In your heart... a boundary of what not to do...followed by what to do...focus on the location where Jesus sits with his father...**
- **Then set your thinking (a boundary) not on earth but on the location of your future (things above here)...**
- **The result of that boundary of thinking**

PR 3:6 Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.

The result....You will have good direction...This is the path of all the greats in scripture...the longer they kept their hearts and minds on the above...the less they were governed by the

natural...and the more they became aware they were here for a season...

NLT HEB 11: 13 All these people died still believing what God had promised them. They did not receive what was promised, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed it. They agreed that they were foreigners and nomads here on earth.

- **They become balanced in handling the complexity of life on earth... realizing No one receives all in this life and neither will they....because this is not our home...so there will always be something missing...**
- **Their focus was on a different home...where they belong, they fit...**

¹⁴ People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ 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.

- **all descriptions of this new home are familiar to us... it is of a physical nature...notice right off... it is a country with a city...a location...a place...Apparently a PHYSICAL PLACE...similar to ours...so it is really a home!**

HEB 11:39 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. ⁴⁰ God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

- They were commended for their faith...but life on earth lacked fulfillment for them

- And it is with us also....in fact it will only be when we are all together that we will be complete and fulfilled...this is our destination...

For us to finish the Race well on this earth some boundaries are needed...

- it appears those in this Heaven have their minds set on us... They are witnesses actually surrounding us...

NIV HEB 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,

- witness means someone who is spectating... **they are involved though not in the game**... observing...watching...but not idly but intently... as they are our examples...we need examples...of others in the family!

And there is a particular person to learn from
² *fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

- And we are to practice in trouble the same boundaries Jesus applied when he walked the earth ...
- Jesus who went through scorn and was shamed because of the cross he had to bear... was strengthened by knowing that it was not the end...

- There would be joy afterward....that joy was the end of the separation between God and man...fulfilling the big picture goal...of God with us!!... our creator and his creation...
- and a place where he is atthat has a chair he is sitting on...next to His father Throne...his home and our home!
- So we are to focus on those who have gone before... our witnesses, Jesus, God and an Actual Place...where they all are at....
- **And why must we do that? so we don't get discouraged by men and opposition... and our sin that so easily entangles... and lose heart about what it is all about....**

What is it all about ? Relationships with those who have gone before us.... Relationships with those on the journey, Jesus, God and a place we are going to.....

- **This creates predictability, stability, expectations, direction healthy boundaries which bring us comfort, hope, increases faith and a reason to stay on track for we have a goal and destination... for we belong to the family of God and a place to call home!**

so do what you are supposed to...

God when giving Moses the boundaries of what the people need to obey to be blessed...he said this they are not confusing...they are available, they are do able...and they create stability...hope and a future

NLT PROV 4:20 My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. (boundaries)²¹ Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart,

Why?

*²² for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. ²³ Guard your heart above all else, for it determines **the course of your life.***

**Boundaries keep your body in check... protects your heart...determines the course or compass of your life pointing toward your eternal destination... next week our home's location Heaven
end**

keep them within your heart;

Heart must be covered

*PR 4:22 for they are life to those who find them
and health to a man's whole body.*

a healthy heart makes a healthy life

Deut 30:11 “This command I am giving you today is not too difficult for you, and it is not beyond your reach. ¹² It is not kept in heaven, so distant that you must ask, ‘Who will go up to heaven and bring it down so we can hear it and obey?’ ¹³ It is not kept beyond the sea, so far away that you must ask, ‘Who will cross the sea to bring it to us so we can hear it and obey?’ ¹⁴ No, the message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart so that you can obey it.

*¹⁵ “Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between life and death, between prosperity and disaster. ¹⁶ For I command you this day to love the LORD your God and to keep his commands, decrees, and regulations **by walking in his ways**. If you do this, you will live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy.*

end

NLT 1JN 3:1 See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don't recognize that we are God's children because they don't know him. ² Dear friends, we are already God's children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is. ³ And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure.

Practice healthy boundaries

to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person continue to be holy.”

¹² “Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the

end

- **end**

- **What is it all about ? Relationships with those who have gone before us....Jesus, God and a place we are going too.....**

- **This creates predictability, stability expectations, direction healthy boundaries which bring us comfort, hope, increases faith and a reason to stay on track for we have a goal and destination...and a place to belong!**

So that is why the chapter that precedes chapter 12....namely 11...lists all these heroes of the faith ...and like the heroes of the faith mentioned ...No one receives all in this life and neither will you....because this is not our home...so there will always be something missing...

HEB 11:13 *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.*

- **they realized this was not their home....Well what were they looking for?**

¹⁴ *People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own.* ¹⁵ *If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return.* ¹⁶ *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.*

- **all descriptions are of a physical nature...notice right off... it is a country with a city...a location...a place...Apparently a PHYSICAL PLACE...**

HEB 11:39 *These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised.* ⁴⁰ *God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.*

- **they were commended for their faith...but life on earth lacked fulfillment for them**
- **and it is with us also....in fact it will only be when we are all together that we will be complete and fulfilled...**

keep doing what you are supposed too...

- ^{1JN 3:1} How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³ Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

¹¹ *Let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person continue to be holy.* ¹² *“Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.* ¹³ *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the*

• end

-
-
-
-
- **and that will entail our final destination....as described in Revelation 21-22...the new heaven and the new earth....a PHYSICAL NEW PLACE where the spiritual meets the physical**

Paul also says the same thing...

COL 3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

- What are the things Paul says to set our minds on?? That which is above...namely heaven and the abode of God and the throne of Jesus...

- **why? cause we spend so little time doing that? though we have been raised...that is our abode also...and it appears Heaven has it's mind set on us...**

@@@@@

For us to finish the Race well on this earth a some things are needed...

- One the witnesses surrounding us...witness means someone who is spectating... they are involved though not in the game... observing...watching...but not idly but intently...
- And as we are in this life and during it's trouble's our is on a person...Jesus who went through scorn and shame...because of the joy afterward....the breaking of that separation between God and man...fulfilling that desire for eternity...eternal presences with our creator and his creation...
- and a place where he is atthat has a chair he is sitting on...next to His father Throne...another chair... this
- so we are to focus on those who have gone before... our witnesses, Jesus, God and an Actual Place...where they all are at....
- **And why must we do that? so we don't get discouraged by men and opposition... and our sin that so easily entangles... and lose heart about what it is all about....**

- **What is it all about ? Relationships with those who have gone before us.... Those with us , Jesus, God and a place we are going too.....**
- **That is our Comfort, our stability, our home we are heading toward!!!!!!**

@@@@

God when giving Moses the boundaries of what the people need to obey to be blessed...he said this

Ex 30:11 “This command I am giving you today is not too difficult for you, and it is not beyond your reach. ¹² It is not kept in heaven, so distant that you must ask, ‘Who will go up to heaven and bring it down so we can hear it and obey?’ ¹³ It is not kept beyond the sea, so far away that you must ask, ‘Who will cross the sea to bring it to us so we can hear it and obey?’ ¹⁴ No, the message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart so that you can obey it.

¹⁵ “Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between life and death, between prosperity and disaster. ¹⁶ For I command you this day to love the LORD your God and to keep his commands, decrees, and regulations by walking in his ways. If you do this, you will live and

multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy.

The first boundaries to know is the big picture of a destination...the ultimate blessing in obeying God... is the goal of that direction...the location of where the journey is taking us....Heaven

@@@@

Comfort comes in the knowledge of God has eternal plans for his children..... **404 times in the bible Heaven is mentioned and 238 of those in the New Testament.... and the vast majority refer to the abode of God, his angels and his saints..... in contrast 14 times Hell is mentioned... 5 times Hades is mentioned....**and for most of us we know far more about Hell than we do about heaven.... I hope to correct some of that today...

- Scripture tells us that God in his design of man placed something deep in the core of his being...

ECC 3: 11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

- one ...he has placed in the heart of man a desire for the beautiful....that which has beauty....and in everything we do there is an attempt to make things beautiful... attractive, inviting,but it all is fleeting in time....but we still search for it...
- two...he has set eternity in our hearts....all of us everywhere and in every time period and in every culturein fact anthropologists have never come across any people group or culture who did not believe in some form of afterlife...it is in our DNA...our God

designed blueprint...a life that transcends the time and space domain we live in...we are nostalgic for it....

- **eternal where we all are present relationally...engaged forever...it has been placed in our hearts...because there is such a place**

I want to tell you about that place today....it is called Heaven....but even this Heaven I will speak about is not the final abode for us ...but an intermediate location until we get to God's final plan of a new heaven and a new earth...

let me tell you how this all started....i am very familiar with the scripture that says...

HEB 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

- and I always took that as the old testament saints ...whose stories we can read about and the lessons is they hung in there and so can we.....
- and that God has a race for each one of us ...and to finish the race we need help...
- but something has happened that has broadened my understanding of this cloud of witnesses...and has begun to lead me on a journey of new discovery in God's word....
- **let me tell you what happened... the day after Gabe's memorial..we were at the graveside, Katy, Therese, Bridget,**

Sarah and her 17month old toddler Ryland and myself.... tell story... *Grave covered in flowers of many kinds...* then camera pictures

This cloud of witnesses includes many more than only O.T. saints...it includes the saints of our time.....Gabe at the cemetery.... is part of that cloud of witness and he witnessed to us.....the witness of Gabe ministered to us from another place into our time domain... he was witnessing what was going on...some how some way...is that possible?

So what can we know of Heaven and of our loved ones there? lets examine this...

- **first not only are their human witnesses in the heavenlies...but God himself..**

² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

For us to finish the Race well on this earth a some boundaries are needed...

- One the witnesses surrounding us...witness means someone who is spectating... they are involved though not in the game... observing...watching...but not idly but intently...
- And as we are in this life and during it's trouble's our is on a person...Jesus who went through scorn and shame...because of the joy afterward....the breaking of that separation between God and

man...fulfilling that desire for eternity...eternal presences with our creator and his creation...

- and a place where he is atthat has a chair he is sitting on...next to His father Throne...another chair... this
- so we are to focus on those who have gone before... our witnesses, Jesus, God and an Actual Place...where they all are at....
- **And why must we do that? so we don't get discouraged by men and opposition... and our sin that so easily entangles... and lose heart about what it is all about....**
- **What is it all about ? Relationships with those who have gone before us....Jesus, God and a place we are going too.....**

• **That is our Comfort!!!!!!**

So that is why the chapter that precedes chapter 12....namely 11...lists all these heroes of the faith ...and like the heroes of the faith mentioned ...No one receives all in this life and neither will you....because this is not our home...so there will always be something missing...

*HEB 11:13 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.***

- **they realized this was not their home....Well what were they looking for?**

*¹⁴ People who say such things show that they are looking **for a country of their own.** ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country they had left,*

they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ 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**.

- **all descriptions are of a physical nature...notice right off... it is a country with a city...a location...a place...Apparently a PHYSICAL PLACE...**

HEB 11:39 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. ⁴⁰ God had planned something better for us **so that only together with us would they be made perfect**.

- **they were commended for their faith...but life on earth lacked fulfillment for them**
- **and it is with us also....in fact it will only be when we are all together that we will be complete and fulfilled...and that will entail our final destination....as described in Revelation 21-22...the new heaven and the new earth....a PHYSICAL NEW PLACE where the spiritual meets the physical**

Paul also says the same thing...

COL 3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, **set your hearts on things above**, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² **Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things**.

- What are the things Paul says to set our minds on?? That which is above...namely heaven and the abode of God and the throne of Jesus...

- **why? cause we spend so little time doing that? though we have been raised...that is our abode also...and it appears Heaven has it's mind set on us...**

three scriptural examples...there are more...

*LK 9:28 About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. ²⁹ As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. ³⁰ Two men, **Moses** and **Elijah**, ³¹ appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. ³² Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory **and the two men standing with him.** ³³ As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters--one for you, one for **Moses** and one for **Elijah.**" (He did not know what he was saying.)*

- Moses and Elijah...appeared in glorious, physical bodies although Moses died Elijah was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind...bodily.....yet they both appeared in physical form... How do we know? Peter wanted to build them a house...
- they were standing...not floating like a spirit
- Moses and Elijah...spoke to Jesus about things..they spoke with knowledge of things taking place and about to take place on the earth...

and when Jesus was crucified...

MT 27:50 And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. ^{MT 27:51} At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. ⁵² The

*tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.*⁵³ *They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.*

- these people were aware of the day....and resurrected with bodies...
- interacted with people on the earth....then apparently went to heaven..

Around 94AD John was exiled to the island of Patmos...and on this island he was given a vision of heaven...and things taking place and things that were going to take place on the earth... and he speaks of the saints who have died as martyrs...and he records their conversation with God....

*REV 6:9 When he (Jesus) opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained.*¹⁰ *They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"*¹¹ *Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.*

There are a number of things we see here...

1. Those who died were relocated to the abode of God and were in the Temple with God...
2. those were the same ones who died for him on earth...now live with Him in Heaven
3. they are the same they have not changed...
4. they are distinct individuals...

5. They are fully cognizant of what happened to them...their memory and history on earth was not erased... and fully aware it is still going on....
6. which means they remembered their life on earth...

Stephen the first recorded martyr in Acts...looked up into Heaven...

AC 7:54 When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man **standing** at the right hand of God."

- **Those present in the Temple undoubtedly watching also...** which makes sense..because at the final judgment...not the salvation judgment....we will all give an account of our lives...

RO 14:9 *For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰ You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ¹¹ It is written:*

" 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.' "

RO 14:12 *So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.*

RO 14:13 *Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.*

- Your memory is not erased in Heaven...in fact it will be crystal clear...
- those in chapter 6...remembered they were martyred for Jesus...

7. and they communicated this....

¹⁰ They called **out in a loud voice**, "How long, *Sovereign Lord*, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"

- **communicated this in a loud voice....they had emotions....they spoke audibly...they could adjust their volume**
- **they spoke as one ...there was unity and harmony...**
- **though they cried out as one...each is aware of their own individual history...**
- **“How Long” was their call...the current Heaven bound people are all aware of “time”...the present Heaven has a time element.....**
- **How long what...until he judges those who do wrong....Justice is always the cry of God’s people**
- **How long till you judge? Oh Sovereign Lord...the one who is in charge and the one who is holy and true... THE PERFECT JUDGE**

what happened next....

Rev. 6:11 Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed

- **these people did not know everything....they were still asking questions and learning from God...they were discovering and continuing to grow...**
- **they were given a robe...they have a body a physical form of a different type...**

1Cor 15:40 There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. 41 The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.

- **and told to wait longer... and they have a family connection....until all the rest of the servants and brothers are brought in.... then he will judge...**
- **Now these many people are talking to Jesus or what we call prayer...and they are aware of what is going on the earth and they are concerned...or what we would call interceding**
- **And Jesus know the exact number and the details of every one of them.....**
- **How long until you make it stop....is their cry...**

Voice of the Martyrs estimates there are 150,000 people a year who lose their lives because of their testimony for Jesus . that is more than 400 a day... there are a lot of voices crying out....

- **that is one glimpse of what is happening in heaven....and Scripture indicates there is much more going on in heaven besides this glimpse...**
- **scripture speaks of music, and singing, and worship and books and food...and as we read earlier it is a city....that is still undergoing construction...**

when Jesus was ready to relocate back to where he came from...he told his disciples this...

JN 14:1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I

go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going."

- **Jesus' Father has a house for his children...in a particular location...**
- **and Jesus is going there to add on to it...this has to be physical in some way....**
- **He will come back to take them there...to be with Him**

SO...

- **Jesus who has a Physical body after he rises from the dead...**
- **is going to a place that can only be described as Physical...Location where his Father has a house... There will be spectacular places for each of us**
- **and in that house he is preparing each of them a place to live...**
- **He will come back to get them so they may be where he is and the others are...**

and we will live eternally with God and those who know Him ... This place is our intermediate home....with God ...The Bible tells us that Heaven is a beautiful place....that Jesus is continually adding to and making even better.

- **Thomas like many of us do not understand what place Jesus is speaking about... ask How do we get there from here???
Great question...**

JN 14:5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus Answered... *JN 14:6 I answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

- you can only get to my Father's house through me...
- you see heaven is not our default destination...we don't automatically get there...
- our default destination is separation from God....this is our problem...our solution come to Jesus...
- **the solutions is a person...the destination is a place...**
- Jesus said this to the thief on the cross...who turned to him and asked him to take him to his kingdom...

*LK 23:40 But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? ⁴¹ We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." *LK 23:42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. " *LK 23:43 Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."***

PARADISE...an enclosed garden...walled park..

and Paul visited this same place,...

*2CO 12: 2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know--God knows. ³ And I know that this man--whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows-- ⁴ was caught up to **paradise**. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.*

- interesting that he could not tell if he was in a physical state or not...but knew it was different ...but not that different..

What I know about Gabe in heaven so far....

- Heaven is physical in some way ... it is beautiful a paradise with on going construction
- He has a room or place of his own in our father's house...
- He is with Jesus...and countless others in a city that God created...
- He continues to grow and learn... he is aware to some degree of conditions and people on earth...he can intercede at some level at least prayer...
- He is in a domain that is time oriented...this heaven will end...Rev 21
- He has memory of his own history on earth, who he is and he knows who we are... and he has a body with at least some physical attributes...

And this current heaven will also be recreated...

*REV 21:1 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....***which we will talk about next week**

end

@@@@@

- ^{1JN 3:1} How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³

Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

James sums it up this way

² Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. ³ For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. ⁴ So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

⁵ If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. ⁶ But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. ⁸ Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.

@@@@@

Paul passed through six dimensions to get there... beyond the farthest stretches of the known universe we live in...the place of the third heaven an actual location..... **TIM put this up....** 

1st heaven earth to clouds ...second heaven clouds to stars of the edges of the universe...third heaven abode of God and angels..

- Paul speaks of this experience in the only letter he writes about it in...14 years after the experience...
- his eyes worked there just like here ...he saw visions his brain and mind worked also things were revealed to him ...to his mind...his understanding greatly increased

*2 Cor12:² I was caught up to the **third heaven** fourteen years ago. Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don't know—only God knows. ³ Yes, only God knows whether I was in my body or outside my body. But I do know ⁴ that I was caught up to **paradise** and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell.*

- **whether I was in my spirit body or natural body ..i could not tell...but I was intact**
- **it was the paradise part of heaven (paradise) which biblically speaking has the idea of a vast garden park..similar to what is described as Eden in Genesis whose root word also lends itself to a garden park...**
- **and my ears worked great! I heard astounding sounds...sounds I had never heard before...human words can't describe them adequately and humans were not allowed to tell those back on earth about it...**

⁵ That experience is worth boasting about, but I'm not going to do it. I will boast only about my weaknesses. **14 years he kept this experience out of his letters..**

⁶ *If I wanted to boast, I would be no fool in doing so, because I would be telling the truth. But I won't do it, because I don't want anyone to give me credit beyond what they can see in my life or hear in my message, ⁷ even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God....*

- **Even though he had incredible revelations from God in this Paradise...he did not want people to dismiss him as crazy if he shared them and dismiss his message...no he wanted his message and life to speak of Jesus...**
- **so to reinforce his message by his life...God kept him humble...**

7...So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud.

- because of this thorn ...he would have to continually rely on God's help...like everyone else...
- **Jesus promised the thief on the cross , that he would take him to this same paradise**

LK 23: 42 Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.” 43 And Jesus replied, “I assure you, today you will be with me in **paradise.**” **PARADISE...an enclosed garden...walled park..**

John the Baptist spoke of Jesus coming from his home heaven to ours...:
 NLT [John 3:](#)³¹ “He has come from above and is greater than anyone else. We are of the earth, and we speak of earthly things, but he has come from heaven and is greater than anyone else. ³² He testifies about what he has seen and heard, but how few believe what he tells them!

Jesus speaks of this dimension to his skeptics:

NLT John 3:¹² But if you don't believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man^[e] has come down from heaven.

****** when Jesus was ready to relocate back to where he came from...he told his disciples this...**

NIV JN 14:1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ² **In my Father's house** are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

- **Jesus who has a Physical body like ours after he rises from the dead...**
- **is going to a place that can only be described as Physical...A Location where his Father has a house...**
- **and Jesus is going there and in that house he is preparing each of them a place to live...there is ongoing construction taking place... after all he**

was a carpenter .. There will be spectacular places for each of us He will come back to get them so they may be where he is and the others are...

- **Where is His Father's house located?** John while speaking of the new heaven and new earth...gives us the location where it was in heaven

REV 21:1 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. ² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ I 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.

- In the end heaven and earth united...like a marriage...each different but in union, connected compatible in harmony...
- This heaven then is an intermediate home for us... and **Jesus is continually adding to and making even better.**
- **and heaven is described in the earthly terms as a country...**

NIV HEB 11:13 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. ¹⁴ People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ 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.**

HEB 11:39 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. ⁴⁰ God had planned something better for us **so that only together with us would they be made perfect.**

- they were commended for their faith...but life on earth lacked fulfillment for them and it is with us also....up to and including the present...Jesus continuing to add rooms...expand heaven

COL 3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, *set your hearts on things above*, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² **Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.**

- What are the things Paul says to set our minds on?? That which is above...namely heaven and the abode of God and the throne of Jesus...
- why? because we spend so little time doing that? though we have been raised...that is our abode also...and it appears Heaven has it's mind set on us...

HEB 12: 1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. ² We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. ^{NLT}

- the witnesses surrounding us...witness means someone who is spectating... they are involved though not in the game... observing...watching...but not idly but intently...
- not only should our minds be focused on heaven ...but Jesus who is there now...our future home

So as citizens of this Heaven, where we will live in our father's home, in a holy city, in the country of heaven...what are we to do in the meantime? ... We have something to give the world now which in turn gains us treasures to be used in Heaven!

MT 6: 19 "Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

- where you build treasure ...shows where you heart or the seat of your attachments are... **and how do we do this...**

COL 3: 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, ²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

EPH 6: 7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, ⁸ because you know that the Lord will **reward** everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

- **What do we do to serve God...simply love him and love others...love is demonstrated by service....Jesus served us we serve others...the currency of heaven is service...**
- **And Jesus did not leave us on our own ...he built into us skills..**
The Apostle Paul says...

EPH 2: 10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- **Listen God has prepared good works for us to do...we have to prepare ourselves to do them! That is a process...part of that process is in the actual doing ... by serving we add value to people...we let them know they are valuable...**
- **Your satisfaction in life will come from your place in adding value to others by serving them...and In return we value our selves more ...we recognize we have something to offer...we become part of the solution to the problem of humanity...That is true success!!**

End with

2CO 4:18 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.

- **keep your eyes on the unseen eternal that which will last forever and ever...which will give you proper vision about the temporal...**

3. keep doing what you are supposed to...

- ¹JN 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³ Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

¹¹ *Let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person continue to be holy.* ¹² *“Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.* ¹³ *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the*

And. This is what it will look like...and be like

ESV Rev 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with

man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, **“Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”** ⁶ And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment

- **So what are we to do in the mean time?1) write these words down and put them to memory! it is going to happen...these words are trustworthy and true**

Rev 22: ¹⁰ And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.

3. keep doing what you are supposed too...

Rev 22: ¹¹ *Let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person continue to be holy.* ¹² **“Look, I am coming soon!** My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

4) now is there anyone struggling on the journey that would like prayer to stay on track?

HEB 4:14 ¹⁴ So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. ¹⁵ This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. ¹⁶ So let us come boldly to the **throne of our gracious God.** There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most. lets pray...after glow

now is there anyone struggling on the journey that would like prayer to stay on track?

HEB 4:14 ¹⁴ So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. ¹⁵ This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. ¹⁶ So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

lets pray

- **Don't seal or put this information far from you...keep it handy.. it is not over until he says its over ...**
- **WE WIN!!!**

end

last week we talked about our intermediate home..today about our final home with God....and the reason I want to do this...to talk about our final destination is to put our present journey there in perspective...

and when the journey is put into perspective the journey there will seem less arduous.... it seems to me that most sermons focus on the journey...I think we also need to focus on the destination....