

GREG'S NOTES

A NEW BEGINNING TEACHING OUTLINES

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LET'S TALK ABOUT HEAVEN

Colossians 3

Most of us have busy lives, with more than other things to occupy our attention here on Earth. But Scripture tells us that we should be setting our sights a little bit higher.

Paul tells us to “seek those things which are above . . . not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:1-2). This can be translated as “keep thinking about and seeking heaven.” In other words, our feet should be on the ground, but our minds must be in heaven.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES

1. **Heaven is described as paradise.** As He was being crucified, Jesus told the thief that he would be with Him in paradise (Luke 23:43). The word used for paradise describes the walled garden of a king's palace, something that would overwhelm the senses of someone unused to that splendor. John spends more than a chapter describing the beauty of the new Jerusalem (Revelation 21:1-22:5).
2. **Heaven is described as a city.** The book of Hebrews describes heaven as a city that God designed and built (Hebrews 11:10) and is to come (Hebrews 13:14). Instead of thinking of cities as dirty, crime-ridden places, try imagining the best qualities of a city: the parks, the art, the culture, the food. Think of heaven as a perfect city with no crime and no despair, only joy and beauty.
3. **Heaven is described as a country.** Hebrews 11:16 describes a heavenly city and country, reminiscent of the ancient city-states of Sparta, Athens, and Thebes. Likewise, heaven will be the city-nation of God's people, under His leadership.

RELEVANT REMINDERS

Now that we know a little more about what heaven is like, how should we live? In Colossians 3:5-10, Paul lays out three categories of sin that will keep us out of heaven. Sexual sin is not just the act of adultery, but also thoughts of sexual lust and desire. Idolatry is putting anything ahead of God in our lives, whether it's a possession, a person, or a career. Anger, meanness, and slander cover everything from having a grudge to gossiping.

APPLICABLE ACTIONS

One sure way to get a child to let go of something is to put something better in front of them. Likewise, the knowledge and hope of heaven is better than anything this world has to offer. When you set your mind on things above, on the things of God, then you begin to see this world for what it is. You are still here on earth, but your thoughts are on something greater. And as a result, your life here on Earth will be transformed as you think about and seek the things of heaven.