

1. THE BIBLE IN HEAVEN

God's Word "stands forever" – The Word of God that we now hold in our hands will continue to amaze us in the eons to come.

Isaiah 40:8 (NIV) The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever."

2. "I KNOW."

"My Redeemer is in heaven." Jesus is the one who will stand up for me now and in eternity. He paid the price for me and I belong to Him.

Job says "I know" this. I don't hope it or wish it. I know it is true. I "will see God"- Even though my body is in the grave, I will see God with my own eyes, just like Job.

We will see God!

*Job 19:25 (NIV) I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.
Job 19:26 (NIV) And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God;*

3. FOREVER LOVE

"His love endures forever"- We will never exhaust His love as the ages roll on. There will be no change in His mind toward us. It is enduring love! It never will wear out, grow thin, become cold, be distant, be less—it is enduring.

I am absolutely secure in His love now and forever. He cannot love me more. He has loved me to the uttermost.

Psalm 136:1-26 (NIV)

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. *His love endures forever.*

Give thanks to the God of gods. *His love endures forever.*

Give thanks to the Lord of lords: *His love endures forever.*

to him who alone does great wonders, *His love endures forever.*

who by his understanding made the heavens, *His love endures forever.*

who spread out the earth upon the waters, *His love endures forever.*

who made the great lights-- *His love endures forever.*

the sun to govern the day, *His love endures forever.*

the moon and stars to govern the night; *His love endures forever.*

to him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt *His love endures forever.*

and brought Israel out from among them *His love endures forever.*

with a mighty hand and outstretched arm; *His love endures forever.*

to him who divided the Red Sea asunder *His love endures forever.*
and brought Israel through the midst of it, *His love endures forever.*
but swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea; *His love endures forever.*
to him who led his people through the desert, *His love endures forever.*
who struck down great kings, *His love endures forever.*
and killed mighty kings-- *His love endures forever.*
Sihon king of the Amorites *His love endures forever.*
and Og king of Bashan-- *His love endures forever.*
and gave their land as an inheritance, *His love endures forever.*
an inheritance to his servant Israel; *His love endures forever.*
to the One who remembered us in our low estate *His love endures forever.*
and freed us from our enemies, *His love endures forever.*
and who gives food to every creature. *His love endures forever.*
Give thanks to the God of heaven. *His love endures forever.*

4. ACKNOWLEDGED BY GOD

I will be acknowledged by God when I arrive in heaven. What does that mean? The word “acknowledge” means, “To declare openly by way of speaking out freely, such confession being the effect of deep conviction of facts.” W.E. Vine

God will openly, freely, confess that I am His with deep conviction of the facts. That is incredible. It will not be the kind of confession that is, “Kind of”, “Sort of”, or “Oh I guess so”. No, it will be with deep conviction. Remember how the drama coach in the school play says to the actor, “Now say it again, this time with greater conviction? Make the audience believe you mean it!”

With great conviction I will be announced as His and enter heaven.

Matthew 10:32 "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.

5. GREATNESS IN HEAVEN

There is “greatness” in heaven. What we do on earth has an effect on eternity. Humility now on earth is good preparation for heaven. God’s values will be exalted and honored in heaven. Jesus was the one who associated with the lowly and throughout all eternity those who have followed him will be considered great.

Matthew 18:1 (NIV) At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

Matthew 18:4 (NIV) Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

6. GUARDIAN ANGELS

Each child has a personal “angel” who gets his instructions from God. There probably is not a parent who cannot tell a story about angelic protection of their children. Will we get a chance to chat with our protecting angel in heaven? Most likely, yes.

Matthew 18:10 (NIV) "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven."

7. SACRIFICE REWARDED

God is no man’s debtor.

He is able to shovel it in faster than I can shovel it out. His promise is that anyone who sacrifices for Him will be rewarded now as well as the future.

How would you like to make an investment and gain 10,000% on your money? That is the promise that is found here. The child of God will not arrive in heaven and be able to say that he did not have what he needed. He must confess that he was wealthy on earth with true wealth and now that he has arrived in heaven he has received more than his wildest imagination.

Open your eyes in heaven and see what God has sent on ahead for you.

Mark 10:30 ...will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields--and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life.

8. TREASURE IN HEAVEN

Jesus tells us that “You can’t take it with you but you can send it on ahead.”

One wit said that he never yet saw a funeral hearse with a U-Haul attached to it. After a funeral another said of the departed, “How much did he leave?” The response was, “All of it.”

A couplet that helps us understand these verses says, “If you are giving while you are living, then you are knowing where it is going.” To which I could add, “Now and eternally.”

We have the privilege to share what God has blessed us with here on earth. He said, “The poor you will have with you always.” God has provided an opportunity for each one of us to express love.

For the believer, it is seen as an opportunity to invest for eternity. When we arrive in Heaven we will be able to see the results of our investment it is called “treasures in heaven.”

Luke 12:33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.

Luke 18:22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

9. WISE INVESTMENTS

Use your money for others

Jesus instructs us to use our money wisely. He tells us that we can use what God has given to win others to Christ. I can either think of my money as a way to buy happiness for me each day or I can view it as a way to invest in others and maybe see them in heaven someday. If I have \$100 dollars I can either buy 20 café latte's for my enjoyment or take some of that and give it to missions or Gospel literature or even buy a Scripture portion for someone else. Someone once criticized a person who handed out little Gospel tracts and said, "The statistics say that handing out pamphlets is not very effective." The reply came from the passer out of tracts, "Well if it doesn't accomplish very much, I wonder what handing out none accomplishes?" I firmly believe that God is keeping careful records and will show us exactly what was accomplished with each our gifts.

After two thousand years we still talk about the widow's mites.

Luke 16:9 I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

10. TROUBLE FREE IN HEAVEN

If you believe in heaven, you will have a "trouble" free heart- Trust in God, trust in His Son. He promises that if we think of heaven our reward will be a trouble free heart. If one chooses not to think of heaven the opposite is true. Life is full of choices. It is good to trust in the Lord and think of His promise of a home in heaven!

John 14:1 (NIV) "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.

11. A PREPARED PLACE

Jesus promised a "prepared" personal dwelling place waiting for us- I will have my own place made especially for me by Jesus provided by his love and care.

We will all be together- Those who love Jesus will all be together. (Apart from our sin) It will be great.

Jesus is preparing it now- We are not there yet but it is being made for us. It will be so exciting to go to my new "place" I have not seen it but will enjoy it. My daughter is a military wife. On one move that they made to a new city, she was not able to go and help pick out their new house. What a joy it was when she and the family finally pulled up to the new house her husband had bought! She had great fun exploring all the wonderful rooms and views it had. He had tried to describe it to her but when she saw it she then saw the care her husband had shown to meet her and the children's needs. How much more will our joy be when we are exploring our

new digs in the heavenly city!

John 14:2 (NIV) 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.

12. HE WON'T FORGET

He has promised to come and get us. He will not forget us.

I went once to Jamaica on a Missions trip. I had to follow a few days later by myself after the team had left because of an obligation I had to fulfill.

“No worry” I thought. Someone was supposed to meet me at the Kingston Airport which is on a peninsula about 13 miles from town. Sadly my plane was delayed in Miami, because of a mechanical problem. When I arrived in Jamaica and got off the plane I looked in vain for a friendly face to meet me and take me to my “place”. I found out later that they had come but left after waiting for a while. I literally was the last person in the small airport. They locked the airport and I slept on a bench that night. The next day a friendly guard took me to town and I found my “place”.

More recently I travelled to Kazakhstan to teach in a Bible school. Yes, I went alone again. I did not know a word of Russian which is what they mostly speak. When I went through customs, once again late at night I thought of my Jamaican experience and thought...Oh.. Noooo..not again, this one might really be tough. Then I looked at the crowd and saw three smiling young men with a sign that said, “Mr. Michaux.”

That was a great meeting. Someone had come for me and wanted me!

Jesus wants me personally to be with him where he is. He wants me! He wants me to be with Him. He won't forget and there will be no airplane difficulties.

John 14:3 (NIV) 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.

13. THE HOLY SPIRIT FOREVER

The Holy Spirit will be with us forever. I will have the presence of the Comforter throughout eternity. He will teach me of Christ eternally. The Third Person of the Trinity, the Spirit of God, abides with me, seals me, fills me, strengthens me, comforts me, and imparts the love of God to me now. This same Spirit will continue His ministry in my life forever. There will be no need of road maps, tour guides, program notes, or GPS tracking. I have one who will do that for me forever. He will make Christ more and more real to me as the ages roll on.

John 14:16 (NIV) And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—

John 14:26 (NIV)

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

14. TROUBLES HERE

What should our perspective be on hardships on this side of heaven? The Apostle Paul teaches us by personal example. After being left for dead at Lystra, he later did not focus on his painful Lystran experience. He used the trouble to remind the believers that Heaven is the end of the road after problems we have here on earth. We have the encouraging hope of Heaven in a difficult world. Focus on the end. It will help you with the present.

Acts 14:19 (NIV) Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead.

Acts 14:20 (NIV)

But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

Acts 14:21 (NIV)

They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch,

Acts 14:22 (NIV) strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

15. A CROWN

We can get a crown in Heaven that lasts forever. To those who run their race well, keeping their body under control, a crown is offered as a reward. This race is not against others like other races. This race is against ourselves and our own personal obstacles. If I run my race with aim and purpose I will be rewarded. I will possess a crown in Heaven that lasts forever.

Christ called me to enter this race. He gives me strength for the race. He gives me wisdom on how to run the race. He cheers me on in the race and then welcomes me at the finish and gives me a crown! What a deal is that!

1 Corinthians 9:24 (NIV) Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

1 Corinthians 9:25 (NIV) Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

1 Corinthians 9:26 (NIV) Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air.

1 Corinthians 9:27 (NIV) No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

16. CLEAR VISION

In Heaven, we will see clearly. Our vision now is many times blurry. We see only in part now. Things are not always quite clear. But later there will be no more mystery.

Those who have had cataract surgery and received a lens implant have all had the same observation about the procedure. After years of blurry vision, many times that you don't always realize, a dramatic change takes place. When you wake up from the short procedure you see things clearly. No more blurry vision, no more just getting by and not seeing details. Heaven will be a place of clear, pure vision regarding our knowledge.

We will never have perfect knowledge. Only God is omniscient. But it will be so much greater than we see now. We will understand it better “by and by”.

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NIV) Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

17. AN IMPERISHABLE BODY

In visiting the local cemetery we are sooner or later reminded that we personally will end up there. It might be a disease or an accident or a murder or a war or just old age but we know that we will perish and be in some sort of cemetery.

The hope that we have here in these verses is that someday our body which is perishing will be changed into a body that will not perish. It will not wear out. It will not “age out”. It will not lose power. The 2nd law of thermodynamics will be defeated forever.

“The second law of thermodynamics states that the entropy of an isolated system never decreases, because isolated systems spontaneously evolve towards thermodynamic equilibrium—the state of maximum entropy. Equivalently, perpetual motion machines of the second kind are impossible.”

That is a law for this earth. Just give me some time and you will see in heaven a perpetual motion machine that is possible. I will be empowered by the Holy Spirit in a glorified body.

1 Corinthians 15:42 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable;

1 Corinthians 15:53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

18. I WILL RECOGNIZE YOU

Mary did recognize the resurrected Jesus in the garden. The disciples did recognize Jesus on the Road to Emmaus. The disciples did recognize Jesus in the Upper Room. Peter and John also knew who he was on the seashore and Peter jumped out of the boat to see him.

We will recognize each other in heaven. We will all be like Jesus but we will not lose our identity. What do I look like apart from the effect of sin on my body? No scars. No wrinkles. No metal body parts. No fillings. No cancer. No glasses. No hearing aids. No arthritis.

We will be like Jesus.

Praise God for the day I switched teams. Adam’s team is a bunch of losers, eternally. Jesus offered me a spot on His team and by belief, I switched. Now I am more than just dust of the earth, I will bear the likeness of my Team Leader, the Man from Heaven!

1 Corinthians 15:47-49 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

19. THE FINAL KINGDOM

Heaven is the final kingdom- Christ writes the last chapter. The Son delivers the prize to his Father. The Deliverer is honored above all. That is it, He is the ultimate end. We know how the story ends.

All wickedness will be destroyed- In the end all wickedness is gone, flattened, with no energy to resurrect itself. There is no follow up story about a resurgence of evil and more battles. It is over! Throughout eternity we will never be looking over our shoulders wondering if it will all begin again. Absolute Peace will be in our hearts regarding the end of evil.

1 Corinthians 15:24 (NIV) Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.

20. OUTWEIGHED

Heaven will outweigh any trouble we have here. Here is the challenge--Go ahead and put every trouble you have had on a list. The fact is, some of us have had crushing problems in our lives. God does not dismiss our problems. Instead he asks us to put it in perspective. The Lord knows our real troubles and knows they are not imagined. They just don't compare to what is to come. Imagine what glory heaven must be that it will outweigh some bone deep hurts we have had. That is powerful glory. None of us will be able to say, "I love heaven but I still struggle with bad things that happened to me on earth." No, we will all say – "Lord, you were right. This glorious place and my position in Christ have made me forget my earthly problems."

2 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV) For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

2 Corinthians 11:22 (NIV) Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I.

2 Corinthians 11:23 (NIV) Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again.

2 Corinthians 11:24 (NIV) Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.

2 Corinthians 11:25 (NIV) Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea,

2 Corinthians 11:26 (NIV) I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers.

2 Corinthians 11:27 (NIV) I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.

2 Corinthians 11:28 (NIV) Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.

2 Corinthians 11:29 (NIV) Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?

2 Corinthians 11:30 (NIV) If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.

2 Corinthians 11:31 (NIV) The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is to be praised forever, knows that I am not lying.

2 Corinthians 11:32 (NIV) In Damascus the governor under King Aretas had the city of the Damascenes guarded in order to arrest me.

2 Corinthians 11:33 (NIV) But I was lowered in a basket from a window in the wall and slipped through his hands.

21. A NEW HOUSE

In Heaven I will have a body, that is a “house”, which will be eternal. I have appreciated the “house” I have lived in all these years. I must admit that I am “fearfully and wonderfully made”. It has been a good house but it is described as a tent- a temporary structure without a foundation. Someday I will pull up stakes, fold up the tent and move on. All “houses” here decay and fall apart.

Not so with my new house- it will never age or decay or become weak because it is eternal- it is made by God fit for eternity.

2 Corinthians 5:1 (NIV) 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.

22. SOME NEW CLOTHES

In Heaven I will receive clothing, and a body, which is fit our eternal dwelling.

How many times have you worried about what to wear to a function or meeting of some sort? You just don’t want to have inappropriate clothing, unfit for the occasion. Heaven is our hope when we find ourselves groaning on earth. We will not only have the appropriate clothing but we will be prepared for eternity. No need to worry about what to wear forever. I will be comfortable in my new clothing.

I will not be a disembodied spirit separated from my body ...”naked”, but will be clothed with an eternal body supplied by the manufacturer Himself.

2 Corinthians 5:2 (NIV) Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, 2 Corinthians 5:3 (NIV) because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked.

23. IMMORTALITY

No more mortality. In this life, we try not to die. We work hard to keep living. We eat good food, we try to exercise, get the proper amount of sunlight and protect ourselves from the elements both heat and cold. We take medicines when we are ill and fight against sickness trying to stay alive.

The believer is promised here that the groaning will not last. Any burden will ultimately end. We will be truly immortal, living forever with no death at the end.

2 Corinthians 5:4 (NIV) 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.

24. MY DEPOSIT

The Spirit is our deposit for what is to come. The Holy Spirit who lives in me now is the proof that I will possess all that has been promised.

When I get serious about purchasing a house I place a down payment on it. That payment saves it for me with the seller. I will eventually pay for and ultimately possess it. God made me to be with Him and guarantees I will be there. He does this by giving me the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 5:5 (NIV) 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.

25. HERE AND THERE

If we are “here” then we are not “there”. Clearly put, this earth is not heaven in any way. Heaven comes to us when we leave our body. We have the hope that it is only going to get better when we die. We will be closer to the Lord. What is wonderful about this fact is that by faith we can be confident in this. No need to waver, fear, or be trembling but- CONFIDENT!

2 Corinthians 5:6 (NIV) Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NIV) We live by faith, not by sight.

26. HOME

If we are not in our body we are at home with the Lord. How many times have we taken a long trip and as we near the end of the trip we dream about being at home? Home in our own bed-- with our own easy chair--- in our own yard--- with the flowers we have planted—and all the things that make it “home” to us. As I get closer to home I can see the city from a distance. As I view my city from a high hill outside the town, I can see the general area when my home is. It becomes more and more real to me the closer I get and it drives me to finish my trip no matter how tired I am. I know rest is going to arrive soon.

My eternal home is with the Lord. Heaven draws us when we know our work is done. We have a future.

I long to be home but as long as I am on my trip toward home I want to please the Lord on my long hard trip. Don't give up, please Him until you arrive.

2 Corinthians 5:8 (NIV) We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:9 (NIV) So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

27. UP

Heaven is up. I really am going UP! Through the heavens where the birds fly, through the heavens where the stars are, right into the very presence of God. I will not wander around

aimlessly in a spiritual state in some nebulous nether world after I die. No, this is crystal clear. I am going up to God.

Heaven involves our body, soul and spirit. Paul's experience in going to heaven was overwhelming. The final word in this important area is that "God knows". That really is the answer to all our questions for which we have no answers. "God knows". Somehow that offers great comfort in these areas. That is a fine pillow for us to rest our heads on. "God knows".

2 Corinthians 12:2 (NIV) 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.

28. PARADISE

Heaven is paradise- a "Beautiful Eden-like place", the "Sum total of blessedness". We all have special places that mean a lot to us because of their beauty. Each has a hint of what the Garden of Eden must have been like. However, while watching the beautiful full moon rise, reflecting off a placid lake in Minnesota we are bitten by mosquitoes. While dining on the Gulf Coast of Florida underneath palm trees, a June bug falls in our salad. While enjoying a glorious golden aspen day in the Colorado Mountains in the Fall, as we finish our trip, a sudden snow storm blows up and we almost don't make it home alive. While picking oranges in a California wonderfully scented orchard, we suddenly feel the earth move beneath our feet from an earthquake. While swimming in the warm Caribbean waters on a Jamaican beach, as we travel home we realize that we have gotten sunburned and have to slather on lotion and stay inside the motel for two days only to watch our skin peel off a few days later. Paradise was lost. Hints still remain in our fallen world of what it was like. When I arrive in heaven, there will be no downside, no, "Yes, but...", qualifiers. It is paradise with no fine print.

What will be seen in heaven is indescribable. INDESCRIBABLE. Why is it that some try to write books about it, going beyond what the Bible says? I will stick with the biblical descriptions. Paul said paradise was clearly "inexpressible" If you went there and came back you too would be speechless. Period. Jesus has told me enough that gives me "waters that are deep enough to swim in" and never have my feet touch the bottom.

2 Corinthians 12:4 (NIV) was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.

29. SCHOOL

We will be learning in heaven- What a joy it is to learn things. It is a wonderful thing to have a teacher who has the ability to open our minds to truths that we don't know. It is an exhilarating thing to plumb the depths of knowledge and be consumed by a subject for which we want to learn more and more. Add to this a perfect campus that is very beautiful all of which encourages learning and study. On top of all that, to be in the presence of other learners who are intent on the same passion and reverence for truth that we have. What a combination for learning! It is almost fanciful and unrealistic.

Some of us have experienced some of these things at one time in our schooling. Now multiply it millions of times and that is what heaven will be like. The best Teacher. The best environment. The best subject. What a school it will be! We will be learning forever! Our minds will not be put on hold. Our knowledge base will never be saturated and static. He is going to show us his kindness and grace forever, and forever and forever...

Ephesians 2:6 (NIV) And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 2:7 (NIV) in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus

30. NO WICKEDNESS

There will be no wickedness in heaven-

No immoral person will be lurking about ready to promote evil.

There will be no impure thoughts, no unsavory jokes will be told, and no dirty stories will be repeated.

Greedy- No one who wants to steal from me or desire what I have.

Idolater- only God will be worshiped.

No secret meetings will be held in opposition to Him. There will be no resistance to righteousness. Those who love those things and are characterized by those things will not be a part of His kingdom.

We visited Disney World while my children were young. In my first time there I was so impressed with the cleanliness, music, beauty and happiness of the place. I learned that it was located on a reclaimed former swampland in the interior of Florida. Through man's ingenuity and brilliance the Magic Kingdom was built and everything there was "perfect". What a nice place to be!

One day while eating an ice cream cone, I did notice that they could not keep the black birds out. They still claimed the skies above Disney World. Then I remember a couple who got in a heated argument right in front of me while I was in a line. How disappointing. How could you have a bad attitude in the Magic Kingdom? The Disney people try so hard and are admirable in what they have done...but...

Heaven is the better kingdom – The Kingdom of Christ and of God. We can finally breathe a sigh of relief that we are separated forever from evil. The evil in others and the evil in us.

(p.s. I still like Disney World☺)

Ephesians 5:5 (NIV) For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person--such a man is an idolater--has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

31. A SIMPLE FORMULA

To depart is to be with Christ. When Paul speaks of death he tells us clearly that to leave his mortal body means that he is with Christ. His hope is not simply to be in the same area or universe or some dimension that is pleasant. No. His hope is to be with Christ. To him this is not scary, or fearful, or an anxiety producing prospect. It is BETTER BY FAR. No matter what we claim to be or have or to have done here...that place is better...that Person is better...it is simply better.

If we have served faithfully, our work here is important to us but our heart always desires home.

Philippians 1:23 (NIV) I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;

32. Citizenship

My king is coming for me. I belong to his kingdom. My name is on his role. I have a dual citizenship now. I was born in a specific country but my final destination is that of heaven. Today we are pilgrims traveling to our heavenly country. The word “citizen” is defined as: “The Greek term refers to a colony of foreigners. In one secular source it was used to describe a capital city that kept the name of its citizens on a register.” J.M.

Will I see my name written in heaven? Absolutely.

While visiting the Viet Nam War Memorial in Washington D.C., I observed people carefully scanning the granite inscriptions for names of friends and relatives that had died in the war. After watching others for a while I began to remember classmates of mine in high school who had died in that war. I remember looking at their names. It was very moving. Will it be less moving when I find my name written in heaven?

Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

33. QUALIFIED

He has qualified you- When we realize that salvation is by grace through faith and not of ourselves it causes us to be thankful. I did not qualify myself to be in heaven. I did not earn my inheritance. He did the work. It is a free gift. I look on my passport and I see a stamp that says “Qualified” and it has His signature on it.

I look on my travel itinerary and it says “Destination: Kingdom of Light”, “Kingdom of the Son He loves”. That is where I am headed.

One last note: We will “share” in the inheritance with others. It will not be my private party. I am sharing the kingdom with others who have the same stamp on their passport.

I remember at one time I was struggling and stumbling and full of fear in the dominion of darkness. Not anymore. I am going to the place of light and love. Put your heavenly sunglasses on and get ready for the Light!

Colossians 1:12 (NIV) giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

Colossians 1:13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,

34. APPEAR WITH HIM

We will appear with him. I will be associated with Jesus for eternity, visibly manifested as one of the sons of God.

When my family moved to Colorado from Texas I did not have one friend in the new school I entered. It is pretty scary to say the least for a guy who is kind of little in the first place to go to a new school. We had no “buddy system” for new kids at Benjamin Franklin Grade School! You were just thrown in the water and told to swim.

For some reason, on my first day in second grade, as the new kid on the playground, a 4th grader, named Dale Anderson and some of his friends included me in their group. Dale was a big guy and well respected on the playground I later learned. The next week I was on the playground and climbing on the jungle gym. Some other guys came up to me and started giving me a rough time. I was getting rather nervous. After a little verbal sword crossing and a little pushy shovey, I told them they better cut it out because Dale Anderson was my friend. It was amazing how quickly these bullies backed off when they heard his name. “You are one of Dale’s friends?” Yes, I was associated with DALE!

For centuries, Christians have been bullied, persecuted, laughed at, and singled out for suffering. They have been maligned, put down, misrepresented and generally mistreated and misunderstood.

There is coming a day when He returns, that the jaws of the unsaved will drop when they see these same humble believers appearing with Him in Glory. Their questions will all be answered when they realize that they chose the wrong team. They loved their sin, their darkness and rejected the King of Light. They will finally understand who our “life” was all the time. It will be a day of revelation for them and glory for us.

Colossians 3:4 (NIV) When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

35. THE SOUL WINNER’S CROWN

What a joy it is to lead another person to faith in Christ. What a great announcement to tell them when they say, “What must I do to be saved?” We can respond, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.”

We will know all through eternity that we had the privileges of seeing that person born again. When we walk the streets of gold and see them, they will be our crown.

Samuel Rutherford wrote:

Oh! If one from Anworth
Meet me at God's right hand,
My Heaven will be two Heavens,
In Immanuel's land.

1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?

36. MY CALL TO COME

Heaven is up there and Jesus will come down to get me. Notice the language of this verse. The Lord “Himself” will come down. His coming for the believer is so personal. He does not send an angel or thousands of angels for us. He Himself comes. I will not have to worry about missing my call. A strong voice and a trumpet call will announce this event. This will not be like a busy bus station where the announced bus departures sound like Charlie Brown’s Teacher in that famous Christmas cartoon. We will not look at one another and say “Was that it?” “Was that for us?” It will also not be given in a language that I do not understand. I will hear and I will know exactly what is happening. It will be glorious. We will rise to meet Him.

We won’t miss a second of this wonderful event. We are going up.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 (NIV) For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ

37. OTHER BELIEVERS

We will meet other believers in heaven. The meeting in the clouds after the rapture from earth will not be an isolated personal event alone. We will also be with others at this meeting in the air. Our joy will be shared. What a meeting. What a welcome. What a place to be. This is a hope that thrills cheers and comforts. Others who have gone on before us will welcome us along with our great Host Himself. That will be a glorious meeting. Wow!

We will be in the air. We will not be bound by earth’s gravity. Some major things will change for our benefit. Get ready for some new ways of doing things. We are going to heaven without a space transporter of any kind. It is all new.

We will be with Jesus forever. How many times have we heard and possibly said, “All good things must come to an end.” We will never say that again in heaven. We will never pass someone on the streets of gold and say this is “unbelievable” or this is “too good to be true”. It is believable and it is true. Wherever we go we will be with Jesus. We will have to no worries about the future-- our forever is set. No more spreadsheets, check lists, day timers, project managing---I am with Jesus that is all that is needed. He will let me know what he wants me to do.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 (NIV) After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

38. ENCOURAGING EACH OTHER

Encourage each other. The rapture, heaven, and being with Jesus are always encouraging words for believers. Words about heaven can encourage others. It is our blessed hope. I noticed that this is a command. In view of all the things he told the Thessalonians about Christian living and the prospect of Christ's coming, He adds the command – “Encourage each other with these words”. Have you thought about that? Have you obeyed this command today? Have you encouraged a brother or sister with “these words”?

Well, let me personally obey this command right here and now.

Jesus Christ is returning for His own. He will take us to the clouds and we will be with Himself and other believers in the air. It may happen today!

...I am encouraged just typing this out.

1 Thessalonians 4:18 (NIV) Therefore encourage each other with these words.

39. IN TRAINING

Godliness will have an effect on us now and in the life to come. “Being devout and having a Godward attitude” is pleasing to the Lord. Keeping in physical shape also has value. It makes us feel better and have a better quality of life on earth. Being careful in the care of our bodies takes time, discipline and consistency. In the same way, practicing godliness will take even more discipline and work. There are many temptations to break training- foods, laziness, and general excesses can do an athlete in. How many more temptations are there to fall into that will keep us from godliness? What we do on earth in godly discipline effects our life to come. Godliness, “holds this promise of bright reward and of capacity to enjoy the glories of

We will realize the fulfillment of promise if we are godly.

1 Timothy 4:8 (NIV) For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

40. THE “LOOKING” CROWN

A special crown will be given for those who look for his coming. It means a lot to the Lord for us to remember constantly that He will be good to his promise and return for us. What does it mean to long for his coming? The Christian who longs for his coming is winning souls, living righteously, putting Christ first place in his life, and wide awake spiritually. When these things are true in our lives Christ will award us with a special honor, called a crown. Obedience to the call to remember His return will not go unnoticed.

2 Timothy 4:8 (NIV) Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

41. THE PERFECT SABBATH

Heaven is the perfect Sabbath rest. The writer of Hebrews in chapter four mentions a number different “rests” spoken of in Scripture. God’s rest from his creative works, the Israelite’s rest from their warfare, and the rest we receive from trusting in Christ and not in our works. In heaven we will ultimately find rest from our labors. It doesn’t mean that we will be idle in heaven, swinging in celestial hammocks and drinking ice tea throughout eternity.

No. We will serve Him without frustration, fatigue, worry, and obstacles. Down here we are “weary in our work for Him but never weary of our work for Him.” There, we will have the perfect balance of work and rest at the same time. It will be unlimited strength, endless possibilities of service for Him and absolute peace and rest.

Hebrews 4:9 (NIV) There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God;

42. MY PRIEST FOREVER

Jesus will be my priest forever. How many times have I had a spiritual leader who has left me suddenly or slowly? The good leader, pastor, elder, mentor, or spiritual example that I have looked to for example and guidance can leave me. I have gotten to know them personally and they know me very well. They have followed my progress. They have checked on me in times of weakness and celebrated with me in times of success. As wonderful as this can be, it just does always seem to last. They move to another state or country or responsibilities beyond their control occur in their life keep them from spending time with me. How sad that is. That great Bible study leader that taught me and worked with me teaching me to witness, pray, study the Word and live the Christian life passes from my life.

Not this time though! That cycle is broken. In heaven I will have a FOREVER high priest whose relationship with me will never, never, never change. Now do you feel more comfortable in your future arrival in heaven?

Hebrews 5:6 (NIV) And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

43. SITTING AND SERVING

Jesus is **sitting** in heaven and he is **servicing** in heaven. Hebrews reminds us that there were no chairs in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness because the priests’ work was never done they were never to sit down on the job. However, Christ’s work of salvation is done. He will die no more. His work of salvation is completed. It is “finished” as He said and now He is seated.

What does this teach me about heaven? Jesus Christ My Savior is God, and He is seated at His Father’s right hand. He is perfect in His position. But he also “serves” and works for us. Throughout eternity Jesus will minister to us. He is working for me now as my advocate, mediator and High Priest and will continue to serve in the true eternal dwelling place of God.

Hebrews 8:1 (NIV) The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,

Hebrews 8:2 (NIV) and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man.

44. GOOD SHADOWS

Anything here on earth has a shadow. Shadows can be scary, such as the “shadow of death”. Shadows can also be beautiful, such as the shifting shadows of the sand dunes during the day or the changing shadows of the foothills and the mountains at dusk.

Shadows can also be helpful, telling us the time, showing us the shape and size of things. However, shadows are only that...just shadows, not substance. Even the Tabernacle in the Wilderness although beautiful, was seen as inferior to the real thing. It did have some value. It gave us an idea what heaven and God’s throne are like. God gave it to us for that very purpose. In Christ however, we have the substance not just the shadow.

I have a nice picture of my wife in my wallet. It is special to me. It reminds me of my wife when I look at it. But if she was to walk into the room I would kiss my wife and not the picture. In heaven we will experience the real thing and not a substitute. The Tabernacle is my roadmap, my blue print. It has great value because God gave it. It prepares me for the real thing which is not shadow. There will be no “shadows” in heaven. Even the walls will be made of pure gold that can be seen through (But wait! That is still to come in this study.)

Hebrews 8:5 (NIV) They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

45. FOR ME

Jesus is in heaven and appears for us before God.

How many times in life have you had to be on your own? You went to the new school and after saying good bye to your mom, by your lonesome self, you had to enter a scary new world. You went off to summer camp and maybe did not know anyone. That proved to be a tough way to start the week. Or, you went to a college where you did not know anyone at first. Later on you applied for a job and interviewed ON YOUR OWN. No one was there to cheer you on no one really cared how you were feeling as your life was being examined. At some time or another you felt alone and no one was there to represent your interests. Those can be tough days. Those can be lonely days.

I am also reminded of the politician that I voted for who did not even answer my letters of concern and actually voted against my interests. I thought he would be there for me. In heaven will it be the same old, same old? Oh no! I have the Son of God who right now and forever appears in heaven for ME. He is in God’s presence at this time. He is taking me seriously and is there for me. FOR ME.

Thinking about that makes me feel pretty good right now. It is amazing how belief in that fact can solve my fears and worries.

Hebrews 9:24 (NIV) For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence.

46. PERFECT

We will be perfect in heaven. As Christians, while we are on earth, we seek to be holy. We work at sanctification every day. We try to please him by making the right decisions, thinking the right thoughts, doing the right things, having our speech and actions being consistent with our profession of faith. And then, as we all have experienced, we stumble and fall. We mess up. We stray.

Is all lost regarding our sanctification? No. No matter how far I progress in my progressive sanctification, I will ultimately be made perfect. Wow. No more struggles, no divided mind, no temptations, no guilt, no imperfection, no disappointment in my failures. I will be made perfect. What a great thought is that! The fight will be over. I am not perfect now but I will be, no matter how much I progress here. The process is going on here and now on a daily basis.

But He promises that He will bring it to completion FOREVER. Because of His great sacrifice He will accomplish this in my life.

Hebrews 10:14 (NIV) because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

47. THE CITY

The city I am headed to is a great one. There are amazing cities all over the world; New York City, Moscow, Paris, Buenos Aires, Berlin, Mexico City, Mecca, Beijing, Tokyo, Istanbul and Delhi. However, although each has its own beauty, each also has slums, pollution, decaying infrastructures, roads with potholes, and buildings with cracked foundations. Any building starts to fall apart as soon as it is finished. As a homeowner, I don't know how anyone can believe in evolution. My house has never gotten better and better as time goes on. I have to paint, repair, replace, weatherize and patch on a regular basis. Age has not improved any man built thing.

Abraham held every possession he had very loosely because of his 20/20 vision. He saw his final city afar off. He could see THE CITY. Not just another city, but the perfect city, with perfect foundations built by the perfect builder and perfect architect.

My final city is the one worth waiting for. All else is temporary and when I carefully look at it I see it being chipped away. There will be no "improvements" "the city". And I will never have to move again. It will be my final, perfect move. No more tents for me. This is it.

Hebrews 11:9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. Hebrews 11:10 (NIV) For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

48. THE GOOD COUNTRY

Heaven is also called a country. I like the country I was born in. I identify with it. He determined “the bounds of my habitation”. But my new country is better. I am a pilgrim on my way to that heavenly land.

Heaven is a prepared city. It is not half finished and still under construction. It was prepared for me and ready for occupation as soon as I arrive.

I long for that country. The word “long” means to, “reach or stretch out, signifying the mental effort of stretching oneself out for a thing.” (W.E. Vine) When we long for heaven we use mental effort to remember and remind ourselves where we are heading.

One final thing in this tightly packed verse is that heaven is a place where God is not ashamed of us. No fear about acceptance there. Have you gone to a place where you were not sure about whether you would feel comfortable in that situation? I may have been rejected by certain clubs or organizations or ostracized or belittled or left behind or not included in this world. But in heaven that is all done. God steps up to me and says that He is not ashamed of being my God. I am very happy and very fulfilled with this thought. I have a country, a city, and a God who is not ashamed of me.

Hebrews 11:16 (NIV) 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.

49. MANY OTHER BEINGS

I am headed to a city inhabited by many beings.

On this mount Zion, there are billions of angels. Each one with a story to tell and will be friendly to me. These angels are full of joy. I can't wait to see billions of angels who are really happy! What does it sound like when they all sing at the same time?

There are also believers from the church universal. I will join all the believers from the church age who have preceded me. Their names are inscribed in a large book that is located in heaven. What will my name look like in that book? What typeface will be used? What language will it be in?

No matter – it will be my name in any language. He knows me.

I will come to the place where the God, Great Judge of all men will be. What a thrill it will be to see Him sitting on a throne of righteous judgment. Especially knowing that I can praise Him for that position and attribute that He has but never be under his judgment for my sin. It is a settled issue already because of what Christ has done. My penalty of my just judgment was paid in full by His Firstborn.

I will meet all the Old Testament believers. I can meet all my Old Testament Heroes. I can't wait to speak to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Zephaniah, David, Samuel and on and on. I have taught kids, teens, adults and seasoned citizens about these true heroes for decades and now I will meet them and live with them in that bright city. What a joy!

You can know now on earth that your name is written in heaven. Euodias, Syntyche, Syzychus, and Clement knew their names were there (Philippians 4:2,3). Mine is too because of my faith in the blood of Jesus.

Hebrews 12:22 (NIV) But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, Hebrews 12:23 (NIV) to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,

50. HE WON'T CHANGE

Jesus will never change. People that I have known do change. Politicians, rulers, bosses, friends, and family, as well as styles, tastes, beliefs, science theory all seem to change with time. I have a favorite Chinese restaurant that we have gone to for years. One of my favorite dishes there is Sesame Beef. I love to eat it and have looked forward to eating it all these years because it never lets my taste buds and expectations down. Recently, we went to that same restaurant and I ordered my perennially favorite dish. When it arrived, it looked different than usual; it was cut differently and even tasted different. I was disappointed because I had counted on it being the same. It turned out that they had a new cook and he had a different interpretation of how to prepare that dish. Those memorable days were gone. How sad!

On the other hand, sometimes things need to change. Sometimes change is actually good and better for us.

When it comes to Jesus, I know him. I remember the joy I had the night of my coming to faith in Him. Since then I have walked through the shadows and the light with Him. I have rejoiced at his provision for me, the healing of my body, and the joys of life he has given freely. And I also have known him to be my help in the deepest times of my life. He was there for me. He was the “friend that sticks closer than a brother”. He never changes. Four trillion years from now he will be the same. He will not get better, more loving, more powerful, or more omniscient. He will not change. And, he will love me forever as he does today.

I change, He changes not;
The Christ can never die;
His love, not mine, the resting-place,
His truth, not mine, the tie

Hebrews 13:8 (NIV) Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

51. A SECURE INHERITANCE

My promised inheritance in Heaven is secure. I have an inheritance in Heaven waiting for me. What joy that will be to possess my promised possession.

It is different from this world's inheritances:

It will never perish- Moth and rust and rot can decay things here. My inheritance in heaven is “death proof”.

Some inheritances are spoiled by tarnish, cracks, decay and corrosion. Time and the elements are its enemies and chip away at the original value. My inheritance in heaven is “sin proof”

Some inheritances fade and are worth less because of tax laws, greedy relatives, and legal loopholes which can ruin the worth of the original value. Stocks can be devalued, land can be

devalued, and sometimes even precious things are lost or misplaced and never found. Whatever the inheritor thought he had coming to him might not be what it seemed like initially or what the giver had intended. My inheritance in heaven is “time proof”.

Our inheritance is kept in heaven. It is in safe keeping. It will be there when we arrive. It's in God's bank, a safety vault, and secure for eternity.

I have made a few bad deals in my life, I have bought some inferior products and been sold things that have not fulfilled their promises. That is all over with when I arrive in Heaven. Full value and flowing over will be my inheritance.

1 Peter 1:4 (NIV) and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you,

52. A RICH WELCOME

Peter tells the believers to work at their faith. Make every Effort!
make every effort to add to your faith
goodness; and to goodness,
knowledge;
and to knowledge,
self-control; and to self-control,
perseverance; and to perseverance,
godliness;
and to godliness,
brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness,
love.

He then adds a promise. It is an “if”, “then” type of promise. It is conditional on my doing something. If I do the aforementioned things something really good is going to happen to me when I arrive in heaven. I will receive a rich welcome. Peter is not referring to the *fact* of entering the kingdom but the *manner*. I am saved by faith but what I do with my faith determines reward and a rich welcome.

2 Peter 1:10-11 Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

53. LIKE HIM FOREVER

We will be like Jesus. We will not ever be Jesus but we will share all of His communicable attributes that drew us to him apart from his deity. What will that be like to be like Jesus? We will have a perfect mind, totally clear thinking, a pure personality apart from the consequences of the fall, a perfect body that is equipped for eternity and be absolutely satisfied and continually full of joy and praise and worship.

We will see Him clearly – Artists and extra biblical writers have tried to describe Jesus and frankly they all fail and fall short. I have always been disappointed as an adult and misled as a child by artists' renditions of Jesus. We do not know what He looked like. We know what the Caesar of that time looked like because there are hundreds of coins and statues of him. However, the Lord saw fit to not leave a picture of Himself on earth. On that day though, when I arrive in heaven I will instantly recognize my best Friend and Savior. Then I will know with clear understanding. There will be no disappointment or misunderstanding. I will see Him as He is.

1 John 3:2 (NIV) 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.

54. TRUTH FOREVER

The truth of heaven lives in us forever. Pilate asked, “What is truth?” People of all nations and all generations have wanted to know what truth is. One writer recently said that “70 percent of Americans now believe that there is no such thing as absolute truth.” For the believer however, truth is not elusive, unknown, or unknowable. Because of Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life we have the truth. We believe in an unshakable, unchangeable truth which will never change and be with us forever. One thing we will possess forever is “the truth”. The search is over. There will never be the lurking fear of wondering if we have the truth. We will have a satisfied mind forever. And it has its home in us now!

2 John 1:2 (NIV) because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever:

55. WALKING WITH JESUS

We will be walking with Jesus and dressed in white! Have you ever attended a function and upon arriving at the front door before meeting anyone else, and after looking at yourself, wondering if you wore the appropriate clothing? We like to wear things that are fit for the occasion. We want them to be in good repair and not smelly or having stains on them. In going to the beach we want to have the correct clothing that will make it a day of fun. If we are going to the ski slope we check to make sure that this will be a great day and not a day of cold and wetness. For formal situations, there are stores that will sell or rent us very special clothing that meets the need of the day and honors those in attendance.

In heaven, for the first time in your life (after being a baby) you will never have to worry about your clothing again. What will I wear? It will be provided. Will it fit? It will fit perfectly. Will it be the right color? It will be the best color for heaven – the color of righteousness, the clothes of the overcomer. We will be clothed by Jesus himself. Clothier extraordinaire!

Secondly, we will walk with Him. Somehow there will be a continued, close, personal relationship with Christ. He will want to take a walk with me. There will be plenty of time to do this and no lack of abundance of things to see in our walks. I have been close to a few “big names” in the last few years. And I emphasize the word “close”. I could not be near them because they were famous and I am not. Those who were very close to them were somehow in the in crowd of a selected few. That will not be a problem in heaven. We will have a personal relationship with Jesus. Have you ever talked to a friend and said, “Let’s get out of here and take a little walk!” That is what Jesus will say to me one day In heaven, “Hey Dave, let’s go on a little walk. You are my friend and I want to be with you.” How wonderful that will be, knowing that I am worthy by His grace to be with Him. No doubt, no wondering, no hesitation. I belong there and he wants to be with me. I like that!

Revelation 3:4 Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.

56. I AM AN OVERCOMER

Overcomers are not some special class of believers. According to these verses, three times John states that if you believe in Jesus as the Son of God you are an overcomer. How exciting is that? I am an overcomer.

The overcomer will be made a pillar in the inner sanctuary of God. He will experience safety and security forever in an honored place.

The overcomer will also have three names written on him, signifying intimacy of relationship and ownership. God’s name, the New Jerusalem’s name, and a special name yet to be revealed that belongs to Jesus. I am His for all eternity, His name is on me and He will reveal more about Himself that I could not even imagine on this side of heaven.

We like to sport our favorite team’s name, our expensive clothing label, where we are from, and impressive logos on our t-shirts. Branding is part of our culture. When we walk around town, people notice those names and labels. Throughout eternity, somehow, some way God will brand us as His. I will be known throughout all eternity as being on His Team! That is great branding.

Rev .3:12 Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name.

57. SITTING WITH JESUS

We will sit with Jesus on His throne. Have you ever been to a banquet and while trying to find your place to sit, the honoree of the banquet said to you, "It is so good to see you. Why don't you come up to my table and sit with me and share in the joy of my honor tonight?" That very thing will happen when Jesus shares his joy with me. He did not need to do that. He just decided that He would do it because of His love.

Revelation 3:21 To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.

58. GOD'S THRONE: PART A

The Throne in Heaven.- The central point of heaven is the throne of God. The Apostle John saw it on his trip to heaven and so shall I someday. It is there right now.

We all are aware that if something happened to our President that the Vice President would take over, then the Speaker of the House, then the President of the Senate, then the Secretary of State then the Secretary of the Treasury, then the Secretary of Defense, all the way down to the 15th person on the list of succession, the Secretary of Homeland Security. We are very aware that someone always needs to be in charge of the country with never a gap. It is essential that someone "sit on the throne."

John saw clearly that God was on His throne and He was sitting. It is a beautiful throne. Jasper is the stone that represented, Reuben ('Behold a son'), Jacob's first born and Carnelian which represented Benjamin, ('Son of my right hand') who was Jacob's youngest son. The encircling green rainbow might symbolize God's "pledge to keep his covenants in spite of the coming judgments." Like the evergreen tree we are reminded of His forever promises.

From the throne came lightning, thunder and rumblings. Frankly, if you have been in a Midwest summer lighting storm with lightning flashes and thunder almost faster than you can count them you have felt small and helpless. You seek a place of refuge from this power. God is probably demonstrating that He is a God of irresistible judgment and absolute righteousness. John also notices that there is a sea of glass, clear as crystal, in front of the throne. He saw absolute calm with not a wave or a hidden current underneath. No turbid water or foam or rogue waves are there.

What can I glean from all this? Heaven will have a Ruler who is in control, and who is capable of judging. He has all power. In front of His throne there is calm. No unrest, not rebel forces, no political party jockeying to take control at a weak opportune time. That is the stuff of earth. Man has his day and God will have His way. If you have fished in the early morning on a calm lake, your mind sees the quietness of that moment and the peace that is there. That is just like heaven.

Above all that we see a hint of His faithfulness with the green rainbow and the fact that we will see Him sharing His throne with His Son.

What we have seen here is not a movie, it will not happen in the "bye and bye" it is going on right now as you read this. God will not take control someday. He is in control now. If you

are going through a tough time now, you must lift your eyes a little higher and remember heaven and its promise. Just a little while longer...

Jesus said in Revelation 3:21 “To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.”

Revelation 4:2 At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.

Revelation 4:3-6 And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne.

4:4 Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.

4:5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God.

4:6 Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal

59. GOD’S THRONE: PART B

The Throne of God is surrounded by beings who worship the One on the throne. There were four beings who had clear views of everything. They did not miss anything that was going on because of their many eyes. The beings remind us of the four Gospels, The Lion is like Matthew who presents Christ as the King of Kings, The Ox is like Mark who presents Christ as the Servant, The Man reminds us of Luke who shows us that Christ is the Perfect Man and the eagle who flies above all is like John who writes to show that Jesus Christ is God. Heaven sent us the message of the four gospels. They clearly see who He is.

These creatures are actively involved in worship when John breaks on the scene. We also see the 24 elders who are around the throne who throw their crowns down before the throne admitting that God is the creator who deserves all glory, honor and power. Now that we have the scene set, what does that teach us about God? He is to be worshipped. He has provided us the four Gospels that show us the glory of Christ. They are not just biographies or historical documents to be perused and discussed. They are a message from heaven about the One who sits on the throne with His Father.

Once again it is happening now as you read this. The worship did not start when John arrived. It will not start when we arrive. Tune your heart right now.

Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above.

Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it,
Mount of Thy redeeming love.

Revelation 4:6 ...I. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.

Revelation 4:7 4:7 The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle.

Revelation 4:8 (NIV) Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

Revelation 4:9 (NIV) Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever,

Revelation 4:10 (NIV) the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

Revelation 4:11 (NIV) "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

60. JUSTICE?

Will there ever be justice on earth? Who has the right and authority to bring righteousness on our planet? When will it occur? What will it look like?

In 1938, a cartoon appeared called "Superman". This super hero declared that he fought for "truth justice and the American way". This began a series of others cartoon super heroes, Spider-Man, Captain America, Batman, Wonder Woman, Captain Marvel, and Plastic Man, all of which had a strong moral code, would put themselves in a place of danger to serve others and fight evil. In addition to their moral code they had extraordinary powers and abilities to try to make this happen.

The Apostle John is sorrowful in this heavenly scene that no one can break the seals of the book and begin to make things right on earth. As he is weeping an elder says to him that the answer, the Hero, is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He turns to see the Lion and he sees a lamb freshly slain. What kind of hero is this?

The answer to peace on earth is found in heaven. John tells us that the Hero from heaven that will conquer evil on earth is a Lamb, the Lamb of God. When this is announced, heaven explodes with incredible, abundant praise with the identification of the Deliverer. Billions of angels sing of power, wisdom, strength honor, glory and praise and honor forever to the Lamb.

Beings all over heaven are falling down worshipping. The Lamb is getting ready to make war and reclaim His world.

When the Lamb is worshipped, we will fall down. That is the natural thing to do. Peace will come to the earth through war from on high. Heaven is absolutely excited about this. Should I be less excited about this than heaven's citizens are? No. I am thrilled that Jesus will conquer sin and death and hell.

What is heaven like? One scene we see here is that they rejoice to see Jesus glorified and victorious. Today, we are not called on to do physical warfare in the name of Christ, but we too can rejoice when Christ is victorious in a life.

Revelation 5:1-14

5:1 Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals.

5:2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?"

5:3 But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it.

5:4 I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside.

5:5 Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."

5:6 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

5:7 He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne.

5:8 And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

5:9 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

5:10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

5:11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.

5:12 In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"

5:13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

5:14 The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

61. WORKING IN HEAVEN

We like to work. Man worked before the Fall. It was pleasant work, caring for the Garden. After the Fall, work became difficult. It is in our nature to work. When we have nothing to do for a protracted period of time we get bored and unhappy.

Here is the good news. In heaven we will work! We will continually serve him. We will have things to do to show our appreciation and love for Him. Pleasant work. Satisfying work. A

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good project. A rewarding job. A great Boss. Unlimited strength, ability, desire and passion to please Him. I am willing and ready to go, Jesus! How can I serve you?

To the unsaved today that is a terrible thought. “Young man, don’t waste your life in religious work.” The unsaved father said to his son who had told him his desire to serve the Lord. There are many things wrong with the father’s statement. First of all, they young man said, “I am not serving religion”, “I am serving Jesus”. Secondly, “As a young man I am giving the prime time of my life to the Lord, not the left overs”. Thirdly, “It is just the opposite of waste. My employer has promised to repay me 10,000 percent interest in anything done for Him. That is actually an incredibly wise decision on my part.”

I can serve Him now and I can serve Him throughout eternity!
You never have to pry anything out of the hand of a lover.

1. Give of your best to the Master;
Give of the strength of your youth;
Throw your soul’s fresh, glowing ardor
Into the battle for truth.
Jesus has set the example,
Dauntless was He, young and brave;
Give Him your loyal devotion;
Give Him the best that you have.
 - o Refrain:
Give of your best to the Master;
Give of the strength of your youth;
Clad in salvation’s full armor,
Join in the battle for truth.
2. Give of your best to the Master;
Give Him first place in your heart;
Give Him first place in your service;
Consecrate every part.
Give, and to you will be given;
God His beloved Son gave;
Gratefully seeking to serve Him,
Give Him the best that you have.
3. Give of your best to the Master;
Naught else is worthy His love;
He gave Himself for your ransom,
Gave up His glory above.
Laid down His life without murmur,
You from sin’s ruin to save;
Give Him your heart’s adoration;
Give Him the best that you have.

Revelation 7:15 (NIV) Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them.

62. THE CHUPPAH

He will care for us and we will be under his protection forever. Nothing will harm us. In heaven we will have, "Perfect nearness, service, and fellowship." We will be under his canopy of shelter. In a Jewish wedding ceremony a canopy or "Huppah" is provided under which the groom invites the bride.

"The groom enters the chuppah first to represent his ownership of the home on behalf of the couple. When the bride then enters the chuppah it is as though the groom is providing her with shelter or clothing, and he thus publicly demonstrates his new responsibilities toward her"
I will have this sense of welcome, protection and care throughout all eternity.

Revelation 7:15 (NIV) Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them.

63. NO HUNGER AND THIRST

We will never again hunger or thirst: In heaven, our needs will be met like any no other time before. We will not want for anything. We will have perfect satisfaction in heaven. The sun, which can take life and sap energy and moisture from us, will not be a fear. Nothing will take our energy again. We will have no fear of any antagonistic elements again. When we build our homes we battle wind, sun, cold, water, mold, cracking, shifting foundations, chipping of paint and other time related problems. There is a fear of the elements- they work against us. In heaven there will be no need to fear the sun and heat- there will be perfect security and happiness.

Revelation 7:16 (NIV) Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat.

64. A FOREVER SHEPHERD

We will have a Shepherd forever. Have you ever arrived at a new job, a new building, a conference, a doctor's office, at which you were totally unfamiliar? You wonder to yourself, "Where do I go now?" "What is happening next?" "Does anyone care that I am here and need to know the ropes?" The promise to us in this passage is that Jesus is the One who tenderly cares for us and will give us "perfect guidance."

We will be led forever. We will be shown what to do and where to go forever. We will have direction on how to spend eternity. He is my program. He is my guide. He is my activities director. He is my guidance counselor forever!

We will never cry again forever. We will not have a reason to cry whether about the past the present or future.” We will have perfect unending joy. That will be the standard attitude in heaven.

He will lead them to springs of living water. There will be no more physical, environmental, or emotional needs to be met. We will have a perpetual joy. The living water is from springs with an eternal source. This will never end.

Revelation 7:17 (NIV) For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."
No more

65. JESUS IS GOD.

One more time we see the Deity of Christ clearly presented. He is at the center of the throne. Remember it was said by Jesus, "...I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne." Rev. 3:21

What a great combination King and Shepherd. Not just a symbolic shepherd, in name only. One who is far off and distant from me, but a true Shepherd of my soul. My King is also my Shepherd.

Revelation 7:17 (NIV) For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

66. WE WILL REST IN HEAVEN-

No matter how hard your life was on earth, there is rest coming in heaven.

To die in the Lord is a happy thing. The Word "blessed" means happy or fortunate. To die as a Christian is a happy, fortunate thing.

The reminder in Revelation 14 was to believers who would die during the Tribulation. They were told that they would not miss the blessings of the Millennium. This is a specific promise to them. An application that could fit our situation now is that we should not mourn about anything we will "miss" on earth after we die. Without qualification we are blessed to die in the Lord. Anything continuing on earth after we die pales compared to being with Christ. God is in control. He will glorify Himself on earth as well as in heaven.

Our deeds will follow. The things done for Christ will follow us to heaven. Something done for Jesus is "in the bank". Once again we must remember that our works for Christ will be judged by the quality, not quantity. 1 Corinthians 3:13 says, "his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work".

It is good to know that the Lord has a great memory and will not forget even a small act done in Jesus' name. Matthew 10:42 tell us, "And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to

one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

Our works for Jesus are suspect and scrutinized by the unsaved, sometimes even by our brothers in Christ. Many times they set themselves up as judges on us and how we spend our time, our life, our money and how we preach the Gospel. On this day, "They will not be forgotten, marginalized, or belittled". "Every kindness, sacrificial gift, prayer, tear, or word of testimony" will be remembered and rewarded.

Paul said that he actually forgot the number of baptisms he did in Corinth. 1 Corinthians 1:16 (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.)

Even works done for Christ that we have forgotten will be remembered in heaven.

Revelation 14:13 (NIV) Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

67. BIG CROWDS

There is a great multitude in heaven. I will personally be a part of this unified multitude. This crowd is bent on praising Christ. No one will hold back for any reason. This is it! This is what we waited for while being misunderstood and even persecuted and suffering on the earth that rejected the Savior. Sometimes on this planet believers are small in number, despised and the minority. Only 8 people on earth believed Noah's preaching but were saved from the great flood. They definitely would not have won in a voting of who is right and who is wrong. They were right and millions of others made the wrong choice. The world perished and 8 people were saved. God's will is not determined by a majority opinion.

Everybody in heaven is worshipping God. I enjoy big crowds. There is something to be said about a large crowd and the feeling that comes when they unitedly cheer, yell, or shout for their sports team. It is fun. It is also fun to be part of a big choir. I enjoyed being part of a large choir once in singing praise to God. There was a thrill to sing the crescendos and high notes in unity and harmony. I will personally be part of a unified multitude praising Christ. This time everyone in the crowd will be worshipping. Not judging, not looking around, not waiting for the next big thing. This is wholehearted pull out all the stops, turn up the volume, joyful worship.

Revelation 19:1 (NIV) After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,

68. KINGDOM COMING

A messenger from Heaven is coming down to the planet that is shaking its fist in God's face. And he has a key in his hand. Another chapter of the future is about to be unleashed.

Heaven is the place where the throne of God is and the future of the earth will come from it. This angelic rocket ship is coming to earth to open up scenes of judgment on the rebellious planet. All this is all under His control and He is orchestrating the last days of planet earth and will show His glory and majesty. Truth will prevail in these days.

The kingdom is coming to earth as was prayed millions and millions of times. Matthew 6:10 says in the Disciple's prayer, "...your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This is the answer to that prayer.

There can be no peace unless there is war and a conquering of that which brought bondage. No deals are made here. No compromise this time. No armistice. No peace accord. Judgment and righteousness will prevail in irresistible power without human aid. That is one of the messages coming from heaven.

Revelation 20:1 (NIV) And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain.

69. THE KEY FROM HEAVEN

From time to time, some philosophical news personage or some news commentator will say, "The world is out of control! There are disasters all over the place. This has been an unusual week for the news. When will things calm down?" These comments make it seem like history is not going any place in particular and is totally random. Evil seems to abound uncontrolled.

This passage makes it very clear that Satan, the architect of evil and confusion, can only do what God allows him to do. Satan is totally under His control. There are no surprises to God regarding the movement and actions of Satan.

As the Book of Revelation winds down to a close we see that, two of the members of the unholy trinity are captured and imprisoned. "But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf...The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur." Rev 19:20

Then the chief personification of evil himself," the dragon, the ancient serpent, the devil, Satan is bound and cast into the Abyss". (Rev. 20:2) There he will wait until God looses him again.

It is good for us to be reminded that, no matter how powerful Satan seems he will eventually be locked up and put away by heaven at heaven's will.

Revelation 20:1 (NIV) And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain.

70. The Great White Throne, A. "Its Purity"

We will see the Great White Throne in heaven. The Throne of God's judgment. It is white because of the "perfections and the purity of the decisions that will be handed down". The Great White Throne is a scene of absolute justice. No mistake will be made here. There will not be any reprieves, adjournment to gain more evidence, no swaying to one political party, no

deferential treatment as regards to race or any other status. It will not be with respect of persons. It stands in heaven. In heaven is the stage where the Lord will show his justice.

Psalm 89:46 (NIV) 89:46 How long, O LORD? Will you hide yourself forever?

Revelation 6:10 (NIV) 6:10 They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth...?"

Revelation 20:11 (NIV) Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

71. THE GREAT WHITE THRONE, B. “The Judge”

The judge is seated on the throne. Who is this judge that sits on the throne? It is Jesus. All judgment has been given to him and all authority has been given to him. When standing before the judgment thrones of men while on earth, Jesus did not answer to false charges. However when he was placed under oath and asked if he was the Christ the Son of God he answered. **Matthew 26:64 (NIV)** "...you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

We have the choice of receiving Christ now as the Savior of our souls or facing Him as God the Judge of all.

John 5:22 (NIV) Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son,

John 5:27 (NIV) And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

Revelation 20:11 (NIV) Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

72. THE GREAT WHITE THRONE, C. “Its justice and judgment”

There are a number of judgments spoken of in the Bible. We read of the judgment of the nations, the judgment of the believers, the judgment of angels and more. Finally there is the judgment of the unsaved. We will see that great throne of judgment established in heaven. Nothing will overshadow it. Even the earth and sky run from its awesome presence. It will not be overlooked or mistaken for something else. It will be the centerpiece of the universe at this point. We will see the judge of the universe administering in absolute justice. The lives of those who died rejecting Christ will be judged in minute detail. Every point of their life will be examined showing their sinfulness and worthiness of His righteous justice.

However, believers will be free from that judgment. Christ has borne our judgment. Romans 8:1 bears the glad tidings that, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ." Absolutely none! No fear on our parts now on earth or then at this judgment. There will just be continued worship of the holy and righteous Judge. We will witness the greatness of our King over all other things He has made.

He is to be praised for His judgments. Revelation 19:1, 2 After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants."

Revelation 20:11 (NIV) Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

73. THE BOOK OF LIFE

Heaven is where the Book of Life is- Believer's names are written there in that great book.- You can know for sure that your name is there before you leave earth. The names of those who believe the Gospel are in that book. Paul wrote to a man named Syzygus about other believers whose names were in this book.

Philippians 4:3 (NIV) Yes, and I ask you, loyal *yokefellow*, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. Believers referred to one another as being in the Book of Life.

"Under no circumstances will he erase those names as city officials often did of undesirable people on their roles." J.M.

It will not be a good day to not be found in that book.

Revelation 20:15 (NIV) If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

74. NO SEA

We will dwell in a new heaven- Our heaven will be unused, new. Mr. Vine tells us that the word new is the Greek word, *kainos* which "denotes "new," of that which is unaccustomed or unused, not "new" in time, recent, but "new" as to form or quality, of different nature from what is contrasted as old"

"The new things that are to be received and enjoyed hereafter are:

- A new name, the believer's, Rev. 2:17
- A new name, the Lord's, Rev. 3:12
- A new song, Rev. 5:9
- A new Heaven and a new Earth, Rev. 21:1
- The new Jerusalem, Rev. 3:12; 21:2
- And He that sits on the Throne said, Behold, I make all things new,' Rev. 21:5

In heaven there will be no sea - There is a certain romance of the sea. It can be very beautiful and powerful when we consider its waves, its sea shores, and the sailors who sail upon the wild seas. We also need to remember that seas separate people from one another. The sea divides peoples and nations. It is difficult, dangerous and time consuming to cross the seas.

In our new home in heaven - There will be no seas; there will be no more separation from others forever. How many times have we had the same experience that Paul had at Miletus when he said goodbye to the Christians?

Acts 20:25, 36-38 "Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again.

When he had said this, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him. What grieved them most was his statement that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

The sea is restless-The constant motion of the seas and its restlessness will not be seen in heaven. Jeremiah 49:23 Concerning Damascus: "Hamath and Arpad are dismayed, for they have heard bad news. They are disheartened, troubled like the restless sea".

We will not know restlessness again

Revelation 21:1 (NIV) 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.

75. COMING DOWN

Heaven is up- God is bringing our new home down to us. Somehow, someday our new home is getting closer and closer to planet earth. Some commentators believe that since the New Jerusalem is never said to land on earth it may hover over the earth as a satellite. This wonderful city will be described later but now it can be mentioned that it can contain at least a trillion people with room to spare. The 1400 mile on each side cube is hurtling toward earth now. John saw it 2000 years ago. Heaven is up and it is coming down to us.

Heaven is beautiful and for us- Heaven is beautiful and will be ours in a special way. It will be "Nearer and dearer than ever dreamed of" W.M.

It has been my privilege to perform a number of marriages through the years. It seems that each couple and their families have different ideas on the way that a marriage ceremony should be held. The details are important to all involved. However, one thing that has been a constant is that the bride is always very concerned about how she is dressed for her husband. She wants things to be perfect on her day. One wedding I officiated was held up while the seamstress sewed on two buttons that had fallen off a custom made dress. That bride was not walking down the aisle until all was perfect.

Every bride has a glow on her wedding day. They are all beautiful. I can't explain it but I know it is true.

That is how we will view our home as it comes to us. The WOW factor will be great.

Revelation 21:2 (NIV) I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

76. WITH GOD

We now come to a truth that is repeated four different times by God Himself from His very throne.

God never uses empty phrases. He does not Himself without a good reason. The following is a truth that he apparently wants us to take deep down in our heart. The Lord wants to emphasize it for us to clearly understand and enjoy.

1. We will dwell with God- Not in some other place, no matter how good it might seem. No seconds will do.

2. He will live with us in heaven- No separation or lack of closeness, forever

3. We will be his people- His promise is that He personally claims us as His own

4. He will be with us and be our God- He will be with us.

What He has said could not be more personal. The promise is staggering.

One last time notice that this truth is said with a loud voice so that no one could miss it.

Revelation 21:3 (NIV) And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God."

77. NO TEARS

There are no tears in heaven- God has given us the ability to cry here on earth. It helps us deal with our sorrows. The Old Testament speaks of tears and the consolation that "God knows" *Psalms 6:6 I am worn out from groaning; all night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears.*

God knows when we have cried. The Psalmist also declares that God knows exactly what has caused him to cry. His tears are not forgotten. We read that Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus and also at His rejection.

Psalms 56:8 "Record my lament; list my tears on your scroll-- are they not in your record?"

Tears can be a significant part of our life from time to time. We remember times that we have had tears of sorrow, tears from disappointment, tears because of sickness and pain, and tears because of separation from loved ones. They can be defining moments for us. But again that is for earth and we will leave that behind.

There is no death in heaven-. On earth, death never takes a holiday; it never comes at an appropriate time. It is always a shock when we are forced to deal with it. How sad it is for parents to have to bury their children. Even the long goodbye of someone who has a long term illness or is fading away because of age always surprises us when it actually occurs. In that bright city we will never have to go through that again.

There is no mourning in heaven- Mourning, lamenting, wailing, occurs all around the globe each and every day. There is not a country that will not have someone mourn in a day. We mourn because of all kinds of things that touch our lives in a painful way. In heaven there will be no despondency over failure, death, disappointment, or heartache and loss. We will have no "Danny Boy" songs in heaven. "Enjoy" them here. They won't be allowed in the place of joy!

*Oh Danny boy, the pipes, the pipes are calling
From glen to glen, and down the mountain side*

Heaven 105

*The summer's gone, and all the roses falling
'Tis you, 'tis you must go and I must bide.*

There is no crying in heaven- Jesus cried on the cross, *Matthew 27:50 And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.*

He cried like no other man has ever cried at the close of his sufferings. He cried so that in heaven we would not need to weep as an outlet for the pains of life

There is no pain in heaven- We give all kinds of descriptive words to tell about our aches and pains in our journey on earth. The doctor asks us, "On a scale of 1 to 10, how does your pain feel?" We have pains from cancer, arthritis, tumors, broken bones, organ disorders, cuts, bruises, burns, muscle tears and a multitude of other physical ailments. In heaven there will be no more of what we experience each day on planet earth. It will not be allowed there.

The old order of things is gone- Our life has so much been described by these difficult things. Jesus was not immune from what we go through. He suffered. But he suffers no more. In heaven we will see that things will be done God's way all the time and our life will be described by other things than the big five things that he is listed.

One final note: Paul stated that he would glory in his pain that the power of Christ may rest upon him. Dealing with pain and looking to God for strength can empower us and bring glory to God. We can grow in faith by trusting God in difficult times of pain. It is not wasted. "You meant it for evil but God meant it for good!" Joseph told his brothers.

Revelation 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

78. NEW

Heaven is new- We all love new things. There is a great joy for us when we get something new or see something new. The word "new" from Revelation 21:5 is the same word that is used of us when it speaks about our salvation. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." We are the same people but now our life is new. Our life has been changed. We can honestly tell someone who is unsaved that if they will trust in Christ, they can experience a new life. That is what happened to us and is also in our future.

Mr. Vine says "all things new--not recent, but *changed from the old* (Greek, "*kaina*," not "*nea*"). An earnest of this regeneration and transfiguration of nature is given already in the regenerate soul."

God decided to make his house new for us. We will have the privilege of moving into all things "new".

Maybe John's mind was so taken up with this thought that he had to be reminded to write it down. God reminded him from the throne that he was truly going to do this because his nature demanded that he be true to His words.

Revelation 21:5 (NIV) He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

79. JUDGMENT OVER

It is done- The time of judgment during the Great Tribulation is now over. God declares that He is before and He is after anything. No one has ever upstaged Him or surprised Him or added something to anything He says is finished. Jesus said, "It is finished" on the cross. No one can add to His work of atonement. They just need to believe it.

To him who is thirsty- Thirst is an admission that I have a need. When working in the hot sun and all your moisture is dried up you seek to slake your thirst. My experience is that of all the liquids I like to drink, when I am really thirsty, only water will quench it the best.

The Lord in a sense says, "Are you thirsty?" If you recognize your need, he has the answer. The good news is that he offers it freely.

He has met my needs now. In heaven I will never thirst again. No longing will be unfulfilled in His presence.

Ezekiel tells us that water will flow from the Millennial Temple and that it got deeper and deeper until it was deep enough to swim in.

Truly God's springs are enough for us. Their source is eternal because they are from Him.

Ezekiel 47:1-5 (NIV)

¹ The man brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar.

² He then brought me out through the north gate and led me around the outside to the outer gate facing east, and the water was flowing from the south side.

³ As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep.

⁴ He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist.

⁵ He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in--a river that no one could cross.

Revelation 21:6 (NIV) He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life."

80. I "OWN" IT

Overcomers own all this- no matter what inheritance you have gained on earth, this will outrank them all. No matter if you are king's child or a pauper you will end up with the great inheritance called the New Heaven and New Earth.

George Washington Vanderbilt II built a house in Asheville, NC that sits on 8,000 acres. It was built from 1889 and 1895 and still is the largest privately owned house in the

United States. It has 178,926 square feet and 250 rooms. Mr. Vanderbilt filled his house with art, expensive furniture and other opulent things. It is still owned by the family but is now opened to the public. For \$59.00 you can visit for a day. You can pay more for food and a lot more for a stay overnight in the guest area. However, don't make yourself at home, sit in the chairs, slide down the bannister or pick the flowers because it is not yours. Look, but don't touch and leave at the end of the day. Most of all don't call yourself a "Vanderbilt" and pretend to be part of the family and say that this house is actually your inheritance. You are a guest. That is it.

Think about that for a moment...in heaven, I will not just be there as a guest and marvel at someone else's mansion. I will not stay in a corner of the city. I will not be told to "look, but do not touch". There will be no indication that I am "kind of welcome" here. Exactly the opposite will be true as spoken of in extravagant terms.

Heaven is my inheritance. It is mine. All of it. I am much more, way much more than welcome there. I have been given close intimacy with the owner Himself who claims me as his own son- a special warm unique relationship. What an incredible thought.

Finally, think especially about the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11 and countless others in nations all over the world who have suffered greatly and owned nothing on this earth because of their faith in Christ. What a reward is theirs! They will be together with us. That is a perfect ending to the great story of redemption.

11:35...Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection.

11:36 Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison.

11:37 They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated--

11:38 the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

11:39 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised.

11:40 God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

Revelation 21:7 (NIV) He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

81. A TOXIC LIST

Those who are not overcomers- In this toxic list of sins, notice that the four of these involve wrong attitudes toward God and the mistreatment of others.

Not all are overcomers. Many today do not believe in Christ. Many are hostile towards God and His people. Examples abound all around us. A friend of mine told me of how he was simply reading his Bible at lunch time in the teacher's lounge in a public school when another fellow teacher approached him and told him with profanity that they couldn't believe that anyone "still believed that blankitty- blank stuff." Another friend of mine went to visit a doctor who very clearly told them that they were not a believer. After the doctor left, the nurse came in and

my Christian friend said, “We are fearfully and wonderfully made.” The nurse quietly said, “I hear what you are saying and I believe it too!”

In the United States this year 7 billion dollars will be spent on 218,000 prisoners in Federal prisons. That does not include state prisons and county jails nationwide. How many more people have done things which should require a prison term? That is only the tip of the iceberg of man’s sin.

The Toxic list of those who will not be citizens of heaven:

- No cowardly will be there- those who were afraid to stand for Jesus, for truth,
- No unbelieving- those who will not trust in God- unwilling to “trust the sinner’s Savior”
- No murderers- those whose habit is to take another’s life because it is in their way, “savage killers”
- No sexually immoral- those who practice intimate sexual relationships of all kinds that are forbidden by God
- No magic arts- those who rebelliously try to go around God for spiritual power, trafficking in evil spirits
- No idolaters- those who obstinately refuse to bow to God and turn instead to falsehood
- No liars- those who will not deal with the truth or tell the truth and submit to the God of truth

All these are sins toward God and sins toward fellow man.

None of the people who practice these sins will be in heaven.

God’s promise is that all of these people have hope of going to heaven as long as they have breath in their mortal bodies.

Today they can be washed, sanctified and justified by a loving, accepting God who stands with His arms open wide, as wide as Calvary.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Finally, God wants us to understand that as wonderful as heaven is, the Lake of Fire is exactly the opposite. Both places are extreme – Those under God’s judgment for rejecting His Son will have “their place” of suffering forever not “His place” promised to believers in the “sinner’s Savior”.

Revelation 21:8 (NIV) But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars--their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

82. I THINK I SEE IT NOW

Heaven is coming down even now.

How many times have I gone to my home? I have driven home from work to my home, I have traveled back after vacation to my home and I have gone to other people’s homes. But this,

my final home is coming to me- what a thought- an incredible mobile “home” making its way from outer space to hover over planet earth and its name is the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. What direction will it come from? Maybe it will come from the North.

Psalm 75:6 No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt a man. (North is not mentioned)

Whether that is true or not might not be that important. The important thing to remember is that we should be encouraged to think that even now God is acting on our behalf.

Years ago when I was a senior in high school, I went Christmas caroling with some other teens and college students. We went to a number homes of the sick and elderly and sang.

One particular couple that we visited came to the doorway on that cold winter night while we serenaded them from their front sidewalk. I will never forget that when we were finished singing “Joy to the world the Lord has come” that the husband who was in his nineties came out on the front porch in his slippers against his wife’s protestations. Old Tom Wilson pointed up to the sky and said, “I can see it now...the holy city coming down from heaven...it is coming down even now!” Tom was a godly old man who loved the Lord and knew the Scripture well. After we had sung our last song and moved back to our cars, I said to one of my friends, “What did you think of that brother’s statement?” We both looked at each other and together wondered if maybe he saw something we did not see. He died soon after that. To this day, I have wondered if the dear saint actually saw his new home coming down.

You know now that I think of it he was pointing to the North...I too should keep my new home in mind as I “travel this sod”.

“I’m so glad I’m a part of the Family of God, I’ve been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood! Joint heirs with Jesus as we **travel this sod...**”

Revelation 21:10 (NIV) And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

83. BRILLIANT...GLORY

Heaven shines with the glory of God- we have had hints at this from nature but this is the ultimate reality

Heaven is brilliant- greater than any jewel you have seen

Heaven is clear as crystal- clearness, nothing to hide pure all the way through – no imperfection, no flaw

Most diamonds have flaws, and in the trade these are called, blemishes, scratches, extra facets, fractures, fingerprints, pits, nicks, naturals, carbons, chips, inclusions, needles, clouds, knots, grainlines, feathers, intergrowths, cleavages, etches, channelings, and beardings. The less amount of imperfections, the more expensive the diamond. However, it is said that there are 600 flawless diamonds in the world which are perfectly clear and having no imperfection. All of these of course can easily be held with the fingers. Diamonds are beautiful but small and extremely rare.

God had made His city beautiful. No flaws at all in that glorious place. Look once again at the piling up of words to describe this great city:

“shone...glory...brilliance...precious...jewel...jasper...clear...crystal”. There can be no doubt that this place is beyond description in beauty.

What has he prepared for us? Something that will display his glory with no imperfections.

Revelation 21:11 (NIV) It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

84. WHAT A WALL! WHAT GATES!

Heaven has a wall with gates- Once again, we see that heaven is not a state of mind or an alternate dimension. The writer of Revelation leads us to think of it in terms of a city. It is a city, it has dimensions, with gates that are there to welcome in not to keep us out. Each beautiful gate has a wonderful angel there to welcome us!

Remember in Genesis that God put cherubim and a flashing sword to keep out the ones he had created because of their sin? Remember that the Angel of the Lord stood in the road to oppose Balaam to keep him from going further? Angels can be appointed to keep beings out and away from the presence of the Lord. However these angels are there to welcome the believer in Christ.

We will see angels at the gates- as we come and go, we will always have a heavenly welcome. Have you ever gone to a church, a Bible study, or a Christian gathering and frankly not sensed a true welcome at first? Not a problem here. What kind of things will the angels say to us as we leave? “God speed”? What will they say when we arrive? “We are so glad to see you back home!”? Selah. Just think about that for a while and you will smile.

God will fulfill his promises to Israel – God fulfills the promises made in His word and honors the Jew by His grace. Throughout eternity we will be reminded that God has fulfilled His promises made to His people, Israel. He is the original “Promise Keeper” even though each one of the sons of Jacob were sinners. Just like them we will be reminded of the grace of God forever, and ever and ever...

Revelation 21:12 (NIV) It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

85. THE FOUNDATION A

The city has a beautiful foundation- The mention of foundations shows us that this city is a permanent abode. It is not a temporary dwelling but our forever home. Does your home have beautiful foundations? This home does. I hope your brick and mortar house does. If it does not we both know that troubles will come to the structure. We also know the importance of having beautiful foundations for our family – things that we are building on that will stand the test of time. They are things that will support us through hard times. These are sure things our children can take with them when they leave this home and establish their own home with a beautiful foundation.

Our real city that has a real foundation, it is not just an ideal, not just an idea, or different dimension in a warp of space. No. No. The author of Revelation leads us to believe that it is real in every sense.

The apostles will be honored by name with their names written on the foundation stones- God will honor those 12 who followed Jesus and took the Gospel to the whole world. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament are seen as united in the “final scheme of things”. We mentioned in vs. 12 about the fact that the 12 tribes of Israel are written on the gates of the city. We know that none of them were perfect. We also remember the Apostles and the fact that all of them had feet of clay and yet because of the grace of God we will see their names written in the foundation stones.

When you and I walk through the gate with Peter’s name on its foundation, we will remember that as great as he was that he was a sinner saved by grace. They were truly Apostles of the Lamb. That theme is the heavenly theme. I might remind you that he wrote, “For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.” 1 Peter 1:18-19

And you might remind me that he also wrote, “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” 1 Peter 2:9

Then as we walk through that beautiful gate past that beautiful foundation we will both “declare His praises.” Selah. That is life in this big city!

Revelation 21:14 (NIV) The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

86. MEASURE IT

The heavenly city can be measured- It is real, it is a certain size ordained by God himself. The angel who is reporting this is given a rod of gold, probably symbolizing the “dignity of the task of measuring this city’s gate-towers and walls.”

The shape of the city is a cube. It has the same shape of the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle. It is 1500 miles on each side. Its base would go from the Mississippi River to the Atlantic Ocean and from The Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border. Someone has figured that the city has enough room for more than a trillion people who could live in 48 room mansions. Don’t ever worry about giving out too many invitations to come and live in that city. The wall of the city is 72 yards thick. It has walls made by God. Walls today can be good. We wall in children’s play grounds because we love them. We establish limits with our teenage children also because we love them. We put some kind of wall around our houses to protect it from bad men.

In this city though, these walls seem to say. “You belong here.” “You are my people.” “This is your home for eternity.” These are walls of love and a symbol of ownership. One more thought on the rod of gold. Not to stretch the issue... but the angel was performing a task given to him. He was given the means and the method of measuring by God himself. In our

lives today, each of us should use a golden rod, an accurate, heavenly measuring device as we evaluate things. Our accounting should be golden, our values should be golden, our methods should be golden. That is heaven's way.

Revelation 21:15-17 (NIV) The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long. He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits thick, by man's measurement, which the angel was using.

87. CLEAR OR OPAQUE?

The wall of heaven is clear –Jasper is a clear stone. It is not like the modern jasper which is opaque. There was nothing to hinder the pure light of God's glory to shine and stream out through the whole city. These walls are there to be seen through so that his his glory will be revealed in every area of the city.

Before I leave this, I must ask myself, am I opaque, mysterious, inconsistent, and unclear to others or do I let the glory of God who is in me shine? Does sin hinder others seeing the glory of God in my life? After all it is not "me" that needs to be seen in this dark world but Him.

Philippians 2:15 so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe
2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.
Ephesians 5:14 ... for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

Revelation 21:18 (NIV) The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.

88. FOUNDATIONS B

The foundation of the city is beautiful- Foundations again?? Yes, they are important to God.

Usually foundations are out of sight and not known for their beauty because they are purely functional. However, here we see the whole building glorifies God, even the foundations. God likes the illustration of foundations. They are important in our journey down here. Before we leave this for the last time...do you have good foundations that will survive? Have you built your life on the sure foundation?

Hebrews 1:10 He also says, "In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

1 Timothy 3:15 if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

1 Corinthians 3:12 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw,

Luke 6:48 He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built.

Revelation 21:19 (NIV) The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.

89. INCREDIBLE GATES OF PEARL

The gates are made of one pearl – Pearls are a response to the wounding of the flesh of the oyster. These 1400 mile high pearls will forever remind us that our entrance to heaven was made because of his work on the cross. No one suffered like Jesus. Every time we enter the city we will think of the beautiful complete work of Christ for us.

We will walk on streets of gold- Today we pave streets with inferior but sturdy materials. It would not be appropriate to make a king's throne out of cement, asphalt or gravel. However, in heaven we will walk on what men have given their lives to on earth. Our walk in heaven will be on that which is pure, transparently pure.

How is your walk on earth today? Sometimes we get our values mixed up and consider something that is precious as mundane or common and things that are of little eternal importance as highly precious.

Thank you Lord for this reminder as I finish my race here.

Revelation 21:21 (NIV) The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass.

90. REMEMBER THE APOSTLES

The city has a beautiful foundation. On the foundation is written the names of the 12 Apostles. What an honor this is to be known as those who taught and built on the foundation of Christianity.

Matthew 10:1-4

Simon Peter

Andrew

James son of Zebedee

John;

Philip

Bartholomew

Thomas

Matthew the

Heaven 105

James son of Alphaeus,
Thaddaeus;
Simon the Zealot
~~Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.~~
Matthias

The Apostles will be honored by name. God will honor those 12 who followed Jesus and took the Gospel to the whole world.

We will be reminded of those who gave their life for the Lord and by faith established the foundation of the Church of Jesus Christ, “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.” Ephesians 2:20

Revelation 21:14 (NIV) The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

91. NO PLACE TO WORSHIP

In heaven there will be no specific place of worship – Worship of the Almighty and the Lamb will be everywhere throughout the city.

On earth we have experienced churches based on race, churches proudly based on national origin, and churches based on denominational beliefs that emphasize secondary even tertiary distinctives. We even have churches of the same denominational name that are divided! Many times the present members are not even able to explain why the division occurred. We have churches for young people, old people, rich people, poor people and even churches emphasizing a political party. Some churches are even based on a type of building and architecture. In this city that will be all gone there will be unity in truth.

Days of heaven on earth can occur now when we strive to keep the unity that God has given us.

John 4:21 Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

Psalm 133:1 How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!

John 17:23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Ephesians 4:3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Christ promised this unity if we will lift Him up. If other things or people are lifted up the unity cannot occur. A good friend of mine, who is now with the Lord, once told me to be careful about doctrinal minutiae. He said, “When we get to heaven we will probably find that

anyone of us has enough heresy to sink a battleship. So walk humbly and emphasize the main things.”

John 12:32 But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.”

Revelation 21:22 (NIV) I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

92. A NEW LIGHT

The stellar and lunar and planetary bodies will not be needed light up the New Jerusalem. The Bible uses the word “sun” 150 times, “moon” 60 times, “light” 250 times, “darkness” 200 times, and “stars” 50 times. These wonderful creations are a big part of our lives. Each one teaches us something about the glory of God. Christ is like the sun in his brightness and glory. We cannot gaze on his glory now because it is so great. The moon which has no light in and of itself reflects the glory of the sun much like the church should reflect Christ. We are called out of darkness into the light of Christ. And the starry heavens speak to us about his vastness and infinitude and his promises. They all declare the glory of God.

Someday these object lessons will be put away and we will have the real thing. "It truly will be the Jesus Christ Light and Power Company then." He is the source of light. He is light in its perfection. His light will not dim, burn out or eventually use up its fuel. Steady, perfect, light for eternity. No dark corner will exist. The glory of God is its light- His glory will radiate throughout the whole city shining in splendor. God’s glory is all we need throughout eternity --the perfect light.

The Lamb is its lamp- Jesus is the actual point of light.

Revelation 21:23 (NIV) The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

93. LOOK AT ALL THE PEOPLE

The nations will walk by its light- Redeemed peoples from every nation will walk in the Light of Christ in heaven. On earth the soil has been soaked with the blood of wars that many times are caused by one nation or both nations thinking that they are superior because of their race, language or skin color. The redeemed in heaven will breathe a sigh of relief knowing that this problem is now over-- forever. We will enjoy walking in peace with our brothers and sisters in this land. There will be no lip service, no hypocrisy, no hidden or bad attitude toward one another. There will be everlasting joy in his presence.

Kings of the earth will give their splendor to Jesus- The kings of earth from the past who are now part of the redeemed multitude will bring glory to the city by simply entering it. Christ will be clearly seen as the “King of Kings.”

Will we all look alike in heaven? Will we be cookie cutter people all looking the same with no distinctiveness?

It doesn't seem like that. The Lord did not accidentally have you born into some random country. Where you were born and to whom you were born was all part of His plan. In heaven, we will know where we came from and what our backgrounds were on earth. However, this time, we will look at all of this from a heavenly point of view. Remember, the Word of God will be there and it records the sins of mankind. Our minds will not be erased but we will now with unfettered mind we will see what God sees. Wouldn't that be wonderful to enjoy our differences without partiality and a proud judgmental attitude? Well get ready to stand with your palm branch in your hand and wearing your white robe standing shoulder to shoulder with those from "every nation, tribe, people and language."

On this day we will all speak one pure language. Confusion of languages was the sign of the judgment on the pride of those at the Tower of Babel. That confusion will be erased in our heavenly "country". (I am reminded that every time angels spoke to men throughout the Bible, their message was understood.)

Zephaniah 3:9 "Then will I purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD and serve him shoulder to shoulder.

Acts 17:26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

Revelation 7:9 After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every *nation, tribe, people and language*, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.

Revelation 21:24 (NIV) The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

94. WELCOME! COME ON IN.

The gates of the city will be open all the time- Gates of cities in Bible times were designed to keep the enemy out. They were defensive giving security to the citizens inside. The gates of heaven will never be shut. In heaven there will be a continuous welcome as we come and go. There will be coming and going. However, you will need no certificate, passport, documentation or proof of residency to enter this, the best of cities. Just a big friendly welcome to all the blood bought saints.

Once again John is told that there will be no night- We will have not have any night fears again, no shadows, no secret hidden things to surprise or hurt us. It will be "a land of fadeless day" Think of countless peoples all over the world throughout the centuries who have feared the night. Because of the ruthless, savage attacks of the marauding Vikings, Western Europeans prayed the following prayer for centuries:

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“Summa pia gratia nostra conservando corpora et custodita, de gente fera Normannica nos libera, quae nostra vastat, Deus, regna,”

“Our supreme and holy Grace, protect us and ours, deliver us, God, from the savage race of Northmen which lays waste our realms”.

Those days are now over. There is no need to be nervous, looking over your shoulder, waiting for the second shoe to drop, or listening for the creaking shoes of an attacker. It is over. You may now breathe a sigh of relief.

I will never forget when a veteran teacher came to our Christian School to teach. He was a wonderful history teacher that had come from a large public school. While at that school he was threatened by the administration that if he brought up the Bible, or religion, or the name of God ever in class that he could be in jeopardy of holding his position. For the first full year after he came to us he told me that he had a reflex action of looking at the door to the hallway before he talked about Jesus openly in our school. In his second year he reported to me that he truly entered into the fullness of the freedom our school had in declaring the Gospel. He finally exhaled and enjoyed his freedom to mention the Lord in his class. He was free to tell the students that History is actually “His Story”.

The beauty of this truth is that Christ has promised us His peace here and now. We can taste heaven on this rebellious planet.

**Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin?
The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.**

**Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed?
To do the will of Jesus, this is rest.**

**Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging round?
On Jesus' bosom naught but calm is found.**

**Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away?
In Jesus' keeping we are safe, and they.**

**Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown?
Jesus we know, and he is on the throne.**

**Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and ours?
Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.**

**It is enough: earth's struggles soon shall cease,
and Jesus call us to heaven's perfect peace.**

Revelation 21:25 (NIV) On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.

95. BRING IN THE GLORY

All peoples, from all nations will bring their glory to the city- In heaven; all peoples will be dissolved into the people of God. Once more it is mentioned that nations other than the nation of Israel will bring their glory and honor to Jesus. Any glory they have, any honor that they have, will be brought to Jesus.

I wonder how many rulers, kings, tribal leaders, or princes, throughout the centuries were believers? On this day we will find out. Those who have given their hearts to Christ will bring their glory and honor to the King.

Isn't that just like the Lord in our Christian lives? He saves us by grace. He gives us the will to serve Him. He gives us the Holy Spirit to empower us to guide us into what He called us to do. He gives us strength to run our race and then rewards us for running the race! Anything I will do is all of grace.

The same is true of heaven. Glory is brought to the city, the glory that had been given them by God in the first place.

Revelation 21:26 (NIV) The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.

96. KEPT OUT

Nothing impure will enter it- Scriptures teach us that righteousness is actually a very simple thing. It really is not complicated. Proverbs 4:18-19 The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day. But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.

How many types of impurities are there? There must be thousands and thousands of kinds of impurity after you consider all the variations and subsets of each. The works of the flesh are summarized in Galatians 5:19-20 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions

Nothing impure will ever enter this city. Neither the impurity of the mind, the body, the soul, or the spirit will be there, ever. Some of these sins are seen and very public and some are inner and never outwardly seen by others. None of them will ever slink into this city.

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

Nothing shameful will enter it-How many times have we brought shame on ourselves? How many people have tried to shame others? The Bible teaches us that the unsaved love shame- they glory in it.

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Philippians 3:19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.

Psalm 4:2 How long, O men, will you turn my glory into shame? How long will you love delusions and seek false gods? Selah

Nothing deceitful will enter it-How many times have I been deceived by a person? How many times have I made a bad buy or bought into a bad system of some kind? The answer is embarrassing. Some of us are more gullible than others. Some of us have been cheated by slick talking salesmen who are able to convince us to buy something we don't need or that will not work at all. No more "buyer beware" in this city. There is no need for deceit in this city of light. The very reason for deception now is that the deceiver knows that his deceiving ways will not stand the scrutiny of inspection in the light. In our heavenly home everything is out in the open and subject to His light.

Those whose names are in the Lamb's book of life will be there- This verse warns that only those whose names are in the Lamb's book of life can enter.

Revelation 21:27 (NIV) Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Lord, I care not for riches, neither silver nor gold;
I would make sure of Heaven, I would enter the fold.
In the book of Thy kingdom, with its pages so fair,
Tell me, Jesus, my Savior, is my name written there?

Refrain

*Is my name written there,
On the page white and fair?
In the book of Thy kingdom,
Is my name written there?*

Lord, my sins they are many, like the sands of the sea,
But Thy blood, O my Savior, is sufficient for me;
For Thy promise is written, in bright letters that glow,
"Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them like snow."

Refrain

Oh! That beautiful city, with its mansions of light,
With its glorified beings, in pure garments of white;
Where no evil thing cometh to despoil what is fair;
Where the angels are watching, yes, my name's written there

97. MINERAL AND VEGETABLE

We will see the throne of God and the river that comes from it. I am reminded that Job stated,

Job 19:25-28 I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.

And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes--I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

Job understood the implications of the resurrection. He knew that he would see God. I too will see God and see his throne with my very own eyes.

We will see the river with no source flowing – I need to quote from Dr. Constable’s commentary now.

"Up to this chapter, the New Jerusalem seems to be all mineral and no Vegetable. Its appearance is as the dazzling display of a fabulous jewelry Store; we wonder if there is no soft grass to sit upon, no green trees to Enjoy, and no water to drink or food to eat. However, here are introduced The elements which add a rich softness to this city of elaborate beauty."

The water of life with no beginning and no end will proceed from the throne of God and His Son, the Lamb. Throughout eternity when I view the throne, I will be reminded that I am satisfied, and refreshed in His presence. He is my all in all!

The last word in this verse must be mentioned and enjoyed. I am there because of the Lamb. Not the Lion, but the Lamb. Throughout eternity my song will be that of the Lamb. Worthy is the Lamb!

Revelation 22:1 (NIV) Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb

98. GROWING THINGS

There will be things growing fruitfully in heaven- The moon will be gone so there will no longer be a lunar calendar. A new type of calendar will be in effect which define months. The picture here is that rather than bearing fruit a few months of the year, this tree will perpetually bear fruit. Heaven is not static, sanitized, and sterile, From this we see that it has growth and change.

There will be fruit from this tree- This fruit which we may eat, symbolizes our participation in the life of God. This abundance of life will cause us to ‘enjoy perpetual health.’”

There will be healing – The leaves of this tree will somehow enrich heavenly life making it full and satisfying and bringing “ceaseless provision.”

Some of the Lord’s own don’t experience a great amount of health on earth. Many suffer prolonged illnesses and even constant pain. These dear saints groan and travail but those who have “20/20” vision can see what lies ahead – healing for all peoples who are citizens of heaven.

We will eat of this tree and live forever.

Revelation 22:2 (NIV) down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

99. NO CURSE

No mark of the curse will be there- The curse will be removed and we will eat from the tree of life. In heaven, there will be no violence in nature, no thorns, no weeds, no mold, no disease, no storms, and no distance from God.

We will serve him- We will have work to do to in heaven. It will be priestly service for God and the Lamb. Work is not a result of sin. Hard work was. Before man fell he worked in the Garden.

Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 2:15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Since we are made in the image of God, we love to work. Work will fulfill our need to accomplish as in the Garden before the fall. What a joy it is to serve the Savior. On earth our prayer should always be, "Lord give me a way to express my love for you by serving you."

God and His Son will be there on the throne- We once again notice that serving "him" is serving God and the Lamb, they are "essentially one being".

Revelation 22:3 (NIV) No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.

100. THE FACE OF JESUS

We will see the face of Jesus- We will enjoy an intimate personal relationship with God. There is no mystery religion here, no veil, no smoke and mirrors. We will see His face. There will be no distance only personal closeness. How many times have we travelled land and sea to make our way back to loved ones? Phone calls are good. Texting and I-photos are wonderful but we always want to see the face of a loved one. We want to see them face to face. That will happen for the last and final time.

His name will be in the front of our minds- Nothing will ever separate us from our thoughts of Him. My mind will not have any competition with evil and unworthy thoughts. On earth I want to think of Jesus all the time but it is so hard to do. There are so many things that

can occupy my mind. What a joy it will be to think about Him all the time. I will only entertain the highest thoughts forever. My mind will be used in exactly the way it was intended by its Maker.

Revelation 22:4 (NIV) They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

101. NO NIGHT AGAIN

There will be no night in heaven- How often do we need to prepare for the night now? It makes up half of our lives. Day and Night. In heaven the night will disappear. There will be no secret dark places to be concerned about. No creatures of darkness to fear. We will never again need preparation to go into the darkness.

He will give light – A difference is seen here from the statements earlier about light in the city. In chapter 21 the emphasis is on the glory of the city.

Revelation 21:23 -25 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.

This reference (22:5) emphasizes the fact of how the light will affect the city dwellers. What a delight it will be for us to be given light.

We will reign with him forever- He chooses to have us reign with him. We who were rebels on an earth that crucified the Son of God are now ruling with the King of Kings. All because of grace. How long will that last? Forever and ever. This indicates “not timelessness nor absence of time but extension of time- as far back and as far forward as one could imagine- time in its wholeness”

Revelation 22:5 (NIV) There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

102. IT IS TRUE

What we believe about heaven is true- We can trust this incredible doctrine about our future. The Book of Revelation ends with strong statements about its truthfulness, its veracity, and its accuracy. A strong threat and a warning is given to the one who tries to add or take from it.

Revelation 22:18,19 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

Clearly it is there to be seen – DO NOT TAMPER WITH THIS BOOK. It is true. It just needs to be believed.

All this will come to pass shortly- We will be there just around the corner – don't give up.

Revelation 22:6 (NIV) The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place."

103. WE WILL BE CLEAN

We will be clean in his sight- Praise God! I will have no hidden embarrassments, no surprise reveals, no skeletons in the closet and no "gotchas" in that day. It is over. I have eternal life in its fullness. I am clean and accepted. By faith in Christ I have total forgiveness and readiness to live in eternity. I am ready to go.

We will have a right to the tree of life- It belongs to us by right. He said so. I can freely go through the gates into the city. I have access, unfettered, access with authority. It is all because of grace.

Revelation 22:14 (NIV) "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city."

104. OUTSIDE OF HEAVEN

We are now six verses from the end of this great Revelation. Lines are drawn very clearly at the end of the book. God is not politically correct. That is a disease of thinking that affects us in this generation. It will be not be a part of God's kingdom. It has come from the kingdom of darkness. Listen to God about what he thinks the way things really are!

There will be no dogs in the city- There will be no fearful, unclean, vicious animals. There will be no teachers of false doctrines

Philippians 3:2 Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh. No magic arts – There will be no Harry Potter types (even "just for fun"), no voodoo, no Ouija, no black magic, no genies, no ghosts, no evil spirits., no vampires, and no monsters.

Sexually immoral- There will be no sexual predators, no evil men with ulterior motives, no men gaining power over others, manipulating and ruining lives.

No murderers – There will be no fear of someone taking my life, or the lives of others. They are not welcome and will not enter.

Falsehood – There will not be those who traffic in lies, and deception. Those who don't love the truth but oppose of truth will be outside.

Revelation 22:15 (NIV) Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

105. INVITATION

What a wonderful way to end this wonderful book! This book tells us so much about heaven.

How does it end? It ends with an invitation.

We will be welcomed by the Spirit of God and His church- What a “winsome” invitation is this. What a powerful invitation to anyone who hears it.

The Scripture closes with an invitation. Heaven Is there for you. It is a gift and cannot be worked for or gained by any merit, religious or otherwise.

Free gift – Once again as Scripture closes, salvation is seen as a free gift.

The Bible opens with water and ends with water –water is the source of life now and a symbol of eternal life. Are you thirsty? As an unbeliever, He can quench your thirst eternally. As a believer he can continue to meet your needs. There is no need to be thirsty in our walk in Christ.

Revelation 22:17 (NIV) The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.