

My Grandfather's House

John 14:2-3 HCSB In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also.

Introduction:

My grandfather, Ray Curtis, was a wonderful man. He was tall, handsome and had eyes the color of the sky on a bright summer day. He had an infectious smile that could brighten any room. He loved his wife unconditionally. Even when Alzheimer's disease made her mean, every time he looked at her, you could see that he saw the teenage beauty queen he'd married so many years before. He served her faithfully until her body caught up to her mind and also died. After a "suitable" mourning period, no one was surprised that all the widow ladies in town began sending my grandfather pies and cakes and admiring looks!

My grandfather used to live in Huntington, West Virginia, but he doesn't live there any more. He has moved to heaven - to the New Jerusalem. I'd like to talk to you this morning about my grandfather's new home - about his condition this morning.

I. Will we know each other in Heaven?

This age-old question comes to mind when a precious loved one has passed away. Several passages of Scripture point to an answer to the question.



The disciples seemed to intuitively recognize Moses and Elijah.¹

- **Luke 9:28-33 HCSB** About eight days after these words, He took along Peter, John, and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. (29) As He was praying, the appearance of His face changed, and His clothes became dazzling white. (30) Suddenly, two men were talking with Him--Moses and Elijah. (31) They appeared in glory and were speaking of His death, which He was about to accomplish in Jerusalem. (32) Peter and those with him were in a deep sleep, and when they became fully awake,

they saw His glory and the two men who were standing with Him. (33) As the two men were departing from Him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it's good for us to be here! Let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"--not knowing what he said.

The rich man, Lazarus, and Abraham certainly recognized each other.²

¹ Image found at <http://www.dst-corp.com/james/PaintingsOfJesus/Jesus08.jpg>

² Rich Man in Hell by Christian Dare at "Christian Dare Art"

- **Luke 16:22-23 HCSB** One day the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. (23) And being in torment in Hades, he looked up and saw Abraham a long way off, with Lazarus at his side.



Jesus' glorified body was a real, tangible object, and His disciples recognized Him after His resurrection.

- **Luke 24:36-43 HCSB** And as they were saying these things, He Himself stood among them. He said to them, "Peace to you!" (37) But they were startled and terrified and thought they were seeing a ghost. (38) "Why are you troubled?" He asked them. "And why do doubts arise in your hearts? (39) Look at My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself! Touch Me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have." (40) Having said this, He showed them His hands and feet. (41) But while they still could not believe because of *their* joy and were amazed, He asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" (42) So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, (43) and He took it and ate in their presence.

Our resurrection bodies, likewise, will be real and recognizable. We shall know even as we are known.

- **1 Corinthians 13:12 HCSB** (12) For now we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, as I am fully known.

Paul certainly expected to see and know the Thessalonian believers in heaven. He said they would be his joy and crown in heaven.

- **1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 HCSB** (19) For who is our hope, or joy, or crown of boasting in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? Is it not you? (20) For you are our glory and joy!

The Bible comforts us with the assurance that we will be with our loved ones forever.

- **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 HCSB** (13) We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, concerning those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. (14) Since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in the same way God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. (15) For we say this to you by a revelation from the Lord: We who are still alive at the Lord's coming will certainly have no advantage over those who have fallen asleep. (16) For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the archangel's voice, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (17) Then we who are still alive will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will always be with the Lord. (18) Therefore encourage one another with these words.

That's not much comfort if we can't recognize each other or fellowship with each other, is it?

II. What is my grandfather doing in Heaven?

He is aware of events on earth. Some people visualize heaven as white-robed saints sitting on the edges of clouds playing harps. However, the author of the book of Hebrews indicates that those who are in heaven are aware of what is happening on Earth, referring to them as "a great cloud of witnesses".³



- **Hebrews 12:1 HCSB** Therefore since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily ensnares us, and run with endurance the race that lies before us,

This is reiterated by the Apostle John who relates that the martyred saints are conscious of the ongoing persecution of the believers on Earth and are crying out to God for justice.

- **Revelation 6:8-10 HCSB** And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. The horseman on it was named Death, and

Hades was following after him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth. (9) When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those slaughtered because of God's word and the testimony they had. (10) They cried out with a loud voice: "O Lord, holy and true, how long until You judge and avenge our blood from those who live on the earth?"

A cursory study of the picture John gives in Revelation 21–22 shows that, among other things, these four activities will occupy our attention:

1. **Exploring the Golden City.** Until the Messiah establishes His throne on Earth, the New Jerusalem resides in heaven. John was given a "city tour" of the New Jerusalem, and his description is given to prepare us for our own trip (Revelation 21:10–22:3). All splendors aside though, what truly makes heaven spectacular is that we will be forever in God's presence. As the psalmist so poignantly expressed,
 - **Psalms 16:11 HCSB** You reveal the path of life to me; in Your presence is abundant joy; in Your right hand are eternal pleasures.
2. **Serving.** This is the Bible's most definitive verse about our eternal occupation (Revelation 22:3).
 - **Revelation 22:3 HCSB** and there will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him.

³ "Forefathers" found at <http://frted.files.wordpress.com/2008/12/forefathers1.jpg>

3. **Fellowshipping with Jesus.** More than anything Jesus wants to have a relationship with us. All of human history has been a long, poignant story of God reaching out to restore what we lost in Eden. (Revelation 22:4).
 - **Revelation 22:4 HCSB** They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.
4. **Reigning with Him.** (Revelation 22:5).
 - **Revelation 22:5 HCSB** Night will no longer exist, and people will not need lamplight or sunlight, because the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign forever and ever.
5. **Worshipping.** (Revelation 22:6–9).
 - **Revelation 22:6-9 HCSB** Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent His angel to show His servants what must quickly take place." (7) "Look, I am coming quickly! Blessed is the one who keeps the prophetic words of this book." (8) I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had shown them to me. (9) But he said to me, "Don't do that! I am a fellow slave with you, your brothers the prophets, and those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

III. How can I be sure that I will get to see him again?

Heaven is a place for those who have received Jesus Christ as Lord.

- **John 14:1-6 HCSB** "Your heart must not be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me. (2) In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. (3) If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also. (4) You know the way where I am going." (5) "Lord," Thomas said, "we don't know where You're going. How can we know the way?" (6) Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Conclusion:

Believe in God. Believe in His Messiah, the Lord Jesus. Acknowledge your need for the Messiah's mediation on your behalf. Make Christ your King and dedicate yourself to obediently serving Him. Do this and you too will discover the Way, the Truth and the Life. And who knows? Perhaps you'll get a chance to meet my grandfather.