

THE PLEASANT VIEW PLUMB LINE

"...then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel..." (Amos 7:8)

WHY I WANT TO GO TO HEAVEN

Every person that has lived upon the face of this earth has a soul that will exist eternally. When God created man He created him in His own image (Genesis 1:26-27). Therefore, man is far different from the rest of the creation in that he has a spirit that will survive the death of his body. James says that the body without the spirit is dead (James 2:26). Yet one's soul continues to exist apart from his body. Solomon wrote; "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). A very serious thought that each of us should contemplate is: where will by soul be 100 years from now, 1,000 years from now, 10,000 years from now? Every soul shall exist eternally in one of two places: heaven, or hell (Matthew 25:46). We decide in this life where we will be in the next life. Our destiny is determined by the road which we are traveling (Matthew 7:13-14). The purpose of this article is to encourage us to so live that heaven will be the home of our soul. Excuse first person references, but perhaps this will make it more personal to each reader. I want to go to heaven; I speak for all others who want to go to heaven.

Those in Heaven.

Think of the great people of the Bible that will be there. Abraham, a great man of God will be there (Hebrews 11:10-16). One now can only read and study about this great man of faith but in heaven there will be a much closer fellowship to be enjoyed. Think of the prophets mentioned in the Bible as Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Amos. Think of the apostles, who suffered immensely for the cause of Christ (Acts 5:41; 12:4). All of the faithful throughout all the ages will be there. More importantly, however, think of the close fellowship one will enjoy with God the Father, Jesus Christ His Son, and with the Holy Spirit.

Contrariwise, in hell one will not enjoy the precious fellowship with such as mentioned above. In hell one's fellowship will be with the immoral and the defiled of all ages. Read carefully I Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8 and see the ones whom will populate hell.

Land of Paradise.

Revelation 21 and 22 picture heaven as a most beautiful place to behold. Not only is it a beautiful place, but it is a place with no more earthly woes. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4). Here is a picture of a loving father who wipes away the tears of His precious child. Also pointed: there is no more death, sorrow, crying, or pain in this fair land. If we knew of such a place as this on earth, all would have the same zip-code! Yet, such a place can truly be ours in heaven—if we want it!

In hell, however, there will be great pain. Here disobedient souls will be tormented for ever and ever, and shall have no rest day or night (Revelation 14:11; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

God Wants Me to Go to Heaven.

One should never think that God doesn't want him in heaven. He does! He has tre-

WHAT IS MAN?

Text: _____

I. Man is _____

Notes:

II. Man is _____

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III. Man is _____

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PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Text: _____

I. _____ Do I Prepare?

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II. _____ Do I Prepare?

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III. _____ Do I Prepare?

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mendously demonstrated this fact in that He created man in His own image (Genesis 1:26-27), gave His only Begotten Son (John 3:16); gave the Bible as our spiritual road map to heaven (2 Timothy 3:16-17). One thing to remember, however, is God will not take us to heaven contrary to our will (2 Peter 3:9). Also, since sin cannot dwell with God, one must obtain forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ (John 14:6).

I Want My Family There.

Perhaps some reader of these lines is not a member of the Lord's church, or for some reason has become an unfaithful child of God. Do you realize that you are teaching your loved ones by your example. No doubt you want your children and loved ones to go to heaven when they leave this life. What are we teaching our children now? Are we teaching them being a Christian is not really important? Are we teaching them that jobs and recreation come before the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33)? Children deserve Christian parents who will teach them the ways of God. God required parents in the Old Testament era to do so (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). He likewise commands fathers to do the same in the Christian age (Ephesians 6:4). How sad it will be that precious children will grow up and be lost because the very ones that should have loved them the most neglected their responsibilities to teach (by word and example) them the word of God!

Do you not desire to go to heaven? You can know that you are saved. Paul wrote, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1). Do you have this assurance? If not, why not believe in Christ (John 8:24), repent of your sins (Luke 13:3), confess your faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God (Acts 8:37), and then be baptized for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38). Upon doing so, the Lord will add you to His church (Acts 2:47). If you are an erring child of God, why not come back to God today by repentance and confession of your sins (1 John 1:8-10). Will heaven be the home of your soul? Jesus said: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul" (Matthew 16:26)?

-Billy Bland

[Editor's Note: I read this article the other day on brother Jackson's website (www.christiancourier.com) and found its content interesting, especially the note of response. Richard Dawkins remains one of the most outspoken and influential atheists in the world. I hope its inclusion is beneficial and educational.]

A NOTE FROM RICHARD DAWKINS

Richard Dawkins is a British atheist who has attempted to find some degree of fame in recent years by defaming the existence of God with the use of some of the most virulent language of which the depraved human tongue or pen is capable. To those who know no better, he seems credible. To those to whom logic is a total stranger, bluff and bluster pass for argument.

In November of 2006, we published an article under the title, Richard Dawkins—God Hater. It was a response to a laudatory article that appeared in a national magazine regarding Dawkins' book, *The God Delusion*.

Dawkins is the most arrogant atheist to which this writer has ever had the misfortune to be exposed, and I have in my library some of the most celebrated works of that misguided persuasion. In his *Delusion* tirade the author is ambitious enough to boast: "If this book works as I intend, religious readers who open it will be atheists when they put it down." As Shakespeare has Cassius say to Julius Caesar: "Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed that he hath grown so great?"

The following year, Inter-Varsity Press published a book under the title, *The Dawkins Delusion? - Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine*. It was authored by Alister E. McGrath and Joanna Collicut McGrath (the bulk of the volume is attributed to Alister McGrath). Dr. McGrath, who holds a doctorate in molecular biophysics, is now professor of historical theology at Oxford University—and he is a former atheist.

In his academic travels, however, he repudiated his atheistic heritage. His study of the history of Christianity led to his belief in God and the validity of the Christian religion. He writes: "I had originally intended to spend my life in scientific research but found that my discovery of Christianity led me to study its history and ideas in great depth." He identifies himself as a "Christian," using the term in its most societal generic sense.

Though his volume is relatively brief, he takes Dawkins to the proverbial woodshed. I recommend this diminutive volume.

Dawkin's literary "seisure is highly volatile and loaded with incendiary jargon. It is long on rage and short on logic. Rarely does one encounter an effort that is so utterly void of one of the most fundamental principles of logical thought, namely, the law of rationality—no conclusion may be drawn in the absence of adequate credible evidence.

The evidence for the existence of God is overwhelming, the evidence supporting atheism is a black hole of despair from which no ray of light is apparent. The Dawkins illusion is void of rational conclusion. In Texas, Dawkin's effort might be described as all hat and no cattle. Referring to Dawkins' book, Professor McGrath asks: "Is the case for atheism really so weak that it has to be bolstered by such half-baked nonsense?"

I saw all of this to make a very brief point. A few days ago I received an e-mail from the celebrated atheist himself. No, it was not an attempt to respond to my article in any intelligent way. It simply was this:

Friday, October 2, 2009

Richard Dawkins

England

Your delusion has been noted.

He could have spared himself four words, and simply said, "Ouch!"

-Wayne Jackson