

Where Is Everything Going in the Future?

Part 2 – Heaven

Interview with Dr. Erwin Lutzer

[Ed. Note: This article is excerpted from interviews with Dr. Erwin Lutzer, pastor of Moody Church in Chicago, IL. These interviews were conducted by Dr. John Ankerberg as part of The John Ankerberg Show. Edited for publication.]

What actually happens at the point of transition from life, to death, to heaven?

One day, while my wife and I were traveling, I felt some real heaviness on my chest. And this fear came over me that I might be dying. I thought I might be having a heart attack. Well, thankfully, it wasn't that, of course, but I began to wonder, "What would it be like just at that moment of death?" And it's amazing that driving along like that, the thing that came to my mind first is that I knew that if I died at that moment, that I would see angels. Of course, those angels would then take us into the presence of Christ. That's what Luke 16 teaches. It says that the rich man died and was buried; and Lazarus, the poor man, died and he was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. So I don't know about you, but I expect to see angels when I die.

Sometime ago I read in *Christianity Today* a marvelous story by Steve Saint, who is the son of one of the missionary martyrs who died in the jungles of Ecuador. He said that there are people living today who say that when those killings were taking place, when those five missionaries were being martyred, they actually heard beings singing in the trees. And today some of these people say that they did not know what the singing was until years later when they heard Christian records.

Well, we can't always build our theology on experiences, but an experience like that would be perfectly consistent with the Scriptures because the angels are watching us. They are sent "to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation." So one of the things that we shall see, when we die, I believe, is angels.

But, of course, we want to see the Lord Jesus Christ because He is the One whom we love. Now, remember, we are talking about those who know Jesus Christ as Savior, you who have believed in Him.

But what actually happens at that point of transition? What happens when you die and a moment later? Oftentimes we talk about how different heaven is going to be.

What I'd like to do first is talk about the things that remain the same when you die. As a pastor I've often discovered that people forget that we are the same people after we die as we are here.

Now, of course, we're different in the sense that we have a different way of living: we have a new nature, we are not sinners anymore. But here's what I'd like to point out. **Personal knowledge continues in heaven.** Remember the rich man that Jesus told about in Luke 16? Here he is in *Hades*. He is tormented. And what does he say? He says, "Send Lazarus so that he might go and preach to my five brothers so that they do not come to this same place of torment." Notice that compassion and knowledge continued. He remembered his brothers.

Remember the Mount of Transfiguration where you have Peter, James and John. They are up on the mountain and they meet Moses and Elijah. There is, of course, sharing of information and so forth. I like to think of the fact that when we get to heaven we won't need name tags. And I base that on the fact that I think that Peter, James and John instantly knew Moses and Elijah. But furthermore, the Bible says, "We shall know even as we are fully known." So you die and you go to heaven. Do you remember your family on earth? Of course you remember your family on earth. Personal knowledge continues.

Personal love continues. I mentioned the rich man. He was concerned about his brothers. When I speak to a widow, and she says, "Pastor Lutzer, does my husband remember that he was married to me?" Of course he remembers that he was married to you. Does he remember your children? Of course he remembers your children. He remembers where he was in his own family tree and who he is. He's the same person over there as he is here. So, let's keep that in mind.

You'll remember there is that passage of Scripture that talks about the fact that Jesus, in responding to an issue that was brought to Him said that in heaven we are "like angels who neither marry nor are given in marriage." Some people have misinterpreted that. They think it means that in heaven we are going to be sexless; that just like angels are neither male nor female, apparently, that in heaven we will not be male or female. I strongly disagree. What Jesus was simply saying is that there are no baby angels and there is no marriage in heaven.

But in heaven your mother will still be your mother. Your father will be known as your father. These kinds of bits and pieces of information and concern will be known—I can assure you of that.

People often ask me, "Well, our loved ones in heaven, do they know what we're doing here on earth?" I would simply say this, that there's no evidence in the Scriptures that they can see us. My own hunch is that they've got better things to do than to watch us. They are in the presence of Jesus. They are rejoicing.

But I would say that, if they wanted to have an update, I really do believe that the Lord Jesus Christ would give it to them. I can't imagine that in heaven they would desire information that Jesus Christ would not grant them.

One day the seven-year-old daughter of an associate pastor at the Moody Church said something very interesting. Her grandfather died, and she said,

“Daddy, can we pray to Jesus to get a message to Grandpa?” Now, my associate said that he was somewhat taken aback. He had never been asked that question before. But as he began to think about it, he thought, “You know, there’s nothing in my theology that says that we can’t pray to Jesus to get a message to Grandpa.”

Now, you think of the wisdom of that little girl. She knew that if anything, you pray to Jesus to get a message to Grandpa. You don’t pray to Grandpa to get a message to Jesus. All that I know is that in heaven the needs and the desires of people will be fulfilled. And if they want updates on what is happening here on earth, I can assume that those will be granted to them.

Let me tell you something else that continues. **Personal feelings continue.** I need to stress this because sometimes we think of heaven in such metaphysical ways that we forget that we’re the same people on the other side. For example, there is joy in heaven. Even Asaph in the Old Testament said that there is joy: “Thou dost guide me with thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory.” In the 16th Psalm it says, “At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.”

Do people, after death, even have a sense of justice? Oh, yes. The Book of Revelation talks about those who are underneath the throne, and then it says they had died and they were beneath the throne and they kept saying, “Lord, how long will it be until you avenge those who have put us to death?”

Let me say also that in heaven I think that **various activities continue.** By that I mean, scientists may continue to do their work. They may continue to explore the vastness of the universe. Then, of course, I can imagine also musicians doing their work. Our leader of worship at the Moody Church sometimes tells me that when we get to heaven, he’s still going to have something to do, but as a preacher, I’m going to be out of work.

I want you to know that I believe that in heaven “the ideas of God,” said Jonathan Edwards, “**The ideas of God will continue** to eternity.” I like to think of it this way. We will begin knowing God, but our knowledge of Him will be constantly increasing and we will never exhaust the knowledge of the Lord our God.

What kind of body will we have in heaven?

What kind of a body do the saints who are in heaven today have? We know that the great emphasis in the New Testament is on the Resurrection. First Corinthians 15 says, “We shall be raised.” Paul anticipates that and it is so important to our theology.

Well, if people in heaven today do not yet have a body, how do they communicate? There are two different views that have been given about this. First of all, there are those who believe that we have an intermediate body; that is, that God creates a body that the saints in heaven can use until they get their permanent resurrected one. Now, that’s a plausible theory, but I have to wonder, “What happens to that body at the day of resurrection? Is it just thrown away, annihilated, discarded?”

There might be another explanation that I want you to think about. Possibly, our souls, after we die, take on the characteristics of a body. Now, that’s more plausible

than it seems. Listen to this text from the Book of Revelation: “And when he broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who have been slain because of the Word of God and because of the testimony which they had maintained; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell upon the earth.’” Now, that’s what the text says. The souls were beneath the altar and look at what they were doing. They were crying out loud. They were speaking. They were clothed with white garments.

I can’t understand that mystery, but maybe what God does is enable the souls of those who go to heaven to have those characteristics which they need to communicate. There needs to be communication with words and what have you. There needs to be some visual sight of these individuals so that they recognize one another and are in the presence of Christ. And just possibly, it is that the soul is able to do that.

But here’s the bottom line—let’s not miss that which is most important—when you die as a Christian, you are immediately in the presence of Christ. You are immediately conscious. There is no break of consciousness. And, as a result of that, you know that all of the faculties that you had here on earth, all of your abilities, carry over to the other side. Of that we can be certain.

Dwight L. Moody, before he died, said, “Soon you shall read in the newspapers that D. L. Moody has died.” He said, “Do not believe it, for in that moment I shall be more alive than I have ever been.”

I like what Chet Bitterman said. Following the death of his son as a missionary martyr, Chet said, “We have eight living children. Seven are on earth and one is in heaven.” It is really true that the moment you die, you are more alive than you have ever been.

What are the differences between our bodies now and the new bodies that God will give to us when we get to heaven?

I’d like to take a moment to discuss the resurrection body, because that’s the body that we shall have permanently. In 1 Corinthians 15, the Apostle Paul makes four contrasts between this body and the one that we shall have.

And by the way, before I get into those contrasts, there are some people who think that God is going to create these bodies *ex nihilo*, that is to say, “Out of nothing.” No! There is continuity between the body that you have today and the one that you will have. You see, when the disciples went to the tomb of Christ on Easter morning, when they went there, God didn’t just create a brand new body for the Lord Jesus Christ and leave His physical body in the tomb. No, there was continuity. And that’s why they were able to recognize Him. And He could even say to Thomas, “Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing.”

Everything that we know about the resurrection body of Jesus really applies to us. As I think about this, not a one of us would like to die, but it is exciting, isn’t it? Because the Scripture says that eventually “**we shall be like Him**... For we shall

see Him as He is.” What a fantastic hope God gives to us in the Scriptures.

1. *Sown a perishable body; raised imperishable*

Well, very quickly, let’s look at what these contrasts are. First of all, it says, in 1 Corinthians 15, “We are sown a perishable body; we are raised imperishable.”

Why don’t you come with me—let’s do some hospital visitation. We go through the hallways and in this room, here’s a young mother, 24-years-old, two small children. She’s dying of cancer.

We go across the hall and we visit a man who has had a heart attack and the question is whether he is going to make it or whether he is going to die.

We go down the hall and we discover that someone else is dying from a very rare disease and the doctors do not even know its cause.

And all the way down, we see the deterioration of the body. And the Scripture says that just a kernel is put into the ground—and there is continuity between the kernel and the stalk, between the acorn and the tree—in the very same way a person is buried and then they are raised imperishable. Imperishable.

2. *Sown in dishonor, raised in glory*

Paul also tells us that it is “sown in dishonor.” I know that the funeral industry today is able to do some marvelous things with bodies, but the fact of the matter is that every time a person dies, there is that sense of hopelessness, of helplessness, and death is not pretty. The Scripture says here, “It is sown in dishonor, but it is raised in glory.”

You take the most humble Christian you’ve ever met—maybe even someone you don’t like very much and they’re believers in Jesus Christ and they die. They are raised, they will receive a body that is a blaze, really, of glory—a body like that of Jesus Christ. A body like that of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful thing we have to look forward to.

3. *Sown in weakness, raised in power*

It is “sown in weakness.” I don’t have to say anything about that because we all know that, don’t we? But it is “raised in power.”

4. *Sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body*

It is “sown a natural body,” the Scripture says, “it is raised a spiritual body.”

I need to clarify something because you have all of these ideas prevalent. Some people think that when we die we’re going to be angels. No, that’s not true. The angels have their separate existence. Some people also think that we’re going to be spirits. No, you’re not going to be a spirit. You’re going to be a spiritual body but there’s a big difference. Remember, after the Resurrection Jesus said to the disciples, “Touch me. Handle me, and see. A spirit does not have flesh and bones.” So you can see that we are going to have a body like that of Jesus Christ.

Now, mind you, it will be able to go through doors. It will not be subject to the limitations that we know in this life because our body is going to be like that of Jesus Christ.

I like to point out at funerals that when we say that this person is in heaven, we're not saying that just to make people feel better. Sometimes we preachers are expected to say some wonderful things about those who have died. No, my friend; we say it because if they have believed in Jesus Christ, it is true! It is true because Christ is the Savior of the world. "He who believes in Me has everlasting life." And that means you can go from this life to the next and Christ carries you all the way through to the very throne room of God.

Why are you convinced that heaven is real?

There's a story I love to tell, because it talks to us about how real death is and how real heaven is. In Iowa there was a little girl who was dying. The pastor came to visit her one Saturday morning and she looked up and she said, "I want to go to heaven but they're letting Mamie in ahead of me." Then a little while later she said, "And now they're letting Gramps go in ahead of me." As time went on, the pastor had to leave. He discovered a few hours later that the little girl died. The pastor decided that he would check on who these people were. Who was Mamie? Who was Gramps? He discovered that Mamie was a little girl who used to live in the neighborhood, but had moved to New York State. Gramps was a friend of the family who had moved to the Southwest. He tracked them down and would you believe that both of them died that Saturday morning?

I want you to know that death is real but heaven is very real. And that little girl actually saw the entrance to heaven and saw those people go in. Now, of course we don't build our theology on this, we build it upon the Scriptures. But an experience like that is consistent with what the Bible teaches. It makes sense that there are those who die who, during that period of transition—especially in the days before tranquilizers and sedatives were given to people, they died with their faculties intact—they could already see the spirit world. Jesus died that way, in fact. He refused what was given to Him. That does not mean that we should not use pain-killers and things like that. I'm just simply saying that the experience of seeing the other side is a very, very real one.

What does the Bible tell us about heaven?

One day a little girl was looking at pictures of Jesus in a storybook. That night the little girl dreamt about Jesus. The next morning she said to her parents, "I dreamed about Jesus and He's a hundred times better than the pictures." Well, I think that the time is going to come when you and I are going to agree that He's a hundred times better than anything that we could possibly say about Him. And even eye is not able to grasp and ear is not able to hear and tongue is not able to speak all of the wonders that God has prepared for those who love Him.

What we'd like to do is to help us to understand heaven a little better by looking at what the Bible calls "the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," the text says in Revelation 21. Just this past Saturday I attended a wedding. Beautiful bride adorned. We all know what goes into that dress, don't we? We know how much it costs, those of us who have

had daughters who have been married. But the whole emphasis is on the bride and God makes them beautiful, even more beautiful on the day of their wedding.

Now, what can we say about the New Jerusalem? First of all, I want to say a word about its size. Listen to the words of Scripture: “And the city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod 1500 miles its length and width and height are equal.”

Now, when you stop to think about it, you realize that the New Jerusalem could either be a cube 1500 miles square, or it could also be a pyramid, because it talks about its height and then its base being 1500 miles. Let’s suppose that it is a cube. Do you know that the New Jerusalem would have 396,000 stories, each one half the size of the United States? Each story 20 feet high, if you take it literally, 1500 miles by 1500 miles—that’s lots of room. It’s enough for the Redeemed of the Old Testament. It’s enough for the Redeemed of the New Testament. And it’s enough for you.

And you know, I believe that there’s a crown that only you can wear. There may be a condominium—and I’m putting this into language that we can understand—there may be a condominium with your name on it. The Bible says that there’s a place reserved in heaven for you. I like that. I’ve been to restaurants where there is this long line. But, if you have a reservation, you can walk past the line and immediately be seated—because it’s reserved. And there is a place reserved in heaven for you. Heaven has enough room for you. It has enough room for the saints of all the ages.

You say, “Pastor Lutzer, what if I am stuck on the thousandth floor or the ten thousandth floor and all of the activity is in the downstairs lounge? Well, I want you to know that’s no problem, because remember this—we learned this previously—that when we have our resurrected bodies, we will be like Christ. Do you remember how effortlessly He traveled; how He could be in Jerusalem and then be in Galilee, or be in Galilee and then be in Jerusalem? Or how He went through doors because He had a body whose molecular structure was different and therefore was not limited by matter? And you know that in heaven the thought is going to be the movement. If you say, “I want to be where the action is” and you want to travel in a certain direction or to a certain place, you simply desire to do that, you choose to do that, and so far as we know, the travel is effortless and you will arrive there. So we have all of that to look forward to in the heavenly Jerusalem. It is indeed a place. You know, Jesus said, “I am going to prepare a place for you,” and this is the place that He went to prepare. And He spoke and it was created.

What will we do in heaven?

Another question that people oftentimes ask is, “What are we going to be doing in heaven? What is our occupation going to be?”

Well, it’s not going to be like that Sunday School child who thought that heaven was going to be like sitting in a church service where you begin in the hymnal with number one, you sing all the way through, and when you’re finished, you start over again and sing the same songs. Heaven is not going to be boring.

God is going to have work for us to do. For example, it says, first of all, that

we're going to worship God. Revelation 5 places God right in the midst of the throne and then it talks about the elders worshiping Him and it talks about all of us joining together to worship Him. What a wonderful experience that is going to be.

You know, I am interested in Church History and maybe you are, too. You read it and what do you find? Doctrinal heresies. You find moral failures. You wonder how in the world the Church survived all these centuries. Well, it wouldn't have unless Jesus Christ were behind it and building His Church. Won't it be wonderful to finally be all together, believe the same thing, united with one mind? That is what you have when the Church is finally in the presence of God, one Church all worshiping together, all praising the same Lord, united in one faith. I look forward to that. It's going to be a wonderful occasion.

But also, keep in mind that **we are going to serve Him**. Heaven is going to be a place of activity. In fact, the text says here, "And they shall see His face; His name shall be on their foreheads and there shall no longer be any night and they shall not have need of the light of the lamp nor of the light of the sun because the Lord God shall illumine them and they shall reign forever and ever."

You say, "What is it that we're going to reign over?" The Bible says that we're going to judge angels. It means that we're going to rule over the angels. By the way, I think this is what makes the devil so angry is to think that sinners like us who fell—just as he fell—that we who were plunged into sin, God redeemed, lifted up, and made heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. We shall be above the heavenly hosts, a position which he once occupied. We'll be above that. And we shall rule over angels.

I tend to think, too, that the universe is a big place with hundreds of trillions of stars. The experts tell us more stars in the sky than there are grains of sand on the seashores of the world. I don't know about you, but I can't believe that God would create all of these without each one of them giving Him glory. Who knows? Maybe we are going to be ruling over galaxies and have huge responsibilities in the universe. Travel is going to be effortless. We'll be able to travel from one place to another even as Jesus did, as we've emphasized, and therefore God is going to have responsibilities for us and we shall serve Him. We shall serve Him.

Of course, we have to combine all of these wonders with the fact that we will have an indestructible, eternal body, as we've already learned. And no one will comment on our age. Nobody is going to say, "You don't look as young as you used to," because we will be eternally young.

I love the poem that Dr. Henson wrote: "The stars shall live for a million years and million years and a day, but God and I shall live and love when the stars have passed away." Wow. All of that awaits us.

But if you do not know Jesus Christ as your Savior, what you must do is believe that when He died on the cross He did all that ever will be necessary to reconcile you to God. If you give up trusting yourself and believe in Him, you'll belong to Him forever. "For as many as believed on Him, to them He gave the power to be the sons of God, even to those who believe on His name."

What does the Bible tell us will not be in heaven?

We always talk about the glories of heaven and what is going to be there. But we can also take comfort in the things that won't be in heaven. When our children were small, they sang a little song that talked about the "won't be's" of heaven. Things that will not be there.

I have read Revelation 21 and 22 and I've come up with at least ten things that will not be in heaven. For example, it says, that the New Jerusalem comes down from God out of heaven and it says, "And there was **no more sea**." The sea in the Bible usually refers to "the nations,"—the "sea that cannot rest that casts up mire and dirt." Well, there will be no more restlessness among the nations of the earth. The wars are going to end. Those headlines as to what is happening in some of the countries of Europe are finally going to be over. Aren't you glad? No bad headlines in heaven.

Secondly, it says "there is **no more death**." The hearse will have taken its last journey. You look at all the funeral homes and you can see how busy they are, day after day. I'm not to the point yet where I read obituaries, but from time to time, you turn to it in the newspaper and you see this long list of people who died. When we do that, what we should really do is see our own names, because the time is coming when you and I shall be listed there. It's going to be all over and it'll be all over a lot sooner than we realize.

In Chicago the other day, a friend died very, very unexpectedly. Just, boom, and he's gone. That's going to be our story. We're gone. The Bible says it's like a vapor that is here today and gone tomorrow. No more death.

No more sorrow. I speak to you today because you are filled with sorrow possibly, and if you are not filled with sorrow today, you know someone who is.

And then it goes on to say that "there is **no more crying**." Let me read the text here. It says, "And he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes and there shall no longer be any death, nor mourning, nor crying, nor pain, for the first things have passed away." The phrase that I wanted us to zero in on is, "He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Naturally, the question always is, "Why are there tears in heaven?" Well, I think that there are tears in heaven possibly because we regret the way in which we lived. By the way, this is a good time to emphasize that we are the same people in heaven as we are here on earth. And the memories of earth we take with us. I'm not necessarily saying the memories of our sins but the memories of who we were, how we served the Lord, the Judgment Seat of Jesus Christ which shall already have happened at this point. We have all of this that we bring to bear and we weep. We weep because of the way we lived. Yes, we also might weep because of people we know who will never show up for the celestial celebration—relatives, friends, possibly a mother, a father, and we know that they will be lost forever. We weep.

There are some people who have actually looked at this and they've said, "It is impossible to be happy in heaven as long as you know that you have a loved one in hell." They have even suggested that God will blank out the memory of a son who is

lost. I disagree with that. I can't imagine that God is going to somehow take away our tears by giving us the "gift of ignorance." God's method of solving these problems is not to limit the sphere of human knowledge; it is to broaden it and to give us an explanation. And here is how I generally answer that question. I say, "Look, if God can be happy throughout all of eternity, we will be happy throughout all of eternity, too." So I tend to think that rather than God having a handkerchief and coming and wiping away each individual tear—though, of course, He could do that—I tend to think the tears are wiped away because He gives us an **explanation** for those who are lost and His purposes and we accept the fact that we have failed and that is put behind us—that's one of the reasons for the tears—so that we can get on with heaven without crying.

I don't know about you, but I think I speak for you when I say that when you look at the newspapers today—children being abused; starvation. What is it? Twenty thousand every day because of famine throughout the world?—you think of the buckets and buckets of tears cried every single minute on this sinful, hurting world. I want you to know that for believers in Christ, the tears are wiped away. Wiped away by God.

Let me say also that there is **no more pain**. Revelation 21:4 says, "There shall no longer be any pain." Well, you come with me to a hospital and you see the pain, you see the agony, you see those that are going through these difficult, difficult circumstances, whether the pain is physical or emotional. We live in a very, very hurting world. There is none of that in heaven. No more pain. It's all gone.

Also, "there is **no temple therein**," it says, "And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple; and the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and the lamp is the Lamb."

Earlier in the Book of Revelation there is a temple, and it has been suggested that as long as the earth is in existence and the Great Tribulation is taking place, there's a temple in heaven. But once that ends, in the new order of reality, there is no temple. Why? Because we have the privilege, then, of worshiping God directly. We don't even need a temple that we enter. Could I say that the whole universe is God's temple at that moment. All of heaven is God's temple. And we have the privilege of being able to see Him face to face and to worship Him directly. So there is no temple therein.

Then we read, "There is **no need of the sun, nor of the moon**, for God Himself shall illumine it, and"—remember this—"the lamp is the Lamb."

Wow! Did you know that in heaven we will not have to sleep, and it's not because we will be weary, either. We're going to have bodies that are going to be able to just keep going and going and going and we will never, never be tired. And therefore there is no need for night because we generally sleep during the night.

"The lamp is the Lamb." You know, it does make you want to say, "Lord, come quickly," doesn't it, as you think about the beauty and the glories of heaven.

And then, "**no more abominations**." Notice, "And the nations shall walk by its

light and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it, and in the daytime”—for there is no night there—“its gates shall never be closed; and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it and nothing unclean....” We need to take this carefully because we live in an age where we have taken the holiness of God and we have brought God down to our own level and we’ve gotten so used to sin that it doesn’t affect us anymore. But listen to this: “Nothing unclean, no one who practices abomination and lying....” Is there someone reading this who practices lying? Some time ago I read that book, *The Day America Told the Truth*, and I concluded that the only time you can believe an American is when he tells you he’s lying. I’ve exaggerated it, but about 90% of all Americans say they lie at least every week if not every day? Notice, it says, “... they shall not enter in but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.”

How can we know if our name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life?

Let’s talk very frankly about this. You say, “Pastor Lutzer, I’ve committed abominations and I am one who practices lying.” What you need to do is to flee to Christ. What you need to do is to understand that, of course, it’s possible to have that in your background. We have all sinned. But what we need to do is to recognize that Jesus Christ died for sinners and when we put our faith in Christ, we can be assured that our name is in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

Maybe it’s because I’m getting older than I used to be, which is true of all of us, but I used to like that song sung many years ago: “Is your name written there?” The question is, “Is your name here?” You can find out by believing in Jesus and participating in the blessings that He brings and be very, very clear on this, that no abominations will enter heaven. It’s a pure place for a people that have been purified by God.

One day after dinner I received a phone call from a friend of mine, a pastor, who is dying of cancer and just had days to live. He said to me on the telephone, “Goodbye, Erwin, I will see you in heaven.” I spoke to him very briefly then and put the receiver down and spontaneously I began to cry. I normally don’t do that but it was so touching to think that this is real. These people and many others will be in heaven and we will be there with them forever. And as we’ve learned, no more tears, no more crying.

If you have never trusted Christ as your Savior, if you are not sure whether or not heaven is your final destination, there’s only one way to be sure, and that is to trust the One who is already there qualified to lead you all the way home.

There was a little girl who was asked whether or not she was afraid to go through the cemetery near her home. And she said, “No. The reason I am not afraid to run through the cemetery is because my home is on the other side.”

All of us are going to be in a cemetery someday. But through faith in Christ, we need not be overwhelmed by it because our home is on the other side.