

# Heaven Can't Wait

by Warren Wiersbe

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*Knowing we're going to heaven gives us the secret to an unselfish life, an untroubled heart, and an undivided fellowship with God and other believers.*

**Duration:** 33:01

**Scripture:** John 12:23-28, John 14:1-2

**Topics:** "Self Sacrifice", "Eternal Focus"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses the analogy of a seed to illustrate the concept of self-sacrifice and serving others. He emphasizes that protecting and guarding one's own life will ultimately lead to loneliness and fruitlessness. However, if one is willing to die to oneself and serve others, they will experience fulfillment and expansion in life. The preacher also highlights the importance of looking to the future glory and not being selfish in the present. He references passages from the Gospel of John, specifically chapter 12 verse 23 and chapter 14, to support his message.

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## Transcript

We open the word of God to the gospel of John, and we shall read from three portions of that gospel, beginning with chapter 12, verse 23. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.

But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be.

If any man serve me, him will my Father honor. Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour.

Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again. Chapter 14.

Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions.

If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. And where I go ye know, and the way ye know.

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not where thou goest, and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me. Chapter 17, verse 22.

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world. May God's words speak to our hearts today.

Three times in the Gospel of John, our Lord Jesus uses the phrase, where I am. He's talking about heaven. Our Lord Jesus came down from heaven.

He died on the cross to take us to heaven, and he returned to heaven, and that's where he is now. And that's his great desire, where I am. Now not everybody believes in heaven.

The famous Harvard philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, who has written some profound books, made the following statement, quote, can you imagine anything more appallingly idiotic than the Christian idea of heaven, unquote. Our Lord Jesus didn't think that the Christian idea of heaven was idiotic. In fact, our Lord went out of his way to assure his disciples concerning heaven.

Now we Christians, if we are honest, have to admit we don't talk much about heaven. Oh, if you've lost a loved one for a while, you sort of talk about heaven. If you have a terminal illness, you think and talk about heaven.

If there's been a bereavement in your family or some difficulty, you talk about heaven. But for the most part, most Christians look upon heaven as the place we're going to go after we've had the best time possible here on earth. And our Lord didn't look at heaven that way.

Our Lord did not have a negative attitude toward heaven. Well, there's at least some place to go when things are all over here. Our Lord had a positive attitude about heaven.

The fact that he was returning to heaven was a motivating factor in his life. And the Lord Jesus wants the fact that we're going to heaven to be a motivating factor in our lives. And so let's talk about that just now.

Our Lord Jesus is saying to us that the assurance of heaven ought to make a difference in our lives. Now, what kind of a difference does it make? Well, I want to suggest to you from these three places where Jesus said, where I am, that our Lord is giving us the benefits that come to us when we know that we're going to heaven. If you are a Christian through faith in Jesus Christ and you know that you're going to heaven, then there ought to be in your life and in my life these three benefits.

Now, what are they? Let's start with John chapter 12, verses 23 through 28. Verse 26, our Lord says this, If any man serve me, let him follow me. And where I am, there shall also my servant be.

If any man serve me, him will my father honor. He had talked in verse 24 about the seed being planted and dying. Now, when you first look at this, it looks as though he's talking about death.

He's not. He's talking about heaven, that where I am. Here's the first benefit of being sure that you're going to heaven.

It is the secret of an unselfish life. It is the secret of an unselfish life. Now, selfishness is one of the big problems we face.

If we were to go up and down these rows just now and just ask very personal questions. Have any problems this week? Oh, I had some awful problems. What caused these problems? Somebody was selfish.

Selfishness is at the root of our sins. When Satan came to Eve, he said, Oh, you don't want to listen to God. You want to be like God.

That's selfishness. Selfishness is at the root of our sins. And selfishness is at the root of all of our difficulties.

And selfishness is what keeps us from enjoying life. And selfishness is what makes us wrap ourselves up in a little package and protect ourselves and insulate ourselves and isolate ourselves. And that's a miserable way to live.

Now, our Lord says if you want to get cured of selfishness, just keep reminding yourself, I'm going to heaven. I'm going to be in glory someday. One of these days, I'm going to see the Lord.

One of these days, I'm going to walk through the gates of the city. This is what kept Abraham going. He looked for a city whose builder and maker was God.

That's what kept Moses going. Moses endured as seeing him who was invisible. That's what helped to keep our Lord Jesus going, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross.

And that's what helps to keep you and me going. It's the secret of an unselfish life. You take a husband and a wife, if there's selfishness, you've got misery in the home.

Parents and children, if there's selfishness, you've got trouble. Students and instructors, if there's selfishness, you've got difficulty. And my heart and your heart, our hearts are so constituted that they are like great sponges that want to take in and not give out.

They are like blotters that want to soak up but not give. Our hearts are selfish. And my Lord says to me, if you'll just remember, just keep in mind now, you're going to heaven.

It's the secret of an unselfish life. Now, why is this so? Why is it that knowing today I'm going to be in heaven? Perhaps today. Why would that take the selfishness out of my heart, out of your heart? Our Lord illustrates this with the seed.

Those Greeks came to the Lord Jesus in verse 20. They wanted to see the Lord Jesus. And Jesus said, The hour has come.

Now, that hour goes all through the Gospel of John. In John chapter 2, when Jesus performed His first miracle, He said, My hour has not yet come. John chapter 7, John chapter 8, they tried to arrest Him.

They couldn't do it. His hour had not yet come. And now Jesus says, The hour has come.

What hour? The hour has come that the Son of Man should be. Now, if I had been writing it, that next word would be crucified. The hour has come that the Son of Man should be crucified.

He didn't say crucified. He said glorified. He was looking beyond the sufferings of the cross to the glories of the throne.

He was looking beyond the treachery and the meanness and the tragic carnality and the uncivil rights of Calvary to that hour when He would return to glory to be with the Father. And so Jesus said, The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified, not crucified. And then He talks about a seed.

He said, Here is a seed. If I keep this seed protected, that seed will always be alone, and the life that is in that seed will not do anybody any good. But if I take that seed, and if I plant that seed into the ground, that seed dies.

But in dying it lives, and in living it grows, and in growing it produces beauty and fruitfulness and more seed. Now the Lord is saying to you and me, we can do one of two things with our lives. We are seeds.

As God's children, we are seeds. These bodies are the husk, and down inside we have that life, that eternal life that we've received through faith in Christ. Now you can do one of two things with your life.

You can protect your life. You can isolate your life. You can hold your life.

He who protects his life, he who guards his life, is going to lose it. But he who loses his life for my sake and the gospel's the same is going to find it. Now let's talk to the seed.

Here we have a seed. And a seed is not a very beautiful thing. A seed is somewhat ugly.

And you say to this seed, Where are you going? Down into the ground. Kind of hard, isn't it? Yes, it's not too easy. What are you going to do? I'm going to die.

Send down my roots and then send up my shoots. But seed, how can you do a thing like that? What makes you do it? Oh, he says, I'm looking to the future. When they put me under the ground and bury me in that little grave, I'm not thinking about the present.

I'm thinking about the future. One of these days I will turn into a gorgeous flower. And then that flower is going to turn into seed.

And then there will be more seed planted that will produce more flowers and more seeds. And I'm going to multiply myself in a wonderful way. The seed is looking to the glory of the future.

And somebody here just now is saying, I have to do an awful lot of serving. There may be a busy mother or father or a student who has an awful lot to do. Or there's some other person who says, Boy, I sacrifice for other people.

They walk on me. They push me. They kick me.

I can't take much more of this. Oh, except the grain of wheat fall into the ground and die. It's going to abide alone.

And if you want to go through life lonely and fruitless, just protect yourself, isolate yourself, guard yourself. But if you want to go through life fulfilling and expanding, where there's beauty and fruitfulness, then let God bury you. And the only thing that keeps you going when you're buried is knowing that one day there's going to be the glory.

The seed that is planted is able to stand the darkness and the dampness and the pressure and the death because it knows that one day it shall come forth in resurrection glory. And that's what keeps us going. The next time you and I are tempted to be selfish, I want my way.

I want this thing and I want it right now. Let's remember, we're going to heaven. And what we get today and what we guard today can be lost.

But what we give today, what we share today will be kept. And the important thing a hundred years from now is not what this world thinks about us. The important thing a hundred years from now when we're up in heaven will be the glory that comes to the Father.

Jesus said, what shall I say? Not what shall I do? He knew what He was going to do. What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? That's what most of us say. Lord, why did this happen to me? Oh God, spare me from this hour.

He said, no, I won't say that. I will say, Father, glorify Your name. But I can't glorify My name unless You are buried.

Then I'll be buried. Ah, but You're going to be raised from the dead and You shall be raised in glory. Then raise me in glory.

You say You're going to heaven. Prove it with an unselfish life that where I am, there may My servant be also. Now John 14 gives me a second benefit of knowing that I'm going to heaven.

And don't you feel sorry for people who don't know they're going to heaven? Don't you feel sorry for these people who say, well now, Pastor, that's all very interesting. But you don't really know if you're going to heaven until you die. That's too late.

Paul knew he was going to heaven. I know whom I have believed, said Paul. And I'm persuaded that he's able to keep that which I've committed unto him against that day.

John knew that he was going to heaven. These things write I unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life. Beloved, now are we the sons of God.

It doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him. For we shall see Him as He is.

David knew he was going to heaven. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Jesus knew that He was going to heaven. I go to prepare a place for you. Which gives us the second benefit of knowing that you're going to heaven.

John chapter 14. It's not only the secret of an unselfish life. It's the secret of an untroubled heart.

Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in me. Which means I am God.

In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Not for myself. I've got a place waiting for me up there. A throne.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am, there ye may be also. It's the secret of an untroubled heart. Now these disciples were troubled.

And they had every right to be troubled. Our Lord was going to leave them. Did you ever feel like God had left you? Did God ever disappoint you? They argued with Him.

They said, now Lord, how can you leave us? How can you? No, I'm going back. It's expedient for you that I go away. No wonder they were troubled.

Jesus was going to leave them. And one of the disciples was going to betray Him. They looked at each other and said, who is it? Lord, is it I? And Peter was going to deny Him.

Now they looked to Peter for leadership. Peter was the strong one. And they were saying to themselves, if Peter is going to fall apart, what hope is there for us? And they were troubled.

Circumstances were against them. Their friends were against them. Their enemies were against them.

And it even looked as though God was against them. And they were troubled. And Jesus said, men, you've forgotten something.

There's no reason for your hearts to be troubled. You're going to heaven. And who can mind the journey when the way leads home? You're going to heaven.

Here is Jesus about to go to the cross and die, and yet He is comforting His disciples. You'd think they'd be comforting Him. And He's looking at these strong men who had fallen apart, strong men against whom the world had risen.

And He says to these strong men who were now so weak, why are your hearts so troubled? Don't let your hearts be troubled. You're going to heaven. I don't know what it is that may trouble your hearts today.

People have different problems. As I'm moving now more and more across the country in preaching, I'm discovering in every church people have got problems. Churches have problems.

And we get troubled. And when we get troubled, we start using our energy on the inside to try to cover things up. And then we don't have any energy left on the outside to do our work.

And so we get tired and irritable. We can't do our studies. We can't mop the floor.

We can't do our work. And the doctor says, well, there's nothing wrong with you physically. What are you worrying about? Do you know that a Christian worrying is a bad testimony? You go up to some unsaved person and say, hey, man, you ought to be going to heaven.

And he looks at you and says, hey, I work with you. You worry all the time. If going to heaven makes me like you, I don't want it.

Well, dear friends, we're going to heaven. And Jesus said, where I am, you're going to be. Now stop worrying.

You see, the future is secure for the Christian. Now the future is not secure for the unsaved person. Jesus never said to the unsaved person, be he moral or religious or any other kind of a person, I'm preparing a place for you.

He's preparing a place for his own children. It's always fun to watch a young couple when the first baby is going to come into the home. Kind of fun to watch them when the fifth one comes along, too.

But it's fun to watch them when the first baby is going to come into the home. And I tell you, that home changes in anticipation of the baby. All the preparation that's being made.

Right now, my Lord Jesus is preparing a home for his people up in heaven, a perfect home, a joyful home, a home of praise and purity, a home where there's going to be fellowship and we'll never say goodbye. We'll never have to turn the lights on because it'll never be dark. When you pick up the telephone directory, you'll never find a mortician listed or a doctor or a pharmacist.

It's going to be great to be in heaven. What are we worrying about? Why are we troubled? He's preparing a place for us in heaven. It's the secret of an untroubled heart.

Oh, my friend, there's no need for your heart to be troubled about the future unless you don't know Jesus as your Savior. Then your heart had better be troubled. Now, there's a third benefit that comes to us because we're going to heaven.

It's the secret of an unselfish life. It's the secret of an untroubled heart. And in John 17, my Lord tells me that the fact that I'm going to heaven is the secret of an undivided fellowship.

Do you know why we're going to heaven? To see his glory and to share his glory. Do you know why God saved you? Well, because you're such a good person, not on your life. I hear people pray, oh, save my husband.

Oh, our home would be so much happier if my husband were saved. That's true, but that's not why God's going to save your husband. I know lots of happy homes where the husband isn't saved.

Do you know why God saved you? For his glory. When you read Ephesians chapter 1, when the Apostle Paul pulls all the stops out on his organ and he gets those manuals going and he sings that great hymn of praise, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies, in Christ Jesus. Then stanza 1, the blessings of God the Father, he's chosen us, he's adopted us to the praise of the glory of his grace.

Stanza 2, the blessings of God the Son, he's redeemed us, he's made us his inheritance, he's sharing his will with us to the praise of the glory of his grace. Stanza 3, the blessings of God the Holy Spirit who has sealed us, who is giving us the Word of God to the praise of the glory of his grace. Dear friend, don't you ever forget, God didn't save you for your glory.

God saved you for his glory. And one of these days, he's going to gather together all believers, all true believers, no matter what denominational label they may wear. Did you know you are going to be in heaven with people whose theology you disagree with? You say, I can't believe such a thing.

Jesus said so. Nobody is going to heaven because he's a Baptist or a Presbyterian or a Methodist or a Protestant or a Roman Catholic or any other group. We go to heaven because we have trusted Christ as our Savior.

In just a few moments, we shall share together in the Lord's table. No one goes to heaven by participating in a communion service. There is no grace or salvation mediated to you through bread and the cup.

We're saved through faith in Christ. But did you know that Jesus was concerned about the unity of God's people six times in John 17? He says that they may be one, one, one, one, one. One of the great problems today in this world is the fact that the saints don't get along with each other.

And if you don't belong to my group and come to my convention and read my magazine, you're not going to make it to heaven. Now, I'm not saying that you and I must water down our theology and find the least common denominator. No, I have my convictions about these things.

And you have your convictions. But if you are saved and I am saved through faith in Christ, one of these days we're going to be in heaven together. We'd better start learning how to get along down here.

Now, I don't have to work with you on your committee. I may not agree with the work you're doing. I may not agree with writing a check for your ministry.

I may not want to belong to your organization. But if you are a Christian and I am a Christian, we're going to be in heaven together. Let's love each other on earth.

It's the secret of an undivided fellowship. And I tell you, when I think of the fact that one day I'm going to be in heaven and I'm going to walk down the golden streets with people whom I disagreed with, it makes me want to love them down here and present to the world at least the unity of God's people. There are some Christians, when they meet a stranger, they try to find out where they disagree.

They pull out their revolver and get ready. Don't be like that. When you meet a stranger and discover he's a Christian, don't find out where you disagree.

Find out where you agree and say, you know what, brother, we're going to be in heaven someday. I recommend that you sit down with the hymn book someday. Don't take it home with you, but just when you come early to church, instead of sitting talking, just page through the hymn book and discover that we've been singing hymns by Methodists and Presbyterians.

I think one reason there's going to be so much music up in heaven, music is very ecumenical. If you go through this hymnal that we have here, you'll find many different persuasions of Christians represented here. Quakers are in here.

You know why? We're all going to the same glory. And I tell you, when you realize you're going to be in heaven, and when you realize that in heaven we are not going to be Presbyterians or Methodists or Baptists or Plymouth brethren, I guess we're all going to be united brethren up in heaven. When you realize this, it makes you want to reach out and throw your arms around your brother, your sister, and say,

God bless you.

We don't agree on everything, but God bless you. I'm not going to hate you, I'm going to love you. And our Lord tells us that when we do this, then the world is going to know that He's the real Savior.

How can you get an unsaved world to love Jesus when Jesus' people don't even love each other? Let's be thankful for each other right here. Let's love each other right here. Let's stand together here.

We don't have to work together. We don't have to give together. But let's at least have a united testimony that we love the same Lord.

This we can do without compromising, because one of these days we're going to be in heaven together. There are some saints who think they're the only ones who are going to be there, and the Lord may give them that privilege of just being off in a corner someplace for a few million years until they grow up to the place where they can fellowship with the rest of us. He may let them do that, I don't know.

It's great to know you're going to heaven. Going to heaven is not just some faraway expectation when I get old and decrepit. Going to heaven is a tremendously dynamic thing in our lives today.

It is the secret of an unselfish life. We don't mind dying because the future is glory. It's the secret of an untroubled heart.

We don't mind bearing burdens because the future is glory. It's the secret of an undivided fellowship. We don't mind the differences among God's people.

We're going to be in heaven together someday in glory. Let's bring some of that glory down right now. Let's just share some of that glory today.

Now, if you don't know that you're going to heaven, if you've never trusted Christ as your Savior, today would be a good time to do that. He said, I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life. No man comes to the Father but by me.

But I have religion, you say. Oh, but if you don't have Him, you're not going to go to the Father. But I'm doing the best I can.

But if you don't have Jesus Christ, you'll never make it to the Father. He's the only Savior. Trust Him.

And do it now. Let's pray together. Gracious Father, thank you for the assurance of heaven.

Oh, may it make a difference in our lives. May we not only sing about going there and preach about going there, but help us to live like those who are going there. And I pray that some here this morning will trust Christ as their Savior.

And some of your troubled saints will find peace. And some of your fighting saints will find love. Oh, God, work abundantly in our hearts.

For Jesus' sake, amen.

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