Main Idea: The Reality of Heaven brings purpose and meaning to life here on earth right now.

I. INTRODUCTION: THE DISCONNECT WITH HEAVEN

A. “Dualism” in theology is the idea that the physical creation is evil. Only the spiritual is good.
   1. e.g. money, cars, house, food, body are all evil. Only spirit, soul, mind, intuition are good.
   2. There can be an artificial disconnect that occurs because this world is seen as evil, and if not, evil, then at least definitely less than where we’re going. Why take care of something that we know is going to be destroyed anyway? In fact, it’s more spiritual to not care about this world.

B. There’s an old song that goes: “This world is not my home. I’m just passing through.”
   1. It’s Biblical in the sense that we are not to put our heart in the things of this world. It’s all passing away in its present form. But is it true that we’re just passing through?
   2. Therefore there are Christians who live their faith on Sundays from 11am – 1pm, but the rest of the week, their faith has little to do with life, work, family, politics, social action, etc…
   3. Q: Should Christians care about jobs, environment, government, taking care of our physical bodies, social institutions, etc? What does our faith have to do with these things when this world is not our home?
   4. Q: Is our faith only concerned about praying, reading the Bible, or do physical things matter?

II. BIBLE OVERVIEW (REVIEW)

A. The Bible starts in Genesis 1-2 with Creation, in the Garden of Eden, with mankind given the mandate to rule over all of creation as God’s representatives. By Genesis 3, man has rejected God’s plan and opens the door to sin and death to enter into the world.
   1. Jesus comes to redeem us, forgive us of our sins, and the process of restoration to God’s original purpose is begun.

B. The Bible ends with a New Creation, New Heaven and New Earth, in a Garden-like city, the New Jerusalem, with mankind restored to the place of ruling and reigning with God over creation (Rev. 21-22).
1. This is our final destination. Heaven is a temporary place until Jesus returns as He promised and brings judgment, justice, and then brings heaven and earth together (Rev. 19-22).

C. Heaven is God’s original plan for creation fulfilled and upgraded. In other words, heaven is what makes the earth so wonderful and none of the things that make it awful.

D. This world is very much our home right now and for all eternity. Not this world as it is, but a New Earth.

1. The earth (as the place of our inheritance) will continue forever (Ps. 37:29; 78:69; 104:5; 105:10-11; 125:1-2; 1 Chr. 23:25; 28:8; Isa. 60:21; Ezek. 37:25; Joel 3:20).

*The righteous shall inherit the land, And dwell in it forever. (Psalm 37:29)*

E. God created the world and said it was “very good.” It’s the entrance of sin and death into the world by mankind’s disobedience and rejection of God’s ways that mankind, and all of creation was affected.

F. Rom. 8:19-22 says that all creation groans and waits for the sons of God to be revealed.

> 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. (Rom. 8:19-22)

G. We will be made new. Everything will be made new.

III. OUR ETERNAL STATE

Q: Will we have bodies? What will we be like?

A. We will have resurrected bodies like Jesus did after He rose from the dead. Jesus is the first fruits.

> But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. (1 Cor.15:20-22)

1. Adam was our “prototype,” now through faith, Jesus becomes our new “prototype.”

*And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man. (1 Cor. 15:49)*

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. (Phil. 3:20-21)

B. We do not become angels. The Bible does not speak of people getting “their wings.” 1. No mention of halos. Jesus didn’t have one that His disciples saw.
1. Angels serve God and mankind.

\[14\text{ Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:14)}\]

Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? (1 Corinthians 6:3)

C. Culture, sports, fashion, dance, learning, art, music, etc. will all be redeemed.

1. There will probably be different nations and racial distinctives. Every nation, tribe, and tongue will continue under reign of the Kingdom of God.

Q: Will we eat? Will there be food?

D. The resurrected Jesus ate with His disciples. He prepared them a meal and ate bread and fish with them. (John 21:4-14; c.f. Luke 22:18).

\[40\text{ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. 41 But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?” 42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. 43 And He took it and ate in their presence. (Luke 24:40-43; c.f. Acts 10:40-41; John 21:10-15)}\]

1. The Bible speaks of food in heaven.

\[29\text{ And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, 30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Luke 22:29-30)}\]

7 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” ’ (Rev. 2:7)

Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” 6 And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. (Revelation 21:5-6)

2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. (Rev. 22:2)

2. God richly provides for our enjoyment here on the Earth. How much more so in the New Heaven & New Earth?

Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. (1 Tim. 6:17)

\[31\text{ Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Cor. 10:31)}\]
E. Q: Will there be animals in heaven?

Isa. 11:6-9 describes the New Earth, where there will no longer be any hurt nor destruction.

“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:6-9; c.f. 65:22)

1. God saved animals from the flood (Gen. 6:19-20) and He established the Covenant with “every living creature (Gen. 9:9-17).

2. Randy Alcorn, in his book Heaven, points out that when Adam was created, when Noah was delivered, when Jesus was born, they were all surrounded with animals.

3. Will we be reunited with our pets? The Bible does say specifically that we will or we will not. It’s something we “leave on the shelf” until God reveals more. It would not be inconsistent with the Bible for God to do that.

IV. CONCLUSION – BECAUSE HEA IS FOR REAL, YOU CAN:

A. Live a life of hope and purpose.


   a. This world is not my home. I’m just passing through.

      (1) It’s partly true, but not accurate. Our faith is not one of trying to escape the world, but to invite God’s Kingdom here. “Let Your Kingdom come!”

      (2) Note: NLT translates Heb. 13:17 inaccurately.

2. Our home is the New Jerusalem and it’s coming here to earth (Rev. 21-22). God’s Kingdom is coming to earth. New Heaven and New Earth joined together.

3. There is an aspect of permanence. Moth and rust do not destroy. Phones and computers do not need to go out of style the moment you buy it. Work and labor, and it’s as a mist, breath on a cold day. Here a moment, gone the next.

4. We will not be disembodied spirits or pure consciousness, absorbed into the “all” or reincarnated into other life-forms.

B. Live a life today that has impact for all eternity.
1. Our role in the world is not to try to escape it but to be the salt and light, to be redemptive, transformative, reformational, and revolutionary.

2. Not to be conformed into the mold of this world, but to be transformed by the God of heaven and to be agents of transformation in the world.

\[ I \] 
\[ beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. \]
\[ 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12:1-2) \]

3. Your role is to surrender your life to God. Let God be the Lord of your life. Live differently than the world by living out the values of the Kingdom of God.

a. How does this affect the way you work? Family? Church?

b. Could this be the reason that God has placed you on this earth? To be the salt and the light of the world? Ultimately, it’s in pointing people to Jesus and His finished work. But it’s His finished work on the cross that gives us citizenship into the New Jerusalem.

4. We can live with confidence knowing that our labor in God is not in vain. There is a permanence.

\[ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. (1 Cor. 15:58) \]

\[ 6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. (John 14:6) \]

C. **Main Idea:** The Reality of Heaven brings purpose and meaning to life here on earth right now.

1. Imagine yourself with a resurrected body, dwelling in the New Heavens and New Earth.

D. Jesus, the Son of God, who lived, died, and rose again, conquering sin and death. Makes a way for you. Heb. 10:20 calls it the new and living way.

1. To know Jesus is to know life. It gives you entry into the Kingdom of God. You know you can go to heaven for sure. But this is just the beginning of the way. It’s the entrance, the door. What’s inside? It’s God’s purpose for your life. It’s to come to God Himself.

\[ John 17:3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. \]

a. You don’t get to heaven automatically. It’s only through faith in Jesus Christ.

2. Heaven is not just somewhere that we’re waiting to get to. Heaven is God’s Kingdom that we’re inviting right where we are today.

E. Set your mind on things above. That’s the only way you’ll be maximally earthly good – fulfill God’s purpose for you.

F. Invite God’s Kingdom here right now where you are.