

88 September 24, 2022 – Heaven Is Real

The book “90 Minutes in Heaven” by Don Piper is a great summary of what a physical Heaven is like. Don was pronounced dead by several different emergency rescue technicians following a wreck of his car with a truck. He was trapped in the vehicle while waiting for the necessary equipment to release him from the wreckage. Time was not of the essence as he was already pronounced dead. A passerby detained in the traffic held back until the wreckage could be cleared, walked to the wreckage, as a pastor, to see if he could be of help. As it turned out the passerby was a friend of Don trapped in the wreck. He was told that Don was pronounced dead and was waiting on the coroner and equipment for extraction of the body, but the friend sought permission to enter the vehicle from the back open area to pray over his friend. During this prayer Don woke up after 90 minutes, was rescued and spent years in hospital recovery and physical restoration and many more years to revive a life as normal as could be achieved.

Don’s description of his 90 minutes in Heaven is described in the book. Genesis 28:17 says, “*He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven".* Following are some significant paragraphs from the Chapters “My Time in Heaven” and Heavenly Music”.

When I died, I did not flow through a long, dark tunnel. I had no sense of fading away or of coming back. I never felt my body being transported into the light. Simultaneous with my last recollection of seeing the bridge and the rain a light enveloped me, with a brilliance beyond earthly comprehension or description. In my next moment of awareness, I was standing in heaven. Joy pulsated through me as I looked around, and at the moment I became aware of a large crowd of people. They stood in front of a brilliant, ornate gate. I have no idea how far away they were; such things as distance did not matter. As the crowd rushed toward me, I did not see Jesus, but I did see people I had known. As they surged toward me, I knew instantly that all of them died during my lifetime. Their presence seemed absolutely natural.

He then described seeing, recognizing, hugging, and talking with people who preceded him in death, his grandfather as the first, then a close friend, followed by many, many friends of the past.

More and more people reached for me and called me by name. I felt overwhelmed by the number of people who had come to welcome me to heaven. There were so many of them, and I had never imagined anyone being as happy as they all were. Their faces radiated a serenity I had never seen on earth. All were full of life and expressed radiant joy. Everything I experienced was like a first-class buffet for the senses. I had never felt such powerful embraces or feasted my eyes on such beauty. Heavens light and texture defy earthly eyes or explanation. Warm, radiant light engulfed me. As I looked around, I could hardly grasp the vivid, dazzling colors. Every hue and tone surpassed anything I had ever seen. With all the heightened awareness of my senses, I felt as if I had never seen, heard, or felt anything so real before. I do not recall that I tasted anything, yet I knew that I had, that too would have been more glorious than anything I had eaten or drunk on earth. The best way I can explain it is to say that I felt as if I were in another dimension. Never, even in my happiest moments, had I ever felt so fully alive. I stood speechless in front of the crowd of loved ones, still trying to take in everything. Over and over I heard how overjoyed they were to see me and how excited they were to have me among them. I am not sure if they actually said the words or not, but I knew that in heaven there is no sense of time passing. I was not conscious of anything I had left behind and felt no regrets about leaving family or possessions. It was as if God had removed anything negative or worrisome from my consciousness, and I could only rejoice at being together with these wonderful people.

Age expresses time passing , and there is no time there. All of the people I encountered were the same age they had been the last time I had seen them – except that all the ravages of living on earth had vanished. Even though some of their features may not have been considered attractive on earth, in heaven every feature was perfect, beautiful, and wonderful to gaze at. When I first stood in heaven, they were still in front of me and came rushing toward me. They embraced me, and no matter which direction I looked, I saw someone I had loved and who had loved me. They surrounded me, moving around so that everyone had a chance to welcome me to heaven. I felt loved – more loved than ever before in my life. They did not say they loved me. I do not remember what words they spoke. When they gazed at me, I knew what the Bible means by perfect love. It emanated from every person who surrounded me.

At some point, I looked around and the sight overwhelmed me. Everything was brilliantly intense. Coming out from the gate – a short distance ahead – was brighter than the light that surrounded us, utterly luminous. As soon as I stopped gazing at the peoples faces, I realized that everything around me glowed with a dazzling intensity. In trying to describe the scene, words are totally inadequate, because human words cannot express the feelings of awe and wonder at what I beheld. Everything I saw glowed with intense brightness. The best I can describe it is that we began to move toward that light. No one said it was time to do so, and yet we all started forward at the same time. As I stared ahead, everything seemed to grow taller – like a gentle hill that kept going upward and never stopped. I expected to see some darkness behind the gate, but as far ahead as I could see , there was absolutely nothing but intense, radiant light. By contrast the powerful light I had encountered when I met my friends and loved ones paled into darkness as the radiance and iridescence in front of me increased. It was as if each step I took intensified the glowing luminosity. I did not know how it could get more dazzling, but it did. It would be like cracking open the door of a dark room and walking into brightness of a noonday sun. As the door swings open , the full rays of the sun burst forth, and we are momentarily blinded. I was not blinded, but I was amazed that the luster and intensity continually increased. Strange as it seems, as brilliant as everything was, each time I stepped forward, the splendor increased. The farther I walked, the brighter the light. The light engulfed me, and I had the sense that I was being ushered into the presence of God. Although our earthly eyes must gradually adjust to light or darkness, my heavenly eyes saw with absolute ease. In heaven, each of our senses is immeasurably heightened to take it all in. And what a sensory celebration! A holy awe came over me as I stepped forward. I had no idea what lay ahead, but I sensed that with each step I took, it would grow more wonderous.

Don further then describes the heavenly music heard within this 90-minute period. The Post for October 1, 2022, will continue with this description.

But providing more description of Heaven I repeat a portion of my previous Post #12, Soul (Cont) describes my Mom's experience as she transitioned from her hospice bed to Heaven. **"Mom's Last Words"** is a written record kept by me and Mom's oldest grandchild, Tina, of Mom's requests or statements when awake as well as her verbal descriptions when she passed to unconsciousness from whence, she never woke up. She did speak clearly when in a trance or unconscious state. This is contrary to reading secular descriptions of the process just before the end of life because I truly knew that Jesus was present and guiding her through the process of coming to be with Him in Heaven. Mom told us specifically on the day she died "This is the day" and "I cannot stay here". At one point she said, "I want the room by myself so I can go over all my memories". We put in place soft music from her CD album of Elvis Presley's gospel music to include her favorite song "Amazing Grace". In her passing to the other side at least two times, she made comments as "I feel like I am up in the sky, it's beautiful, flying by myself"; "amazing there is

Buster (Dale, a son-in law's dog), dogs are in heaven"; "I am sitting on a hill and everything is so beautiful like Vanderbilt's place and beautiful homes"; "way off in heaven, that's where I was, I saw dad (her husband who previously died), grandma (probably hers) how wonderful that was, and Kevin (my son who died in a truck accident), "oh its gorgeous, I can see everything, truly marvelous"; "you are the jewels (as she opened her arms wide)"; "all these people where are they coming from"; and many more. When Mom died a cold wind passed across the back of my and Linda's neck, to us meaning Mom's **spirit** was saying "**goodbye**".

In conjunction with our Eternal Life in an Eternal Heaven, many ask what age will we be when we depart Earth and take residence in Heaven? What about kids, elderly people, the age at which we die, or is there an ideal age? Don Piper in the foregoing indicated that people he saw in Heaven were at the age when they died. The Bible does not give a specific answer to this question, thus there is much speculation on this subject. But one normally accepted idea is associated with 1 John 3:2 "*Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is*". It is considered that if Jesus was 33 years old when He was resurrected then it is likely that 33 is the age that our body will be when we arrive in Heaven as we "will be like Him". Another consideration is that 33 years old is the optimal age of our bodies here on Earth. The good news regardless is that in Eternal Life there likely will be no aging. What we do know as confirmed by the scriptures Phil 3:20-21 and 2 Cor 5:1-10 that our bodies will be made all new as our old bodies will be resurrected, renewed, and perfected.