

Being Heavenly Minded

by Dany Hameau

Dany Hameau emphasizes the importance of being heavenly minded as a way to fulfill the church's purpose and reflect God's glory in our lives.

Duration: 1:29:38

Topics: "Heavenly Minded"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of living a life that is in line with the teachings of God. He emphasizes that the church exists for God, Christians, and the world. The speaker encourages self-reflection and asks important questions about our commitment to worship, discipleship, and evangelism. He then goes on to outline practical ways in which believers should express their new life, such as speaking truthfully, controlling anger, being compassionate and forgiving, and walking in the light. The sermon emphasizes the need to rid ourselves of sinful behaviors and instead live a life worthy of the calling we have received.

Transcript

Beloved brothers and sisters, I greet you in the powerful name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus, whom we have pleasure to love, to serve, and to expect as he is coming back very soon. It is indeed a great privilege to be gathered to listen to God's word.

Now I am aware this is a minister's conference. We as ministers are used to minister to others. But who is to minister to us? Sometimes I think our wives try to minister to us, but we do not always listen to them.

And from time to time it is good to have a pause and to put some difficult questions to ourselves. How am I doing as a minister? How is the church which I am supposed to serve doing? What will I have to say to the Lord when I will be held accountable to him? Maybe it is useful to remind ourselves of the three main goals of the church. Firstly, the church exists for God.

The church is the place where redeemed sinners are to worship God in spirit and truth. Are we promoting worship in spirit and truth? Secondly, the church exists for Christians. One of the purposes of the church is to train disciples, teaching them how to put into practice the Lord's command.

Are we discipleship trainers? And thirdly, the church exists for the world. We are to proclaim the good news of the gospel to the lost. Are we still preaching the good news? Are we still preaching the good news

of grace or the bad news of law? The church is a place which should provide the space for worship, for training, and for world evangelism.

Reading the different passages of scriptures concerning the theme of our conference, these are some of the questions I put to myself. Am I aware of the times I am living in? What are the characteristics of wise behavior? How can I best redeem the time in view of eternity? And how can I remain watchful without falling asleep, spiritually speaking? The urgency of the hour requires us to carefully live our Christian life. And before looking for a servant, God is looking for a worshipper.

And this matters in the eyes of God more than we can imagine. The urgency of the hour has obviously something to do with faith. Now, what is faith? Faith is fixing our eyes on the invisible, believing the incredible in order to perform the impossible.

Fixing our eyes on the invisible, believing the incredible in order to perform the impossible. We read in Hebrews 11 verse 10 that Abraham was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. And the writer to the Hebrews adds that here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.

Now, Paul might have had this thought in mind when he wrote to the Colossians in chapter 3. And I would ask you to turn into your Bibles to Colossians chapter 3. We will read from verse 1 till verse 4. Colossians 3 verse 1 till 4. Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Being heavenly minded, I suggest is the need for the hour, the urgency of the hour. Paul says in these verses that the Christian life is a life hidden with Christ in God.

And yet it is a life lived down on this earth. These four verses point to the believer's union and identification with Christ. We have been identified in Christ's death, in the very same manner as we have been identified with Christ's resurrection.

And thus our life is hidden with God in Christ. Set your hearts on things above. It means that we are to desire and even to strive for those things.

We are to see to it that our interests are centered on Christ. Our attitudes, our ambitions, and whole outlook on life are molded by Christ's relation to us. Our allegiance to Christ must, so to speak, take precedence over all other earthly allegiances.

In the original, the verb is a present imperative, suggesting a continuing action. Keep on seeking, keep on setting your hearts on things above. Now, of course, it doesn't mean that we are to withdraw from all the activities of the world.

To engage only in contemplation of eternity and heaven. Paul makes it quite clear in the verses which follow. He expected Christians to maintain normal relationships within this world.

Do not set your mind on earthly things. Now, all earthly things are not evil in themselves. But some of them are.

Even things harmless in themselves may become harmful if permitted to take the place that should be reserved for the things above. Earthly things may be understood to include wealth, worldly honor, power, pleasures, and all the like. To make such things the goal of life and the subject of our preoccupation is unworthy of those who have been raised with Christ.

So to speak, we are to keep our feet down on this earth but our hearts in heaven. We must never forget that our citizenship is first in heaven and secondly on this earth. You remember what Jesus said to the teachers of the law and the Pharisees.

You are from below. I am from above. You are from this world.

I am not from this world. Setting one's heart and mind on things above leads us to be heavenly minded. We then cultivate a new frame of mind opposed to being earthly minded.

In Romans 8 verse 5 till 8, Paul says, Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the spirit is life and peace. The sinful mind is hostile to God.

It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. I have got some visual aids.

It is to make sure that in case you do not understand my English, at least you will be able to read my slides. Being heavenly minded is the calling of every child of God. It is a mindset which initiates a new style of living.

It should be our preoccupation today, here and on earth, and not only for the hereafter. Being heavenly minded is God's program, not only during the eternal state, but right now. Because God's strategy is to promote the establishment of the kingdom in the world through the local church and in every nation.

Brothers and sisters, do you believe? Are you convinced that heaven is the best place to live? No doubt about it. Heaven is the best place to live. Now, from my understanding of the New Testament, I believe that in God's program, God's strategy, the local church is supposed to be a foretaste of what is happening in heaven.

We are ministers of the gospel. We have a great responsibility. The local church, in God's strategy, is supposed to show what living in heaven looks like.

The local church should give us a clear idea of what life in heaven looks like. And I would like to bring five characteristics of what heaven life looks like. And these are characteristics which we should find right now in our local churches.

I will quickly quote them and then we'll get back to these five points in detail. First point, being heavenly minded means living in the awareness of God's glory. Second point, living in the awareness of Christ's holiness and its implications.

Third point, being heavenly minded means receiving and offering love from above. Fourth point, being heavenly minded means being fully satisfied with the joy of the Holy Spirit. And fifthly, being heavenly minded means living in unity and harmony with one another.

Now, we'll come back to these five points. The Lord has taught us how to pray. We are to say the Lord's Prayer.

Did you realize that once in heaven, we shall no longer need to say the Lord's Prayer? We will no longer need to pray our Father in heaven because we will be in His presence. We will need no longer to pray, Hallowed be your name, because everyone will acclaim His holiness. We will no longer need to pray, Your kingdom come.

We will be reigning with Him. We will no longer need to pray, Your will be done, because everybody will obey Him perfectly. We will no longer need to pray, Give us today our daily bread, for He will have met every unsatisfied need.

We will no longer need to pray, Forgive us our debts, because we will sin no more and no one will ever sin against us again. We will no longer need to pray, Lead us not into temptation, because we will no longer be tempted by anything or anyone, because the devil will be cast out in the lake of fire forever. We will no longer need to pray, Give us today our daily bread, for He will have met every unsatisfied need.

So first point, being heavenly minded means living in the awareness of God's glory. Please keep your Bible open in Colossians 3, because we will go to it now. Verse 4 says, When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Verse 4 says, When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. In His temple, all cry glory, says Psalm 29 verse 9. You remember in Solomon's temple, the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple of God. You remember in Solomon's temple, the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple of God.

Psalm 50 verse 2 says, From Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth. Psalm 50 verse 2 says, From Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth. Linked to His perfection, the glory of God is the expression of His very being.

The manifestation of the excellence of all His attributes, which irradiates the whole environment. The book of Revelation unveils the scenery in heaven. We see what's happening in heaven.

And one of the most striking reality is the presence of God and the Lamb, who occupies the main, the central, the focal place in heaven. And in heaven, God's presence is inescapable. You just can't miss it.

It irradiates the whole environment. And the presence of God is awe-inspiring. We have more than enough to be filled with wonder at God's glory.

In Revelation 21, John saw the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God. And Isaiah 60 verse 1 says, The Lord rises upon you, Jerusalem, and His glory appears upon you.

Now Paul, writing to the Colossians in Colossians 1 verse 27, what does he say? Christ in you, the hope of glory. God calls us into His kingdom and glory. Now the Bible says that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

If our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, shouldn't God's glory shine in and through us? First point to remember, heaven is where God's glory shines forth. We are ministers of the gospel. The local church is supposed to make God's presence visible and manifest God's glory.

Second point, being heavenly minded means living in the awareness of Christ's holiness and its implications. Let us read Colossians 3 verse 5. Do not lie to each other since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self. And verse 17, whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

In the parallel passage of Colossians in Ephesians 4, Paul is talking about a life worthy of the calling we have received. Ephesians 4 verse 1 reads, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. A life worthy of the calling we have received according to Paul means walking in unity, walking in holiness, walking in harmony, and getting involved in spiritual warfare.

Now, in a very practical way, Paul speaks about how change is made possible and how it should express itself in normal daily life. And in Ephesians 4 and 5, he gives us nine practical ways how new life should express itself. In each of these examples, we are to say no to the flesh and yes to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

One should put off falsehood and speak truthfully. A Christian should think what he says and say what he thinks. Two, master your anger without giving the devil a foothold.

Three, do not steal but give to those in need. Four, no killing words but helpful words for building others up. Five, say no to bitterness and yes to a compassionate and forgiving spirit.

Six, no hint of sexual immorality but rather a thankful attitude for the sacredness of sex. Seven, have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness but rather walk in the light. Eight, no foolish behavior but a wise and mature conduct.

Nine, say no to the fleshly debauchery and yes to the fullness of the Holy Spirit. You see, heaven is a protected place. Revelation 21.17 says, nothing impure will ever enter it nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

We are ministers of the Gospel and we are supposed to look after the flock the Lord has entrusted us in our local churches. The minimum service which the local church is supposed to offer is to call sin by its name. In the local church we must learn to tell the truth in love.

It is not an either or, it is a both and. If we love enough the people coming to church, we are to put a name on their sin and call them to repentance. If we do not call the people to come to the cross confessing their sins and making their life right, there is no hope for humanity.

And the church and the Christians have lost their flavor. He chose us in Christ before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. Just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do.

For it is written, be holy because I am holy. Hebrews 12 verse 14 reminds us that without holiness no one will see the Lord. The local church is supposed to be a training center where we teach how to obey the Lord's command, how to practice God's will, and how to make the difference between holiness and sin.

And as you all know, there is only one person one can change. And it is such hard work and toiling. The only person I can change is myself.

And once I start to change, maybe others might get the right and the good idea of doing the same. In my home church where I attend in the Paris area, there are over 15 nationalities. When we share agape meals, the ladies exchange menus and receipts from all over the world.

It is a tremendous place where to learn how to build meaningful and strong relationships with people different from yourself. And this is what the church is all about, isn't it? Unless you believe like Jonah did. Jonah thought that God was only for the Israelites.

He ended in a bad shape. The local church is the place where by God's grace we are to learn how to build meaningful and strong relationships by Christ's love. Because where man, religion, culture builds walls between men, the gospel of Christ builds bridges of reconciliation.

So the local church is the place where we are to learn how to cope with other people. Fourth point, being heavenly minded means being fully satisfied with the joy of the Holy Spirit. Let's read verse 16 and 17.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, verse 17, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Verse 17, being fully satisfied with the joy of the Holy Spirit.

We meet some Christians running from convention to convention. They seem sometimes to be looking after something they think they haven't got yet. And they are waiting for something new which maybe a new guru will just reveal.

Recently, a French theologian told me something interesting. He told me, I think I am just about to write a book and the title will be, The reason why I cannot sing any longer in the church. I said, how is it? Why? I had an idea and I fully agreed with him.

But he explained to me that the songs we are singing at church are really light, no content, no theological content in it. The history of the church shows us that once the people of God got revived, they came back first to the Bible and secondly, they sang. And I am just amazed at seeing how you dear Zulu people love singing.

I want to buy a CD of Zulu songs from my wife. I want her to be blessed as well. Did you notice the relationship between the place given to the word of God and the singing in the heart in this verse 16? The local church needs to come back to the Bible.

And we as ministers, we have a tremendous responsibility. What are we preaching about? Are we giving our dear people real spiritual meat from the word? Or just candies or sweets? I hope you not only preach about Psalms and John's Gospel and from time to time you preach from Leviticus. And we must plead that ministers would preach expository sermons.

In some circles you sadly hear something like, well brother, you know, in our church we pray so much to the Lord, it takes so much time, we don't even have time enough to open the Bible. The more you expose your audience to the word of God, the less pastoral care you have to do afterwards. In God's church today in Europe, there is a spiritual famine.

We need to get the people of God back to the Bible. If we don't, we will be looking elsewhere what only Christ can give us. Paul had to remind the Christians in Rome of some important things.

He had to tell them, you see, the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Paul needed to remind those Christians in Rome who were overly concerned about secondary issues. As a Christian not being allowed to eat meat or regarding one day as more sacred than another.

And Paul let them know that to be concerned with such trivial matters is to miss completely the essence of Christian living. Well, I'm aware that once you speak about being fully satisfied with the joy of the Holy Spirit, one can get labeled as charismatic or Pentecostal. I don't mind.

The Bible is not any more charismatic or Pentecostal than Baptist or Reformed. As Billy Graham put it one day, talking about the fullness of the Spirit, name it as you want, but just get it. Whatever the label, what is most important is what lies behind.

Never let the letter of the law extinguish the spirit of grace. Every Christian, in his mind at least, has a clear view of what a real, a dedicated, a real Christian is. And of course it's according to his own image, according to what he has got.

And this is how we feel superior to the brothers and sisters sitting nearby us. Never let the letter of the law extinguish the spirit of grace. What is most important in God's eye is not, are we allowed to eat meat or vegetables? Should we make any difference between the days of the week? This is not all the essence of Christian living, isn't it? Paul says the kingdom of God, rather, is a matter of rejoicing in Christ.

Is Christ sufficient for you? Are you complete in Him? Paul says that we have received the fullness of God's graciousness in Christ. If we miss this, we will be looking elsewhere at what only can be found in Christ. And we will be running from convention to convention, from one man of God to another man of God.

And at the end of the day, we will be disappointed and frustrated. The kingdom of God is a matter of rejoicing in the joy of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is always promoting real joy, because the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, and peace.

Psalms 16 verse 11 says, You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. Psalm 36 verse 8 and 9 says, They feast on the abundance of your house. You give them drink from your river of delights, for with you is the fountain of life.

Psalms 36 verse 8 and 9 says, You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. The prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 65 verse 17 to 19, talking about new heaven and new earth, said from the Lord, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.

But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create. For I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people.

The sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. Did you notice that in Scripture, joy is linked with forgiveness? The more we repent, the more we find matter for rejoicing. Beloved Zulu brothers and sisters, I am amazed at listening to your testimonies.

Because you show that you have this joy of being a sinner who has been redeemed, cleansed and forgiven. It seems that in Europe, in many churches, people have lost the joy of their salvation. Maybe it's because they think that you repent once for your whole life, once for all.

Joy is linked with forgiveness. David, once he repented from his sin with Bathsheba. In Psalm 51 verse 12 he said, Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me.

Being heavenly minded means being fully satisfied with the joy of the Holy Spirit. Now, this has a lot to do with Christ's finished work on the cross at Golgotha. In Christ only, and in His finished work, we find full satisfaction.

And as it was reported yesterday night about our dear brother, one needs not to jump into a plane to fly overseas, he just has to go to Calvary. You have been given fullness in Christ. We are fully satisfied in Christ.

He is perfectly sufficient for each one of us. Now, when Paul wrote to the Ephesians in Ephesians 5, talking about the contrast between saying yes to the flesh and saying yes to the prompting of the will of the Holy Spirit, he said, do not get drunk on wine, but rather instead be filled with the Holy Spirit. And he explains that four things happen when one is filled with the Holy Spirit.

In Ephesians 5, verses 19 to 21. First, we speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. This has to do with public worship.

Secondly, we sing and make music in our heart to the Lord. This has something to do with private devotions. Thirdly, we always give thanks to God the Father for everything.

Being thankful is the sign of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. And fourthly, we submit to one another out of fear or reverence for Christ. We find and take our place in our relationships to one another.

We are ministers of the gospel. The local church is supposed to be a place where we celebrate our God in the joy of the Holy Spirit. Fifthly, and this is my last point, being heavenly minded means living in unity and harmony with one another.

Verse 12, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Verse 13, bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

14, and over all these virtues, put on love. Love which binds them all together in perfect unity. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.

We've said that once you are filled with the Holy Spirit, you have a heart which says yes to life, thank you Lord, and yes to everyone around us. Another thing happens once you are filled with the Holy Spirit. You find your place in relating to others.

The general principle is, be submitted to one another in the fear of Christ. This is the general principle. Now let's remain practical.

So Paul writes, wives be submitted to your husbands. Husbands, love your wives. Children, obey your parents.

Fathers, do not embitter your children or they will become discouraged. Slaves, obey your earthly masters. And masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair.

Being heavenly minded means living in unity and harmony with one another. In the parallel passage, Paul wrote to the Ephesians that living a life worthy of the calling they have received is made possible through humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another in love, and making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. In heaven, the high priestly prayer of our Lord in John 17 will be fully answered.

But in the meantime, the Lord prayed for us in our local churches. They shall all be one, just as the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father. And Jesus prays that the Son will be in us and that we shall be brought to complete unity.

And He prays that we shall share with His glory and be with Him forever. Heaven is the place where unity and harmony prevail. The local church is supposed to be a place where we experience reconciliation with one another, where men build walls of separation.

The Gospel brings bridges for reconciliation. We are ministers of the Gospel. We do have a great responsibility, don't we? The pew members are to pray for their spiritual leaders, who is sufficient for such a high calling.

The urgency of the hour is to be heavenly minded. We must live in the awareness of God's glory. And the purpose of the local church is to make God's presence visible and manifest His glory.

Being heavenly minded means, secondly, living in the awareness of Christ's holiness. The local church is supposed to be a training center where we are taught how to practice God's will and to make the difference between holiness and sin. Thirdly, being heavenly minded means receiving and offering love from above.

The local church is supposed to be a place where we learn to love one another and how to cope with different people. Fourthly, being heavenly minded means being fully satisfied with the joy of the Holy Spirit. And the local church is supposed to be a place where we celebrate our God and worship Him in spirit and truth.

Lastly and fifthly, being heavenly minded means living in unity and harmony with one another. And our local churches should provide for a space for reconciliation. The local church is supposed to give us a clearer idea of what life in heaven looks like.

The urgency of the hour is to be heavenly minded. Set your hearts and minds on things above and not on earthly things. As ministers of God, may we be promoting true worship in our local churches in spirit and truth.

May we be promoting faithful training in real discipleship, teaching them how to obey the Lord's command. And as ministers of God, may we be promoters of a real vision and passion for world mission and world evangelism. May God bless you.

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