

Romans 14:17

by Paul Washer

The kingdom of heaven is not just about the future, but about the quality of life now, transformed by the power of God.

Duration: 45:04

Scripture: Psalm 16:11, Matthew 6:33, John 15:11, Romans 14:17, Galatians 5:22-23, Philippians 4:7, 1 Timothy 6:11

Topics: "Kingdom Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker uses the concept of stepping into heaven to illustrate the idea of being transformed by the glory of God. He emphasizes that in order to bear the beauty of God and experience true worship, one must be supernaturally transformed. The speaker also highlights the idea that heaven is not a static place, but rather a pursuit of knowing and experiencing more of God's infinite nature. He encourages listeners to be motivated by growing in the knowledge of God and experiencing the beauties of God, which can be overwhelming and take their breath away.

Transcript

Look in Romans 14. I just love this passage, Romans 14, 17. Look at what it says.

Now, for the kingdom of heaven is not eating and drinking. OK, now don't just fix your eyes on what it's not. OK, but look at what it is.

It is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Do you want to know what godliness is? Do you want to know what a mature Christian is? He's a righteous person. And do you know how you can tell if it's a biblical righteousness and not a religious righteousness? It produces peace.

Isn't that what you desire just about as much as anything on this planet? We live in a world where there is no peace. I mean, it's like the philosopher said, if there's no gunfire or bombs going off today, it's just because everybody's reloading at the same time. There's no peace in this world.

And a lot of you young people, man, there's no peace in your heart. There's just not. I know what it's like to be in the university.

You know how the professor will tell you, if you think the university is tough, just wait till you get out in the real world. That's a lie. The real world is a lot easier than the university.

Universities are demonic. I mean, they're just horrible, the pressure. But you come into a new thing in your life.

You come in just getting up in the morning and you have no peace at all. Some of you stumble to the bathroom in the morning and do this and that. You just feel like there's a hole in your heart.

Well, do you know where the peace has to come from? It has to come from the knowledge of everything that God is and everything that He has done for you. And when I say you, I want to take it as a second person, of course, but I want it in singular. I want you to think of it in singular instead of plural.

Not a group of you necessarily, but what He has done for you. And that's why we study the Bible. We don't study the Bible to have big heads or to know a lot of things.

We study the Bible so that we know who He is. And in knowing who He is and knowing what He's done for us in Christ, we have peace even though we're going through the most horrible things in our lives. You see, because of Him.

And then, as we also deepen in our relationship with Him in prayer and in just walking with Him and knowing Him and seeing the things He's done in our lives, you know what happens? The Holy Spirit, this is supernatural, gives us peace. So it's righteousness and peace. And look at that last one.

Look at that last one. Joy. I mean, joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Joy. I mean, now, you have to understand this idea of the kingdom of heaven and understand it in the context of eternal life. See, He's not just talking about a future thing here.

Something that's going to come over in Beulah land or when you cross over the other side or when you go to heaven. That's not what He's talking about. You see, those who believe in the Son have eternal life.

They possess eternal life. Eternal life is that we might know God. And Jesus Christ, whom He has sent.

You see, eternal life is not so much a quantity of life, even though it is that, you know what I mean by quantity? It's not just that it's a long, long time. Eternal life is a quality of life. A quality of life that has been absolutely changed by a person who's been brought into that life.

The person of God. And that's why eternal life starts now. Now, when we talk about the kingdom of heaven, here's something, a good illustration.

Imagine you're standing on the platform, a train platform, OK? And a plane, not a plane, a train on the train platform is coming like this, OK? Now, let's say that the... What's the first car that carries everything on a train? The engine, OK? Wow, I like science too. An engine, OK? It's right here. So, you can say the train has arrived, OK? But at the same time, you must say that the train has not yet arrived, because all of it's not here.

But at the same time, you must say that the train is arriving. That's the kingdom of heaven. That's the whole idea of eternal life and everything that God is doing in your life.

That's what it's about. You see, when you come to know Christ, there is a sense in which the kingdom has arrived and you have eternal life. But it's also in its fullness, it's coming, it's still coming.

You've got it. You've got the first fruits of it, which is the indwelling of the Spirit, the presence of God, different works of God in your life. You've got the first fruits of it.

So, bam, it's come, but it's still coming. And one day it will come in its fullness in what we call the consummation, when Christ returns and the resurrection and the new heavens and the new earth. There.

But see, I want you to have these first fruits in your life. That's what preaching is about. That's what knowledge is about.

It's not about you just learning things, even though learning things is foundational. It is learning things so that the quality of your life is transformed. And the quality of your life is only transformed in the person of God, in the person of Christ.

Do you see that? You see, my great joy, my great hope and goal for you as a minister is the quality of your life. Joy, unspeakable and full of glory. The kind of thing that makes you get up in the morning and dance a jig across the kitchen floor.

That's what this is about. The quality of your life. Now, I guess we'll look at this text for a minute.

Just a minute more. Look what it says, that the kingdom of God is righteousness. Now, what is righteousness? Righteousness is conformity to the nature and the will of God.

It's conformity to the law of God. You see? God has expressed to us. It's not like the dark philosopher or the Gnostics who said, you can't know who God is.

No, God has told us who He is. Now, there's a whole bunch of ways in which He's told us, but I want to give you two. One is through the law.

The law. Things like the Ten Commandments, other teachings in the law where we can discern who God is. He's given us the law.

But then the fullest revelation of God's righteousness is who? His Son, Jesus Christ. Okay? Now, I don't want to... Like some people who want to put those against one another, I just don't see because Jesus wrote the law. But see, God, what I want you to know is He has taught us and told us who He is and what He desires of you.

Now, here's what I want you to see. You think, because you've been raised this way, you think that authority and law and things like that are all bad, evil, coercive, manipulative, and basically out to rain on your parade. That's the kind of culture you've been raised in.

And I know that because my generation started it. We were the hippies who first wore the shirts that said, question authority. Okay? So you have this idea that law is bad, that rules are bad, that righteousness, that God correcting you is somehow wrong.

Well, I was addressing a group of students one time and I just started talking about different things God has expressed about righteousness. And we were talking about some law. And one student said, you're just trying to put us under that law.

You're just legalistic. You're just trying to put us under these rules. And I've heard that so much and I've never had a good response to it.

And then right there on that platform, pop, it just popped into my head. And I said, young man, let me ask you a question. Am I understanding you properly in saying that you don't want to be put under these laws? And this is a Christian group, supposedly.

But these laws, any sort of rule or teaching is legalism and it coerces you and it limits your life. Is that what you're telling me? He says, yes, we're not of the law. We're of the Spirit.

And I said, well, I'd have to maybe debate with you on your interpretation of that text. But I said, let's look at something for a moment. And I want you to look at this.

I said, young man, which one of these laws limits your life? Tell me which one of these laws do you... I mean, why do you hate them? Let me give you an example. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Why do you not like that law? Why do you think it's coercive and manipulative? Don't steal your neighbor's wife.

What's so coercive and manipulative about that law? Don't lie. Why do you call that legalism and you hate it? I think, young man, we're seeing something. You've got a severe problem.

Because the law is good. It's righteous. It's holy.

And if you hate it that much and you consider it something that limits you, then maybe you've got some severe problems. Now, when he talks about righteousness, I want you to think about something. Let's talk about heaven for a moment.

Do you realize that most people's idea of heaven is utopian? You know, utopia is this perfect place where you go and you get everything you want. And you're not sick and you don't get fat even though you eat all sorts of food. And I mean, just all these wonderful things that go on.

It's a utopia. That's most people's idea of a utopia. Now, here's a question we have to ask ourselves.

If heaven is a place where everybody gets exactly what they want, then who's going to decide how it's going to be? And if someone decides how it's going to be in that one heaven, then everybody else has to conform themselves to the way that person says it's going to be. Or you've got to create a heaven for every individual so that he can get exactly what he wants. Now, I want you to think about something.

Let's say that everybody on this planet and everyone who's ever lived since Adam all of a sudden gets transferred to a utopia. To a perfect place where no one gets sick and no one dies. What's it going to look like? It's going to look like hell in about five minutes.

Because we're going to bring with us all our selfishness, all our self-centeredness, all our egotistical desires, our warrings, our debauchery. You see what happens here? Heaven can't exist as we are. It can't.

I mean, just with your roommates you get in enough fights. Just with your wife you get in enough fights to ruin heaven. Do you see that? So the only way there can be a heaven is if we get rid of all this sin, all this self-centeredness, all this selfishness.

The only way there can be a heaven is to have a place that's righteous with a perfectly righteous leader or sovereign and all of us somehow have been transformed by His power to be righteous. That's the only way that you can have heaven and that's the only way you can have peace. Now let's bring this back down

to earth.

Young people, and I'm primarily going to speak to you today, is this, some of you believe in Jesus and you've truly been born again, but you have been raised in a generation that does not understand righteousness. You do not. I have seen among young people such a disconnect that it's frightening.

I mean, you're over here and you're reading MacArthur and John Piper and all these Christian celebrities and you're even reading the Puritans and everything, and then you can just step over and watch a movie that is pornographic. Or you can talk about being holy and doing certain things and then enter into relationships that lead to ungodly activity between you and that other person. You see, here's what I want you to see.

That the true coming of Christ is not that you've read the right books. It's not that you even study the Puritans. It's not this.

It's that somehow is birthed in you an increasing conformity to Christ, but not just in the big scheme of things, but in practical things. Do you see what I'm saying? I mean, I'm just amazed. I mean, sometimes, and I just want to give you these illustrations because they're so practical.

You know, I'll be preaching somewhere on holiness, you know, and some person will walk up to me and go, oh, Brother Paul, I just love that sermon on holiness and we need to be holy. And I'm sitting there like this going, I can't even look at this person because of the way they're dressed. Or I'll sometimes, you know, just hear young people talking or they'll talk about their Facebooks or their this's and their that's.

And it's just unbelievable the things that they're talking about. They are things that believers should not even mention. You see, you have to be taught what it means to be righteous.

And that's why you have to be brought under the Scriptures. You have to be brought under the example of Christ. You have to learn to imitate Him.

Why? Because even though you may claim to be Christian and you may be Christian, and even though you may read the right books and you're all excited about certain kinds of theology and everything else, unless it filters down into every aspect of your life, none of it really matters. It just doesn't matter. It's got to filter into your relationships.

It's got to filter into the way you talk. It's got to filter into what you look at and don't look at, what you listen to and don't listen to, what you wear and what you don't wear, what you do and don't do. Now, righteousness does not kill you.

It doesn't limit your life. It doesn't hurt you. It doesn't make you feel bad.

It's not like you're the kid outside the candy store watching everyone else eat. That's not what righteousness is. Righteousness prospers your life.

Let me give you a perfect example. You look at some of the older people. Movies about older times like *Pride and Prejudice* or what's the other one? What are they? The *Bonnet* movies, what do you call them? *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, all those kind of movies.

Now, let me give you just... I'm going to be a screenwriter right now and I'm going to give you a scene from a movie that's like that. There's a girl and she walks into a room and there's a book on the table and there

are other people in the room, but there's a young man that she particularly is fond of. And only she knows it in her heart of hearts.

But she's just fond of him. And so, she happens to see this book on the table that she thinks she just wants to look at it, see what it's going to say, and she reaches for the book. Okay? Now, when she reaches for the book, this guy's also looking at the book and just by mistake, he reaches for the book at the same time.

And when their hands touch, his hand goes like this across her hand. She goes... She flushes. Her heart is beating so much, she's about ready to have a heart attack.

She can't breathe and she runs out of the room. Can you imagine those kinds of emotions? No, you can't. You can't feel that way anymore.

A guy can touch you, he can push you, he can get in a touch football game with you and throw you to the ground and you just roll right back up. You can't experience those emotions again. They've been killed in you by your culture because righteousness was taken away.

This girl, her hand is just barely touched by a boy she's fond of that takes her breath away. Because we're not a righteous people, we can't feel that anymore. Everything that's in poetry everything that's in fine literature everything that is noble and excellent and wonderful and loving and all these things they're dead in our culture.

Do you see that? Why? Because righteousness has been killed. And this is what I want you to see young people. I want you to be righteous because of the fruit that righteousness bears.

It makes you human again. It gives you the ability again to write poetry and to think deep thoughts and all these other things. Do you see what I'm saying? And when that is taken out of your life, you become brute.

You become animal. You become grunge. You go through what we call the death of beauty.

You see, that's what righteousness does. Righteousness is not about sitting here being real morose. Righteousness is being conformed to the image of God.

I want to use Europe at its height of refinement for a moment. When we did have some absolutely spectacular literature and other things that happened. Beauty, art, literature, music, everything.

You know what's so sad about that? You think that's Western culture. That's not Western culture. You see, Western culture is this.

All of us running around naked painting ourselves blue and eating one another. Prior to the advent of Christianity, that's what Western culture looked like. Really? Don't think.

I mean, they were Vikings and all this kind of stuff. Doing atrocities. Druids and every kind of thing you could imagine.

No sense of love, of beauty, or anything until what happened? Christianity came in there. And then the Reformation in which Christianity really arrived. The deep truths about God.

High thoughts about God. The preciousness of Christ. And what did it do? The Puritan genius was this.

See, you were taught to hate the Puritans. But the Puritan genius was this. To take everything that's in Scripture and seek to apply it to our lives.

Now, they failed in some ways as all of us fail. But the fact of the matter is it transformed society so that you have these precious things like pride and prejudice and sense and sensibility and the beautiful poetry that came out of the Victorian era and everything else. The sad thing about it is the very Victorian era that wreathed the benefits of Christianity denied Christianity.

And went from there to Spice Girls. Went from there to grunge. Went from there to European techno-punk.

I was teaching at a university in Brasov in Romania two years ago. And I noticed it was a pretty hostile crowd. And I noticed some girls came in.

And I mean, they had spikes through their noses and purple hair. And I mean, the full nine yards or whatever it is. They had it all.

They were letting everybody know they were in rebellion. Against everything. They were probably in rebellion against rebellion.

But they were beautiful to me. When I saw those girls, 17, 18, 19, come down, I just, like a father's heart, my heart just broke. And partway through the sermon, I asked them.

You know, I just stopped and I said, girls, let me ask you a question. Have you ever seen, I mean, some of these older movies where they're, you know, like *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, these types of things? And most of them went, yeah, yeah. And I said, while you were watching it or maybe afterwards, did you feel sad? Melancholy? And a lot of them said, well, yeah.

Yeah, why? The death of beauty. The death of beauty. Now, I didn't do this publicly in front of them because I didn't want to hurt them.

But I spoke a little more on the subject. But basically, it's look, girls, you went from reading poetry, writing books, speaking about beauty and music and art and refinement to driving a nail through your nose. What did that? An unrighteous culture.

In Eastern Europe, it's an amazing thing. When you get out into the countryside, you see all these stone, these cobblestone streets and the beautiful, beautiful old brick farmhouses and things like that. But when you come into the cities where communism had its strength, you see these ugly just buildings, blocks like you put ants in, all covered in smoke and dirt and dark and thousands of people live inside them.

You know, what are you seeing here? I'm not giving a lecture on communism, but the point is much of that, if not all of it, was demonic. It was anti-scriptural. So what do you have? You have people being taken from beauty into these horrid little beehives to live like insects.

You see, whenever a culture is not righteous, it kills that culture. It turns it once again into beasts. You don't know how to treat a young girl.

You really don't. You don't even have a clue. No one ever taught you.

No one ever opened up the Scripture and told you. You know nothing. Probably everything you know is wrong.

Do you know many of you young girls, you want to be godly, you want to follow the Lord, but who do you know that could actually sit down with a Bible and teach you what femininity is? Do you see? We're just a mixed up race. And what's amazing is if our culture could come through the door right now and listen, they would have me on CNN just because I was telling you that there may ought to be a difference between a man and a woman. Look at the way our culture is.

Now, the Kingdom of Heaven is righteousness and righteousness is good. Righteousness enables relationships. Righteousness corrects those relationships when the man sins or the woman sins.

It's righteousness that brings them back to where they ought to be. Righteousness enables you to truly love a woman or a man. Righteousness allows you to have a family.

Righteousness allows you to walk in a way worthy of your vocation. And so, righteousness is not what everybody says it is. It's not a terrible thing that restricts your life as the irreligious would say.

And it's not a morbid thing that will take all the joy out as many religious people will tell you. As a matter of fact, have you ever read some of the Puritan poems to their wives? You know about Puritans. They hated everything that was joy.

You can't read those poems without blushing. It's like, dude, put on your brakes. You're writing too much.

They were so full of life. Why? Because there was a sense of righteousness. Look at Christ.

I mean, children wanted to be around Him. He rejoiced with joy exceedingly. He was anointed with joy.

Why? Because He was righteous. All the sadness in my home and there is sadness at times because we're still not totally transformed. Well, my wife is, but I'm not.

All the sadness in my home comes from unrighteousness. So the goal here is to be righteous. And what does it bring? It brings peace.

It brings peace. I mean, this beautiful, wonderful sense of security. Of security.

Of knowing of the sovereignty of God. And that by our growth and righteousness, we are demonstrating evidence that we truly belong to Him. That we truly belong to Him.

Let me ask you a question. You have faith in Christ? You believe that God is one? Congratulations. The demons do likewise.

But they have more spiritual sensitivity than most people who claim to believe in God. For they also tremble. Do you believe in Christ? Wonderful.

Let me ask you a question. Is there any evidence of that faith? James says, basically, tell me about your faith without works and I will prove to you my faith by my works. Is there a growth in righteousness in your life? Are you becoming more like Christ? Is it obvious to you that there's this all-sovereign? And all here in the Greek means all.

All-sovereign. Sovereign everywhere and everything. That there's this all-sovereign God that's got ahold of you to make you righteous? That He's working in your life to make you righteous? Is it obvious to you? I was sitting down this morning and I was kind of meditating.

And that means I was just sitting down at a table with some tea and looking at my Bible, okay? It doesn't mean my legs were crossed and I was in some type of lotus position. I was just looking at the Scriptures and I said, Lord, in all the failures and follies of my life, there have been times where it was like more steps backward than steps forward. Sometimes looking in the mirror of God's Word in which I said, man, I'm not making progress.

Lord, what is it really that makes me know? I mean, John Newton had a similar question. What makes me know that I'm really Yours? And I think that it comes down to two things. One is, I know... It's not that I delight in Christ as I should or I love Christ as I should or anything, but I know I have no hope without Christ.

That's one truth. I know that it's not 99% Jesus and 1% me. I know I have no hope whatsoever without Christ.

So that's a done deal. I know that at least in one thing I've got right. There is no hope outside of Jesus.

I am thoroughly convinced of that. The other thing is this. I know I am a prisoner.

I know that I cannot run beyond God's sovereignty. I know that God has taken hold of my life and there is nothing on this earth I could do to escape it. And that primarily evidences itself in discipline, which is one of the greatest signs of being a child of God.

I know that. I know I cannot get free. I remember one time God was calling me to preach and I didn't want to preach.

And I was sitting in my 66 Mustang, had pony interior, empty headers, four barrel. That four barrel kick in and break the seat. I mean, it was the most spectacular car.

And I got in that car and I said, I'm driving all the way to California. I'm not going to preach. I'm getting out of here.

And he's like, no, I didn't say anything, but just, and no, no one spoke to me, but a thought did pop into my head. Yeah, you just go ahead and drive to California and I'll be there when you get there waiting on you. There's a sense in which I cannot get rid of Him.

It's not that I want to, but even if I wanted to, I couldn't. He has taken over. It's like, you know, that illustration, you know, where people say, Jesus is knocking on the door of your heart, but there's only a doorknob on the inside.

And if you want Jesus to come in, you got to open the door. Well, that's not true. The door happens to belong to Jesus.

He wants in, He'll kick the stinking door down. But here's something that I want you to see. Let's just use that illustration for a moment.

Let's just use it, okay? I don't approve of it, but I want to use it. Jesus is knocking on the door of your heart, okay? I want to give you eternal life. And you go, oh, wow, eternal life.

All my sins are gone. I get to go to heaven. This is a great deal.

All I got to do is open the door. Open the door. And you run and you put your hand on that doorknob.

And the moment you put your hand on that doorknob, Jesus clears His voice and says, just wait before you turn that doorknob. You know this. I come through that door.

The door is mine. The doorknob is mine. You're mine.

Everything you own is mine. Mine, mine, mine. As Abraham Kuyper said, that famous Dutch theologian, he said when Jesus comes back, He will stretch forth His hands across this planet.

He will say, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine. That's what He does. And when He takes something as His own, it's His own forever.

Israel learned that. Before Israel entered into that covenant, He said, you need to be careful before you enter into this covenant. Because when you do, I'm going to be on you.

You're mine. I will not let you be like the nations. Israel has suffered like no other people on this planet.

I have peace of knowing because of the works of God in my life that God is all sovereign and He's in control of my life. So we've got righteousness, peace, and joy. Joy.

Do you know where I get my most joy? I'll tell you. It's a secret. For about, I don't know how many years, it's over 10 years, I've been working on a book that no one's ever even seen and maybe never will see.

And all I do, basically, is take every verse that has something to do with Christ in the Gospel, every concept that has to do with Christ in the Gospel, and I meditate upon it. But then I research it. I mean, on one verse, it may take me weeks or months.

Not so much to understand, but I go back into all the Puritans, all the Reformers, back to Augustine, back everywhere I can go until I exhaust every resource I have to find great thoughts about Christ. And I want to tell you, sometimes I will read things like that and it will bring me such joy. I feel like I'm going to explode.

And if that is what heaven is like, then sign me up. Because heaven is going to be greater and greater and greater manifestations of the Person of Christ, which is going to fill us with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Let me give you a little idea of what this joy we're talking about.

Have you ever seen something so beautiful that when you saw it, it literally, I mean, literally took your breath away? Whether it was a sunset. I've seen some of those beautiful sunsets. There are paintings that have done that to me.

I love Van Gogh's *Starry, Starry Night*, Monet's *Water Lilies*, especially the size of the thing. What is it? Is it *Nessun Dorma*? *Nessun Dorma*, sung by the three great tenors. I mean, literally, I weep when I hear that.

It's just unbelievable to me. All right, now I want you to imagine something. Oh, and when I first saw my wife too, because I've got to go home today.

Yeah, that was a close one. Thank you, Kevin. He's going, your wife, your wife.

No, he didn't have to remind me. I've literally listened and seen things, and you have too, that have taken my breath away. I mean, literally.

Now, I want you to realize something. If you want to do a PhD in theology, do it on this. The beauty, better to put it in plural, the beauties of God.

I want to submit to you that God is so beautiful that if you were to catch one glimpse of His beauty without somehow being supernaturally supported by Him, in an instant, it would disintegrate your senses, and for the rest of your life on this earth, you would be a madman. You could not even begin to comprehend the slightest glimpse of His beauty. And to me, the Christian life, and I believe this will be carried over into heaven.

People ask me, they say, Brother Paul, when we get to heaven, will we know everything? I say, well, we won't know everything, but we'll know a lot. Because see, the problem with heaven is the word infinite. You've got a God of infinite beauty, of infinite glory, of infinite power.

So how is a finite creature ever going to comprehend that? Not going to happen. And that's what makes heaven, heaven. You see, do you honestly think that heaven is really cool because you get to walk down streets of gold? Do you honestly think that? I mean, after a while, it's just a street.

Or swinging on gates of pearl back and forth. I mean, I don't know. It may not take much to entertain you, but that doesn't work for me.

And if I'm going to be in a place almost infinitely, of infinite duration, I need something infinite to captivate me, to cause me to go on, to chase, to motivate me to even exist. I'm not existing to be stagnant, to be static. I'm existing because the thing about life is that you want to go on.

There's this passionate desire for more. And when you lose that, you die. Heaven is not just getting it all the first day and then you just kind of sit there.

Heaven is this thing about an infinite, infinite God that you will be chasing down, knowing more and more about. Imagine it this way. In true Christianity, and this doesn't happen on a daily basis to none of us.

This doesn't happen. But it does happen. In true Christianity, I come to understand through the Scriptures or through biblical preaching, through the work of the Holy Spirit illuminating the Scriptures, I come to understand something today about the greatness of God that I never knew.

And it fills me with joy. And then I go on. And as I walk through this Christian life, hopefully through the Scriptures and the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit and the providence of God, I am learning greater and greater, gaining greater and greater thoughts about the glory and the power and the beauty of God.

And these are the things that drive me and should be driving you. You see, that's why so many churches today, they have to have programs and plans and get people excited and acquire the fire and get pumped up and bring in the power team and all these different things to motivate people. Why? Because the proper motivation isn't there, which is growing in the knowledge of who God is.

And the more you grow in that, the more you're transformed by it, but the more you want more. Now, imagine stepping into heaven. Stepping into heaven.

Just imagine this. Now, this is just a construct, okay? I don't believe heaven's this way or anything. I'm just trying to get a truth across to you through an illustration.

Imagine stepping into heaven and there before you is a revelation of God and Christ unlike anything you could have ever imagined. And you must be supernaturally transformed in order to bear that glory. In order to even look upon His beauty, you must be supernaturally transformed.

And you look at that beauty in a way you've never seen it before and you are filled with such joy and ecstasy that you never thought possible. And worship that you never thought possible. The expression of that joy, which is worship.

And then let's say you go to bed. Of course, you don't go to bed, but we're going to go to bed. So we go to bed.

You wake up the next morning. And there before you is a greater revelation of God and Christ. So much greater that it's as though you never saw Him before.

And it leads you to greater joy and greater ecstasy to the point where if you had not been supernaturally strengthened again, it would have killed you or driven you mad. And then you worship Him and you serve Him and you delight in Him with a righteousness and a peace and a joy that has been unknown to you. And that is every day of eternity.

And what does righteousness do on this planet? Righteousness makes you a witness for Christ. Righteousness makes you able to enter into relationships with other people. Righteousness brings you peace.

Righteousness brings you joy. Righteousness enables your mind to do things. Righteousness enables you to create beauty, to solve problems, to heal a culture, to rebuild that which has fallen.

It's all dependent upon righteousness. And as a people is righteous, so will their life and their culture improve. And as they are given over to greater and greater degrees of wickedness, they have what we have today.

So, don't think, at least don't think because I'm here, because I've got kind of a mean reputation. Don't think because I'm here you're supposed to pray a certain way, or you're afraid to rejoice, or be happy. I would rather have you run away from me.

Running up and down these chairs right here than being morose. I want you to have joy, real joy, true joy. Please, because that's the Kingdom of Heaven.

That's the Kingdom of Heaven. If you don't know Christ here today, you don't know Christ, you're not sure if you know Christ, then please come talk to me after the service. Because I would love to tell you about Jesus, and tell you how you can know Him, and share the Gospel with you.

Or if you've got a problem and you're sitting there going, you know, I don't understand some of the things. Okay, come on, we'll just stay here, and we'll talk about it, alright? To help you in any way that we can, please. But people, I want your real life outside of this building, your real life, to be righteous.

I want you, Christ wants you to have joy and peace, alright? Alright, let's pray. Father, thank you for your help, your blessing, whatever measure it has been given, that will be told to us only in eternity. Lord, bless your people, in Jesus' name, Amen.

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