

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Are you ready for heaven?

(Jerry Fite)

Ask your child, “Are you ready to go to Disney World?”, you probably will receive the quick reply, “Yes, I can’t wait.” Ask your wife or husband the same question, you might hear, “Not yet, I have a little more washing to do before we go,” or “... I have just a few more loose ends to tie up before we leave.” Readiness can be interpreted as being “willing,” and also understood as being “prepared.” Therefore, “Are you ready for heaven?”

This question makes us consider if we are spiritually minded or not. Our children, excited about what lies in Disney World, can’t wait to get there. Likewise, the spiritually minded person should long for heaven. Peter asks, “... *what manner of persons ought ye to be in holy living and godliness looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?*” (2 Peter 3:11-12). The mind-set of the person living the holy and godly life is not just wanting the Lord to return, but “earnestly desiring” the coming of the Lord. Yes, that is when the world and all the works therein will be dissolved with fervent

heat. What makes our new abiding place so great, that we welcome the coming of the Lord and the very elements of the present heaven and earth to be loosed into oblivion? Peter answers, “*But according to His promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*” (2 Peter 3:13).

When one lives each day according to God’s standard of righteousness, his or her heart will be vexed or distressed by the character of those walking according to the course of this world. Lot was rescued from such a world around him. God delivered, “... *righteous Lot, sore distressed by the lascivious life of the wicked (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their lawless deeds)*” (2 Peter 2:7-8). Lot, striving to live righteously before God, was continually tormented by what he heard and saw. The righteous today should earnestly desire heaven, because righteousness permeates heaven. Surely, like a child, the spiritually minded person, can truthfully say, “I can’t wait to go there.”

Are you then prepared for heaven? Our readiness will not be based upon our perfect deeds, but on our relationship with Jesus

Christ. We know that heaven is the place where, “... *in no wise shall enter anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie, but only they that are written in the Lamb’s book of life*” (Revelation 21:27). We all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). How can we then enter the abode where the perfectly Holy and Righteous God dwells? It will not be based upon our performance in relationship to law, “*because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified*” (Romans 3:20). But because Jesus paid the price by dying for our sins, we can be justified through faith in Christ, and His sacrifice (Romans 3:20-21, 25). The essential relationship of being in Christ is seen when we are “*baptized into Christ*” and become “*sons of God by faith*” (Galatians 3:26-27). Only in Christ can we be ready for heaven.

Dear conscientious Christian, do you say you are not ready yet for heaven because you feel you have not done enough for the Lord? Is heaven for the Christian based upon how much you do? No, but it continues to be by faith in Christ. As we live faithful lives, let us remember God has not appointed us to wrath, but to salvation. He wants us to live together with him forever (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10).