

Glad Tidings

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

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Why can you be sure of Heaven?

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You spark my curiosity when you talk of one day seeing “the street of gold” and “the river of life.” You heighten my interest when you tell me that we will be able to see such glorious surroundings through eyes never to overflow with tears again due to death, mourning, crying, or pain. What a place to fathom where not only the formidable enemy of death, but depressing chronic pain no longer exist! These things are wonderful to contemplate, but on what basis do you anchor your hope of ever going to such a place?

First, God has REVEALED these characteristics of our reward in heaven through the Gospel. Paul speaks of our hope as “...laid up for you in the heavens, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel” (*Colossians 1:5*). So, we have not just “dreamed up” a fanciful utopian abode, but we have the TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL describing the celestial heavenly city for us (*cf. Revelation 21-22*). Yes, absolute, irrefutable truth, not the postmodern subjective substitutes of reality.

Second, God, WHO CANNOT LIE, has PROMISED eternal life in heaven. This was one basis for Paul’s hope of heaven, for he writes, “*in hope of eternal life which God who cannot lie promised*

before times eternal” (*Titus 1:2*). A promise can create great anticipation, but a longing ever coming to fruition is only as sure as the truthful character of the one who makes the promise. God not only does not lie; He CANNOT lie!

A truthful person can promise us something, yet not have the POWER or means to fulfill the promise. God manifested “*the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places...*” (*Ephesians 1:19-20*). Paul connects Jesus’ resurrection to the basis of our hope for life beyond the grave: “*But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep*” (*I Corinthians 15:20*). What a foundation for our faith to be promised future glory by the One who views the rare transcendence of natural law (resurrection from the dead) in the same light as the repeatable stages of natural law (firstfruits)!

Our future in heaven is sure because our God, who cannot lie, has promised it, and demonstrated His power to deliver on His promise by raising Jesus from the dead.

While our hope of heaven is sure because of God’s righteous character and miraculous power,

man has an important part to play in GUARDING the inheritance. Peter speaking of this inheritance reserved in heaven, adds: “*who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time*” (*I Peter 1:5*). God will do his part in making heaven a reality. The question remaining is, will you continue to manifest faith?

Four areas of a life of faith are mandatory before heaven is sure for us. We must keep TRUSTING in God and His promise (*I Peter 1:5, Eph. 1:13*). We must OVERCOME the Devil, who works hard to rob us of our inheritance (*Rev. 12:11, Rev. 2:7, 11, 3:5, 3:21, etc.*). We must ABIDE in the teachings of Christ as revealed in His Gospel (*I John 2:24-25, 5:11-13, 2 John 9*). Only by abiding in Christ’s teaching do we have the Son, therefore have eternal life. Finally, we must GROW SPIRITUALLY before enjoying one day the abundant entrance into the kingdom of heaven (*2 Peter 1:5-11*). You do not “slip” into heaven, you GROW into heaven. This demands constant “diligence” on our part.

Our Country’s forefathers gave us a Republic, with the caveat, “If you can keep it.” God has given us Heaven if we continue to trust, overcome, abide, and grow in Him! Heaven is sure, are you?