

# Going to Heaven? Critical Realities

Barry:

As a preacher, you're asked to do funerals and sometimes you'll hear the phrase, somebody said, well, he preached him right into heaven. Can you really do that?

## INTRO

John:

Well, let's take a look and see what Jesus has to say about this idea. Beginning in Matthew 6, I invite you to open your Bible to verse 16 and following where Jesus says, (Matthew 6.16-23) *“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites with a sad countenance, for they disfigure their faces, and they may appear to men to be fasting. And surely I say to you, they have the reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your father who is in secret place, and your father who sees in secret rewards you openly. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness.”*

You know, it's interesting when you think about the idea of going to heaven. It's a wonderful place and we want to go there, right? And Jesus again points to this idea of be careful what you do because the choices you make are going to determine the outcome.

Barry:

You know, he starts here by talking about fasting. And fasting, I think of all the spiritual disciplines that we see modeled in chapter six might be the one we struggle with the most because it's that idea of, you know, giving something up that's so basic in order for a spiritual purpose.

And here he's talking about those people who would do that in order to get, you know, people's attention to make people say, oh, how great

they are. And, you know, as we talked about earlier, you know, at a funeral, people will sit here and talk about all the good things this person has done. And you can convince everybody in an auditorium that this person is great. But if they did it with the wrong motives, if they did it for earthly gain, it's not going to have the heavenly gain. And that's exactly what this passage is leading to. You know, Jesus has been saying this over and over, whether it's prayer or whatever he talks about, you know, giving to charity. When we do it before men, we get our reward here. Where is our reward eternally supposed to be? In heaven. And that's why he emphasizes in that last section about storing up your treasure where it's permanent.

John:

Yes. And when you look at what he says there about laying up treasure in heaven, he's not talking about physical gain. He's not talking about gold. He's not talking about silver. He's talking about a spiritual existence. And that's, of course, where we want to go.

And so, when we look at what he says, it's a choice we make. And so if we want to have a place where there are no feasts, where there is no rust, where there are no moths and no bugs, I look forward to that. That's the kind of mentality that he's telling us we must have.

No matter what someone may think of you, no matter what someone may believe of you, what matters is the choices you make in this life. And God knows your decision.

Barry:

How many people have we seen in recent years who had this sterling reputation, some actor, some politician, some preacher? Everybody thinks the greatest thing and then something is revealed about them and it all comes crashing down. And they become the biggest pariah in the world. Because that's what happens on earth. Whatever you do here has a chance of falling apart. And that's what he's emphasizing here.

And he talks about that next section. I think a lot of people see that and get confused when he talks about the eye being the lamp of the body and everything. He's not telling us there that, well, we just have no idea whether we've done the right things.

I don't think that's what he's saying at all. He's saying we have to have the right viewpoint in order to know what the right things are. If we have a bad eye, we're going to lead us into darkness and destruction.

And that's why we need to have that eye of God, that we see things from God's perspective. We see how God views things. So many times, we're so focused on things that aren't going to matter in eternity.

And that's what he's trying to tell us here. Put your effort into that's going to matter forever.

John:

Whether you go to heaven or not, it's going to be up to you, even as Jesus makes this clear in this section.

And really, when you boil all this down, the most important decision you'll ever make in life is to become a Christian. The most important decision you'll ever make is to make certain that the choices you make are in line with God.

Barry:

You know, every one of us are going to have a funeral if the before we die. Every one of us are going to have people stand around and say things about us. And sometimes we're concerned about, hey, what are they going to say about me?

But let me tell you, the words that are going to most matter to you when you die is to hear the Lord say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Nothing else that will be said will much matter to you.

We want to continue to always be the people that are pleasing to God. In order to be pleasing to God, we got to look at what he tells us to do. And that's why we want to encourage you to study your Bible and follow along with our videos to help you do that.

And we have several that are available on the website for you to do that. If you have any questions or comments, something that you'd like to study or learn more about, we'd love to hear from you. There are various ways to contact us, either through email, through the website, or through a phone or text.

We'd love to hear from you. Thank you so much for studying with us today.