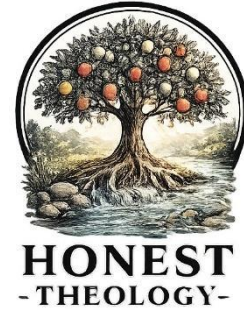


Searching for Heaven ... Will You Join Me?



I begin the final leg of my [seminary](#) experience this summer with an anticipated ending in May of 2027. With Master of Divinity *and* Master of Theology degrees (hey, go big or go home, right?) I hope to enrich my teaching abilities. This final year will involve choosing and writing a detailed thesis regarding a topic of my choice. I'm looking forward to it, believe it or not! (I told you I was a nerd.)

Choosing a topic that you want to spend a year researching and writing on is daunting. Initially, my passion for gender equality within church settings seemed to be the likely direction God was leading, but midway through my studies, something else actually began to gain interest: heaven.

You can't go to seminary and not touch on the topic of heaven! It's a little bit like setting out on a lifetime journey but having no final destination in mind. But the more the topic came up, the more I realized that what I had always thought heaven was ... was only one concept out of numerous ones. Even more surprising, few "typical" Christians (from all denominations) have the ability to give an articulate understanding of heaven (let alone reference supporting Scripture). And, much to my shock and horror, was in that group!

Don't misunderstand me. This confident belief in heaven is the whole concept of faith. It gives believers a blessed hope that often is the only thing that keeps us upright. It involves believing in Scriptural concepts that are impossible to prove (or even honestly comprehend) until after they happen. (Then you can say, "SEE?! I told you so!") It's believing in something in advance that only makes sense in reverse. *And that's for everyone on the planet.*

Yet, the greatest aspect of Christian hope is the promise of redemption, renewal, and eternal life. A promise of no more tears or pain. It's a promised reality that will make everything you've ever had to experience *worth it*. Think about that. (It's more than I can imagine, honestly.)

As a teacher, I have many precious eternal sisters and brothers. We have studied, laughed, cried, prayed, and worked side by side to learn more about God through Jesus Christ. As we age together (some of us have been doing this for almost 20 years!), the concept of heaven has gotten more and more ... present with us. We've endured the deaths of parents, partners, family, friends, and even (the hardest of all) children. We've watched the world go mad with violence and hatred. We've discovered we need to consider long term care insurance for ourselves and fill out forms for Medicare and Social Security. More and more, the concept of death and heaven seem more ... real ... than ever before.

As a teacher, the responsibility of being able to articulate what I believe about heaven has suddenly become not only of personal importance but (almost even more so) of critical spiritual responsibility. God has called me to be a teacher; I need to fulfill that purpose where I feel God wants me to go. And so, I wonder and ask questions, worry and try to better understand the incomprehensible. I read and pray, pray and read... For me, it has become the direction of my final thesis. (Could this be the reason I've felt driven to seminary *all along*?! Gulp.)

When I get through this year (note the God-given confidence!), my future goal is to write a publishable book about ... Heaven (what did you think I was going to say?!) I want it to be a book that the average individual can read and at least go, “Hmmmmmm ... I’ve learned something ... I’ve gotta think more about this ...” Even more expansive, I’d like to write a book that teachers and ministers and personal study nerds like me will be able to utilize in their God-given call and purpose. (Go big, or go home, right?) But that’s years away.

Honest Theology is a good reflection of how my brain works. I have found a great joy and peace as I write here (even if no one reads it, lol). These feelings are how I have experienced God’s affirmation that I am on the right track (as opposed to depression and anxiety). I find that the writing here helps organize my thoughts and even gives me insight (into what I know and how to express it or what I need to research more). Last night (lots of thoughts come at about 4:00 a.m.), I thought clearly that it is here that I will also begin to document my search for heaven. (Not all my posts, but some.)

It’s kind of private and kind of scary really. I’m stepping out into the unknown (usually, safely in the sanctity of my office) and sharing stuff with others. Stuff that often ends up in the shredder because it turns out to be so ... bad. But I think it might be important to show others how God is leading me on this rather interesting path. I’m also praying that there are some of you out there who might learn, question, suggest, and pray for me as I take this journey. Maybe even communicate from time to time? Answer some questions if I pose them? These are the reasons why I’m inviting you along on this journey. I’d like to get all the help I can. After all, heaven belongs to all of us, not just theologians.

Scripture to maybe check out:

- Psalm 119:105 – Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
- Matthew 5:14-16 “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Bibliography notes:

For this post I used New Revised Standard Version, Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Feel free to research your own translation or look up the many translations that are available on [Bible Gateway](#).

What are your thoughts about this post? Email me and let me know!

honesttheology@gmail.com

I am available on many platforms, if you’d like to read more from me:

- [Substack](#) (You can subscribe!)
- [Facebook](#)

- [Instagram](#)
- [Honest Theology Website](#)
- [Pinterest](#)