



# Heaven, our living Hope!

## Part 1

By Pastor Grant Williams

### 1 Peter 1:3-25 AMPC

3 Praised (honored, blessed) be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah)! By His boundless mercy we have been born again to an ever-living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 [Born anew] into an inheritance which is beyond the reach of change and decay [imperishable], unsullied and unfading, reserved in heaven for you,

**Jesus is our Living Hope and our inheritance is reserved in Heaven!**

5 Who are being guarded (garrisoned) by God's power through [your] faith [till you fully inherit that [c]final] salvation that is ready to be revealed [for you] in the last time.

6 [You should] be exceedingly glad on this account, though now for a little while you may be distressed by trials and suffer temptations,

7 So that [the genuineness] of your faith may be tested, [your faith] which is infinitely more precious than the perishable gold which is tested and purified by fire. [This proving of your faith is intended] to redound to [your] praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One) is revealed.

8 Without having seen Him, you love Him; though you do not [even] now see Him, you believe in Him and exult and thrill with inexpressible and glorious (triumphant, heavenly) joy.

9 [At the same time] you receive the result (outcome, consummation) of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

**10 The prophets, who prophesied of the grace (divine blessing) which was intended for you, searched and inquired earnestly about this salvation.**

**11 They sought [to find out] to whom or when this was to come which the Spirit of Christ working within them was indicating when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow [them].**

**12 It was then disclosed to them that the services they were rendering were not meant for themselves and their period of time, but for you. [It is these very] things which have now already been made known plainly to you by those who preached the good news (the Gospel) to you by the [same] Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Into these things [the very] angels long to look!**

**13 So brace up your minds; be sober (circumspect, morally alert); set your hope wholly and unchangeably on the grace (divine favor) that is coming to you when Jesus Christ (the Messiah) is revealed.**

**14 [Live] as children of obedience [to God]; do not conform yourselves to the evil desires [that governed you] in your former ignorance [when you did not know the requirements of the Gospel].**

**15 But as the One Who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all your conduct and manner of living.**

**16 For it is written, You shall be holy, for I am holy.**

17 And if you call upon Him as [your] Father Who judges each one impartially according to what he does, [then] you should conduct yourselves with true reverence throughout the time of your temporary residence [on the earth, whether long or short].

18 You must know (recognize) that you were redeemed (ransomed) from the useless (fruitless) way of living inherited by tradition from [your] forefathers, not with corruptible things [such as] silver and gold,

19 But [you were purchased] with the precious blood of Christ (the Messiah), like that of a [sacrificial] lamb without blemish or spot.

20 *It is true that He was chosen and foreordained (destined and foreknown for it) before the foundation of the world, **but He was brought out to public view (made manifest) in these last days (at the end of the times) for the sake of you.***

21 *Through Him you believe in (adhere to, rely on) God, Who raised Him up from the dead and gave Him honor and glory, **so that your faith and hope are [centered and rest] in God.***

22 ***Since by your obedience** to the Truth through the [Holy] Spirit you have purified your hearts for the sincere affection of the brethren, [see that you] love one another fervently from a pure heart.*

23 *You have been regenerated (born again), not from a mortal [d]origin ([e]seed, sperm), but from one that is immortal by the ever living and lasting Word of God.*

24 *For all flesh (mankind) is like grass, and all its glory (honor) like [the] flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower drops off,*

25 *But the Word of the Lord ([f]divine instruction, the Gospel) endures forever. And **this Word is the good news which was preached to you.***

Peter is reminding and reassuring the New Testament Church about their new life and hope of heaven. He was also reminding them to be obedient to God's Word, His Commands and by Holy as "He is Holy". Many thought they may have missed the rapture, thought they were going through the tribulation. The New Testament Church believed that was Jesus who died on the cross fulfilling what was foretold by the prophets and as a result were being killed by the Romans, harassed and killed by religious leaders and they need to be encouraged.

Peter was not saying anything new but reminding them of what had already been spoken of by the Prophets, the New Testament writers and Jesus Himself.

Paul encouraged the church in his first letter as well by reminding them about the rapture of the church and being caught up together to heaven. His instructions and reminder was also on ***how to get to heaven...*** be obedient to His Word, commands or precepts.

### **1 Thessalonians 4:1-18 AMPC**

1 Furthermore, [a]brethren, **we beg and admonish you in [virtue of our union with] the Lord Jesus, that [you follow the instructions which] you learned from us about how you ought to walk so as to please and gratify God,** as indeed you are doing, [and] that you do so even more and more abundantly [attaining yet greater perfection in living this life].

2 **For you know what charges and precepts we gave you** [[b]on the authority and by the inspiration of] the Lord Jesus.

3 **For this is the will of God,** that you should be consecrated (separated and set apart for pure and holy living): that you should abstain and shrink from all sexual vice,

4 That each one of you should know how to [c]possess (control, manage) his own [d]body in consecration (purity, separated from things profane) and honor,

5 Not [to be used] in the passion of lust like the heathen, who are ignorant of the true God and have no knowledge of His will,

6 That no man transgress and overreach his brother and defraud him in this matter or defraud his brother in business. For the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we have already warned you solemnly and [e]told you plainly.

7 For God has not called us to impurity but to consecration [to dedicate ourselves to the most thorough purity].

8 Therefore whoever disregards (sets aside and rejects this) disregards not man but God, Whose [very] Spirit [Whom] He gives to you is holy (chaste, pure).

9 But concerning brotherly love [for all other Christians], you have no need to have anyone write you, for you yourselves have been [personally] taught by God to love one another.

10 And indeed you already are [extending and displaying your love] to all the brethren throughout Macedonia. But we beseech and earnestly exhort you, brethren, that you [f]excel [in this matter] more and more,

11 To make it your ambition and definitely endeavor to live quietly and peacefully, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we charged you,

12 So that you may bear yourselves becomingly and be correct and honorable and command the respect of the outside world, being dependent on nobody [self-supporting] and having need of nothing.

13 **Now also we would not have you ignorant, brethren, about those who fall asleep [[g]in death],** that you may not grieve [for them] as the rest do who have no hope [beyond the grave].

14 **For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again,** even so **God will also bring with Him** through Jesus those who have fallen asleep [[h]in death].

15 **For this we declare to you by the Lord's [own] word,** that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall in no way precede [into His presence] or have any advantage at all over those who have previously fallen asleep [in Him [i]in death].

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud cry of summons, with the shout of an archangel, and with the blast of the trumpet of God. And those who have departed this life in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we, the living ones who remain [on the earth], **shall simultaneously be caught up along with [the resurrected dead] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so always (through the eternity of the eternities) we shall be with the Lord!**

18 **Therefore comfort and encourage one another with these words.**

Two thousand years ago the New Testament Church needed to be reminded about the Hope of Heaven and how to get there or the only way to get there.

### **John 14:6 AMPC**

6 Jesus said to him, **I am the Way and the Truth** and the Life; no one comes to the Father except by (through) Me.

### **John 1:1 AMPC**

1 In the beginning [before all time] **was the Word (Christ),** and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself.

**Hebrews 13:8 KJV**

8 Jesus Christ (The word or the truth) the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

**Malachi 3:6 AMPC**

6 For I am the Lord (The Word the truth), I do not change;

**Isaiah 33:22 AMPC**

22 For the Lord (the Word the truth) is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; He will save us.

**John 14:15 KJV**

15 **If ye love me**, keep my commandments. (the Word the truth)

**John 16:8-13 AMPC**

8 And when He (the Holy Spirit) comes, He will convict and convince the world and bring demonstration to it about **sin** and about **righteousness (uprightness of heart and right standing with God)** and about **judgment**:

13 But when He, the **Spirit of Truth** (the Truth-giving Spirit) comes, **He will guide you into all the Truth** (the whole, full Truth). For He will not speak His own message **[on His own authority - wolves will]**; but He will tell whatever He hears [from the Father; He will give the message that has been given to Him], and **He will announce and declare to you the things that are to come [that will happen in the future]**.

**John 17:14-19 AMPC**

14 I have given and delivered to them Your word (message) and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world [do not belong to the world], just as I am not of the world.

15 I do not ask that You will take them out of the world, but that You will keep and protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world (worldly, belonging to the world), [just] as I am not of the world.

17 **Sanctify them [purify, consecrate, separate them for Yourself, make them holy] by the Truth; Your Word is Truth.**

18 *Just as You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.*

19 *And so for their sake and on their behalf I sanctify (dedicate, consecrate) Myself, that they also may be sanctified (dedicated, consecrated, made holy) in the Truth.*

Thomas asked Jesus or the Word about where He was going and how to get there... Remember, there is no “thing” new under the sun.

### **John 14:1-9 AMPC**

1 **Do not let your hearts be troubled** (distressed, agitated). *You believe in and adhere to and trust in and rely on God; believe in and adhere to and trust in and rely also on Me.*

2 *In My Father's house there are many dwelling places (homes). If it were not so, I would have told you; **for I am going away to prepare a place for you.***

3 *And when (if) I go and make ready a place for you, **I will come back again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also.***

4 **And [to the place] where I am going, you know the way.**

5 *Thomas said to Him, Lord, we do not know where You are going, so **how can we know the way?***

6 *Jesus said to him, **I am the Way and the Truth and the Life;** no one comes to the Father except by (through) Me.*

7 *If you had known Me [had learned to recognize Me], you would also have known My Father. From now on, you know Him and have seen Him.*

Many people pick on Thomas for his line of questioning but, many in the New Testament Church were asking the very same “thing”. The writings of Paul and Peter confirm that there were many questions on Heaven and how the way to get there regarding what was already written in the Old Testament and preached the New Testament writers along with Jesus as well.

In verse 8 of John chapter 14, John gives us further insight into the line of questioning by the followers of Jesus regarding Heaven...

**John 14:8-9 AMPC**

8 Philip said to Him, Lord, **show us the Father [cause us to see the Father—that is all we ask]; then we shall be satisfied.**

9 Jesus replied, *Have I been with all of you for so long a time, and **do you not recognize and know Me yet, Philip?** Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say then, Show us the Father?*

How much more now do we need to hear, to be reminded now that all the signs that were foretold about the latter days that our Hope is almost here? Satan is working to rob you and I of our hope, to deceive you and I and cause our heart to get weary in doing what is right or righteous.

Here is the “Never Wrong” Prophet Isaiah who Peter said

**Isaiah 40:31 AMPC**

31 **But those who wait for the Lord [who expect, look for, and hope in Him] shall change and renew their strength and power; they shall lift their wings and mount up [close to God] as eagles [mount up to the sun]; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint or become tired.**

**1 Peter 1:10-12 AMPC**

10 The prophets, who prophesied of the grace (divine blessing) which was intended for you, searched and inquired earnestly about this salvation.

11 They sought [to find out] to whom or when this was to come which the Spirit of Christ working within them was indicating when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow [them].

12 It was then disclosed to them that the services they were rendering were not meant for themselves and their period of time, but for you. [It is these very] things which have now already been made known plainly to you by those who preached the good news (the Gospel) to you by the [same] Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Into these things [the very] angels long to look!

When someone says the word **Heaven** what image(s) come to mind? If someone asks you to describe heaven, how would you respond?



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Paul wrote this letter to the church in Corinth...

**2 Corinthians 4:1-18 AMPC**

*1 Therefore, since we do hold and engage in this ministry by the mercy of God [granting us favor, benefits, opportunities, and especially salvation], we do not get discouraged (spiritless and despondent with fear) or become faint with weariness and exhaustion.*

*2 We have renounced disgraceful ways (secret thoughts, feelings, desires and underhandedness, the methods and arts that men hide through shame); we refuse to deal craftily (to practice trickery and cunning) or to adulterate or handle dishonestly the Word of God, but we state the truth openly (clearly and candidly). And so we commend ourselves in the sight and presence of God to every man's conscience.*

*3 But even if our Gospel (the glad tidings) also be hidden (obscured and covered up with a veil that hinders the knowledge of God), it is hidden [only] to those who are perishing and obscured [only] to those who are spiritually dying and veiled [only] to those who are lost.*

*4 For the god of this world has blinded the unbelievers' minds [that they should not discern the truth], preventing them from seeing the illuminating light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ (the Messiah), Who is the Image and Likeness of God.*

5 For what we preach is not ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves [merely] as your servants (slaves) for Jesus' sake.

6 For God Who said, Let light shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts so as [to beam forth] the Light for the illumination of the knowledge of the majesty and glory of God [as it is manifest in the Person and is revealed] in the face of Jesus Christ (the Messiah).

7 However, we possess this precious treasure [the divine Light of the Gospel] in [frail, human] vessels of earth, that the grandeur and exceeding greatness of the power may be shown to be from God and not from ourselves.

8 We are hedged in (pressed) on every side [troubled and oppressed in every way], but not cramped or crushed; we suffer embarrassments and are perplexed and unable to find a way out, but not driven to despair;

9 We are pursued (persecuted and hard driven), but not deserted [to stand alone]; we are struck down to the ground, but never struck out and destroyed;

10 Always carrying about in the body the liability and exposure to the same putting to death that the Lord Jesus suffered, so that the [[a]resurrection] life of Jesus also may be shown forth by and in our bodies.

11 For we who live are constantly [experiencing] being handed over to death for Jesus' sake, that the [[b]resurrection] life of Jesus also may be evidenced through our flesh which is liable to death.

12 Thus death is actively at work in us, but [it is in order that [c]our] life [may be actively at work] in you.

13 Yet we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, I have believed, and therefore have I spoken. We too believe, and therefore we speak,

14 Assured that He Who raised up the Lord Jesus will raise us up also with Jesus and bring us [along] with you into His presence.

15 For all [these] things are [taking place] for your sake, so that the more grace (divine favor and spiritual blessing) extends to more and more people and multiplies through the many, the more thanksgiving may increase [and redound] to the glory of God.

*16 Therefore we do not become discouraged (utterly spiritless, exhausted, and wearied out through fear). Though our outer man is [progressively] decaying and wasting away, yet our inner self is being [progressively] renewed day after day.*

*17 For our light, momentary affliction (this slight distress of the passing hour) is ever more and more abundantly preparing and producing and achieving for us an everlasting weight of glory [beyond all measure, excessively surpassing all comparisons and all calculations, a vast and transcendent glory and blessedness never to cease!],*

*18 Since we consider and look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are visible are temporal (brief and fleeting), but the things that are invisible are deathless and everlasting.*

During this series we are going to study:

When Jesus said I got to prepare a place for you, where is it?

Where and what is Paradise?

Where is the Third Heaven?

When will the New Heaven and New Earth be constructed and be like?

Will we know each other in heaven?

Where is the location of the Millennium reign and what will do?

Where are we during the 7 year Tribulation?

What is my job in Heaven...

Does it matter what I do as long as I get there?

What will Hell be like?



### **Revelation 22:1-15 AMPC**

1 Then he showed me the river whose waters give life, sparkling like crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb

2 Through the middle of the Broadway of the city; also, on either side of the river was the tree of life with its twelve varieties of fruit, yielding each month its fresh crop; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing and the restoration of the nations.

3 There shall no longer exist there anything that is accursed (detestable, foul, offensive, impure, hateful, or horrible). But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall worship Him [pay divine honors to Him and do Him holy service].

4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.

5 And there shall be no more night; they have no need for lamplight or sunlight, for the Lord God will illuminate them and be their light, and they shall reign [as kings] forever and ever (through the eternities of the eternities).

6 And he [of the seven angels further] said to me, These statements are reliable (worthy of confidence) and genuine (true). And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent His messenger (angel) to make known and exhibit to His servants what must soon come to pass.

7 And behold, I am coming speedily. Blessed (happy and [a]to be envied) is he who observes and lays to heart and keeps the truths of the prophecy (the predictions, consolations, and warnings) contained in this [little] book.

8 And I, John, am he who heard and witnessed these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell prostrate before the feet of the messenger (angel) who showed them to me, to worship him.

9 But he said to me, Refrain! [You must not do that!] I am [only] a fellow servant along with yourself and with your brethren the prophets and with those who are mindful of and practice [the truths contained in] the messages of this book. Worship God!

10 And he [further] told me, Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book and make no secret of them, for the time [b]when things are brought to a crisis and the period of their fulfillment is near.

*11 He who is unrighteous (unjust, wicked), let him be unrighteous still; and he who is filthy (vile, impure), let him be filthy still; and he who is righteous (just, upright, in right standing with God), let him do right still; and he who is holy, let him be holy still.*

*12 Behold, I am coming soon, and I shall bring My wages and rewards with Me, to repay and render to each one just what his own actions and his own work merit.*

*13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last (the Before all and the End of all).*

*14 Blessed (happy and [c]to be envied) are those who cleanse their garments, that they may have the authority and right to [approach] the tree of life and to enter through the gates into the city.*