



Part 2: *HEAVEN IS NOT MY HOME* *UNDERSTANDING OUR FUTURE HOPE*

INTRODUCTION – How “Gladiator” Got It Right

Perhaps, like Maximus in the movie *Gladiator*, Christians should be looking forward to a more _____ life after death.

Revelation 21-22

A Biblical View Of Creation Care...

Past, Present, & Future

- God chose to create the physical world for his delight. We exist as in a physical dimension because God made us this way (**Genesis 1:1; Revelation 4:11**). God declares all creation “good” (**Genesis 1:31**).
- God makes humans in his image as his representatives on Earth, and commissions us to care for creation (**Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15**).
- God shows his high value for all creation by making a covenant of care with all creatures (**Genesis 9:9-10**); delighting in creatures which have no apparent usefulness (**Job 39-41**); feeding birds and clothing lilies (**Matthew 6:26-30**); making sure that even the land should have a Sabbath rest (**Leviticus 25:4; 26:33-35**).
- Just as works of art say something about the artist, God reveals his heart to us through his creation (**Psalms 19:1-4; Romans 1:20**).
- God wills in Christ to reconcile “all things to himself” (**Colossians 1:20**), not just selected human beings. He wants to renew all creation just as he renews humanity (**Romans 8:19-23**).
- Christ is the “first fruits” of the dead (**1 Corinthians 15:20**) and we are the “first fruits” of all creatures (**Romans 8:23; James 1:18**). What God did for Jesus on Easter Sunday, he plans to do for all creation. So, we can look at Jesus’ resurrection body as a kind of prototype for the destiny of all creation (**1 Corinthians 15; Luke 24:13-43; John 20:14-28**).

- God looks forward to a time when all creation will live in harmony (**Isaiah 11:6-9; 55:13; 65:17-25; Revelation 21-22**). In the meantime, Jesus’ life force presently works to sustain all creation (**Colossians 1:15-17**).
 - Jesus invites us to pray for God’s Kingdom to come to Earth (**Matthew 6:10**).
- BUT** isn’t this world destined for destruction and replacement? (**Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1**)
 - BUT** aren’t Christians supposed to be looking forward to being taken out of this world to live in Heaven? (**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**)
 - BUT** isn’t our salvation waiting for us *in heaven*? (**1 Peter 1:4**)
 - BUT** if resurrection is our destiny, what happens to us when we die? (**Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8**)

CONCLUSION – Repenting Of “Lifeboat Theology”

TITANIC THEOLOGY: The ship (our world) has already hit the iceberg. It’s too late to prevent it from going down. Our goal now should be to get people in the lifeboats. Any attempt to rescue God’s creation amounts to rearranging the deck chairs on a sinking ship. The only thing that matters now is saving souls.

We must replace our “lifeboat theology” with _____ theology.

Genesis 6:17-22

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

WARMING UP...

- Explore and discuss the implications of this quote from Paul Marshall: *Our works, here and now, are not all transitory. The good that we have done will not simply disappear and be forgotten. This world is not a passing and futile phase; it will be taken up in God’s new world. Our good buildings, our great inventions, our acts of healing, our best writings, our creative art, our finest clothes, our greatest treasures will not simply pass away. If they represent the finest works of God’s image-bearers, they will adorn the world to come.*
- After reviewing this week’s message, including key texts, share one thing that most challenged, puzzled, or encouraged you.

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

- Read Paul’s discussion of present suffering and future liberation in **Romans 8:18-27**. a) What verse or thought stands out to you the most? Why? b) This passage oozes the themes of Empathy, Interconnectivity, and Action on multiple levels. Identify and discuss some examples. d) How do (should?) the concepts of this passage effect our present action in this world? e) How does this passage inform your answer to the question: If there is a God, why is there so much suffering in the world?
- See “F” in the sermon notes above. a) Brainstorm ways that the new earth might be similar to Jesus’ resurrection body. b) What encourages you most about this view of the future?

SO WHAT?...

- To what degree have you personally empathized with creation the way God empathizes with you? In what ways might that attitude adjustment change aspects of your lifestyle? Take a few minutes to pray through **Romans 8:18-27**, reading a verse, then praying about what it brings to mind regarding your relationship with God and creation.

Bruxy Cavey @ THE MEETING HOUSE – Sunday, May 28 / June 4, 2006