

Apologetics 11.1- What Will We Be Doing in Heaven – Part 1

Transcription

OK, this study is on: What will we do in heaven, for heaven's sake. What will we do in heaven, for heaven's sake, and of course for those of you who are watching on Russian television, we want to greet you in the name of Jesus Christ. It is great to have you here with us, and we are excited about this study because this is going to cover a lot of territory that a lot of people have questions about. What are we going to do in heaven? Have you ever thought about it? Are we just going to sit around? Are we going to play harps? What are we going to do? So, today, we're going to actually study: What will we do in heaven, for heaven's sake. Now, one of the first things is, we will become immortal. Would you say the word "immortal"? Immortal. We will be immortal when we are caught up. The Bible says this mortal must put on immortality. That's 1 Corinthians 15:53, and that means that we're going to have an exchange with brand new bodies. Now, how many of you will be glad to have bodies that don't get sick or fail? Isn't that awesome? What a blessing it's going to be. We're going to have bodies that do not get sick and do not fail. They will be immortal and incorruptible, *aftharsia* in Greek means incorruptible. And you know what? What would you guess incorruptible means? Right, it doesn't corrupt. And what does corrupt mean? My body which has not seen corruption... King David said those words. It means they won't rot. They won't die. They won't stink. They will not be put in a grave ever again, so we are going to put on. Now, I want you to look at the words "put on". I started early, by the way, just for those of you who are in here, so you know, when I say 7:00, I mean 7:00, so for those of you who are watching... you're on time, I know, because that's how television works. Anyway... the Word says we must "put on" immortality. And what I want y'all to understand "put on" means is just like a jacket. That phrase in the original language means literally, we're going to have a brand new body put on us, and it's no longer going to be corruptible, which is a wonderful blessing. Now, we're going to put on immortality. And as we covered last week, there's

not going to be any soul sleep. And one of the verses we'll look at is 1 Thessalonians 4:13 that says, "I don't want you, ignorant brothers, concerning those who are asleep, so that you won't sorrow as others who have no hope; for if we believe Jesus died and rose again..." how many of you believe that Jesus died and rose again? "Even so, them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." We are with Him, that's why he brings us with him. "Now, we who are alive and remain", that's...if the Lord came tonight, that would be us, because we are sitting here, "alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have died." And by the way, you say..."why does it say the word 'asleep'?" As I mentioned to you last week, if I were to talk to you about a relative who you love who passed away, I would probably use the word "passed away" if I was talking to you. I would say, "Gone to be with the Lord". I probably wouldn't walk up to you on the street and you're weeping, and I say, "So, how are you feeling now that your dead relative is gone?" I wouldn't say that word. The word, "asleep" was a word which was used as a derivative within their language, which was a very natural word for death. It was a very gracious word that we simply...our bodies are asleep, which they are, but our spirits remain alive. "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then, we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we be forever, or ever, with the Lord." Now, here we come to tonight's question. What, Pete, are we going to do in heaven. This is actually the wrong question to first ask. And I'll tell you why. Now, I want everybody to really focus as I'm speaking to you, because, the paradigm of scripture is usually abused theologically, because people perceive things through their eyes. Do you all remember last week; I was teaching you rhetoric, and how often a person would debate and say, "there is sin or problems in the world." And you would say "yes". And they say, "The sin is destroying the world". You'd agree. And they'd say, "and God has done nothing about it, therefore there really is no God." In other words, let's say an Atheist is saying, "You know, the world is rotten. God's done nothing about it, therefore there is no God." That's not true logic. That's inappropriate. Because what it's really saying is, "because God hasn't done what I

would want Him to do about it, there's no God." Do you understand? That was presumptuous. This is the way you really carry on with an Atheist who doesn't believe there's a God, a discussion. If you say, "do you think there is evil in this world?" If they say, "yes", you've already won the argument, do you know why? Because if there is evil, then by contrast there has to be good. If there is darkness, there must be light for you to contrast it against, because if we were born blind, and never seeing light, we would have a hard time explaining darkness. Why? Because we don't know the contrast. Are you with me? So, the true debate is not...don't ever let a person say, "Well, since the world is rotten, and God's done nothing about it, therefore there is no God". No. Is the world rotten? They say, "Yes", you say, "so if the world is evil, then there must be good, and if there is good, there must be one who brings good, or at least One who judges the difference between good and evil, and that means there's a law-giver, because you need law to know if it's good or evil. Because it's when you break the law, that it's evil, and when you keep the law that it's good, therefore, therefore must be a law-giver, therefore there is God. That's actually how that debate follows through logically. Do you follow? Here is...when we say, what are we going to do forever in heaven? I'll tell you why that's really the wrong question for us as believers to ask, and I want you to hear this really carefully. It's because, if we're saying, "What are we going to do?" We're really thinking of us as us. I'm thinking of myself as Peter Spencer, and you're all thinking of yourselves...Mary Smith. And you're thinking as Mary Smith...hope there's no Mary Smith in here...but, as Mary Smith, you pretty much wake up in the morning, and the world rotates around you, Mary, and the world rotates around Peter, and the world rotates around Frank and Bill and Jim...well, there's a Jim, sorry Jim...but anyway...there's a world where we think...what will WE do in heaven. The right question is, "Who will we be in heaven?" first before understanding what we'll do, and I'll tell you why. If we look with fleshly eyes, we can go through the whole thing looking for what we want now on earth, and be disappointed if we see improperly what God is going to do with us. Now, I even think in a human manner, it's exciting what God is going to do with us. I need to let you know ahead of time, by the way, this class is going to take 2

classes, and I'm saying that out loud for myself, because I just noticed I was about to ramble through 47 slides in 22 minutes, and it would totally blow your mind, so this is going to take 2 weeks. The second thing is, next week is not the next week. We're off next week because it is a Spring Break week, and I'm going to be spending some time with my children this week, not only getting moved from OKC and getting some stuff organized in my house, but also actually spending time with my children, and we had talked about this before the study started that we were going to be taking Spring Break off, but it was either going to be the weekend we're on now, or next weekend, and so we're off next weekend. So, you're going to have to wait until the following weekend to get the whole study. But, the real correct question is, "What will we be like?" What will we as new creatures enjoy doing in heaven forever? And I want you to shift your paradigm from who you are right now as corrupt adults. We are corrupted, the older we get. Not just with sin, but with our purpose, our values, our systems. What we want to do with our lives. It actually corrupts. Versus what Jesus talked about with children. "Truly, I say to you. Unless you are changed..." and the word there is like the word you would find in the Old Testament Hebrew for "Repent", "Unless you 'turn around' from the direction you're going and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." Now, that's interesting. Of course, we enter the kingdom of heaven by faith in Jesus Christ. But, why is it attaching faith in Christ as being the equivalent of becoming like children? There's a lot about children that I wanted to cover tonight, and so I want to paradigm shift you in the world of becoming a child before I paradigm our travel to the world...the infinite, eternal world of heaven...because we need to know what kind of mindset we need to have when we enter heaven, so we best appreciate it. What makes children the happiest? Now, all of you have been children, I know that...I don't know if all of you have children, but I know all of you have been children, and, that would be logical...correct? OK, maybe not, alright, well, it is true. The simplest things...boxes, laughter, running, playing...you know, Isaiah 11:6 talks about a little child shall lead them. Well, that actually implies that there are going to be levels of authority, and this is going to be a later part of the study, but there are levels in heaven, and there are levels in

hell. There are levels of punishment in hell, and there are levels of glory in heaven. The levels of glory in heaven are referred to...I'll give you a hint...with the word, "Crowns" for example. "We will throw our crowns down at His feet." We receive crowns as a glory. But, I'm going to give you a hint. Would you say, "Semitic Symbolism" with me? Semitic Symbolism. To the Jew that was reading...and the majority of the people who were reading the book of Revelation, when it talked about the lamb, and when John says, "behold the lamb of God", how many of you think people actually turned expecting to see a 4-legged wooly little creature. No, they didn't, they expected that that symbolism of the lamb without blemish and spot...that was a prophetic statement about the messiah. And the book of Revelation, we know it's talking about Jesus. Is everybody with me? We're not talking about, you know, a 4-legged creature. "A little child shall lead them." What we're looking at in heaven, in levels of glory, the word, "Crowns" is the very same way. When you study Semitic symbolism, you'll find that crowns, a crown deals with authority. It deals with power. That's actually a hint on what we're going to do...the active concept of a verb...in heaven. It deals with the concept of rulership. It deals with the concept of authority. Because, I mean, how many crowns can you really wear at once. I was reading yesterday who had 6...he's a disc jockey...he has 600 pair of shoes. I'm like, OK, maybe 5, 10 pair...I mean, to me even that's pretty elaborate, but 600 pair? How are you going to wear all these? Your feet are going to change shape over the years, I mean...even if you wore 2 a day; it's still going to take you a year to go through all of them. Well, we're looking at...how many crowns can you actually wear? What if you're Billy Graham? What if you're a godly man or woman that's really changed the world? What about Peter and Paul and the apostles? How many crowns can they wear? We're going to look at Semitic Symbolism, and how it actually tells what we're going to be doing. Now, I'm just going to give you a question to hang on. Then, if we're ruling...who and what are we going to be ruling over? Good question. Next point...children...these are characteristics children have. Now, I want you to really analyze your heart, and see if you are ready. If, in other words, if you were to go to heaven right now, if there would be almost no change at all...first of all, they have pure humility.

It's something which a wonderful evangelist...and I'm just blank on his last name, because it's an Indian name, but he talks about the law of diminishing returns...how it's not for children. And he talks about how a child's propensity to exult...now watch this, now watch these points...these people will make it in...I want to watch all your eyes.....but, the law of diminishing returns. It's critical to stay focused on this, because I'm hitting each point, and if the superstructure of your thinking is not correct, your overall premise is going to be lost. A child's propensity to exult in the monotonous makes him seem eternal. I have literally bought toys for my children when they were little, taken them out of the box... and 2 days later, they are still playing with the box. Have you ever seen this? They make noises with them, they put them on their heads like a hat, they run around the house with them, they throw them, they turn them into airplanes, and it's a box with a piece of plastic. And, it's the most amazing thing...the propensity of children...to not be bored. They can deal with the monotonous. It is amazing how they deal with the monotonous. Now, that's something that is critically important, I believe, in Jesus' words explaining to us about heaven. What we might say...I mean...how many of you have ever been in a choir? Ok, ok, you enjoy singing...but I've got to tell you the truth. My parents...my mother was a concert pianist, and my father was a basso profundo with the metropolitan opera, and I mean, there was a lot of music in our house, but I've got to tell you the truth, I went to choir rehearsal, and I'd be in choir rehearsal 4 or 5 hours a day at times, week on end when we were about to travel to Europe and stuff, and I've got to tell you the truth, you know, you can only take so much practice. So, at times, I was thinking...I'm going to spend my eternity singing in heaven. I really love singing, but I mean, there's got to be a break here somewhere...is how my brain worked as a child. Well, not as a child, but as a teenager. What we have to understand is: the ability of a child to exult in what seems simple to us, we'll see why within their minds, it is eternal. It's joy for eternity. And they also prove to us that life does not consist in things. The fact that they play with the box over the toy gives a hint about the mind of a child. Do you follow that? The fact that they can play with the box over the expensive toy shows a lot about what Jesus was talking about, about having that pure and innocent

heart. They enjoy life without prestige. You think about a 4 year old child. Little Megan...is she here? She's upstairs. This little child is a joy. She giggles and she squeals with delight all day long over the most interesting things. She'll come in here and she'll hide a little toy behind one of the cushions, and she'll say, "Abba, Abba" you know, that's the Hebrew word for "Grandpa" as well as "Father", and she'll call me in here, and she'll say, "What do you notice that's different?" And I'm like....you know...I don't know...my house has become a studio. I don't even recognize my house any more. It changes from day to day, but it's because she figures that I'll notice that one of the pillows has shifted and that there's a toy behind the pillow. And, I'm telling you...she squeals with delight, and for the next 20 minutes this is a race to the conclusion to figure out what this child has done to change the world around us. And when I finally discover it, she is in heaven. Now, have you ever noticed that children say, "Let's do that again. Let's do that again. Let's do that again. Let's do that again." Well about the 20th time you're about to lose your mind, because you don't want to hurt the child's feelings, but it's like...how long can you do this? And the answer is....forever. If a child stayed like that age wise, and didn't begin to garner the characteristics we adults garner, they could do it forever. Now, I want you to transfer that thinking to heaven. We may think after a couple of years, choir practice is just too much. But, there's a lot more that's going to happen in heaven. But, don't doubt, whatsoever, you're not going to be you as you exactly are, mind wise, in heaven. You're not going to have the corruption, you're not going to have the sin factor, you're not going to have the desire to break God's laws...first of all, that's gone. But, even the way that you think will be like a child. She can play that game, I'm not kidding you. I know that Megan could play those games...if I got up at 6:30 with her...at 11:00 at night, she would still be finding a way to entertain herself in this room. Hiding coins, or whatever it is. I remember the first day that I showed her how to make a coin disappear. And I will tell you the truth, that was her goal for the next 3 days, she had to make a coin. The same with my son when he was little, my children when they were little. I'd show them how to make the coins disappear. They'd work at it, they'd work at it, they'd work at it. That is what a child is like. See, children

enjoy life without prestige. Money. How many of your 4 or 5 year olds. If they ask for money, do they ever know how to spend it? They don't know where to spend it. Or, they think they can buy a car with a quarter. Have you noticed this? They have no desire to have money. They have no sex life. That's not even interesting to them. That's not part of their lives. In heaven we go, yeah, but are we going to be able to, I don't know...I'm married, and it's like, God, are you going to let me still be married, and all...because our minds are full of the wonderment of this world. Do you realize that stuff is going to be boring compared to the stuff that God's going to give us? They don't desire power. Now, a child definitely has a sin nature at times, and you know in the middles of the night at 2:00 in the morning when they're 4 days old, and they scream bloody murder, yeah...they do have power, because we're there. But, you know what I'm saying. A conqueror was once asked, "You have conquered the world. Now what do you want?" and his answer was simply one word..."More". You've conquered the world, what else could you want, and he goes, "more". In other words, it wasn't the world he wanted to conquer, he just wanted more, and he finally got it all, but he still wanted more. The unsatisfiability of life is a curse we actually have. Versus, a child who does not have that. Does that make sense? That's part of our corrupt nature. Phil 4:11 Says, what? Would you read this out loud with me? "Be content in all things". Now, has that ever been hard, if you thought that through? It doesn't mean be sloppy, lackadaisical and not try to do better. But, wherever you are, be content that that's where you are in that journey. Does that mean I shouldn't try to get a better job? NO. But, it means that as you're trying to get a better job, you're celebrating God every moment of the day, and that is what contentment is. That you're glorying in God wherever you are. "But, Lord, I don't want to live in a Podunk town with only 45 people and I'm the town sheriff", but you know what? If you want to be a New York City policeman, then go ahead and take the exam, but in the mean time let them see Jesus every time they see you. That's where pure contentment comes from. We will be, I can assure you, in heaven, content. Joyful wherever we are, because it's going to be a whole lot better than many people have, obviously, in the lake of fire. One of the things about children is they

are learners. They never stop asking questions, and the reason I'm driving you into this world of thinking like a child, is because that is the world, that when you begin to understand what we do in heaven, makes it such an extraordinary world. They never stop asking questions. You know? When a child asks questions, do you know that the child's not just asking you a question? "How come the sky is blue?" I mean, my son, Gideon, loves to ask questions. And he asks the greatest questions in the world, and sometimes I can't answer them or I'm not quite sure, and he goes...you don't know? Right, Gid? Right? Like, how could you not know, you're my dad? And I'm like, but I'm sweating bullets sometimes, some of the questions he asks, they're really complex questions, but did you know that a child, they have shown, doesn't just ask questions to get data, he does it as a form of communication, as a form of communion, it's a wonderful way to draw a response back from that adult. Questions are a process and an act of love. I have no doubt we'll come up with a billion questions in heaven, and I have no doubt God will answer them all. And I have no doubt we'll still be fascinated with God. We will never grow bored with who God is. Children are undeterred. Failure doesn't stop them. What if every kid quit trying to walk after he fell the first time? Everyone would be crawling around today. You would have crawled in here, you know...maybe some people that haven't made it yet, that's what they're doing, I don't know, but, you know...what do you notice about a child? Tries to get up...falls, tries to get up...falls, tries to get up...falls. I mean, this is how it's like, and once he's up, he's suddenly moving down the couch, because now he wants to learn how to walk, and once they learn how to walk, what do they do, they walk without support. And then they walk without support and kind of put it into a jog, walk without support and put it into a jog, and they fall down, fall down, fall down, but they continue until they what? Walk and run. That's one of the things about children that as we get older, we kind of lose that zip, don't we? It's easier to quit as an adult. They're candid. Their prayers are honest. They're simple and direct for everything including Batman and Barbie. Did you ever notice the prayers of a child? It isn't..."Oh, Thou knowest, God..." They don't know King James. Now, what's interesting about that to me is...there's nothing wrong with King James prayers, but, the prayer of

a child, literally whatever the Spirit of God may put on their heart, whatever they're feeling, is who they and what they talk about to God. That's amazingly precious. Come on, and when you pray with a child and they start doing that. Don't you find that interesting? Like, I mean, this is a prayer, I mean, do you ever feel tempted...this is a prayer, you don't cover Barbie in the prayer...don't cover Barbie, don't cover Batman, but they may just feel like praying for the salvation of Batman, but it's OK. In other words, there's something candid. We lose that as we get older, don't we? Sure, we do. We lose that. We become a façade. That's why children are transparent...so shall we be. The scriptures show us that we learn to disguise as we get older. Children are painfully honest..."I have a stinky diaper." How many of you would say tonight, "Well, I've got B.O." How many of you would say that? You wouldn't say that, would you? Well, the fact that you won't answer me, you're embarrassed about me saying that, the fact that I just said that, it was embarrassing. I wouldn't say that, but I said that as an example. In other words, we're not going to be that candidly honest, I mean, we've learned that we've got to be prim; we've got to be proper. And that's understandable, there's such a thing as being civilized, but the thing about a child is that they're candidly transparent. These are just some other things I put there, as you read the word, they're playful. You know what? God wants you to play. He wants you to take a break in the week, in fact, he wants you to totally rest from labor and enjoy Him. And enjoy His creation. We're going to find verses where Jesus, you know, actually teaches the concept of enjoying His creation. They celebrate. The thing about children is they celebrate. Now, let me just share what's neat about celebration. How many of you find that children don't want a birthday party? The day they find out that there's this zero hour called a birthday party coming, you are unable to talk to them about anything. You're at the dinner table, and you say...hey, baby, how's the soup? "When's my birthday?" You walk outside and say, "Where are you sneakers?" "When's my birthday?" I mean, they're waiting for that time..."in 3 days, honey, in 3 days". Is it 3 days yet?", "no", "is it 3 days yet?", "no. You asked me 5 minutes ago, the days don't change that quick", right? And finally, it's 2 days, then it's 1 day, then it's the birthday party. It's exalting to a

child, isn't it? Celebration is something, did you know, we're going to do in heaven, but we're not going to do it with the..."Here we're go again with that song." I mean, it's going to be like a child celebrates his birthday. Isn't that extraordinary? Because, see, you don't have bodies that get old, get tired, or get bored. Now, I'm getting so old that I'm losing brain cells. I'm getting so old, that there's a tendency that I forget a lot, so every day's a new day for me anyway, but...I think that in heaven, what's going to happen, literally every moment and every emotion is going to be fresh and anew. Children are unsophisticated. They are unencumbered by worldly wisdom. We are..."I've been there, done that." They say, "I've been there, done that...let's do it again." There is a major difference, and I am taking you into this world of thinking like a child because it has everything to do with the joy of heaven. There has been the question, will we recognize people in heaven, the answer is yes. Resurrection bodies are recognizable. You had, on the mount of transfiguration...what's interesting is they recognized...remember the mount of transfiguration? Moses and who else? Elijah. What's funny is the writer does write that they recognize Moses and Elijah, but has it ever dawned on you? Moses and Elijah lived centuries before them. I mean, what was there, a Moses tag on this guy, or what? I mean, there wasn't like, "MOSES", that wasn't on there. So, how did they recognize Moses and Elijah? I have no doubt at all that the Spirit of our God told them, communicated with them that what they saw were Moses and Elijah. Their spirits were aware of those spirits. Our spirits will know one another because of the spirit of God. I have no doubt that they are recognizable, but that goes a little into the next step on how we're recognized. But, will you read 1 Corinthians 13:12 with me? "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even also as I am known." You know what looking through a glass darkly means? Anybody? What does it mean to you? We look now through a glass darkly? Like a mask? OK. Anybody else? Ok, let's say that you were to look through a window, and it's dark inside, and there's a lot of reflection on the outside. It's kind of hard to see, and you do this, right? And as I'm doing this right now, for example, I can see y'all better, because this bright light is causing the aperture of my eye to close, this iris to close, and I

can't quite see you as well, but if I go like this, and I block out the light, suddenly, it opens back up, and I can see you better. Well, right now, when we look at the heavenly things, and even at each other, it's really not as clear as you think it is. I've been married for 33 years, and I still don't know her as well as I one day and eternally will know her, and she doesn't know me as well as she will know me in eternity. I think I understand God, we study His scriptures, but I don't even know a smidgen of God compared to what I'll understand some day. Now, I've got to tell you, the more you get to know God, that blows your mind. That you haven't even begun. You're looking through a glass darkly. But, one day, the glass is gone, and you'll see it clear as a bell. That'll take a million years just to get over that shock. Just the amazement of it, so that's where we see a glass darkly. Children are imaginative. Their intellect doesn't devour their imagination. You know, in an unlimited heaven, that'll be great. They're full of wonder. We're stuck in a rut here on earth. But, Jesus said...look at the birds of the air, the lilies of the field, the hair on your head, take a look...it all glorifies God. Now, when Jesus was talking like that, I want to just say something. He's intellectually, no doubt, the most intelligent human on the planet at the time, right? On the Human side, do you agree? He's brilliant, he's a genius, and he talks like a child. But, He doesn't talk...He's not a simpleton...He speaks simply. One of the hardest things in the world, and R.C. Sproul, and men like this were in my...you know, this was the world I traveled in as a child when my Dad was a theologian, and one of the most complicated things in the world is understanding sometimes, theologians when they're talking. They almost purposely chose words that they sound like a doctor talking about your operation. And, the wonderful thing about Jesus is, He was deeper than anybody else, more intellectual than anybody else, but he was as clear and simple as a bell, because He got to the point of what mattered. And he said...look at the birds of the air, look at the lilies of the field, consider the hair on your head. Take a look at all of it...it all glorifies God. Because, you know what he said? Major in the majors, minor in the minors, and this is the majors. So, when we come back next week to this next program, we're going to tell you a little bit more about heaven, but now, we're going to go into, not only how we are going to see heaven,

and the excitement of it from our point of view, but also what we're going to be doing, so God bless you, and we look forward to seeing you again next week.