

“Will We Recognize One Another in Heaven?”

(Ray Reynolds – Preacher’s Forum 10/27/08)

Introduction: For the first eight years of my preaching career, I preached that there would be no recognition in heaven. My basis for this argument was mainly from three thoughts of Scripture: (1) The story of the rich man and Lazarus in **Luke 16:19-31**, (2) My firm belief that God will not allow sadness in heaven based on **Revelation 7:17, 21:4**, and (3) Many of my mentors and friends argued against future recognition. Maybe it would be good to discuss those arguments from both sides. It might help us to see what the Bible says about this issue. . . .

Discussion:

I. Will We Recognize One Another in Heaven? – Negative Arguments

Evidence #1 - Luke 16:19-31

PARADISE & HADES PRIOR TO THE CROSS

Matthew 11:23, Luke 10:15, Matthew 16:18, Luke 23:43

PROPHESIES ABOUT THE CROSS

Joel 2:1-32, Psalm 16:8-1, Psalm 132:11-13, Acts 2:31

THE TRANSITION BETWEEN COVENANTS & RELEASE FROM WAITING

Matthew 27:51-53, Ephesians 4:8-10, I Peter 3:18-22

PARADISE & HADES AFTER THE CROSS

II Corinthians 12:3-4, I Corinthians 15:55, Revelation 1:18, Revelation 2:7,

Revelation 6:8, Revelation 20:13-15

Evidence #2 - Revelation 7:17 and Revelation 21:4

Colossians 3:16, Isaiah 25:8, Revelation 7:9-10, Revelation 7:17, Revelation 14:15, Revelation 21:4

Evidence #3 – Many teachers teach against it

II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:20

II. Will We Recognize One Another in Heaven? – Affirmative Arguments

Evidence #1 – First Hand Witnesses

Acts 7:55 (Stephen), Acts 9:3 (Paul), Acts 10 (Peter), II Corinthians 12:3-4 (Paul)

Evidence #2 – Hebrews 11-12

Hebrews 11:1-3, 11:40, 12:1-2

Evidence #3 – Revelation

Revelation 1:1-4, 1:8, 2:13, 4:4, 5:8, 6:9-11, 7:9-12, 8:3-4, 11:18, 13:1-18, 14:12, 19:1-6, 22:1-5, 22:9-10, 22:12, 22:19-21,

CONCLUSION: By rightly dividing the word of God we realize that Jesus died on the cross and rose again. During those three days he was hard at work. Now, Jesus works as our mediator and High Priest interceding for us at the right hand of God. The Bible reveals that the saints that have gone before us are witnesses to heaven’s work. The Scriptures also show us that these saints are fellow advocates for the rest of the world as they await final judgment in heaven (**Hebrews 11, Revelation**). They are watching the works of the church and praying for our deliverance. At this very moment, God is sitting on His throne awaiting the day to send the Savior back to the earth to pronounce the final judgment on mankind. And, to answer your question, I can confidently say “Yes!” It is my understanding, from rightly dividing these Scriptures, that all the saved are conscious in heaven awaiting our entrance into that eternal kingdom. And we must not forget that Jesus is waiting to reward us for our faithful life!