*Introduction*

**Read poem.**

Do you get homesick?

If you are a student along way from home, that may be a more pertinent question for you than to someone who is living in their native home. BUT... as a Christian, do you get homesick? is a pertinent question for ALL of us.

We are sometimes reluctant to dwell on or show an interest in Heaven because we feel that it can cause others to say to us "you're to spiritual to be of any earthly good".

There has been in the Church, for many years now, an emphasis on the 'social gospel' - getting involved in the community, reaching out to people by 'doing' and looking at Church as something just for the here and now.

Because of these things, we push heaven to the back of our minds, or out of our minds all together.

In fact, let me ask you - when was the last time you thought about heaven?

**READ: Rev 21 (whole chapter)**

This morning I want to make a statement to you and then give you reasons behind the statement.

Statement: ***You will never fully live as a Christian unless you keep heaven in view!***

I am not saying that we have to think about heaven all the time, but remember that heaven is our home and our eternal destination.

There are some within the Church today who believe that the earth as it is will continue until we as Christians make it ready for our coming King.

Let me remind you that the ONLY New Jerusalem we will see - is not man made! but is eternal and prepared by our Lord Jesus Christ himself.

***John 14:1-3 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.***

So having made that statement, I want to give you the reasons behind it.

1. If heaven is not in view - Here will become your home.

2. If heaven is not in view - we will not be good ambassadors for Christ.

3. If heaven is not in view - Our faith will become tiresome.

1. If heaven is not in view - Here will become your home.

When we first became a Christian, we were buzzing, on the whole. We knew something had changed - Jesus had come into our hearts.

Whether it was a sudden experience that we were definitely aware of or whether it was a gradual recognising that Jesus was Lord doesn't really matter, the thing is that we had become new creations.

***2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!***

Now you realise that your home is not here, but in heaven, with our Lord.

But over time that buzzing, has worn off for many, we have lost the zeal, life has returned to mundane.

This is NOT because Christ has dwindled in us, but that we have 'snuggled' back into the world and made it our home.

Everyone has a physical home, we decorate it, we 'live' in it. Its the lace we sleep and come back to. There is no problem with that.

Providing it does not become our attachment.

The biblical principle here is that we are on holiday here, we are only in temporary housing, a holiday let if you like.

When we go on holiday and we arrive in our chalet, we give it the eye, and think 'I like this' and you settle in. But you settle in knowing you are only there for a week or two and then you will leave it - so you use it as a base, but you do not get attached to it. Our real home calls.

Our real home as a Christian is with the Lord, it is a mansion with many rooms, it has walls of jewels, streets of gold, there are no weeds in the garden, it is the perfect climate, it is joy, it is pleasure, it is eternal.

For some of us the problem is that we never give our true home a thought and therefore here becomes home.

***Matt 6:19-20 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.***

Where is your home?

2. If heaven is not in view - we will not be good ambassadors for Christ.

***2 Cor 5:20-21 We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.***

The Concise English Dictionary says an ambassador is - A representative of a foreign state.

Again the Dictionary states that an Embassy is - The Mission or the residence of an Ambassador.

Therefore, as Christians, we are not residents of this world, but representatives of another world.

We do not belong here, but we are here in order to represent the interests of our LORD and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who, at this time lives in the realm of heaven - where our true home is.

The embassy in which he/she lives is the mission.

When we become born again through the power of the blood, why are we not immediately transported to heaven? because our passport has changed, our nationality has changed? our home has changed?

Why are we still here?

Because we have become Christ's representatives here on earth and our work is to represent Him. To tell others about him.

But if we do not have heaven in view, our home, the place where Jesus is, how can we fully represent him.

Its a bit like going into a holiday shop and asking about Scotland. If I were to ask one of the staff what Scotland was like, they would say, "Its lovelly" and I would say "How do you know" and they would reply "Because I have been there"

But if I was to ask another sales person and they said "Its lovelly" and I would say "How do you know, have you been there?" and they would reply "No" - what am I going to think?

If we are going to represent the Kingdom of God then we need to have the Kingdom of God in view, or we will not be effective.

3. If heaven is not in view - Our faith will be tiresome.

The book of Hebrews contains that wonderful chapter on faith.

It states in 11v1 ***Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.***

Our faith in Christ Jesus is real, but we do not see Jesus. Our faith covers much more than just the person of Jesus, it should cover the whole of the promises of God.

Before Jesus was translated back to the Father he said to the disciples - "I go to prepare a place for you".

The faith that we have now will translate into reality.

The writer of the Hebrews goes onto say:

***HEB 11:13-14 All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own.***

Abraham, Moses, David, they all were given promises by God that were not fulfilled in their lifetime, but they did not stop believing or acting as though they would. Why? because they had heaven in view.

Paul goes on to say:

***1 Cor 15:19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.***

When the going gets tough, it is our faith in what is to come that gets us through, its faith in the promises of God that we look to.

Faith without hope is tiresome.

The weight of this world starts to really bare down on us when things are going wrong.

Is your faith tired, are you wondering what its all about. You know it is a finished work, BUT... Heaven is not in view.

Over the past few months we have been looking in our Bible study at the Corinthian Church, and the problems they got themselves into, and Paul, talking of the body states:

***2 Cor 5:1-3 For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked.***

Paul links the body to heaven, for that is where we are heading, that is where we belong, that is where our home is, and the Corinthians had lost sight of it.

When Jesus told the parable of the 5 wise and 5 foolish virgins who were waiting for the Bridegroom, 5 fell asleep - Why? because they forgot why they were there, and what they were waiting for! Heaven was not in view.

*Conclusion*

We are on a journey. A journey that started when, or will start when, we met Jesus, at the foot of the cross. Since that day we have been heading for our destination - heaven.

It is not wrong to think about it, we should always have it in view. It should not be the only thing we think about, because on a journey there are many things to see and do, but we should keep it in view.

We live in exciting times when we see Biblical events being fulfilled before our eyes, heaven IS in view!

If you are finding life is comfortable and you are at home, as a Christian, in the world, if you are not representing the kingdom of God, here and now, you are not fulfilling the role of an ambassador, if the cares of this world are swamping your faith. Get a glimpse of heaven, and keep it in view.

For heaven is where our Saviour is, and where he is coming from.

Heaven is the place that has been prepared for us

Heaven is the place where there is no sin, no pain, no crying.

Heaven is being in the eternal presence of Almighty God.

Keep it in view as you go about your daily business, for what awaits the believer in Jesus is right at the door.

Hallelujah!

Amen