

Continuity & Discontinuity

**Present life on Earth v.
Future life
on New Earth**

www.epm.org/alcorntgc

Disclaimers

- 1) Sorry, I haven't actually **been** to Heaven
- 2) The most important aspect of Heaven: **We will see God** (Rev 22:4) is not our focus.
- 3) Insufficient time to fulfill workshop description.

Consolation: www.epm.org/alcorntgc includes PowerPoint, videos, articles, authors and books cited in workshop.

I don't believe in an afterlife, so I don't have to spend my whole life **fearing hell**, or **fearing heaven even more**.

For **whatever the tortures of hell**, *I think the boredom of heaven would be even worse.*

Isaac Asimov

Whenever I think about heaven, **it makes me depressed**. I'd rather cease to exist when I die.

I can't stand the thought of **endless boring tedium**. To me, ***heaven doesn't sound much better than hell***.

I'd ***rather be annihilated*** than spend eternity like that.

Evangelical pastor

³ No longer will there be any *curse*.

[God's] servants will *serve* him.

⁴ They will *see his face*....

⁵ And they will *reign for ever and ever*.

Revelation 22:3-5, NIV

No believer who *understands* what Scripture says about eternal life will *ever* see it as dull, boring or dreadful!

In the beginning, God created the **heavens** and the **earth**. Genesis 1:1

Behold, I will create **new heavens** and a **new earth**. Isaiah 65:17

“As the **new heavens** and the **new earth** that I make will endure before me,” declares the LORD, “so will your name and descendants endure.” Isaiah 66:22

In keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a **new heaven** and a **new earth**, the home of righteousness.

2 Peter 3:13

Then I saw a **new heaven** and a **new earth**, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.

Revelation 21:1

Both in 2 Peter 3:13 and in Revelation 21:1 the word used to designate the newness of the new cosmos is **not *neos* but *kainos***.

...*neos* means new in time or origin...*kainos* means new in nature or quality.

... not the emergence of a cosmos totally other than the present one, but ...a universe which, though...gloriously renewed, ***stands in continuity with the present one.***

Anthony Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*

*Should we call the **New Earth** Heaven?*

N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, says no.

Heaven will be *replaced* by the **New Earth**.

“Heaven is not our Home.”

“Heaven is important, **but its not the end of the world.**”

What & Where is Heaven?

1. **The Triune God's special, central dwelling place;** where he lives with angels and his redeemed people.
2. **The place where God's throne is;** the location from which he rules the universe and carries out his sovereign plan.

Present Heaven & Future Heaven

- Two different *time frames*
immediate (at death) v. eventual
- Two different *conditions*
pre-resurrection/*post*-resurrection
- Two different *locations*
one “up,” likely outside our dimension, a *layover*;
other our *final destination*
- Both are *Heaven (original v. relocated)*

God's future special dwelling place will be **with his people on the New Earth**:

- I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, *coming down out of heaven* from God...
- “the dwelling place of God is **with** man. He will **dwell with them**...and God himself will be **with them**...”

Revelation 21:2-3

- “**the throne of God and of the Lamb**” will be **on the New Earth**.

Revelation 22:1

The New Earth will be **God's central dwelling place** where he will live with his people *and* where his *throne* will be located.

If we understand it's 1) different from the **present pre-resurrection Heaven**, and 2) it will be **a fully embodied existence on a physical renovated Earth**, it's right to call the New Earth the **future Heaven**.

The New Earth is where we will forever have **life after life after death**.

... the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, **to unite *all things* in him, things in heaven and things on earth.**

Ephesians 1:9-10

... through him **to reconcile to himself *all things*, whether on earth or in heaven,** making peace by the blood of his cross.

Colossians 1:20

For by him [Jesus] **all things** were created: **things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible...all things** were created by him and for him. He is before **all things**, and in him **all things** hold together...

that in **everything** he might be preeminent. For in him **all the fullness of God** was pleased to dwell...to reconcile to himself **all things, whether on earth or in heaven**, making peace by the blood of his cross. Colossians 1:16-20

Christians often talk about **living with God “in heaven” forever**. But in fact the biblical teaching is **richer than that**: it tells us that there will be **new heavens** and a **new earth**—**an entirely renewed creation**—and we will live with God there. . . .

There will also be a new kind of **unification of heaven and earth**. . . . There will be a **joining of heaven and earth** in this new creation.

Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*

Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew 6:10

The earth will be ***filled with the knowledge
of the glory of the LORD***, as the waters
cover the sea.

Habakkuk 2:14

The new earth will also be heaven, since God will dwell there with his people.

Glorified believers, in other words, will ***continue to be in heaven while they are inhabiting the new earth.***

Anthony Hoekema

Redemption in Jesus Christ reaches just as far as the fall. The horizon of creation is at the same time the horizon of sin and of salvation.

To conceive of either the fall or Christ's deliverance as encompassing **less than the whole of creation** is to **compromise the biblical teaching** of the radical nature of the fall and ***the cosmic scope of redemption.***

Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained*

No more let sins and sorrows
grow

Nor thorns infest the ground;

He comes to make His blessings
flow

Far as the Curse is found.

Isaac Watts,
“Joy to the World,” AD 1719
book on Heaven: *The World to Come*

[The early Christians] believed that God was going to do **for the whole cosmos** what **he had done** for Jesus at Easter.

N. T. Wright,
Surprised by Hope

Blessed [happy] are the meek,
for *they shall inherit the earth.*

Matthew 5:5



He [Son of Man, Messiah] was given authority, glory and sovereign power; **all peoples, nations and men of every language** worshiped him.

His dominion is *an everlasting dominion that will not pass away*, and his kingdom is one that will *never be destroyed*.

Daniel 7:14

But the saints of the Most High will receive *the* kingdom and **will possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.**

Daniel 7:18, ESV

will possess it forever—
yes, forever and ever. (NIV)

But the court **[of God]** will sit, and his **[evil earthly leader's]** power will be taken away and ***completely destroyed forever.***

Then the sovereignty, power and **greatness** of the **kingdoms** under the whole heaven will be **handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High.**

His kingdom will be an **everlasting kingdom**, and ***all*** rulers will worship and obey him.

Daniel 7:26-27

Everything in the Gospels points to the idea that ***life in the Kingdom of God in the Age to Come will be life on the earth***—life transformed by the Kingdom of God.

George Eldon Ladd,
A Theology of the New Testament

Everything will be glorified, even nature itself.

And that seems to me to be the biblical teaching about the eternal state: that **what we call heaven is life in this perfect world** as God intended humanity to live it.

. . . men and women are meant to live in the body, and will live in a glorified body in a glorified world, and God will be with them.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones,
Great Doctrines of the Bible

Christianity must yet **triumph in a renovated earth**, and with the returned Messiah as universal king, **or fail**.

There is no third alternative.

Anthony Buzzard,
Our Fathers Who Aren't in Heaven

And he said to him, “Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, ***you shall have authority over ten cities.***”

And the second came, saying, “Lord, your mina has made five minas.” And he said to him, “And ***you are to be over five cities.***”

Luke 19:17-19

God will make the new earth his dwelling place. . . . Heaven and earth will then no longer be separated as they are now, but **they will be one.**

But to leave **the new earth out of consideration** when we think of the final state of believers **is greatly to impoverish biblical teaching about the life to come.**

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and the Future

Continuity

After *my skin has been destroyed*, yet **in my flesh** I shall see God.

I will see him **with my own eyes**, *I* and **not another**.

Job 19:26-27

For the trumpet will sound, and **the dead** will be **raised imperishable**, and **we** shall be **changed**.

1 Corinthians 15:52

WE must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that **each of US** may receive what is due **US** for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

2 Corinthians 5:10

If **we** endure, **we** will also **reign with him**.

2 Timothy 2:12

At the **renewal of all things**, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne,

you who have followed me will also **sit on twelve thrones, judging [ruling]** the twelve tribes of Israel.

Jesus

Matthew 19:27-28

[Jesus] whom heaven must receive until the time for **restoring all the things** about which God spoke **by the mouth of his holy prophets** long ago.

Peter, Acts 3:28

*I am making **all things new**....*

Jesus, Revelation 21:5

Are mountains, rivers, oceans, stars, planets, animals, culture—arts, music, literature, sports—part of “**all things**”?

Primary Discontinuity Passages

1. For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And ***the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.***

Isaiah 65:17

2. For in the resurrection **they neither marry nor are given in marriage**, but are like angels in heaven.

Matthew 22:30

3) ...with the **resurrection of the dead**. What is sown is **perishable**; what is raised is **imperishable**. ⁴³ It is sown in **dishonor** ...raised in **glory**. ...sown in **weakness**...raised in **power**.

⁴⁴ It is sown ***a natural body***; it is raised ***a spiritual body***.

1 Corinthians 15

4) Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and ***the sea was no more.***

Revelation 21:1

5) And he swore by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are therein...***that there should be time no longer.***

Revelation 10:6, KJV

No time in Heaven?

Those who had been slain because of the word of God . . . called out in a loud voice, **“How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?”**

. . . Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to **wait a little longer**, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.

Revelation 6:9-11

... they are before the throne of God, and **serve him day and night** in his temple.

Revelation 7:15

There was **silence in heaven for about half an hour.**

Revelation 8:1

On each side of the river stood
the tree of life, bearing twelve
crops of fruit, **yielding its fruit
every month.**

Revelation 22:2

“There should be time no longer.”

Revelation 10:6, KJV

There will be **no more delay!** (ESV, NIV, NLT)

Time will have run out: *No time remaining
before God judges.*

“And time shall be no more” is **not in the Bible!**

Do we forget this life when we die and go to Heaven?

For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. . . . So then, each of us will ***give an account of ourselves to God.***

Romans 14:10-12

How long before you will judge and
avenge our blood on those . . . on the
earth?

Revelation 6:10

I will . . . **remember their sins no
more.**

Jeremiah 31:34

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes,
and death shall be no more, neither shall there
be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for
the former things have passed away.”

And he who was seated on the throne said,
“Behold, I am making **all things new.**”

Revelation 21:4-5

We **will live happily ever after!** We have **not**
passed our peaks! We **don't need a bucket list!**

Is a Spiritual BODY non-physical?

Body is the **noun**, **spiritual** the **adjective** (as **Earth** is the **noun**, **New** the **adjective**).

Spiritual body can't be **non-physical** or it would be a **non-body**.

Christ's resurrection body was **emphatically physical**.

Interpretation: "Spiritual body" is a resurrected body **under the control** of a **redeemed, cleansed and Christ-like spirit**.

They were startled and frightened and **thought they saw a spirit**. And [Jesus] said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? **See my hands and my feet, that *it is I myself***.

Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.

Luke 24:37-40

All the dead shall be raised up,
with the **self-same bodies**, and
none other although with
different qualities.

The Westminster Confession, 1646

The ***self-same bodies*** of the dead which were laid in the grave, being then again ***united to their souls forever***, shall be ***raised up by the power of Christ.***

*Westminster Larger
Catechism, 1647*

If Christ's "**new body**" meant a body that hadn't existed before, then...

his **old body** would have stayed in the tomb.

If Bob goes to Heaven when he dies, then **Bob must be the old Bob** made new.

Our bodies will be raised **only if they remain** our original bodies.

... the heavens will *pass away with a roar*, and the heavenly bodies will be *burned up and dissolved*, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be *exposed*.

heuresthisetai, works “found,” *laid bare*, NIV; *disclosed*, HCSB “burned up,” KJV, NASB

But according to his promise we are waiting for *new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells*.

... Humankind, which has botched its original mandate and the whole creation along with it, is given another chance in Christ;
we are reinstated as God's managers on earth. *The original good creation is to be restored.*

Albert Wolters,
Creation Regained

Jesus:

... **all who are in the tombs** will
hear his voice and come out ...

... to the resurrection of **life** ... to
the resurrection of **judgment**.

John 5:28-29

There must be continuity, for otherwise there would be **little point in speaking about a resurrection at all.**

The calling into existence of a completely new set of people totally different from the present inhabitants of the earth **would not be a resurrection.**

Anthony Hoekema,
The Bible and The Future

Of Americans who believe in a resurrection of the dead, **two-thirds believe they will not have bodies after the resurrection.**

Time Magazine,
March 31, 1997

Resurrection

**YOU KEEP USING THAT WORD. I DO NOT
THINK IT MEANS WHAT YOU THINK IT MEANS.**

- **Resurrection:** becoming embodied again after death; the same body made alive.
- **Redemption:** buying back what was formerly owned.
- **Reconciliation:** regaining a friend.

- **Renewal:** making new again, restoring to an original state.
- **Regeneration:** being born again, having a new beginning.
- **Restoration:** bringing back the lost.

No more Sea?

Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on **both banks of the river**. ...**Every month they will bear fruit** because the **water** from the sanctuary flows to them. Their **fruit** will serve for food and **their leaves for healing**.

Ezekiel 47:12

On each side of the river stood the **tree** of life, **yielding its fruit every month**. And the **leaves of the tree are for the healing** of the nations.

Revelation 22:2

This water flows . . . Into . . . the sea; *when the water flows into the sea, the water will become fresh.*

And wherever the river goes, *every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish. . . that the waters of the sea may become fresh . . . everything will live where the river goes.*

Ezekiel 47:8-9

Sea to Hebrews: **treacherous**, icy, stormy waters that **separated families**, **destroyed ships**, flooded lands, ***drowned loved ones***.

Its creatures **devoured seafarers**, its ***salt waters poisoned people*** on the sea who craved fresh water.

Would safe, fresh, “sweet” life-giving ocean waters be “No more sea” ***as they knew it?*** (see ***Spurgeon***)

What Discontinuity Centers On

He will wipe away **every** tear from their eyes; and there will **no longer be any** death; there will **no longer be any** mourning, or crying, or pain, for the former things have passed away.

And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, **I am making all things new.**”

Revelation 21:4-5

No longer will there be **any curse.**

Revelation 22:3

The believer's glorification

Discontinuity: we will be glorified

Continuity: we will be glorified

The Lord Jesus Christ... will **transform our lowly bodies** so that **they** will be like his glorious body.

Philippians 3:20-21

Glorified Jesus: Revelation 1:13-18; 19:11-16

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth **shall awake**, some to **everlasting life**... And those who are wise shall **shine like the brightness of the sky above**: and those who turn many to righteousness, **like the stars forever and ever**. Dan. 12:2-3

⁴¹ **The Son of Man** will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom **all causes of sin** and **all law-breakers**,

⁴² and **throw them** into the **fiery furnace**. In that place there will be **weeping** and **gnashing of teeth**.

⁴³ Then **the righteous will shine like the sun** in the **kingdom of their Father**.

Matthew 13:41-43

MAJOR INTERPRETIVE PRINCIPLE

*As the **new person** in Christ is to the **old**
And as the **new body** will be to the **old**
so the **new heavens** and **new earth** will be to
the **old heavens** and **old earth**.*

Substantial **change**, essential **continuity**

New person** → **New body** → **New Earth

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. **The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.**

2 Corinthians 5:17

New creation is transformation of old; *same person changed.*

If there isn't continuity between old and new, there's no *re*generation, only generation.

Figurative or Literal?

Something *literal* can have great symbolic and figurative meaning.

* wedding **ring**, dress, cross, **crown**, sword, **bread and wine**, water baptism.

New Jerusalem can represent **bride of Christ** and **still be a city**. *Walls* can represent safety, *gates* access, *river* life, *tree* Eden, horses....

Some texts (e.g. Isaiah 65 & 66) **use the term “New Earth”** and therefore we should see them through that lens.

Some texts (e.g. Daniel 7) explicitly refer to an *everlasting kingdom of God on earth*.

Other prophetic texts are **directly quoted in Revelation 21-22** and applied to the New Earth (e.g. Isaiah 60 and Ezekiel 47).

This suggests that *other portions of the same passages* likely also refer to the New Earth.

“**New Earth**” (e.g. Isaiah 65:17) should be interpreted as that—eternal kingdom of God on Earth—*except* when referring to things that we are elsewhere told will NOT be true of the New Earth, such as **death** (65:20).

Many things are likely true of *both* the Millennium *and* the New Earth, such as living in **houses**, planting **vineyards** and **animals** living at peace (Isaiah 65:21, 25).

If the Bible didn't speak of a future earth, *then* “rule the earth” and “inherit the earth” would be figurative.

If Scripture didn't teach resurrection bodies will be physical, and will eat and drink, *then* we should interpret feasting figuratively.

Jesus: Many will come from east and west and recline at table with **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob** in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 8:12

Jesus: I confer on you a kingdom . . . so that you may **eat and drink at my table** in my kingdom.

Luke 22:29-30

Will there be animals on the New Earth?

- Animals were the **second most important** aspect of God's earthly creation (Gen 2)
- God made a clear covenant **not only with people but animals** in Genesis 9...
- Animals are part of Romans 8's "**all creation**" that fell on our coattails, **groans** now and will **rise on our coattails**

- Animals are part of the earth's “**all things**” that will be **renewed** (Matthew 19:27-28) and **restored** (Acts 3:28)
- **Isaiah 60** and **Ezekiel 47**'s references to animals ***thriving in a renewed creation*** should be seen as about the New Earth
- Isaiah 65 is “**New Earth**” (v. 17) The wolf and the lamb will feed together... **lion will eat straw** like the ox... ***no more harm or destruction*** (v. 25)

Does already-fulfilled biblical prophecy argue for literal interpretation?

“Rejoice daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and **mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.**” Zechariah 9:9

Had we not been told Jesus fulfilled this literally, would we assume it's **a figurative expression of messianic humility?**

“Many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at **the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob** in the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 8:11

Barring evidence to the contrary, there will be ***real eating and drinking* in our resurrection bodies** with **identifiable historical people** in the eternal kingdom.

“By [the lamb’s] light will **the nations** walk, and the **kings of the earth** will bring their glory [splendors] into it”

Revelation 21:24

Barring evidence to the contrary, there will be **nations, cultures** and **human rulers** on the New Earth.

If figurative what would these symbolize?

Jesus: “**use worldly wealth to gain friends** for yourselves, so that when it is gone, ***you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.***” Luke 16:9

Does ***other Scripture*** suggest we believe we will be ***embodied***? And have ***dwellings in the eternal state***? (Isaiah 65:21; John 14:1-2)

Conclusion: barring evidence to the contrary, Jesus suggests we’ll have homes in the eternal state, and open them to others.

The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the **LORD God planted a garden in Eden**, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed.

... A **river watering the garden flowed from Eden**. . . . The LORD God **put man in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it**.

Genesis 2:8-10, 15

The NATIONS will walk by [the Lamb's] light, and **the KINGS OF THE EARTH will bring their splendor into [the city].** *On no day will its gates ever be shut...*

The glory and honor of the NATIONS will be brought into it. . . . the river of the water of life . . . flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb **down the middle of the great street of the city. . . .**

Revelation 21:24-26

... On each side of the river stood *the tree of life*, bearing **twelve crops of fruit**, yielding its **fruit every month**. And the leaves of the tree are for the **healing of the NATIONS**.

No longer will there be any curse. [God's] servants will *serve* him. **They will see his face**... And **they will reign for ever and ever**...

Revelation 22:2-5

... Your **gates shall be open continually**; day and night they shall not be shut

... that people may bring to you **the wealth of the nations**, with their kings led in procession.

Isaiah 60:11

(Revelation 21:24-26; 22:1-5)

... The teaching of the entire Scripture is to the effect that **God's plans are never defeated, that *he does not replace but restore.***

He who made Paradise for Adam will make heaven and earth new, far beyond Paradise, in the consummation.

R. C. H. Lenski

New creation is the dominating notion of biblical theology because new creation is the goal or purpose of God's redemptive-historical plan;

new creation is the logical main point of Scripture.

Greg Beale

Eschatological Conception of N.T. Theology

God *hangs on* to his fallen original creation and *salvages it*.

He refuses to abandon the work of his hands—in fact, *he sacrifices his own Son to save his original project. . . .*

Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained*

Resurrected bodies are not intended just to float in space, or to flit from cloud to cloud. They **call for a new earth** on which to live and to work, glorifying God.

*The doctrine of the resurrection of the body, in fact, **makes no sense whatever apart from the doctrine of the new earth.***

Anthony Hoekema

If we'll be the **same people** with **redeemed bodies** and **sinless natures** living on a redeemed Earth, there's a **paradigm shift**:

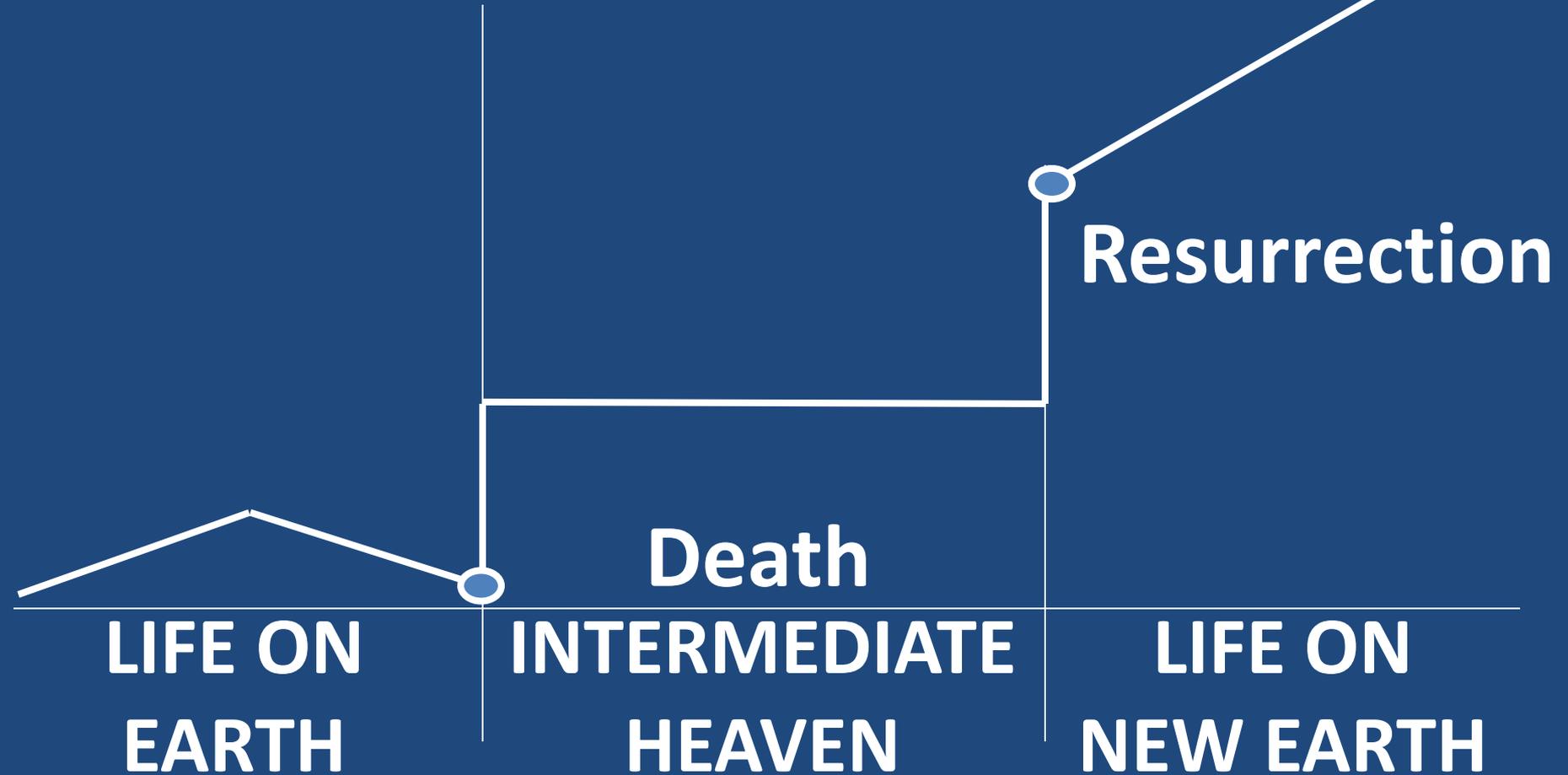
Mountains? Rivers? Animals? Culture?

Concerts? Books? Science? Technology? Crafts?

Sports? Space exploration?

The perspective moves from “No way” to “**Why Not?**” If it's sinful, obviously, **NO**. If human, image-bearing and God-honoring—and not explicitly excluded, then **YES!**

Are We Past Our Peaks?



www.epm.org/alcorntgc

A. A. Hodge, *Evangelical Theology*

Heaven, as the eternal home of the divine Man and the redeemed members of the human race, **must necessarily be thoroughly human in its structure, conditions, and activities.**

Its joys and activities must all be rational, moral, emotional, voluntary and active. . . . There must be the exercise of all the faculties, **the gratification of all tastes, the development of all talent capacities, the realization of all ideals.**

. . . The reason, the intellectual curiosity, the imagination, the aesthetic instincts, the holy affections, the social affinities, the inexhaustible resources of strength and power native to the human soul **must all find in heaven exercise and satisfaction. . . .**

Then there must always be a goal of endeavor before us, ever future. . . . **Heaven will prove the consummate flower and fruit of the whole creation and of all the history of the universe.**

The general tenor of prophecy and the analogy of the divine dealings point unmistakably ***to this earth purified and renewed,***

and *not to the heavens* in any ordinary sense of the term, as the eternal habitation of the blessed.

Henry Alford,
Greek New Testament

Nothing of the diversity of the nations and peoples, their cultural products, languages, arts, sciences, literature, and technology—so far as these are good and excellent—will be lost upon life in the new creation.

Cornelius Venema,
The Promise of the Future

The total work of Christ is ***nothing less than to redeem this entire creation from the effects of sin.***

That purpose will not be accomplished until God has ushered in the new earth, until Paradise Lost has become Paradise Regained.

Anthony Hoekema

Victor Hugo, *"The Future Life"*

I feel within me that future life. I am like a forest that has been razed; the new shoots are stronger and brighter. ***I shall most certainly rise toward the heavens*** the nearer my approach to the end, the plainer is the sound of immortal symphonies of ***worlds which invite me....***

For half a century I have been translating my thoughts into prose and verse: history, drama,

...philosophy, romance, tradition, satire, ode, and song; all of these I have tried. But I feel **I haven't given utterance to the thousandth part of what lies within me...**

When I go to the grave I can say, as others have said, "My day's work is done." But I cannot say, "My life is done." My work will recommence the next morning.

The tomb is not a blind alley; **it is a thoroughfare**. It **closes upon the twilight**, but **opens upon the dawn**.