

*Biblical Answers to Common Questions*

# HEAVEN



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ALCORN

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Biblical Answers to Common Questions

*adapted from*  
Heaven

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*I once scorned ev'ry fearful thought of death,  
When it was but the end of pulse and breath,  
But now my eyes have seen that past the pain  
There is a world that's waiting to be claimed.  
Earthmaker, Holy, let me now depart,  
For living's such a temporary art.  
And dying is but getting dressed for God,  
Our graves are merely doorways cut in sod.*

Calvin Miller



# INTRODUCTION

Maybe you feel as if you've passed your peak, physically or emotionally, and that your best opportunities are behind you. Perhaps you're burdened, discouraged, depressed, or even traumatized. Perhaps your dreams—your marriage, career, or ambitions—have crumbled. Perhaps you've become cynical or have lost hope.

An understanding of the true Christian teaching about Heaven (not the popular caricatures of Heaven) can change all that. That's why I wrote *Heaven*, a full-length treatment of the subject that deals with all the questions people ask about this great subject.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this little booklet is to give you just a taste of the glorious truth about Heaven.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information about *Heaven* and other resources, go to [www.epm.org](http://www.epm.org).

God's people in ages past had a source of strength and perspective largely unknown to us today: Heaven. It was their central reference point, the North Star by which they could navigate their lives. But in contemporary society, Heaven has fallen off our radar screens.

"Whenever I think about Heaven," a pastor said to me, "it makes me depressed. I'd rather just cease to exist when I die."

"Why?" I asked.

"I can't stand the thought of that endless tedium. To float around in the clouds with nothing to do but strum a harp . . . it's all so terribly boring. Heaven doesn't sound much better than Hell. I'd rather be annihilated than spend eternity in a place like that."

Where did this Bible-believing, seminary-educated pastor get such a view of Heaven? Certainly not from Scripture, where the apostle Paul says that to depart and be with Christ is *far better* than staying on Earth (Philippians 1:23). My friend was more honest about it than most, yet I've found that many Christians share the same misconceptions about Heaven.

Our unbiblical assumption that Heaven won't be a real, earthly place blinds us to what Scripture actually says. Rarely do we hear descriptions that capture what the Bible portrays as a New Earth with a great capital city made with precious stones; a New Earth that contains trees and rivers, and where resurrected people come in and out of the gates, engaged in meaningful relationships and productive activity.

J. C. Ryle, a nineteenth-century British theologian, said, "I pity the man who never thinks about heaven."<sup>2</sup> We could also say, "I pity the man who never thinks *accurately* about Heaven." It's our inaccurate thinking, I believe, that motivates us to think so little about Heaven.

As you will see, the problem is not that the Bible doesn't tell us much about Heaven. It's that we don't pay attention to what it tells us.

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<sup>2</sup> J. C. Ryle, *Heaven* (Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2000), 19.





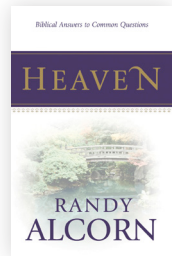
eternal perspective ministries

with author Randy Alcorn

## More about the *Heaven* booklet

This 60-page booklet is a sampling of the questions and answers found in Randy Alcorn's *Heaven* book and is being distributed widely at memorial services and funerals, and used as an evangelistic tool with friends and neighbors.

**Purchase this booklet**



## About Randy Alcorn

Randy is the founder and director of Eternal Perspective Ministries and the best-selling author of over 50 books (over nine million in print) including *Heaven*, *The Treasure Principle*, and the Gold Medallion winner *Safely Home*.



## About Eternal Perspective Ministries

Eternal Perspective Ministries (EPM) is a nonprofit ministry dedicated to teaching principles of God's Word and assisting the church in ministering to the unreached, unfed, unborn, uneducated, and unsupported people around the world. You can order all of Randy's books and products through EPM's online store at **[www.epm.org](http://www.epm.org)**.