

*In search of...*

# Truth & Right

Volume 11 Issue 11

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## The City Abraham Waited For

How often do you think about heaven? I mean, REALLY think about it? I'm talking about sitting down with an open Bible and a prayerful heart and dwelling on the subject of heaven in your mind, going out of your way to study biblical passages that talk about what it will be like over there. When was the last time you did that?

If you're not in the habit of thinking about heaven, I suggest that you start because I know from personal experience that thinking about heaven and the reward that waits for us there on a regular basis brings anticipation...and anticipation is a great motivation for Christians to live

the kind of lives that God would have them to live. That's how Abraham was (Heb. 11:8-16). He ***"was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God."*** He ***"desired a better country, that is, a heavenly one"*** because he had faith, which is why he obeyed God. As a result, ***"God was not ashamed to be called (his) God..."***

What does it mean to anticipate heaven? For one thing, it means that we have to prepare ourselves for heaven. That's what Abraham did. Ezra did so as well. He ***"had set his heart to study the Law***

***of the Lord, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel***" (Ez. 7:10). Do you have similar goals? Have you prepared yourself to study the Bible every single day, and then to obey it, and then to teach it to others? Ezra, Abraham, all of the great examples of faith in the Old Testament did so...because they were looking for that homeland, that better, heavenly country (Heb. 11:13-16). Are we doing the same? Or is it just a foregone assumption in our minds that we will go to heaven...even if we don't prepare for it? We might be surprised...

Peter talked of those who purified their souls after obeying the truth (1 Pet. 1:22). That's something else people who anticipate heaven do. All of us have sinned and were dead in our trespasses and without hope (Rom. 3:23; Eph. 2:1-3, 12-13)...and that would never change unless we obtained a living faith (James 2:14-26) from hearing God's Word (Rom. 10:17) and

acting on that faith by confessing it (Rom. 10:9-10), repenting of our sins (2 Cor. 7:9-10), and being immersed in water for the forgiveness of our sins (Acts 2:38; John 3:3-5). Only then do we become pure in heart, and thus will see God (Matt. 5:8). Have you purified yourself in order to be ready for heaven?

The one who anticipates heaven will do these things because God has commanded them. God saves only those who obey him (Heb. 5:9). On the day of judgment there will be many religious people who will not be saved in spite of their allegiance to Christ and their good works...because they did not completely obey God (Matt. 7:21-27). That's why Jesus said to people who had already believed in him that they must abide in his Word in order to be true disciples who know the truth that sets them free (John 8:31-32). The one who obeys God's commandments has the right to the tree of life and

enters that city (Rev. 22:14). Are you obeying God's Word?

Heaven will be a place of rest (Heb. 4:9-10; Rev. 14:13), but we must make sure that we don't miss it (Heb. 4:1). Those who are ready for it will be granted that rest when Jesus comes again (2 Thess. 1:7). Heaven will also be a better place than where we currently are (Heb. 11:16), a place as beautiful as a bride looking her best on her wedding day (Rev. 21:2), a place where there will be no more sorrow, death, pain, or crying (Rev. 21:4) because there will be no sin there (Rev. 21:27). Heaven is a prepared place, a place that Jesus is preparing for us now (John 14:1-3), a place that has been prepared for us since before the world began (Matt. 25:34).

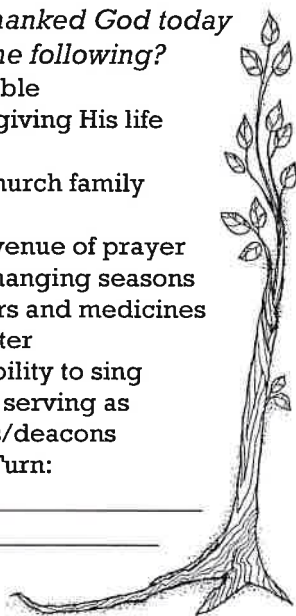
Are we prepared for heaven? Are we looking for that city that Abraham was looking for?

God gave you a gift of  
**86,400**  
seconds today. Have  
you used one to say  
**THANK YOU?**

*Have you thanked God today  
for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- Jobs
- The avenue of prayer
- The changing seasons
- Doctors and medicines
- Laughter
- The ability to sing
- Those serving as elders/deacons
- Your Turn:

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**WELLSBURG CHURCH OF CHRIST**

92 Rose Cottage Lane  
Wellsburg, WV 26070  
304-737-1422

<http://www.truthandright.org>



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# Laborers in the Vineyard

X O E K N K S J K N E R N F N U M B C S  
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**DIRECTIONS:** Look up the scripture in the Bible, and find the answer in the crossword above.

- Matt. 20:1, *For the kingdom of heaven is like a \_\_\_\_\_ of a house...*  
 Matt. 20:1, *...who went out early in the \_\_\_\_\_ to hire laborers for his vineyard*  
 Matt. 20:2, *After \_\_\_\_\_ with the laborers for a denarius a day,*  
 Matt. 20:3, *and going out about the third hour he saw others \_\_\_\_\_ idle...*  
 Matt. 20:4, *...he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and \_\_\_\_\_ is right...*  
 Matt. 20:6, *And about the \_\_\_\_\_ hour he went out and found others...*  
 Matt. 20:7, *They said to him, ' \_\_\_\_\_ no one has hired us.'*  
 Matt. 20:8, *And when \_\_\_\_\_ came the owner of the vineyard said...*  
 Matt. 20:10, *...they thought they would \_\_\_\_\_ more, but each of them also...*  
 Matt. 20:11, *...they \_\_\_\_\_ at the master of the house,*  
 Matt. 20:12, *...them equal to us who have borne the \_\_\_\_\_ of the day...*  
 Matt. 20:15, *Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what \_\_\_\_\_ to me?*