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Preparing for Heaven: Building the Eternal Phase of Your Life

Hello. My name is Dick Wulf. And, I really want to get you more interested in heaven than you already are. I want to tell you how to prepare for heaven and enhance your experience there forever. I hope you are sure you are headed to heaven as I know I am. I want you to realize how wonderful it is going to be.

I was 75 years old in year 2018 when I recorded these podcasts for the HeavenBeckons.com website. A year earlier, in December 2017, I was unexpectedly and suddenly diagnosed with two cancers, one of them to be terminal by now, September 2019. Therefore, I was particularly mindful of heaven and that I would soon be going there.

I had just finished writing a 900 page manuscript on how faith together in our Christian friendships, Christian families, and Christian marriages is the way to (1) become more like Jesus, (2) give to God more worship, (3) defeat evil, and (4) prepare for a higher quality of life in heaven.

In light of my soon-to-come death, I talked things over with God, and He gave me an urgent call to what was first called the *Getting Ready to Go Home to Heaven* podcast curriculum and is now called *Preparing for Heaven: Building the Eternal Phase of Your Life*.

Surgery, 40 radiation treatments, and God's healing touch has me now, in September 2019, in remission with the terminal diagnosis postponed, but with signs that the cancer is again growing.

<pause>

To establish some sort of credibility with you, let me tell you that I have been a psychotherapist for over 52 years with a specialty in small group dynamics, am a Christian author, have been in church leadership positions for well over 40 years, and have been a conference speaker and consultant for churches and parachurch organizations. I have been married to my wife Jean for 54 years.

<pause> <pause>

Think about how wonderful heaven is and will be when we get there. There won't be any problems with people in heaven. Won't that be nice?! <> No misunderstandings, nothing said to hurt us, no competition for advantage over us, nothing disagreeable at all! How will it feel to never be misunderstood <> or to say anything hurtful ever again?

Imagine a life that goes on forever, is never boring, and everyone gets along, everyone sees our good qualities and all our bad characteristics are gone forever.

It is almost certain that there will be unlimited adventures and opportunities. We do not have any idea what these might be, but think of climbing a challenging mountain or learning a new skill. And, there will be other citizens in heaven ready to encourage us to step into those adventures and opportunities – with no one to discourage us.

Even more wonderful than all of this, imagine a life where nothing gets in the way of our relationship with God. Not only will we be with Jesus, we will be constantly aware of His presence to the maximum that we have let the Holy Spirit develop this capacity.

Unfortunately, the Bible gives us only a little glimpse of the physical aspects of heaven – crystal clear river, streets of gold, a city with 12 marvelous gates, and a few other things. However, we know much, much more about the society of heaven and its relationships. That is because all of our relationships in heaven will be as they are instructed in the Bible to be now. For example, certainly, if we are to love others now, we will love them in heaven.

The wonder of God's grace will surround us in heaven and we should want to prepare to recognize as much of that undeserved favor as we have time left before death. Before coming to heaven we will each have grown to some level to appreciate how much we do not deserve to go to heaven. We will know how marvelous God is to love us so much as to invite us to live with Him in His kingdom forever. I hope you will let me show you how to enter heaven with higher appreciation for being there than you now have.

[PAUSE]

By now, I hope you very much want to go to heaven. Most likely you already know what is required to live in heaven forever. However, let's review it, just in case you wrongly think that you have to be good enough. No one is good enough for a personal relationship with God who is absolutely holy. No one is **good enough** to live forever in heaven, God's home.

The good news is that God took care of that problem for us. History shows that out of His love

God opened the door to heaven for those who **do not** trust in their own goodness but **do trust** in the **perfect goodness** of Jesus Christ. Jesus was and is God and came from heaven and took on human form. Jesus then lived a perfect human life, did no evil, and then took our sins onto Himself and died to pay the penalty for them. If we believe this, we are covered by His righteousness, belong to God, and have inherited eternal life, beginning now and continuing forever in heaven. <> We can never be good enough; we just have to believe in faith that what the Bible says is true when it declares in John 3:16-18, (quote)

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

(unquote)

If you already believe that Jesus Christ died to take your sins upon Himself and died to pay the penalty for those sins and remove the barrier of personal relationship with God, <> or if you will believe now, <> then you have eternal life and can look forward to living in heaven for all eternity.

[PAUSE]

If you are going to heaven, there are some things you might want to do now, before you die and go there. Heaven will have a higher quality of life for those who prepare before they get there. This is just like going on a dream vacation where you prepare for the trip long before you go so that you can enjoy more when you actually get there.

It is really appealing to think that everyone's experience in heaven will be the same. According to the Bible, that is wrong. Thinking that it does not much matter how we live now because heaven will make it all better – is not correct.

Actually, heaven **will** make it all better in some respects. Mainly, we will no longer have any evil nature in us. The old, sin-contaminated self will have been left behind. And, there will be no sin or evil of any kind in heaven. Therefore, we will all have only joy and no disappointment,

◆ be totally happy and hopeful without any discouragement, ◆ and love without hatred or betrayal. But, we must understand that we will have different levels of capacity for these things depending on how we have prepared ourselves for heaven by becoming more like Jesus.

There are many aspects of heaven that will be different for each of us because we did or did not prepare for higher attainment of heaven's joys by becoming more and more like Jesus.

Jesus told a parable about heaven that shows we will not all have the same quality of life in heaven. He told about a master who gave three servants different amounts of money to invest and create profit for him. The servants who put in diligent effort and increased the master's investment were given rule of cities in proportion to their effort. But the servant who did nothing with what he was given was not rewarded at all.

Since there is no pain and sorrow in heaven, once we get there we will be completely content. We will not envy those whose joy, for example, is greater than ours because we will know that they prepared and deserve that higher level of joy.

We can liken all of this to computer games where players attain higher and higher levels by putting in more time playing and getting better. Those at lower levels completely understand that those at higher levels deserve to be there, and so they are happy with the level at which they are playing.

Similarly, but much more disastrous spiritually, even now we know other Christians with a closer relationship with God than we have as well as believers completely satisfied with less relationship with Him. Even now we know people not trying very hard to have a closer relationship with God, but who are very happy with their level of faith.

Many levels of advancement in our spirits, down deep inside of ourselves, must be gained while we are living in an environment with sin and evil and pain. In heaven there will be some things we can still grow in and reap more advanced levels of enjoyment. But, there are many spiritual benefits that will not be able to grow because the opportunity to become in some way like Jesus will not be possible in the sinless environment of heaven. For example, you will have lost the possibility of becoming more forgiving since there will be no need for forgiveness in heaven.

So, now is the time for preparing for heaven. Not doing so will result, not in unhappiness, but in loss of valuable benefits in heaven.

Let's consider joy in heaven as an example. There are many ways to prepare for heaven so that our joy will be a higher "complete joy" than a lower "complete joy". And those ways are all to become more like Jesus in one way or another. Romans 8:29 in the Bible makes it clear that becoming increasingly like Jesus is God's purpose for our lives. There is still time, even if you are confined to bed, to work on changing your spirit to be more like Jesus. You can still change your thoughts, feelings and actions and purify a bit more who you are deep down inside.

We are spiritual beings with bodies. At death we will leave our bodies behind, but we will be very much alive in our spirits. But consider this: only what is like Jesus in our spirits will enter heaven. If that is the case, don't we want to spend our weeks, months and years becoming more like Jesus?

In the Bible, 1 Tim 4:7-8, says, "Train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come." (Notice it says, "for the life to come" – that's heaven!) Godliness and Christlikeness are the same thing and something that we train for now for this life – and for life in heaven.

The more frequent and honest relationships you have with your closest Christian friends and Christian family members are used by God to make changes in your spirit to become more like Jesus. When you face life and its difficulties biblically with the help of your Christian Inner Circle, you will grow to think, feel, and act more like Jesus. <> As a result, deep changes in your spirit will blossom.

The audio curriculum at this web site titled *Preparing for Heaven: Building the Eternal Phase of Your Life* is designed to help you prepare for heaven with your Christian Inner Circle of friends and relatives who believe God and His Bible. In four instructional courses, I will help you go through all of the Togethers of Scripture, which are 65 things God tells us in the Bible that we are to do with other believers. Each of these 65 aspects of love in relationship with other Christians and with God change you to be more like Jesus – and they have great benefits in heaven. But, these benefits only come from **doing** these things, not just knowing about them.

Most Christians still have a lot of time left to change a lot of their ways of thinking to God's ways of thinking, their feelings to be more like God's emotions, and their actions to be more consistent with the way Jesus would behave. And, the longer a Christian has, the more he or she can prepare for heaven. There is no reason to put this off – we do not know if we will go to heaven prematurely because of an accident or unfortunate illness that will cut our preparation short.

Let me say to those of you who are bedridden and your life is about to transition to heaven soon, Course One in the *Preparing for Heaven* audio curriculum can all be done while medically confined.

You can click through to the free streaming of the podcasts of the *Preparing for Heaven: Building the Eternal Phase of Your Life* audio curriculum from the home page of HeavenBeckons.com where you just clicked to listen to this message. Each podcast is about 15 minutes long. So, why not get started preparing for heaven now?