

Some Questions About Heaven

Part 2 Heaven 3

I. Will We Be Angels In Heaven?

A. We will not be angels in heaven.

1. They are a different created order. (Psa. 148:2, 5).
 - a. Jesus did not die for them (Heb. 2:16), but He died only for humans. (Jn. 3:16; Heb. 5:9).
 - b. What a blessing we have in Jesus!
2. We are not angels now, and we will not be angels in heaven.
3. We are separated from the angels now and then.

B. We will be like them in several ways. (Matt. 22:30; Lk. 20:34-36).

MAT 22:30 "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.	LUK 20:34 And Jesus said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, LUK 20:35 but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; LUK 20:36 for neither can they die anymore, for they are like angels , and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.
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1. We will not be like the angels in every way.
2. We will be like them in that we will not marry, and in that we cannot die anymore according to the above passages. Angels are created and everlasting, but not eternal.
3. We can also deduct from scriptures that we will be like them in other ways.
 - a. We will be like them in that we will praise God and serve Him.
 - b. We will be like them in that we will not sin.
 - c. We will be like them in that we will enjoy the presence of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.
 - d. We will be like them in that we will have a heavenly body.
 - e. We will be like them in that we will be able to enjoy heaven.

f. We will be like them in that we will likely have names and identities.

1) See Matt. 17:1-5; Lk. 16:19-31; 13:28.

2) Angels appear to have names though only two are mentioned by name in God's word.

Gabriel - Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Lk. 1:19, 26	Michael - Jude 9; Rev. 12:7
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3) It is not logical that only two angels would have names, and the host of other angels are all nameless and have no real identity.

4) Without identity much our importance is lost or diminished.

5) Imagine being in heaven nameless and knowing no one.

6) God even has a name for myriads of stars. (Psa. 147:4).

7) If on earth even the sparrows have significance (Matt. 10:39-31), then how can we imagine in heaven we will be mere clones with no identity or significance?

II. What Will We Do In Heaven?

A. We will praise God. (Rev. 7:9,10).

REV 7:9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; REV 7:10 and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."
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1. This will be exciting, thrilling beyond words.

2. Imagine all of the redeemed, "a multitude that no man can number," singing praises to God.

a. All of our musical imperfections will vanish.

b. We will have perfect voices to praise our God from our hearts.

c. All suffering is passed, and we will be with the family of faith singing praises to the Awesome God.

B. We will serve God. (Rev. 22:3,4).

REV 22:3 And there shall no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His bond-servants shall serve Him; REV 22:4 and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.

1. How we will serve God is not specified.

2. We can be sure it will be challenging work.

3. Our finite minds cannot even imagine the exciting and challenging things God has in mind for us.

C. We will rest. (Heb. 4:9-11; Rev. 14:13).

HEB 4:9 There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

HEB 4:10 For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.

HEB 4:11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience.

REV 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "**that they may rest from their labors**, for their deeds follow with them."

1. The word "rest" does not mean cessation of all activity.

a. This would create great boredom and restlessness.

b. This would destroy the joy and happiness that comes from activity and having purpose.

2. God "rested" from His creative work. (Gen. 2:1-4).

a. This did not mean God was tired and ceased all activity on the 7th day.

b. The Almighty God cannot become tired.

c. It means God ceased His creative work. He created nothing on the 7th day, but He was still upholding the universe and watching over His creation.

d. God has always been active (Jn. 5:17), and He never takes a day off and never tires or becomes weary.

III. Will We Have The Same Body In Heaven?

A. The answer is "no."

1. The body is corruptible. (1 Cor. 15:50-52).

2. It is not adapted for a perpetual place like heaven. Gen. 2:7; Eccles. 12:7

3. Who would want to live in this old physical body forever?

B. Our bodies in heaven will not be fleshly. (1 Cor. 15:50; Phil. 3:20,21; 2 Cor. 4:26-5:3).

C. Paul makes clear our bodies will be changed at the resurrection. (1 Cor. 15:49-57).

1. It is the mortal body that will be raised. (Rom. 8:11).

2. The Almighty God can raise it even if it is scattered all over the earth.

3. It will then be instantly changed from a mortal, corruptible body to a body that is immortal and incorruptible. (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

4. We will then bear the image of the heavenly (Christ). (1 Cor. 15:49).

5. We will be like Jesus. (1 Jn. 3:1,2).

D. The fact we will have spiritual bodies does not mean we will not be the same persons.

1. We change in all sorts of ways in this world, but we are still the same persons.

2. If we will not be the same persons, there would be no punishment or reward.

3. Some new person or identity would be blessed or punished for us.

IV. Will Some Of The Saved Be On Earth?

A. Some think most of the righteous will be on earth, and only a 144,000 will go to heaven. (Rev. 7:4; 14:1,3).

<p>REV 7:4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:</p>	<p>REV 14:1 And I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. REV 14:3 And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth.</p>
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1. This is a figurative passage.

a. They are celibate males. (Rev. 14:4).

<p>REV 14:4 These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.</p>

b. They are sealed out of “every tribe of the sons of Israel.” (Rev. 7:4).

c. A literal interpretation also excludes females from heaven and all Gentiles from heaven.

2. The 144,000 does not represent all the saved.

a. There will be a vast multitude there. (Rev. 7:9).

b. Revelation 14:4 says, “These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.” “First fruits” does not mean they are the only ones going to heaven.

c. All believers will be with Jesus in heaven. (Jn. 14:1-6; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Pet. 1:4; 2 Pet. 1:5-11).

B. This is false doctrine.

1. We are "pilgrims" (strangers) on earth. (1 Pet. 1:1; 2:11).

2. "Our citizenship is in heaven." (Phil. 3:20).

3. This earth will be destroyed. (2 Pet. 3:10).

2PE 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

4. Heaven is promised "to him who overcomes." (Rev. 2:7; 3:21).

5. Heaven is promised to those who have their names "written in the Lamb's book of life." (Rev. 21:27).

C. Some object by saying "the meek" shall "inherit the earth." (Matt. 5:5; Psa. 37:11).

MAT 5:5 "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

PSA 37:11 But the humble will inherit the land, And will delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

1. "The meek" are "pure in heart" and "they shall see God." (Matt. 5:8).

2. "The meek" are persecuted and those persecuted "for righteousness sake" will be in heaven. (Matt. 5:10-12).

3. "The meek" enjoy great blessings on the earth (Mk. 10:29,30), but will enjoy eternal life in heaven.

MAR 10:29 Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake,
MAR 10:30 but that he shall receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; **and in the age to come, eternal life.**

V. Are There Degrees Of Reward?

A. In answering this question, it is very important to emphasize that every faithful follower of God will be blessed with a home in heaven. (Rev. 21:3, 7; 2:10; Tit. 3:7; Heb. 5:9).

B. Daniel tells us that "they who lead many to righteousness" shall shine "like the stars forever and ever." (Dan.12:3).

DAN 12:3 "And those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

1. These words were obviously penned for the purpose of stimulating, motivating men in soul winning.

2. Will those who turn only a few souls, or none at all, "to righteousness" shine just as brilliantly.

3. If so why was the promise made?

C. At the end of the age the Lord will "recompense every man according to his deeds."

<p>MAT 16:27 "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds.</p> <p>REV 20:12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.</p>	<p>ROM 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,</p> <p>ROM 2:6 who will render to every man according to his deeds:</p> <p>ROM 2:7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;</p>	<p>PRO 24:12 If you say, "See, we did not know this," Does He not consider it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?</p>
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1. This might mean that men will be saved or lost based on the way they live. See 2 Cor. 5:10.
2. It could also be understood that there will be degrees of reward.
 - a. The “deeds” of all men [even good man] are not be exactly the same.
 - b. Not all have the same works, and some have done much more than others.
 - c. Salvation is not earned (Eph. 2:8, 9), but this does not mean God could not or will not reward some more than others.
- C. The parable of the laborers in the vineyard might cast some doubt there will be degrees of reward. (Matt. 20:1-16).
 1. Those who obeyed “the eleventh hour” received exactly the same amount of wages as those who came in at the first hour or at other times during the day.
 2. It is certain that all receive the same wages, and this is assumed by many to be heaven.
 3. This passage may be dealing with heaven, but many scholars believe it has another meaning.
 - a. It may have been delivered to show that the Gentile who came in at “the eleventh hour” would enjoy the kingdom and have the same privileges as the chosen people of God who had served God for many centuries.
 - b. The point could be that Gentiles would be a part of the kingdom just as the Jews who had labored for centuries.
 - c. To make the “denarius” stand for “eternal life” would represent saints in heaven murmuring against God.

<p>MAT 20:11 "And when they received it, they grumbled at the landowner,</p> <p>MAT 20:12 saying, ' These last men have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.'</p>

- d. This is appalling that saints would murmur against God. This contradicts the fact there will be no evil in heaven. (Rev. 21:8, 27).

- e. It also suggests that “eternal life” is earned and this is both appalling and unscriptural. (Matt. 20:12).
- f. If we interpret the parable to mean that the master of the vineyard represents God, and the denarius represents eternal reward, how are we to interpret the fact that those who worked all day received a denarius, **but were sent away from the master** of the vineyard?

MAT 20:13 "But he answered and said to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius?"

MAT 20:14 '**Take what is yours and go your way** [be gone], but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you.

MAT 20:15 'Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?'

MAT 20:16 "Thus the last shall be first, and the first last."

- 1) This would suggest they were cut off from eternal life.
- 2) This does not harmonize with Paul’s words, “And so shall we ever be with the Lord?” (1 Thess. 4:18).
- g. The “denarius” does not represent eternal life, but it means that the Gentiles would receive the same blessings as the Jews in the kingdom of God (the church).
- h. The Gentiles who were called at the end of the Jewish dispensation or “the eleventh hour” would enjoy all the blessings of the kingdom and were most often the first to accept Christ and the kingdom.
 - 1) Membership, forgiveness, joy, help, fellowship, etc. come to all who come to Christ.
 - 2) Both Jews and Gentiles received this blessing.
- j. Most of Jews rejected Christ though the church in the very beginning was made up of Jews.
 - 1) See Acts 1:8 and Acts 2-9
 - 2) See Acts 10 for the gospel being taken to the non-proselyte Gentiles.

D. It is not certain that all will enjoy heaven just alike.

- 1. Some Christians enjoy worship and service more than others Christians here.
- 2. The fact we do not all enjoy worship and service exactly alike here may suggest there could be degrees of enjoyment in heaven.
- 3. Some in heaven will have great joy because their converts will be there.
- 4. Others will be in heaven, but some or all of their converts will, like wood, hay or stubble, perish from apostasy. (1 Cor. 3:12-15).

1CO 3:12 Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,
 1CO 3:13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

1CO 3:14 If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward.

1CO 3:15 If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

a. "He shall suffer loss."

- 1) This suggests that some of our converts will not be saved, and this is disappointing at best.
- 2) This does not keep us from being saved.
- 3) This will not keep us from being happy because God has promised that we will be happy. (Rev. 21:4).
- 4) We do not understand how God will make us happy, much God knows how to make us happy.
- 5) Worrying about being happy in heaven is foolish and undermines the power and promises of God.

b. "But he himself shall be saved."

- 1) A person can be saved even if his converts are lost.
- 2) Each person is individually judged. (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12).

Note:

- This passage indicates that there will be a realization if our converts are saved or lost.
- If there is not realization of who is saved or lost, it means we will always be in the dark and have no idea if our work was successful or failure. We will never know the fate of our loved ones.
- Paul emphasizes that either way we will be saved if we are faithful through the trials ("so as through fire") we must experience in this life.

5. Jesus taught there is "a prophet's reward," and there is a "righteous man's reward." (Matt. 10:41).

MAT 10:41 "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive **a prophet's reward**; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive **a righteous man's reward**."

- a. These rewards differ from each other, and they also differ from all other rewards.
 - b. If "a prophet's reward" or "a righteous man's reward" or the reward of the saved in general are all the same, why this language?
 - c. If there is not distinction in rewards, the passage is without significance.
 - d. Jesus would have said we will all receive the same reward.
- E. Though it appears there may be degrees of reward or enjoyment, this is not where we should put our emphasis.
1. We should focus on giving our hearts to God. (Matt. 22:37-39).
 - 2.. We should focus on being good servants. (Matt. 25:21; 27:28).
 3. God will do the right thing, and will make no mistakes or show no partiality in bestowing honor and blessings.

F. There are other things that suggest there may be degrees of reward.

1. The Bible tells those in heaven will sing “the song of Moses” (Rev. 15:3), but there no indication that each one of us will have a song.
2. The Bible says, “the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (Rev. 21:14), but such recognition does not appear to be for all.
3. Abraham appears to have greater preeminence in the afterlife than Lazarus and perhaps many others. (Lk. 16:19-31).
 - a. The place of the righteous departed spirits in called “Abraham’s bosom.”
 - b. See Luke 16:22, 24, 27.
4. Jesus affirmed it was not His place to designate those who would sit next to Him in glory (Mk. 10:40), but He replied “But to sit on my right hand or on my left hand is not mine to give; but it for those to whom it hath been prepared.”
 - a. Some glorified beings (whether angelic or human) will occupy a place of distinction beside the Savior.
 - b. This place is a special place for them, but not for all the saints.
 - c. It is vain to speculate on whom these places might be bestowed.
5. It appears Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have prominence in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 8:11).
6. The parable of the talents suggests not all will be blessed the same. (Matt. 25:14-30).
7. The parable of the nobleman also suggests all will not be blessed the same. (Lk. 19:11-27).

G. It appears certain that there are degrees of punishment. (Lk. 12:47,48; Heb. 10:29).

<p>LUK 12:47 "And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, shall receive many lashes, LUK 12:48 but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. And from everyone who has been given much shall much be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.</p>	<p>HEB 10:29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?</p>
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1. This should not be interpreted that hell is not too bad for some.
2. The fact some may be punished more than others does not imply the lessor degrees of punishment are anything but awful.
3. Hell is always presented as a place of pain and endless torment. There is no suggestion it will not be “too bad for some.”

VI. Will We Know Everything In Heaven?

- A. This is assumed by most, but the scriptures do not teach it.
- B. This would make us omniscient, but this is an exclusive characteristic of Deity.
- C. Without question our knowledge will grow in heaven (when faith becomes sight), but we will never know everything.
- D. Some think 1 Corinthians 13:12 is teaching we will know everything in heaven.

1CO 13:12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known.

1. This chapter is not talking about heaven, but about spiritual gifts. See 1 Cor. 12:8-10 & 1 Corinthians 14.
2. At the time Paul wrote all of God's word had not been revealed; though all necessary truth for salvation had been revealed.
 - a. We are not sure how much truth had not been revealed at the time Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, but likely most of it had.
 - b. Men would not be accountable for truths until they were revealed. (Jas. 4:17).
3. It was being revealed bit by bit, that is, a little at a time.
4. It was revealed over about a 63 year period. Approx 33-96 A.D
5. The last book of the New Testament was written about 96 A.D. according to many scholars, but some think Revelation was written before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D..
6. Once all of God's revelation had been revealed their partial knowledge of God's word would be superseded by God's complete revelation.
7. "All truth" was given to the apostles. (Jn. 16:13).
8. This has reference to God's complete will or revelation for man on earth.
9. All of God's revelation for man would have been revealed, and man would have a complete knowledge of God's will for man.
10. It is not talking about man's omniscience.

VII. Will Heaven Be Forever?

- A. The Bible gives an affirmative answer to this question.
 1. The gospels (Matt. 19:16, 29; 25:46; Mk. 10:30; Jn. 3:15,16,36; 4:14, 36; 5:24, 39; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10:28; 12:25, 50; 17:2, 3).

2. Balance of New Testament (Rom. 2:7; 5:21; 6:22, 23; 2 Cor. 4:17, 18; 5:1; Gal. 6:8; 2 Thess. 2:16 ; 1 Tim. 1:16; 6:12; 2 Tim. 2:10; Tit. 1:2; 3:7; Heb. 5:9, 2 Pet. 1:11; 1 Jn. 2:25; 3:15, 5:11, 13; Jude 1:21; Rev. 22:5).

B. Some contend "eternal" or "forever" sometimes has a limited meaning.

1. This is true. (Phile.15). See Jonah 2:6.

<p>PHM 1:15 For perhaps he was for this reason parted from you for a while, that you should have him back forever,</p> <p>"forever" describes the balance of his life. It is from "aionios."</p>	<p>JON 2:6 "I descended to the roots of the mountains. The earth with its bars was around me forever, But Thou hast brought up my life from the pit, O Lord my God. "forever" describes the time Jonah was inside "the whale" or "the great fish." "aionios." is used here in the Greek Septuagint. Jesus used "ketos" [a huge fish, sea-monster] in Matthew 12:40. The Septuagint also has "ketos." Hebrew has "dag" used with the word greater "great fish."</p> <p>MAT 12:38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."</p> <p>MAT 12:39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet;</p> <p>MAT 12:40 for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Jesus shows "three days and three nights" did not mean "forever," but it probably seemed so to Jonah.</p>
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2. There is no evidence "eternal" means less than an infinite period of time in regard to the afterlife.
3. If it could be proven heaven is limited in duration (which it cannot), this would not make heaven less desirable.

C. Heaven is timeless, but in human terms when we have been there 10,000 years we have no less time to spend there than when we first began.

VIII. Who Will Be In Heaven?

A. Heaven is for those who accept Christ. (Jn.14:6; 3:16, 36; Acts 4:12; Heb. 5:9).

B. Those who lived faithfully before Christ will be saved.

1. Morality alone cannot save. (Acts 10:1-4; 11:13, 14).

- a. No one can live perfectly. (Rom. 3:10, 23).

- b. The moral person has committed many sins, and stands condemned even for one sin. (Jas. 2:10).

2. The law of Moses could not save. (Gal. 2:21; Jas. 2:10).

3. The animal sacrifices did not atone for their sins. (Heb. 10:4,5).
 4. Their sins were covered by the blood of Jesus. (Heb. 9:15-17).
 5. Heaven is the place for the "spirits of just men made perfect." (Heb. 12:22).
- C. Infants, young children, and other unaccountable people, who have never been accountable, will be there.
1. God does not punish the unaccountable, and the doctrine of original sin is absolutely false. (Ezek. 18:20; 2 Cor. 5:10).
 2. Jesus taught we must become like little children in humility to enter heaven. (Matt. 18:1-4).
 3. Jesus taught heaven is for those like little children in innocence and humility. (Mk. 19:13,14).

MAT 19:13 Then some children were brought to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them.

MAT 19:14 But Jesus said, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

4. Note:

- a. The above would not apply to people who were accountable, and then become unaccountable.
- b. One will be judged by his accountable years.
- c. The fact one becomes unaccountable after he or she becomes an unforgiven sinner does not mean automatic salvation.
- d. Furthermore, the righteous will not be held accountable for things they do after becoming unaccountable.
- e. God only holds accountable the accountable.

IX. Will We Be The Same Age In Heaven?

- A. The Bible does not answer this question directly, but implies age does not exist or has no significance.
- B. Age is never mentioned since likely age will not exist in a timeless place like heaven.
 1. Who would want to be a baby or child or a feeble older person forever?
 2. Age is important to a mortal, but age is unimportant to one who will live forever in a new spiritual body.
 3. The fact we are privileged to praise God and serve God also infers that we will not be an age or condition where this is impossible..
 4. Our age, if we there be such in heaven, will be such that we will be able to fully enjoy heaven and serve God as He directs.
 5. Age and time are a part of man's earthly life, but will not likely be a part of the hereafter.

X. Will Those Who Repent On Their Death-bed Be In Heaven?

- A. This is a **challenging question** that many people have asked and have strong feelings concerning this matter.
1. Many answer “yes” to this question, and believe salvation depends on what one does in his final moments of life.
 2. Some try to use the parable of the vineyard to encourage death-bed repentance, but this is not the point of the parable. (Matt. 20:1-16).
 - a. See previous points under the question “Are There Degrees Of Punishment?”
 - b. This parable was not given to encourage death-bed repentance, but it was given **to teach Gentiles would receive the same blessings as Jews.**
 3. Others use the **thief on the cross** as an example that all who repent on their death-bed will be saved.
 4. The scriptures certainly indicate he was saved.

<p>MAT 27:44 And the robbers also who had been crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him.</p>	<p>LUK 23:39 And one of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" LUK 23:40 But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?" LUK 23:41 "And we indeed justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." LUK 23:42 And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" LUK 23:43 And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."</p>	<p>MAR 15:32 "Let this Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe!" And those who were crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him.</p>
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5. To be in “Paradise” is to be saved.
 - a. “Paradise” is used of “Abraham’s bosom.”
 - b. Jesus did not go to heaven that day. (Jn. 20:17).
- B. The question is, **“Does this mean all who manifest repentance as they near death will be saved?”**
1. We cannot be certain [since God is the Judge], but we do know one must believe in God and Christ to be saved. (Heb. 11:6; Jn. 8:24; 14:6).
 2. We do know one must be a baptized believer to be saved. (Mk. 16:16; Jn. 3:5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Gal. 3:26, 27; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:21).

3. We do know that one must do the will of God to be saved. (Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:9).
4. God knows the heart, and He knows if the last minute repentance is sincere or merely an act of fear.
5. We should not count on death-bed repentance, but should live a life in obedience to God. (Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:9).
6. Such a doctrine can encourage a life of folly thinking one can make it ok by a last minute confession of sin.
7. The Bible calls on those who hear the gospel to respond to it without delay - not to postpone coming to Christ to some convenient season or waiting to the last minute to repent.
8. This is a most dangerous and presumptuous path.
9. We do not even know we will have a deathbed or if we will be conscious or in a rational state of mind if we do have a deathbed.
10. Tomorrow may not come (Prov. 27:1), and even if it does the heart may “be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” (Heb. 3:13).
11. It is also dangerous because God knows our every thought and motive. (Heb. 4:12, 13).
12. God cannot be mocked - ridiculed, fooled, tricked, mislead, out-smarted, etc. (Gal. 6:7, 8).
13. It is sinful to deliberately wait to obey God because it robs God of a life of service bringing glory and honor to His name. God knows if we have deliberately waited.
14. We should not seek to judge such cases, but we should not depend on it for ourselves or encourage others to depend on it.

Special Notes About The Thief

1. The thief on the cross may or may not have been baptized. (Matt. 3:5-8).

MAT 3:5 Then Jerusalem was going out to him, **and all Judea, and all the district around the Jordan;**
 MAT 3:6 and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins.
 MAT 3:7 But when he saw **many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism**, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
 MAT 3:8 "Therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance;

2. It is an argument from silence to argue he was or was not baptized.
 - a. It is very possible he had not been baptized since Matthew 3:5, 6 is obviously a hyperbole that did not include “many of the Pharisees and Sadducees” and others, but on the other hand not everyone who was baptized remained faithful.
 - b. It is possible he had been baptized by John or the apostles of Jesus, and had turned away from God.
3. The fact Jesus, during His ministry forgave sins without any textual evidence of baptism preceding the forgiveness

shows it is possible that the thief had not been baptized. (Mk. 2:5; Lk. 7:48).

4. He lived under the Old Covenant that did not require baptism, but both John the Baptist and Jesus were calling on the people to be baptized. (Matt. 3:5-7, 13-17; Mk. 1:5; Jn. 4:1,2).
5. The New Covenant requires it. (Matt. 28:19,20; Mk. 16:16; Jn. 3:5; Acts 2:38; 10:48; Gal. 3:26, 27; Tit. 3:5; Acts 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).

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