

# RESILIENT



## ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

Philippians 1:21 – 30

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## MESSAGE NOTES

### Misconceptions about heaven abound:

*Nearly every Christian I have spoken with has some idea that eternity is an unending church service ... We have settled on an image of the never-ending sing-along in the sky, one great hymn after another, forever and ever, amen. And our heart sinks. "Forever and ever? That's it? That's the good news?" And then we sigh and feel guilty that we are not more spiritual. We lose heart, and we turn once more to the present to find what life we can. — John Eldredge, *The Journey of Desire**

### A Scriptural preview:

*My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am. — John 14:2 – 3*

*People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. — Luke 13:29*

*However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived"— the things God has prepared for those who love Him. — 1 Corinthians 2:9*

*But in keeping with His promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. — 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, and there was no longer any sea. — Revelation 21:1*

*Jesus shows us a radical view of the future, ... to have the whole world enveloped in God's reality. Imagine God removing all that is wrong from the earth and filling it with His glory, everything good being turned up, magnified, wonderfully exaggerated — heaven and earth joined. When we feel awe, sense beauty, thirst to make the world right, we are touching the fluttering movements of a world pregnant with God's reality. — Mark Sayers, *The Trouble With Paris**

### Living in light of eternity means ...

#### 1. We have one ultimate purpose here (1:21).

*Our belief in God is the ultimate context for everything else. ... Will we live forever or not? That should make a difference not just for the future but for the present. And those who believe in an afterlife do not, by virtue of their belief, devalue this life. Rather, they embrace a larger context that infuses much greater value into the small things of this life. — Thomas Merton*

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## 2. We have everything to look forward to (1:22 – 23).

*I meet many faithful Christians who, in spite of their faith, are deeply disappointed in how their lives have turned out. Sometimes it is simply a matter of how they experience aging, which they take to mean they no longer have a future. But often, due to circumstances or wrongful decisions and actions by others, what they had hoped to accomplish in life they did not ... Much of the distress of these good people comes from a failure to realize that their life lies before them ... the life that lies endlessly before us in the kingdom of God. — Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy**

## 3. We have an unshakable stability (1:24 – 30).

*The Bible never belittles disappointment, but it does add one key word: temporary — What we feel now, we will not always feel. Our disappointment is itself a sign, an aching, a hunger for something better. And faith is, in the end, a kind of homesickness — for a home we have never visited but have never once stopped longing for. — Philip Yancey, *Disappointment With God**

*[Life] is so hard because we think this broken world is the only world we're ever going to have. It's easy to feel as if this money is the only wealth we'll ever have, as if this body is the only body we'll ever have. But if Jesus is risen, then your future is so much more beautiful, and so much more certain, than that. — Timothy Keller, *King's Cross**

*So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. — 2 Corinthians 4:18*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What impacted you from this past weekend?
- What are some common perceptions about heaven and how we get there?
- Take some time to read back over Philippians 1:21 – 30
- Paul wrote that he is living for Christ. What do you think most people living for?
- Why is Paul torn between the idea of continuing on or going to be in the presence of God?
- How is Paul an example to us in this idea of serving the believers in Philippi?
- Why do you think many people are afraid of dying?
- In what way does our understanding of heaven inform the way we live on earth?
- How is suffering viewed differently if we have a clear understanding of our future in Christ?
- How would you describe our eternal home in the new heaven based on Scripture?
- In Philippians 1:27 – 30 we gain some clear direction for living in a world of suffering. How would you put those **statements in your own words?**
- What could you do this week to increase your confidence in the future God has planned for you?