

Unbelievers, who never repented of their sin while they were on this earth, will have this view continually before their faces for evermore, and will never be able to atone for it, or get rid of it from their consciences in any way. They will always be reminded of the sins they committed while they were on earth. And, in the next life, they won't be able to carry on with their sins any more. God can't possibly have invented a place where people will be sinning for evermore. That would not be hell. They'd all be enjoying themselves. No. They sin for a short time on this earth, but in hell, they will no longer be able to sin. Consequently, they will be forever hating every minute of their existence. That's hell.

Believers, who repented of their sin and trusted in Christ for their salvation whilst on earth, will still be utterly shocked at finding out what they're really like underneath everything. It will be far worse than they ever imagined. But this will make them even more thankful to the Lord for His grace and mercy in saving them from hell fire, which is exactly what their sins deserve.

And, in heaven, they also won't be able to sin any more, and they will be loving it. That's heaven. We'll be like Christ:

1 John 3:2

*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, **we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.***

We'll be freed from our sinful condition by nature, and we'll be so happy. We'll never want to exalt ourselves any more. Any remaining self-worth we thought we had while on earth, will be taken away from us. All self-

centredness will be gone. We will be totally and finally free from self-esteem and humbled to the dust for evermore. Hallelujah!

But we'll always be aware of what we were on earth. We'll always be able to see the depth of the sin we had on earth, which we were too proud to see for ourselves while we were there. But we'll be freed from it.

Otherwise, what's the point of our time on earth, if we're going to forget about it? Surely, we'll always be aware of what we've been saved from. We only need to see the nail prints in Christ's resurrection body to remind us:

John 20:27

Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

And it will also be true that, those in heaven won't be sad about people being in hell. Everyone, both in heaven and in hell, will understand that hell is just deserts for sin. We should all be there by rights, but by God's grace, some aren't, and have been saved to eternal life. Christians will escape the wrath to come. How dare we think that when we get to heaven we'll be sad about anything. It's a place of complete bliss. On this earth, even in our best moments, some times are always going to be sadder than others. But that cannot be in heaven. There, everything is wonderful all the time.

www.christianpilgrim.org

Heaven

Christianity is all about being saved from our sins. Most Christians would agree with this, but the sad thing is that such a subject is taken so lightly. Many don't think it means all that much at all. Yes, there is a Saviour who has died in the place of all His people as an atonement for sin. All who put their trust in that Saviour, Jesus Christ, will not have to pay the price for their own sins, because Christ paid it all for them Himself. Hallelujah! We believe all that, now let's get on with our church activities.

But sin is not just a light thing, easily removed from our lives by thinking of Jesus. Salvation from our sinful nature is the most precious thing any of us could ever possibly possess. But many don't see that, simply because they don't see the depth of their own sins for themselves, and therefore they don't see much of a need of salvation. Even the best of Christians are almost totally blind to the true vileness of their own souls while they are in these sinful bodies. The fact is that we are wretched, vile creatures. We really are. Selfish, self-centred. All of us. That's the honest truth. We should be humbled to the dust about all this, but we're nothing of the kind. We're too full of ourselves to even begin to see the depth of depravity in our own hearts.

I can scream and scream and scream to try to convince people of how vile we all are, but nobody is going to listen. Nobody wants to listen. Everyone will close their ears and think of me as having some kind of mental illness. "Oh, cheer up!" they would say. But:

Acts 26:25

....I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

My point in mentioning our sinful nature is as an introduction to understanding what life is going to be like after death. When we get to the next world, we'll all have one enormous shock. At the moment, in this world, we all think far too much of ourselves. Unbelievers certainly do, and think of themselves as some great thing, boasting of their achievements. Believers will at least have acknowledged to some degree that they're sinners, and will have come to Christ for salvation, but they'll still have far too high a view of themselves really.

Upon death, as we enter the next world, every one of us will suddenly become aware of what we're truly like by nature. That's the shock. We'll see our vile, wretched, sinful nature for what it really is. Death will be a wake up call to everybody who's ever lived.

When most Christians think of the next life after death, they think that it is going to be fairly similar to life now but without the bad bits. So, we'll see all our friends again and have a good time with them. We'll be chatting to the apostle Paul over a coffee and asking him all those questions we had from our reading about him that we've always wanted to ask. We'll only be forever sad about those who didn't make it and went to hell instead.

Hang on a minute. That is nothing like what heaven is going to be like.

First of all, I don't really want to see people I knew in the past again. I'd be so embarrassed by what I did in my lifetime. And they would

probably feel the same way about what they did.

Genesis 47:9

....few and evil have the days of the years of my life been....

The Bible actually gives us very little detail about what the next world is going to be like. And that is for a purpose. Because even if we knew, we wouldn't understand it, or rather, more to the point, we wouldn't be able to deal with it.

The apostle Paul was once caught up to the third heaven. But he didn't describe anything of what he saw to us. He just said that the words he heard there were "unspeakable," and it is not lawful for anyone to utter them here:

2 Corinthians 12:2-4

I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

So, as long as we are in these bodies, we are deliberately **not** told what it will be like. Because heavenly things will be so completely different from the way things are down here.

In fact, we're told that our life down here is like a seed compared to the full grown plant that we will be in heaven:

1 Corinthians 15:35-38

But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

How can a seed know what the full grown plant is going to be like? It can't.

"You will be green." "What's green?"

"You will be full of sap." "What's sap?"

"You'll see growth." "What's growth? I'm just a dead and dry seed."

It's altogether different in heaven. We're sown a natural body, but raised a spiritual body:

1 Corinthians 15:42-45

*So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: **It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.** There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.*

Here, we are in corruption, dishonour and weakness. There we will be in incorruption, glory and power. That's all we know.

Everyone, when they die, will see the reality of their sin before a holy God. That means that when we die we will see the utter depravity of our very being for ourselves, in full.