

A vibrant, cartoon-style illustration of a peaceful landscape. At the top, a large, multi-colored rainbow arches across a blue sky filled with white clouds. Several angels with white wings and golden halos are depicted in flight, some holding hands. Below the sky, a stone bridge with multiple arches spans a river. In the foreground, a waterfall cascades into the water. To the left, a woman in a yellow swimsuit sits on a grassy bank with a brown dog. In the center, a small sailboat with a white sail and a yellow cabin is on the water. To the right, a small wooden hut with a conical roof sits on a grassy bank. In the background, a windmill and other sailboats are visible. The overall scene is bright and cheerful, suggesting a heavenly or idyllic environment.

HEAVEN'S SECRETS

By the Family of David

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INTRODUCTION

Is there a world beyond this one, or a life after this one? If so, is after-death communication possible? Can those who have passed on to the other world, the spirit world, communicate with the living? These are questions people seem to be asking themselves more than ever. While our world grows increasingly materialistic, somehow still a hunger for spiritual knowledge and experiences is felt by many.

We have included in this book hundreds of messages which communicate heavenly comfort and hope from those who have passed on, to their loved ones still on earth. As well as being a source of great encouragement to the bereaved, these messages also articulate specific, detailed descriptions of life after death, life in Heaven.

Everyone has his own idea of what Heaven will be like. The Bible says that "Eye has not seen, nor has ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, the things that God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Corinthians 2:9). So it seems we can't really expect to fathom the entirety of the world beyond. Nevertheless, like appetizers before a feast or previews before watching a big screen movie, messages from people who have crossed over into that world, whether we believe them or not, give us a foretaste of possible things to come. They spark our imagination and lift it to heights we had not thought possible before.

My wife and I have dedicated the last 27 years to disseminating character-building publications for both young and old. We've also been involved both directly and indirectly with helping to care for people in need, spiritually and physically.

While living and working in 17 different countries, we have been blessed to meet and work with like-minded people, whose work also earns them recognition as missionaries, social workers, humanitarian care givers, pastors, youth counselors, and teachers.

In the course of our work, travels, and written communications with others, we have crossed paths with many people who have experienced, as we have, that it is possible to communicate with the spiritual realm through the gift of the Holy Spirit known as prophecy. We, and other Christians, as well as Muslims, refer to such messages as *prophecies*. Similarly, adherents of the New Age engage in what they have termed *channeling*, while Buddhists and others practice various forms of meditation. Whatever name

you give it, the underlying theme is prayer and intercommunication with a Divine Being, and in some cases, with departed human spirits.

Several years ago we began collecting the prophecies we had received personally as well as those that were sent us by friends and coworkers. As a result, we presently have on file an assortment of over 13,000 prophecies, on a wide variety of subjects.

In the course of reviewing and examining the content of this collection of prophecies, we came across a significant discovery. We found that, intertwined throughout many of the messages from Jesus or from departed loved ones, references were made to Heaven and to the spiritual realm. In some cases, whole messages were devoted to descriptions of Heaven, while in other messages, only a brief comment was made or an interesting insight was given about Heaven. We compiled hundreds of fascinating accounts of life in Heaven into what has now become this book.

The prophecies from which these accounts were taken were received by a vast number of people of various ages and nationalities, located in countries across the globe, from the USA to Africa, from Europe to Japan, and from Russia to Australia. Some of these people knew each other; most did not. Some prophecies were received during a time of quiet prayer or meditation. Sometimes messages were received from a departed loved one who was speaking directly to their spouse, child, or parent. Other times, one who did not know the departed loved one personally sought to make contact with them in order to comfort those who had lost someone dear to them.

Taking these and other factors into consideration, we find it of particular interest that there are similarities among the many descriptions of Heaven that have been given. This is especially fascinating considering the fact that those who received messages from beyond, for the most part, had not read the messages received by others.

Some departed spirits related personal stories or experiences about life in Heaven, others gave descriptions of what they'd seen there. In some cases, a message touching on one aspect of Heaven varies from a description of the same aspect given in another message. We seldom if ever found messages that outright contradicted each other, although there were obvious differences. When describing a particular aspect of Heaven, a messenger from beyond might have imparted a facet or understanding that was slightly different than the accounts given by other messengers. We liken it to a number of different people telling of a common experience; each one would have a different insight or way of expressing it, and though each explanation

would inevitably vary somewhat from another, they would all shed light on the event being described.

In some cases we were aware of who was speaking and to whom, which is noted. In many cases we were not privy to this information, and those messages are not identified as to the circumstances surrounding them. Asterisks separate the individual messages or anecdotes, each of which has been given by a different departed loved one or other heavenly being.

It is our hope that in these words you will find answers to some of your questions: What is it like in Heaven? What do people do there? Will I be with my friends and loved ones? Is there work? Is there play? Do I learn? Is there marriage? Is there sex? Are there children and pets? How do I go there?

We trust that skeptics and believers alike who read these messages with an open mind will find much interesting food for thought. It may even be that you will personally find peace and comfort within these pages, believing that a better place is being prepared for you and your loved ones when your life on earth is over. We understand that the authenticity of the source will be called into question in many, if not all, of your minds, and we simply invite you to taste and judge for yourself.

As for us, we choose to believe that there is a better place, and that if one has simple faith, he can receive a glimpse of Heaven as well as any. Who knows what mysteries and thrills are yet to be discovered?

Peter King
August 1999

CHAPTER 1

Death, Arrival, First Impressions

Do you fear death? Do you wonder what awaits you in that moment that we all will eventually face? Some of those who have passed on to the next life have told us about what they went through in that moment we call death. The experiences they share are very beautiful, and no doubt they have come to tell us their stories in hopes of putting our hearts at ease and to encourage us not to fear the inevitable, but rather prepare for it.

#

I didn't feel any pain when I died. I was really tired that day. All of a sudden the lights went out for me in that world, my eyes closed, and the next thing I knew I entered into this wonderful world of light and love!

* * *

(A teenage girl speaking to her mother about her and her friends' death in a car accident:) It was just so fast! It was just like in an instant. All of a sudden there we were! We were out of our bodies and we were wondering what had happened, and it felt so strange. We felt so good, but there was such chaos all around us. We felt so light. We felt such peace, yet there was so much happening all around.--There were sirens and there were people and it was a mess! But we want to let you know that we didn't feel any pain. Then before long, just like you've heard and read about, we went through the tunnel. And then we came to the glorious Light and we came to the heavenly City! Each of us had someone special there to meet us, who knew us and loved us and helped us feel at home. Mom, it was just so wonderful! We want you to know that we are fine--all of us--we're fine. I'm with Grandpa, and we're busy and we're happy.

* * *

I could see my body lying there dead, and as my spirit rose I was met by a being of light. This being of light then took me through my whole life in

what seemed like an instant. I saw everything I'd ever done.

* * *

I had cancer and my body was a big mess when I died, so when that final hour came, it was such a release to be set free from this old body that had given me so much trouble and so much pain. The trip to Heaven was not long. I was there almost before I knew it! Those first moments are quite special, and what is so special about them is that they are tailored to each individual, and everyone receives their heart's desires and gets the answers to their questions.

* * *

Everything had happened so quickly--leaving earth and loved ones there--and I needed some time to get used to the different changes. The biggest thing that helped me to adjust to not being with my loved ones on earth, was that I was able to meet all my old friends and relatives who had passed on before me. Then I began to feel more at home in Heaven.

* * *

When you first arrive up here it's pretty overwhelming. But it's wonderful! You're relieved. Right away you feel so much love. You feel so loved by God. You feel so loved it permeates every fiber of your being. You feel such forgiveness. You feel pretty small, too. Pretty small because you thought you knew so much. Then you get here and you find out, wow, you hardly knew anything at all.

While on earth we often don't see things so clearly--like looking through a dirty window. But when we get here, it's as clear as being face to face. It's really true. You marvel at the wonders that are here. You marvel at the broadness of His love. The love is overwhelming! It's so enlightening!

* * *

Heaven is quite different than I imagined! And I'm glad, because my idea of Heaven was so dry, boxed-in, so black-and-white, so confined, compared to the vast space, the vast opportunities to learn and to be and to experience,

the brilliance of everything--of the colors, all the sights, the sounds, the love. There's so much to explore! It's so exciting!

* * *

(A husband to his wife:) When I first arrived here in Heaven, I simply couldn't get the point at first that it was best for me to be here! It's not that I was sad to be in this place that is beautiful beyond words, but I actually wanted to argue with God Himself--thinking that surely I had arrived *before* my time and I must be sent back.

Now I can look back on that day and sort of chuckle about it, but at that time I just didn't get it. While on earth I had never imagined that my life would have been cut off at such an early age. But here I was in the bat of an eye! Then it hit me; I was faced with the thought of being separated from you and the kids. I didn't handle it very well, to say the least. I stood there wanting to argue with the Almighty Himself!

Yet God in His supreme love and understanding gave me a choice right that moment. The decision was mine, to either go back with you and the kids, or to stay here in Heaven, I had to choose. I could have gone back; it wasn't too late, but God spoke to my heart right then as clear as clear could ever be. I knew in that moment that I was meant to stay. This was the best choice, though it was not as I would have planned.

I said yes to God, and in that very instant, I met Jesus face to face. He came and wiped away my tears. And when He did, as He put His arm around me, He not only wiped away my tears but He opened my eyes. It was beyond words! He helped me to see, to understand so many things that were foggy in my mind before. He gave me understanding, and I could begin to see the reason for everything in my life. It was as if the blinders were removed from my eyes and I could see that it was meant for me to come Home to Heaven at the time I did. It was not what I had planned, but what Jesus, in His love, knew what was best for me and for you and for the kids.

* * *

My first thought was how clear and wonderful the skies looked, and then I realized I was dead! At least my physical body was dead. But the real me was whole and warm and happy. Some of my old friends greeted me and made me feel right at home. I realized that somehow I had been blessed to

get to go to Heaven. I had to admit I was a little surprised, because I knew I hadn't done anything to deserve being here.--Nothing, that is, except accepting Jesus when I was a child. I thought for sure that I would have had to work for something this beautiful, but no, it was all free!

* * *

(A child speaking to his parents:) Wasn't that a weird thing that happened? One moment I was there with you and the next moment I was gone! I could see what you were doing to try to bring me back, but I was already gone! I was already on my way to see Jesus! I was already on my way to that warm bright light. It was so nice and felt so good!

At first I didn't know what was happening, and it was really strange but I wasn't afraid. I saw that you weren't with me, but I wasn't afraid. Then I came to this beautiful place! It was so pretty! It was so big! Everything is so big! It's like a great big city. It's so pretty!

I'm so happy! I'm getting to do all kinds of new things and I'm playing with my friends. I have to study too, a little bit.

One of the neatest things is that I saw Grandpa! As soon as I got to this big new city, as soon as I was being shown around, Grandpa came! He came running up to me and he was laughing and calling out my name and reaching out his arms. He took me in his arms and he threw me up in the air and he was laughing and laughing so loud! He was kissing me all over my face and hugging me. He was so happy and he was so loud! He was so strong! He wasn't sick anymore, but was really healthy and happy. He picked me up and hugged me for the longest time, and didn't even get tired!

Then he took me around and he told me everybody's names. At first I was a little bit shy, but then I felt real happy. Everybody was so nice and was hugging me and kissing me. I got so many kisses!

Everybody is really happy, and so am I. At first I missed you a little bit because I wished that you could be here with me so I could show you all these cool things. I wish you could be here to see Grandpa and to hear him laugh so loud! He's so funny and he's so happy! I like to be around him so much! I don't even know how long it's been that I've been here, but it's so much fun!

* * *



(A teenage boy speaking:) When I first got here, I was kind of in a state of shock. I had no idea why I was here, why I had to leave so suddenly, what in the world I was going to do here. It took me a little while to get adjusted and used to this new way of life. I hadn't really been thinking about dying, I wasn't geared up for it, of course.

It was so beautiful, right from the very beginning. Even though sometimes I was a little sad, or missed you all, Jesus wiped those tears away, and He helped explain to me what I'd be doing, and how I could be a help, and why He wanted me here.

* * *

(A teenage girl speaking to her parents:) My death sure was a big surprise. I never expected that my life on earth would be over so soon. There's so much that I wish I would have done, but it's not going to do me any good to think about it now. I'm happy here. You see things so differently when you get here--and I really wish I had given a lot more love, to you and to my friends and others.

I wish I had known or had a little preparation about this because I would have... Well, there's always things you wish you would have said or done. I know I didn't tell you I love you enough times, or tell you how thankful I was for you, for your faith in me, for supporting me even through some pretty tough times. I know you had a lot of hopes for me, and I wish I could have somehow helped to fulfill them; but who knows, maybe the best way I can fulfill them is from up here.

* * *

(A child speaking:) Don't worry, Mommy, nothing hurt me at all. It just felt like I closed my eyes and then opened them again, and I was flying towards this beautiful place. Then Grandma came to see me. There were lots of people around, but it was nice to have Grandma there, because I didn't know so many of them. She also brought Fuzzer. He was so cute and fuzzy, just like before, only healthy. He remembered me and jumped on me and licked my face. I stay with Grandma now, until you come. I play with the other children here, and they come over and stay with me and Grandma sometimes.

* * *

I was blessed to leave earth and come here. It's wonderful here, so wonderful. People should not be afraid of dying because your life up here, your *real* life, is so much better than your life on earth. But one of the things that makes it so happy and so wonderful is that it's a fulfillment of your life on earth.--In other words, I finished my mission there, and it was time to come home. If I had come home too early, or wasted my life on earth, I wouldn't be nearly as happy here.

* * *

Chris, if I had known that I was going to Heaven, my transition from this life into the next would have been a little easier for me. See, I didn't leave my earthly body right away, and during that time I was fearful of what would happen to me. I'd heard of life after death. I'd heard of Heaven. I'd heard many theories of what would happen to me when I died, but I just didn't know. I believed that there was a God, that there was a Heaven somewhere, somehow, but I wasn't sure that I would go there. I didn't think I'd been good enough to earn my way there, so I was fearful of where I would end up.

Then I saw the most beautiful girl that I've ever seen in my life. Well, she wasn't just a girl, she was an angel. She didn't say anything to me, but her whole being emanated peace, comfort, and reassurance. Then before I knew it, I was talking with Jesus. He told me the whole story of His life, how He came to earth as a baby and was made poor so that we could be rich. He told me the whole story--the same story that is written in the Bible that I had thought little of while on earth. He told me that He died for me, so that I could have eternal life. Because I didn't get the chance to receive Him while on earth, I was given an opportunity after I died, and as soon as I accepted His love and His sacrifice for me, I was welcomed into Heaven.

* * *

I died what you would consider a very painful death, but I want to encourage you that when I got to Heaven, all that memory of suffering was wiped away. Actually, to say it was a painful death isn't accurate, because while the sickness was painful, when it came time to go home to Heaven, I

felt nothing but peace. The actual moment of passing from this life to the next was very easy, like a release from all that I had suffered.

Now, I don't want any of you who are suffering and wanting to be released prematurely to get any ideas. Because it was my time to go, and because the Lord was calling me, it was a very beautiful experience. But those who end their lives early face a long while of sadness and relearning on the other side. I wouldn't try it if I were you.

But just to encourage you--because everyone's going to die at some time or other--though my sickness was painful, death was not difficult at all by comparison, and the welcome I received when I got here made it worth it all--worth it to wait for my time, worth it to hang on, worth it to endure. I was rewarded for hanging on!

* * *

Jean, it's wonderful here. It far surpasses all that I ever thought, all that I ever read, even all that I ever dreamed. Arriving here is so glorious! So wonderful! So joyous! There is so much love, so much joy and so much peace, so much happiness, fulfillment, excitement.

Once you enter into the arms of God, it's like everything is just washed away. All the past, all your sins, your worries, concerns, everything. You're so relieved, relieved from the pressures and burdens. It's all gone. There's nothing but joy and peace and happiness, the thrill of entering a new life. I knew it would be great, but nothing, nothing like this!

* * *

(A missionary:) I just can't describe the feeling of coming home and knowing that your Savior is pleased with your labors. Knowing that the One who means more to you than any other is happy with you and proud of you is so wonderful. Every battle was worth it. Every trial was worth the fight, and every mistake and lesson was worth the humiliation. Just to be able to have the Lord say to me, little old me so full of mistakes and shortcomings, just to hear Him say, "Well done!" was reward enough for me. But He sure piled it on to let me know that He was pleased. It was wonderful!

CHAPTER 2

What About Your Loved Ones?

Probably one of the first questions that comes to your mind when you think of Heaven is whether or not you will be with those you love--your spouse, children, parents, friends, relatives, and other loved ones. Will they recognize you? Will you interact with them, love them, enjoy their company like you do here? What will your relationship with them be?

We've found that many of the messages which have been given from the heavenly realm have been from one close friend or relative to another--for example, from a mother to a child, or a husband to his wife, etc., and it seems they had a good deal to say about reuniting in Heaven.

#

Since coming to Heaven, I have learned that whatever you have there on earth that you enjoy and love and hold dear will still be here in Heaven, only much better, greatly enhanced, fuller, richer, clearer, and more complete. You're going to find all your dear loved ones and friends who have passed on before you, those who have chosen the path to Heaven. They'll be here to greet you, for they have not disappeared into some unseen spiritual void, but they are here, waiting to greet you and initiate you into your new heavenly home.

* * *

(A wife to her husband:) I love you so much and I'm looking forward to when we can be together again. The day will come that we will be together again forever, and we can make love and we can enjoy each other even more than ever before. We'll both be strong and healthy once again. All our dreams will come true and we'll be able to make up for the time that we've lost. Our dreams that have not yet been realized will be some day.

It's so wonderful! Our mansion is so beautiful! It's so big and homey. It's really magnificent, I hardly have words to describe it, but you're going to love it. We'll be reunited in Heaven. We'll walk hand in hand in the garden. We'll enjoy each other, the children, and all of our loved ones.

* * *

(Jesus speaking to one whose mother died:) She brought such joy and such security to your life. I feel and understand the loss that you feel. But do not fret, for this time when you are apart is only for a moment. It will pass so quickly, and then you will once again be reunited in great joy and love and thanksgiving.

* * *

(A child speaking:) We play for a long time, and it's really fun! I have so many friends. I know if you could see me you'd be happy for me. So you don't need to worry and you don't need to cry because I'm doing just fine! I'm so happy! Jesus is taking care of me, and Grandma Liz is taking care of me.

* * *

(A child speaking:) Mommy! Daddy! I love you! Please don't cry. I know you're sad, but I'm happy, Mommy! I'm fine! Jesus is so sweet to me. There's lots of kids up here, and I'm not lonely.

* * *

(A wife to her husband:) Oh, Tom, I love you! So much has happened in my life over here on this side, I don't know where to begin to tell you all about it! On that wonderful day when we will be united once again we're going to sit down and have a grand time catching up! It's going to be wonderful! This time now is really nothing--like the bat of an eye compared to all eternity. Honey, we're going to be so thankful then, when we can look back and see the reason for so many things that are difficult to understand right now.

* * *

(A child to his parents:) We're all gonna have such a fun time together. When you come here I'm gonna give you a really long hug. Please don't be

sad.

* * *

(A father speaking to his child:) Honey, even though I'm not able to be with you right now and you feel like you're missing out on the special times we could have together, once you get up here we're going to have lots and lots of time together, and we'll be able to catch up on all those things. That's one of the wonderful things about Heaven.--You don't lose anything. If you aren't able to enjoy something on earth, you receive it in even more abundance in Heaven to make up for it, and you find that you've not lost anything--you've only gained!

* * *

I was amazed to see one of the marvels and wonders of Heaven--that nothing gets missed. The things of the spirit world are so amazing, so marvelous, and that includes this big mystery of how there's no time here, how time will be no more. It's a mystery to you now, but when you get over here it will all be made clear and you can bet we're not going to miss a thing. Don't worry, it's not going to be lost. Nothing is lost in Heaven.--It's only found! So don't worry, don't be sad; nothing is lost and everything is gained. And remember, the best things are worth waitin' for. When you get over here to Heaven, what a day of rejoicing that'll be. We're going to be so happy then, and most of all, both you and I are going to be happy forever.

* * *

(A child speaking:) I don't have any hurt or pain. I'm happy with my friends. There are lots of mommies and daddies here; everyone is loving and caring and all taking care of each other!

* * *

(A grandmother speaking:) On earth I was separated from my grandchildren by great distances. My children were missionaries on the other side of the world and I didn't often get to see them. In fact, I didn't even know some of my grandchildren. I was often sad about that, and at

times even wondered why God would let that happen, as I felt it deprived me of a great portion of happiness that could have been mine. I tried, however, to be supportive of my children, and of course I prayed for them all.

When I came here, I was given a great reward for my sacrifice in cheerfully letting them be far away in order to fulfill the calling of their hearts to love others; and a great part of my reward has been the immeasurable happiness of sharing in the lives of my grandchildren. In fact, I not only have been able to spend time with my own grandchildren who have come to join me, but also with other children whose grandparents are not yet here, and with yet others who just like to drop by and enjoy the company. I never have a lonely moment!

* * *

It was really sweet of the Lord to have Dad come and greet me and make me feel right at home. He had so much to share and to tell. You know Dad, he is always full of stories and is such a good teacher and instructor and so concerned. He wanted to help me get located and adjusted.

* * *

As soon as you get up here, we can make up for lost time. We'll sit down in the park and have a good long talk and share our hearts, okay? We'll have lots to do, lots of places to go.

* * *

(Jesus speaking to parents whose child has passed on:) Do not weep for your little one who has flown away to My heavenly Kingdom! Do not weep for this one, for he is safe in My arms! I am protecting and keeping him and loving him and helping him, and he is safe and free and healthy and happy! He is My precious little lamb and I have brought him home where he can be at peace.

He is very much alive and he continues to learn, grow, and mature, and he will wait patiently for the time when you will be together again as one big happy family! There will come a time when he will once again be in your arms, and you will be able to kiss him and love him and tell him all the things that you want to tell him. You'll be able to tell him all the things that you wish

you had told him when he was there with you on earth.

Before you know it, you'll see him again, bright and shining and happy! Before you know it, you'll be doing all the things that you love to do together. Your precious one is not far from you. He is not distant. He is not dead. He is not gone. I have only taken him to My arms for a moment that I might nurture him and comfort him and cuddle him, and I will watch over him until you are reunited as one.

Weep no more for your child, for he now represents you here in My kingdom and will be your aid and support in times of need. He loves you dearly and is proud that you were his parents during his stay on earth. He is now challenged and thrilled to be here in My heavenly realm. He is in very good hands. So worry no more; be at peace.

* * *

(Jesus speaking to someone who was close to death:) Soon the pain and weakness will be washed away and you will have perfect strength in My arms. Soon the tears and waiting will be no more and your life will be filled once again with joy and satisfaction. Soon your tired aching body will be brand new and full of vitality, and you will not know tiredness or fatigue again. You will not know pain again; you will not know suffering anymore or the sadness that you see it brings to your loved ones. For I will wipe away all tears and I will wipe away the memory of that which hurts and makes you sad, and I will replace it all with My perfect love.

This time is just for a moment, My dear. There is just a little bit of pain that will soon be gone, washed away into the sea of forgetfulness with the warm strong embrace of My loving arms. I am preparing a place for you where you will be very happy, a beautiful place where you will be at peace and see your loved ones once again.

You will not be separated forever from the ones you love. In fact, even while you are here in Heaven and they are still on earth you can see them and speak with them and continue to enjoy their love and continue to give them your love. For all things are possible in the spirit, and all things are possible to God. I have not willed to separate loved ones from each other. But rather I have been strengthening their bond of love through the many years they have lived and loved together, so that once they are separated through death, their bond is so strong that they are still connected in spirit and can still speak to each other through their link of love.

So do not worry about your loved ones that you leave behind, for you are not leaving them completely. You will only be gone in body, but you will be present in spirit and you will be able to communicate with them and it will be such a comfort to them. Just trust Me and believe and it will come to pass, just as I have said.

So rest now, My dear child. Rest in My arms and let Me comfort you and give you peace. Do not worry about anything, for you are in My hands and I will take care of you and your loved ones. I am right beside you, and My angels watch over you day and night. I know your every move, and I understand. You are not alone, for I am here with you and I will be with you until the end. Then I will take you into My arms and bring you Home at last to your heavenly reward, where you will begin a new life with Me--a beautiful new life of love and peace and joy, where you will be young and healthy and happier than you've ever been before.

There is much ahead of you and much awaits you in Heaven. There is a whole new world, new experiences, new challenges, and much to learn. There is so much beauty, so much happiness and peace, more than you can even imagine. So just lie back and rest and trust in Me completely, for I will take care of you. I will never leave you or forsake you. You are Mine. You belong to Me and I will bring you safely home to My arms.

CHAPTER 3

Meeting the “Man Upstairs”

What is a person’s first meeting with Jesus like, and how soon does it happen? It appears there are a variety of setups and situations.--In fact, no two first encounters are exactly the same. In the following beautiful accounts you’ll find some interesting and decidedly untraditional descriptions of Jesus and His character and personality.

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(Jesus speaking:) Each one who has come here into My heavenly kingdom has had a different experience in meeting Me, for I am all things to all men. As each desires, as each is capable of receiving, as each one’s need is, so do they receive from Me the welcome and reward that they deserve.

With all, I show unconditional love, and this is the most powerful remembrance with all of them--their experience of first feeling My great and overwhelming love for them. For up until our first meeting they have trusted in My love; some have understood it more than others, but all have accepted it by faith. But to finally see it in person and feel it is more than they ever imagined. And so to each one it is a powerful experience, but for all it is different.

Some I take in My arms then and there with great love in front of all the witnesses, as a testimony of My great love for them and that I am proud of them. Others I take aside to whisper in their ears and comfort them. Others have brought with them very heavy burdens and condemnation, and they need special reassurance and time with Me to lift their burdens. Others have known Me intimately in their lives on earth and are very used to speaking and fellowshiping with Me, and them I greet as old friends and we celebrate together. To each according to his need. I give My love in the way I know each will appreciate it and benefit from it the most.

So to hear a person's story is good, and their remembrance of the love they felt is representative of all. But you must remember that each experience is different, for each of My children has a special reward, a special and unique relationship with Me, a place in My heart which is reserved for

that person and no other.

* * *

When I arrived in Heaven, my dear husband who had preceded me greeted me and oriented me to this marvelous and somewhat overpowering new world. He was gentle and understanding, knowing full well that I, having suffered a slow breakdown of my faculties over a period of several years before my passing, was still frail in mind, though now physically robust in my new body.

Having had little communication with people during the last few years, I found that I was quite shy around other people, and my husband let me go at my own pace. I relaxed in our new house to which he had added special touches that only a husband could. I loved to sit on our porch in the beautiful carved wooden rocking chair that he had placed there specially for me and soak up the warm glow of Heaven that surrounded and caressed me. The grass was a deep and glowing green, sloping gently down to a river that flowed not far away. Graceful elm trees--my very favorite--framed our porch roof with their branches and leaves.

I was content to sit with my husband and chat about all the years we'd spent together. Sometimes my husband would be called away for a short while on business, and he would leave me to my peaceful reverie. I would putter around the house and garden, enjoying the simple pleasures of physical activity that I had so loved before my sickness on earth.

A short while after I'd arrived, my husband came to me one day and asked if I might be interested in visiting a library. Would I! Oh, how I had missed reading books in those last years. I missed tending the used book store my husband and I had owned in our twilight years together, when I would read old yet timeless classics. My favorite subject was history, and I had read every history-related book in our little dusty shop.

My husband took my hand and we walked along a lovely pathway, bordered with roses of every kind. It was a winding path, and we made our leisurely way along. We came to a beautiful building, supported at each corner with majestic cream colored pillars, which I assumed was the library. My husband led me into it, and I was pleased to find the familiar hallowed atmosphere of earthly libraries. People tiptoed here and there, and browsed between ceiling-high shelves, sometimes climbing small stepladders to reach what they wanted. There were mahogany couches with velvet cushion

coverings placed at right angles with each other here and there, and I was pleased to see plants offsetting the warm brown coloring of everything else in the library.

Now I was really in Heaven! My husband smiled and squeezed my hand, then whispered that he'd pick me up later. I nodded without taking my eyes from the end of a bookshelf. It read "World History." I walked to it slowly, carefully, not wishing to take my eyes from this wealth. I craned my neck and scanned the shelves, looking for a familiar word or title.

A young man stood on a small stepladder 10 feet further down the bookshelf, and as I moved closer, he turned and nodded to me with a smile. I nodded back, noticing that he wasn't *that* young. He looked quite distinguished, actually, with his gray-streaked shoulder-length hair pulled back in a loose ponytail, and his khaki-colored slacks and white button-up shirt. He climbed down the ladder and came closer to me. I looked hesitatingly into his eyes and found they gave me an immediate warm and comforting feeling.

"Are you looking for anything in particular?" he asked in low, hushed tones.

"I just love reading history," I replied, scanning the shelf once again. I felt my cheeks getting a little flushed at the attention of this obvious gentleman. I was suddenly happy that I did not look as withered as I was during my last years on earth. I was feeling like a woman again.

I was awakened from my momentary reverie by the man's voice, which was still low so as not to disturb anyone, and gave me the feeling of being infinitely important. He proceeded to explain to me the organization of this wonderful history section. He told me, matter-of-factly, that there was history as it was written on earth, and there was history as it really happened, and that this particular section contained books expounding on history as it really happened. "Oh my," was all I could say.

"So, where would you like to start?" the gentleman asked me, and I had to laugh, for there were hundreds of books. He laughed too--a warm and friendly chuckle that made me feel as though I had known him for countless years. "Let's see," he said thoughtfully, "perhaps you would like to start at the beginning. That is where I began too."

"All right," I agreed, relieved that he had decided for me.

He climbed the ladder and retrieved a book for me. I watched with all the joy of a schoolgirl who is being given an apple from a tree by her first boyfriend. I didn't know why I felt so. He came down and handed me the

book, touching my hand momentarily as he did so.

"I hope you will enjoy it," he said sincerely. "Believe it or not, I helped put these books together."

"No!" I exclaimed in shock, for I was still seeing him as a rather young man, though he couldn't be younger than his fifties. I caught myself as I realized once again that I myself looked just as I did in my prime--not too young and not too old, and that this man's years were not detectable on the surface.

"Well," I said, "then I shall enjoy them all the more, for you are one of the nicest men I have ever met." I could not believe I had said that, for it had been more than thirty or forty years since I had spoken to any man like that.

He took my hand again before turning and walking down the aisle, to I know not where, and it was not until he was out of sight that I registered his final words. He had said he would see me again very soon! *How wonderful*, I thought to myself, and realized that I would like very much for my husband to meet this special man, though I did not know who he was.

A moment later my dear husband greeted me from behind, and noted with a pleased smile that I had managed to choose a book from among so many. He searched my eyes for a moment, then took my arm and led me out and down the steps of the library. "I noticed you met someone."

"Oh, yes. He was such a nice man. I'd so like for you to meet him. It was he who chose the book for me." I babbled on, as my husband just smiled and set the pace for our leisurely stroll home.

"Do you know who he was?" I queried, for there was something in his smile that said he was holding a secret joy back.

"Yes, my dear," he said softly, squeezing my arm. "He is someone who has been very special to you and me our whole lives."

I walked along in a dream, the glow in my heart expanding to my arms and legs and head, as I realized that my precious Savior and I had just met face to face. I remembered every detail of our contact over and over, and marveled at the Savior's infinite wisdom and gentleness in arranging our first meeting so. I realized now that I had known all along that He was an old and dear friend.

My husband stayed silent, knowing full well the overpowering thoughts that must be going through my head. "How wonderful," was all I could whisper, over and over. How tender, how gentle, how *like* my Savior, to make me feel so at home, in such a gentlemanly, unassuming way.

* * *

Baseball was always my passion from the time I could remember. I played Little League baseball. I played baseball in high school. I played baseball in college. I even got a place on a decent team on earth, and when I got married and had a family, I played baseball with my kids on Saturday. I was never a big name, but that didn't really matter to me. I coached Little League, and used the game at every opportunity to profess my faith in and love for Christ. It was all I had to offer my Lord, and I figured if I was going to be remembered by those I loved and those I coached on earth for anything, it would be for being a Christian baseball player.

Well, enough of that. I just wanted to set the scene for my first meeting with the Big Man up here. He didn't come up to me in a suit and tie and shake hands. No, sirree. He gets right down on a person's level. When we first met, He thanked me for what I'd done for Him. I knew, just by seeing the wonderful and radiant people around me, that I was just a little nobody. I felt as small as an ant. But He didn't make me feel like that. He made me feel like a million dollars. He told me, "Jimmy, I gave you a talent and that was playing ball. You took that talent and used it to bring kids to know Me better. And Jimmy, you made Me so happy by doing that."

Well, that was all He needed to say. I was a puddle of tears. Forget the tough guy stuff. I was so grateful and my heart was so touched.

But I wasn't nearly as touched, believe it or not, as I was the next minute after He'd wiped my tears away. He slapped my arm, grinned, and with a twinkle in His eye, said, "Wanna play ball?" I swear! He said those very words!

I was dumbfounded. "You mean there's baseball in Heaven?"

"Is there baseball?!" He said, laughing, as he repeated my words. "Who did you think thought it up in the first place?" And in the blink of an eye He was putting a baseball cap on His head.

He gave me a wink, and the next second I know, we're in the greenest, most beautiful baseball park I have ever seen! Perfect grass. Perfect circle of dark earth on each base. As if that wasn't enough, next thing I look down and I'm dressed in my baseball uniform, complete with my lucky number, eleven. Jesus hands me the bat and takes up the pitcher position. I'm starting to feel a little giddy, I look around and realize there's a stadium surrounding us filled with thousands of people, cheering and whoopin'.

Somebody must've tipped 'em off that the Big Man was comin', I

thought to myself. The whole field is illumined by bright floodlights, just like when we'd play those night games. There are people playing left and right field, shortstop, and bases.

Man, the Lord's a real pro too. I bet He could strike me out every single time. He gave me a fair chance, though, and we have had some good games since then.

Well, that was a night for the books all right. Baseball in Heaven! I'll tell you, nothing could've surprised me more than when the Lord said those three words, "Wanna play ball?" He's just the greatest.

* * *

I was just an ordinary guy on earth. Sure, I tried to do what was right. I tried to be honest and help those who needed it, but I wasn't anything exceptional. I was selfish at times. I yelled at my wife. I always felt bad and really was sorry, but I made a lot of mistakes. I really loved Jesus, though, and I knew that He loved me. I didn't know how He could have, but I felt it and was thankful for that love.

When I got here to Heaven, at first I was a bit surprised, as I wasn't even sure that I would make it here, after all my mistakes. After my dear mother and father greeted me, and some old friends, someone came and took my hand and said there was someone else who wanted to see me.

I was still wondering who it was, when they brought me right into the presence of Jesus. I just stood there, completely awestruck at the beauty and love that I felt coming from His eyes. I say I felt it, because I knew it was there and it was warm all over me, but I didn't have the courage to look up at Him. All I could think about was how much love He had and how little I had.

Jesus didn't let me stand there longer than a split second. He ran toward me and grabbed me in His arms, and just held me so tight. He buried His head on my shoulder, and I felt tears running down my neck.--He was crying! Of course I was crying too, to feel His great love, but I was so surprised that He would cry--not only because in the world men crying is often seen as a form of weakness, but also because I wondered why me, of all people! He hardly knew me, or so I thought.

He pulled me away from Him and looked into my eyes, and in that moment I knew. He loved me like His son, like a long lost son who had finally come home. He had been with me through every difficulty on earth, and had watched me every second. He had seen all my decisions and choices--the

right ones and the wrong ones--and He was telling me that He was proud of me for the times I had sacrificed to help others, or had made a decision for love. He was telling me that He had missed me and that He was so glad I was home. At that moment I felt like I was His only child, and that He would have given everything just to have me home safe and sound.

That was the first time I really experienced Jesus' love, and my life has never been the same. Of course, it was also just the beginning of my new life in Heaven, and since being here I've experienced that love every day, every moment. I realize now that I could have had that on earth if I had been hungry for it and had asked Him. He was right there with me, and would have loved to have had me acknowledge Him more. He loves each of His children like that, only special--as if there were only one. What love! You won't find that anywhere else.--Nothing can even come close!

* * *

On earth I was into perfumes. Eventually I was able to make it my business, and how I loved that! I loved the scents of nature, and the beautiful sense of smell with which to enjoy them all! I tried to blend nature and creation into the scents I developed, as I figured that since God made them, they must be not only enjoyable, but also refreshing or healthy--and I was right!

One day, while out on a walk in part of Heaven which very much resembled wild nature, a man approached me and asked if he could walk with me. I was surprised, as he hadn't been there a second ago, but then again, this was Heaven. He seemed to know me so well, and made me feel so comfortable and at ease. He pointed out various flowers and their scents--many of which were completely new to me, as they do not exist on earth.

I was amazed at his knowledge of the subject, when suddenly I looked up into his eyes as he was talking, and was completely overpowered by the love I saw there. I swear, I've never felt anything like it in all my life. He loved me so passionately in that one gaze that I will never be the same! Instantly I knew who he was.--He was my Savior, my wonderful, caring Creator. He knew me so well, He loved me so completely, and for the rest of our walk He just held me and answered my questions, wiped away my tears, and talked and laughed with me.

That walk gave me a new perspective on everything in life. To realize

how very much He loved me made every difficult thing I'd ever gone through worth it. Of course, Heaven itself and all its beauties were far more than I ever deserved, and I knew it. But still there had been an emptiness inside, a feeling that there was something more I should live for. On earth, although I was saved and believed in God, I didn't have a very intimate relationship with Him. But that has all changed now.

He's become my best friend, and the highlight of my days are the times when He drops by or the moments that we spend in sweet communion.

* * *

When I first arrived I had quite a bit to learn and quite a bit to change, mainly in my attitude of accepting God's love. It was very hard for me because I had so many questions. The Lord was so patient with each one I asked: "Why did You have this happen? Why did I have to be raised there? Why didn't my father understand?" So many whys. The Lord was so patient with each one. But still, with each question and each patient answer, I couldn't quite get it. Although I had believed in Jesus since I was a child and I had prayed to receive Him in my heart earlier in my life, I still didn't understand that all I needed to do to be free of the guilt and remorse and mixed-up emotions was to just let the sunshine of Jesus' love fill me. But finally I just took a deep breath and trusted my heart and life and feelings into His care.

It was so amazing that in one little split second of just laying myself open to trust in God, to trust Jesus, He opened my heart and filled it with unspeakable joy! Then I was cleansed from all my guilt. I was cleansed from my feelings of *Why did I do this? Why did I do that?* Just hating myself. I was cleansed from hate, and it was replaced with love and trust. It was wonderfully amazing!

* * *

I wasn't the least bit prepared for my first meeting with the Almighty, 'cause when I came to this side it wasn't like I'd been planning on coming any time soon. I was young--only 25--and dying was the last thing on my mind that day.

It all happened so fast. My car was broadsided and I was killed on impact. The next thing I know, I'm standing outside of the car thinking *This is*

rather strange, then it all came into focus what had just happened! I had so many thoughts racing through my head that when I saw my guardian angel standing off to the side, I kind of felt like when you're in a situation and there's no getting out of it and you're dragging your heels. It's not that I didn't want to go--but boy, was I scared!

I hadn't lived an exemplary life, so to be meeting my Maker and having to give an account of all that I'd done was a terrifying thought. But then all of a sudden a peace came over me. I can't describe what it was like, because it was like nothing I'd ever felt before. The closest thing I could compare it to was as if you'd been weighted down and then all of a sudden you could fly; that's how I felt inside.

Anyway, the next thing I know is that I'm flying through what looks to me like space with lights flying by. Then everything was so bright! Man, I tell you, this is like nothing I'd ever experienced on earth! It made all the fun and excitement that I'd had seem like nothing when compared to the feeling that I felt at that moment. So *here* is where the fun really begins!

Remember how I said that a real peace came over me when I left that life? Well, now that I was finally in the presence of the Almighty, let me tell you, that feeling was starting to wear a little thin because I was really beginning to feel unworthy and ashamed of all that I'd done just thinking about it all.

Then the most amazing thing happened! It was as if He could read my mind and He knew exactly what I was thinking and all that I'd gone through in my life. It was as though I felt Him say, "I know. It's okay, I love you anyway." Suddenly all the fear and worry about my life and whether or not I'd done anything right--it just all vanished.

Then the next thing I knew I was sitting in a chair by a fireplace, it looked like the cabin that my folks had up by the lake. There was a chair next to me and there was Jesus sitting there right beside me! It nearly freaked me out! I thought, *Where am I?*

Jesus looked at me with a big smile, then said, "I thought you might be more comfortable talking here, seeing as you're more familiar with these surroundings."

We talked for what seemed to be hours. I kept telling Him how sorry I was for not doing this and failing in that. I could see that there was so much more that I could have done with my life if I had seen what was really important, but He so knowingly said, "It's okay. I love you still. I know what it was like."

Jesus told me some stories about the decisions He had to make and the choices He was faced with while He was on earth in human form. I listened, fascinated, thinking, *Wow, He really understands the way I felt.* I never knew that Jesus had some of the same feelings that I had.

Finally, He asked me, "So, now that you're up here, what do you want to do with your life?" I could think of a thousand different things that I always wanted to learn and do--things I wanted to find out about. But then I looked at Him, and His eyes were filled with such love and understanding that I thought for a moment that maybe I should ask what He wanted me to do.

With this thought we were back in the halls of Heaven with angels lining the halls of this great room. He spoke to my heart and said, "I wish for you to learn to help others and to bring others to Me." With this He embraced me and said how proud He was of me for choosing to do His will.

That was just the beginning of the many adventures that I was to have! I now am what you would call a guardian's helper. I go out on assignment to help those in need. I couldn't have picked a more exciting job than this! After my first meeting with Jesus, He told me that I could drop calling Him "the Almighty" since every one up here already knows who He is.

I've gone to see Him many times, and each time is just as special! We go to different spots that I've been to in my past life, as well as new and different places that He has created. He asks my opinion on how I think they look and we talk about new places that I have yet to see. Well, that's it for now as I've got to go! It's a busy life up here. Things are always moving!

* * *

(From Tsun-Yi, a Vietnamese woman who had been sexually abused as a young teenager:) I had much to learn upon my arrival in Heaven. I knew little about God, and all the love, care, and concern that now overwhelmed me was so opposite what I had mostly known during my teen years. I had hatred in my heart that had to be washed away, hurts that cried out for healing, and a longing to discover all that this new world held. But I could not move along as quickly as I wanted to.

I was taken for a review of my life, scene by scene. At any part where there was hurt, pain, grief, misunderstanding, ignorance, question, or doubt, I was instructed and made to understand. Where I had been wrong, I was lovingly and gently corrected. I felt as if at last my eyes had been opened and I was seeing the world around me--the *real* world.

When I had been through my entire life, I met Jesus. He took me by the hand and held me tightly in His strong embrace. I melted. I had never felt such love, such feeling, such warmth. He looked into my eyes and said, “Tsun-yi, I have come to guide you through the review of one last part of your life.”

I looked up into His deep eyes, wondering what He meant. I had already been taken through the review of my entire life, and what had I missed? But as He sat me down, I remembered. There flashed before me the scenes of pain and hurt--my first sexual encounters. Then I realized that they had been blotted out from the review of my life, but I hadn't even missed them.

Sensing my thoughts, He said, “I know, My dear. I kept them back from your memory so that I could lead you through them Myself.” He wept with me at what I had gone through, and promised that never again, in His beautiful heavenly kingdom, would I be subjected to any pain or discomfort. Then He wiped the tears from my eyes and dimmed the memory of my past. I was freed in an instant from the bondage and torment of my former life.

* * *

(Someone who had been an entertainer on earth:) I got to sing for the Lord. He's a terrific audience! He asked me to come and sing for Him soon after I got here. Boy, was I nervous. I was already in a bit of shock, finding out how beautiful things were here. I didn't even have my feet on the ground yet, when there I was, invited to see the Lord and sing for Him.

I thought, *How can this be? I just got here, I'm the new kid in town.* But that's what He wanted. He wanted me to come and sing to Him. And it did wonders for me. I went from feeling like a sort of visitor, a freshman in Heaven--you know, the little guy who doesn't know anything and barely belongs--I went from that to feeling at home, knowing I was a part of the whole show the Lord has going. It was terrific!

So I sang; He sang. I danced, and He danced. We even did a number together. It still amazes me how He took time for me and had me there with Him. He wanted me, little ol' me, to sing and dance for Him. And then on top of that He joined in. It was just terrific! I loved it!

I was on cloud nine from that point on and I never came down! It was a most wonderful experience. It made such a difference in how I adjusted to being here. Like I said, before that, I felt kind of uneasy, like "I know I'm

supposed to be here, but am I really?" But once I had that personal time with the Lord, experiencing Him as a genuine friend, I've never felt lost or uneasy about being here again. I feel perfectly at home, much more so than I ever felt in any home there on earth. My desire for family and home has always been strong, but this filled it up more than I thought was possible.

* * *

(A young teenager speaking:) You know, I couldn't always understand Jesus' love. I couldn't get it in my mind somehow. But since He met me I got to understand it super good. There isn't a better place to be than with Him. I could walk with Him all the time. When He is with me, then I don't want to even play games or go anywhere. I just want to sit with Him and listen to all He has to say. Sometimes we don't talk; I'm just by Him. We're best friends now.

* * *

(A child speaking:) One of my mommy's friends came to see me when I first came to Heaven. She was smiling and held my hand, and walked with me to my new home. Then guess who came to greet me? Jesus did! You want to hear something that made me very happy when I met Him? He told me He was proud of me for all the times that I was loving and obedient, and that He was really happy to have me home with Him. Isn't that neat? It doesn't make any difference if you're big or small when you come to Heaven. If you are one of God's children and you did your best, Jesus will tell you beautiful words that will make your heart very happy!

* * *

(A teenage girl speaking:) Oh, I got to meet Jesus. I'm going to cry. He's so sweet and so personal, but at the same time He's just like awesome. I don't think everybody gets to meet Him right away. It kinda seems like it was a special thing, at least that's just how it seemed to me. Usually people get settled in and are met by other people, by angels, and old friends.

* * *

To see Jesus' eyes, well, you lose yourself in them. They are beyond description. All your emotions, feelings, thoughts, and everything merges as one, and you're wonderfully lost in love.

* * *

The minute I saw Jesus I immediately felt an all-encompassing feeling of love, warmth, peace, total acceptance, and total understanding. As we embraced, tears of joy began to stream down my cheeks. We held each other for what would seem a long time, in earthly terms, during which we never uttered a word, yet our thoughts were being exchanged at an amazing rate. Jesus wiped my tears away and thanked me for loving and serving Him faithfully. He then welcomed me with a heartfelt, "Welcome, My good and faithful servant! Enter into the joy of your Lord!" I had a wonderful time of intimate communication with our Lord and Savior.

* * *

(Jesus speaking:) I cannot put into human words, or describe in a way that you can understand, how perfect and how wonderful, how complete our love will be then. When you come to Me face to face, there will be such a feeling of love, such a tangible, real, complete, satisfying, and fulfilling depth of communication and oneness, that you cannot comprehend it now. I save this delight, this pleasure, this total rapture, for when the time comes. I leave it a mystery, I keep it a surprise.

CHAPTER 4

Such Love!

One of the beauties of Heaven--the power behind the scenes, the peace and aura which makes everything beautiful--is a power which we also have access to here on earth--Love! Unfortunately, though, it seems that many of us don't avail ourselves of this wonderful commodity nearly enough. But the more we use it on earth, the more we prepare ourselves for Heaven, and the greater joy we will have upon our arrival there.

#

When I arrived here I realized that the air of Heaven is love. It's everywhere, it's in everything, it's a part of all of the heavenly creations. You are loved and you give love throughout eternity. Love is present at all times; it's not measured out according to your place or job or responsibility. It's what makes Heaven tick! Love is the central and innermost ingredient of all things. It is the most priceless possession of every heavenly citizen, great or small.

* * *

Now that I've seen the great importance of love and how powerful it is, it's helped me to change the ideas that I had about love. While I was there on earth it was very hard for me to think about the possibility of what you would do when I was gone--would you fall in love again, would you have other close friendships and relationships? Just the thought of it terrified me, as I was so afraid of losing you. But now that I am here, my feelings have completely changed, for I've seen that the special love we share is forever, and that in giving to others, love is only multiplied.

And so, my precious love, I'm very happy to see that you have fallen in love again. It doesn't hurt me. Rather, I rejoice to see you so happy, and to see the dear one who is caring for you so tenderly. You may find that amazing, and looking back at how things used to be, I'm quite amazed myself. But I want to reassure you and comfort you that I'm happy for you. Your love for others hasn't hurt me, rather I am very, very happy! I'm a part of

your love and your heart always, and you're a part of mine--forever! All the love that we share with others becomes a part of the wonderful love we share together.

* * *

(Jesus speaking:) One of the great mysteries in Heaven is the mystery of My love. It is a love that is spiritual, but also touches the physical; it is a love that is pure, holy, and yet filled with passion and desire. My love is as the undying devotion of a father for his child or the deep love of a husband for his wife, yet it is a love that goes beyond what the human mind can fathom, for it is not a human love. Human love is but a taste of My love.

* * *

If I were asked to describe Heaven in one short sentence, I would say that it's a place where everything is filled with God's love. Everything is based on love.

* * *

I love you, son. I'm very happy here. It's wonderful! There's no more pain or deep sorrow. This world is similar in many ways to earth, believe it or not. It's not so different that things are not recognizable. All the wonderful pleasures of earth exist here, yet it's all perfect, without the problems and complexities that people face on earth. Everything is so much more wonderful here, and you cannot really compare the two. One marvelous thing, however, is that everything here in Heaven is filled with love! There is true, pure, unadulterated, unconditional love for each and every person here. This is the wonder of Heaven! True, unending, never failing, unconditional love emanates all over the place!

* * *

(Jesus speaking:) Gold medals in My kingdom are not won through perfection but through love. For love is the key in My Kingdom. Love is the gold that Heaven is made of.

* * *

If people could only understand God and what He is like, a lot more people would believe in Him. He is just a very nice, loving ... I don't want to say person, because He's not a person--He is love. Up here love isn't just a principle or an emotion--love is *God*. It's an energy force and an energy source!

Remember the old saying, "Love makes the world go 'round'"? Well, I want to tell you something: Love makes Heaven go 'round' for sure. Love is an energy source up here. You only know a shadow of it down there. You know it feels good; it makes you feel kind of warm and sometimes pretty mushy inside as well. But up here love is the energy source that runs the whole place. Just like electricity and gasoline and all those things are energy sources or types of energy there, love is the energy source; it's the energy itself here! You'll find there are a lot more uses for love here than you would have even imagined down there.

* * *

I immediately noticed that the Lord's *love* fills the air in Heaven. It's everywhere and you can feel it and smell it and hear it and taste it. It soaks into everyone and everything! Everything just glows with the Lord's love, and it's so warm and comforting and fun and fuzzy. It's beautiful and soft. So you can understand why no one would feel left out, because we all just soak up the Lord's love together as we love each other and go about our work and play.

* * *

I think the most remarkable thing about Heaven is the love that's manifested here, the love that surrounds everything and everyone. You feel it. It's tangible. Love is the reason for existence, because without love you would only be living for yourself. Everyone would have to live alone, and what good would Heaven be if it were like that? Love for the Lord and love for others are the factors that motivate our lives and actions.

* * *

Up here you're just so full of love, you feel like exploding, overflowing.

There's an intense desire to share it, like the desire that flows between a man and a woman in love.

* * *

I've seen that in Heaven everybody loves everyone else. We want to see others happy. We experience the true joy of giving. In return we receive love that overflows and fills us up and supplies all that we need. We never lack for love. The reason we have so much is because we don't hold on to it. We let it go; we give it away. Everybody's loving, everybody's kind, and everybody's giving. You give because you truly want to see others happy. You love because you're so full of Jesus' love. That's Heaven in a nutshell--giving, loving, caring.

* * *

Sweetheart, we see things so differently up here. It's so easy to see how very important love is, and how shameful it is to be selfish or try to keep it for yourself. All that we do is measured by love--how loving the motives behind it are, how much you give with your heart. Even if things on earth seemed to turn out differently than we had planned, and sometimes it seems that we might not have made the wisest choice, if we were sincerely motivated by love, it's to our credit when we get up here.

* * *

Before we could enter [Heaven], we left behind the trappings of hatred and bitterness and the desire to do evil. We've all learned to act in love. For we saw that we could not enter with these things. We had to give them up forever.

* * *

Here in Heaven I've seen total freedom, the freedom to love and not to be entangled with hatred, bitterness, jealousy, lust, envy--all the things that work against love and all the things that hurt and destroy. The only way to enter is by having this directional force of love in the center of your spiritual heart.

* * *

The people who were my enemies on earth are my friends here in Heaven. The people who I hated with a passion and who I fought against there are my brothers here. On earth there is such a struggle going on--such a struggle for power.

In Heaven there isn't a struggle for power. There is the challenge to build, instruct, and produce things of value. In Heaven we do things that are in the interest of creation, in the interest of love, in the interest of life, in the interest of others--things to help our brothers, our neighbors, not things that are for our own self-interest. That's one big difference between Heaven and earth.

* * *

There's no mistaking that the kingdom of Heaven is built on pure outgoing love. It's our foundation here, it's our life's blood--outgoing love one for another.

* * *

Life in Heaven is a dream come true. You're not only with Love Himself and constantly feeling the reassurance and support and inspiration of His love, but you continue learning and understanding.

* * *

(Jesus speaking:) Some will be shocked to arrive here in Heaven, to understand and see and feel the depth of My love, for they have no idea how deep My love runs, how broad My love is, how full My love fills! They have no concept. The puny mind of man cannot encase the broadness and fullness and completeness of My love, for it is not possible.

CHAPTER 5

Heavenly Happiness

Do you sometimes wonder if you'll ever be completely and enduringly happy--free of the cares and worries and problems that are a drain on the happiness you have and, at times, make you weary with life? Do you sometimes wonder if your loved one who has preceded you to Heaven is truly happy? Is there complete happiness awaiting you and those you love in that world beyond?

#

(Teenage girl to her parents:) It's probably difficult for you to relate to this, but I'm not sad about the fact that I died. Of course, I understand why you're sad, because you used to have me there with you and now you don't. But from my end, it's not like I'm missing out on anything. I have nearly all I had before and more, so I'm happy. I can still see you, I can still talk to you, and plus, I'm completely free of all the weights and drags that come along with being in a physical body.

There is so much here to see, to do, to learn--so many things I always wanted to find out about or have a chance to experience, and now I've finally gotten my big opportunity. I can pick up knowledge and new skills so much faster--all kinds of things, from languages to art and dancing and singing and discovering amazing things about science and the universe. You name it.

* * *

Connie, it's Grandfather. I can't express how wonderful it is here. So much love, so much happiness! I'm young and in good condition again and running through the fields and enjoying nature. I'm even allowed to care for the orchards here.

* * *

I don't think there's any greater happiness in the universe than coming to Heaven and being rewarded for the things you did for the Lord and others.

It's like a great feeling of accomplishment, only better.--It's complete fulfillment! Sometimes on earth you feel that in order to do the right thing or to help someone else, you have to sacrifice or miss out on something. Sometimes that's true, but I'll tell you, the feeling of happiness and satisfaction at seeing the results of those decisions is worth it all.

* * *

The Kingdom of Heaven is so beautiful, so simple. It's full of treasures and jewels that I have never seen before. It's full of love, gentleness, caring for one another; it's full of unselfishness. I'm very happy. I'm finally home. I'm finally free from the traditions and bondage and customs and hypocrisy that surrounded me on earth. I'm free and happy. It's beautiful here; I wish you could see it. I've never been so happy in all my life.

I feel like I'm five years old and I don't have a care in the world, for I have Somebody [Jesus] who loves me unconditionally, who loves me in spite of everything that I've done, in spite of my mistakes and imperfections. He has so much love for me. I never experienced it before; it's just so beautiful. I don't have sorrow at all, for I'm free and I'm happy. I have a better life now.

* * *

I have finally arrived in a place where I have found total happiness. It wasn't like that on earth. Though I was happy in making others happy, I was still somewhat sad and longing for love, longing for someone to love me for who I was. That's all over now, and I have found total happiness, total love.

* * *

You didn't think I had much of a sense of humor, did you? Even serious characters like me lighten up and are able to laugh because the problems of life dissolve, vanish, and fade away. We're free, and experiencing that freedom is like losing yourself in wine there on earth. Being here, you just get happy and laugh a lot more than you did on earth. There's so much joy and laughter, and it isn't put on. It's sincere. No one puts on false fronts up here.

* * *

Now I've seen firsthand that not only do you have an overall feeling of peace and happiness, but the Lord adds to that happiness with little personal touches--the things you like best from earth, or the things you wanted to have but couldn't. Me, I always wanted to live by a lake and have a yacht to sail around in--but I couldn't afford it. So, guess what the Lord had saved up for me here?--A beautiful yacht, which is now floating on the lake right beside our heavenly mansion.

And my wife, she's got this thing for gardening, you know. So, instead of having someone fix up our mansion and garden for us, the Lord left it for her to do. They brought by all the "raw materials" and let her do the fun stuff of planting the flowers in the gardens, just the kinds and colors she wanted. Climate and weather conditions and cost don't matter, so all options are available--her dream come true. Once that was done, she started arranging the flowers and plants in the house, choosing vases and pots, experimenting with new combinations, and she was just awlirl with happiness about the whole thing, and still is.

* * *

(Teenage girl who died with her sister and other young people in a car accident, talking to her parents:) You wouldn't believe how amazing everything is up here, how exciting it is! I know it's really hard for you. You've really been feeling bad and you've been crying a lot and we've been seeing you, but please don't cry for *us*! Please don't worry about us, because we're so happy!

* * *

(A young man who died in a train accident:) If you have a favorite place on earth, a place you like to go that's beautiful and peaceful or just fun, God will give you the same thing up here in Heaven, only it's better. My favorite place on earth to hang out was in our swimming hole. We had this big naturally formed hole that filled up with water from a spring underneath. It was a nice swimming hole with a little bluff overlooking it. We could jump off the bluff and do a big cannonball in the water, or we could sit on a little pier

on the other side of the swimming hole and fish. But one reason I really liked the swimming hole is that I'd go down there and I'd think and I'd talk to God.

I liked that swimming hole so much and we had so much fun in it, that the Lord made the same thing for me up here. So whenever I want to have a cool dip or horse around in the water or just sit and think and pray on the side of the pond, I can go down there and do it. I've taken some of my other friends there who are up here in Heaven and they like it too. So that's something you can look forward to. It's fun!

* * *

(Jesus speaking:) Just like the light of Heaven shines day and night, so will your happiness and inspiration. Heaven is full of light, full of laughter, full of love. There's not only light and beauty all around you, but light and warmth that comes from within your heart and spirit, bringing true happiness and contentment, a feeling of peace, satisfaction, fulfillment--it's bliss.

CHAPTER 6

When the Prizes Are Handed Out

What about all the good things--the caring, kind, unselfish, giving, and thoughtful things that we do for others? If God sees and records all our actions, that would mean not just the bad, but the good too--especially those times when we do something which is not easy for the good of others. The following accounts of those who were rewarded when they went to Heaven, and how, should give us something to look forward to.--Or inspire us to live a life that would make the afterlife worth looking forward to.

#

(Jesus speaking:) I am a God of love, mercy, righteousness, tenderness, forgiveness, and sympathy. My judgments are true and righteous altogether. My rewards are absolutely fair. My judgment is totally honest. My recompense is absolutely just.

I give unto each one as he has given unto Me of his life and his labor, his tears and his prayers and his concern. Everything that you do for Me in this life is greatly rewarded in the life that is to come--much more than you could ever imagine! You will be given an hundredfold for every bit of love and concern and labor that is given to Me.

There is no sacrifice that will go unrewarded or unseen or unnoticed by Me, for I watch your every move and I know your every thought. I see your tears and I hear your prayers. I feel your concern, and when you struggle, I am moved with compassion upon you. For I am a just God and I give unto each one his just reward.

* * *

Even though I never came to know Christ on earth, I had a sense of right and wrong--that inner voice that is planted deep in the heart of every man. Having been born and raised in the heart of Africa, deep in the jungle, I strove for peace among my people, and because of this, Jesus rewarded me when I came to Heaven.

I tried to make peace with the neighboring tribes. I listened to that little

voice inside of me that kept telling me it was better to live in peace than to be at war. Because I tried my best to follow that voice, Jesus rewarded me greatly in Heaven, not only with His salvation and the opportunity to receive Him as my personal Savior when I arrived here, but He had great heavenly riches waiting for me--a mansion full of great splendor that shines with the brilliance of the sun.

And to this, He added the thing He knew would make me very happy--my heavenly home sits adjacent to one of the many magical, heavenly jungles! You don't know what joy this brings me to be able to look out my window and gaze upon the tall trees and the exotic bushes, or to step out my door and be able to walk through the jungle and enjoy times of solace and meditation in communion with God, alone, in the quiet, surrounded by the magic of the jungle.

* * *

Mama and Papa never taught me about God, and I grew up too proud to admit that something or someone greater than man could possibly exist. If I couldn't see it, I didn't believe it.

I worked hard to earn an honest living. I worked and I saved up. I was shrewd in business and I became a success in the eyes of the world. I believed in being fair and square. You work hard and you earn your pay was my motto: You don't work and you don't eat. For an honest day's work, I paid an honest day's wages, nothing more and nothing less.

I worked hard to get where I was and I expected the same of others, until one day I was faced with a decision. Who's to say that when tragedy strikes it's an act of God?--At that time in my life, certainly not me, and if anyone asked, I'd mumble under my breath that simply a natural phenomenon was the cause, a quirk of nature.

We were lacking rain that year, but no one expected that when fire broke out in the east pasture it would spread so quickly, destroying everything in its path, as far as the eye could see. Five families were left homeless, and the townsfolk were faced with who would help them get back on their feet. I was willing to do my part and take on the extra labor--give the men jobs, if they were willing to put in a hard day's work.

But what about Mary Jo Pickett, whose husband the fire claimed? There was no place for her in my employ. Why, she had her hands full with four small young ones, the smallest of which was still sucking at the breast. She

had no kin, no place to go, and no one to provide for her.

I wasn't one to give in to the pressure, but night after night something inside of me seemed to call out, saying, "Help Mary"! It was against the principles I had always adhered to, for Mary could give me back nothing in return, or so I thought, but finally I made a decision.

The cottage I owned down by the old creek road was nothing fancy, but it was comfortable enough, and after all, it wasn't being used, so why not? I made the right decision that night to provide shelter for Mary Jo and her children for nothing in return. Others in the town all joined in to help her out in other ways they could.

Little did I realize at the time how far that one act of kindness would go. When I arrived here to Heaven, I had no idea what reward God had stored up for me, all because I followed that nudge that now I know came from Him to help someone in her time of need and expect nothing in return.

* * *

Every single reward I have received in Heaven has been tailor-made especially for me. Jesus knew my deepest longings, my innermost desires, my special likes, and even all my dislikes, and He Himself has handcrafted each one of my rewards accordingly and to suit me perfectly so as to satisfy my tastes, my needs, and even all my wants.

There's so much variety in Heaven! Everyone's rewards are different. There are no two people who have the same, because all the rewards are created for the individual--to meet every individual desire. One thing I can say for certain though, after receiving my rewards, and from all the others I have seen people receive, every single gift is spectacular! Each one is big, each one is very special; each one is very meaningful and carries a very special significance to the person who receives it.

Jesus Himself presented me with each gift He had waiting for me and accompanied it with one of His loving, tender touches and His warm, comforting smile. This alone was a reward in itself. All these showers of gifts, so personalized and presented in such a loving manner, have made me feel so loved, so honored.--I feel I'm worth something, that I count in someone's eyes.--I've been touched with the magic of Heaven!

* * *

As a fireman I helped put out fires. I'd also help get the kittens out of trees or other such little community services. I was a pretty regular guy in my time. Not too smart, not too dumb. I never traveled anywhere and never had any great aspirations, but because I loved God, I wanted to help people, and in my own little way, I did just that.

Well, when I came to Heaven I learned so much about all the marvelous Christians throughout the ages, martyrs and missionaries, great teachers and prophets. I took a whole course. When it was all over, I had a terrible feeling in my stomach. I was wondering what the heck I was doing, enjoying all the pleasures of Heaven, my nice mansion and all the rest, when I had never done anything that great for God.

Jesus understood right away what my problem was, and He ever so carefully explained His wonderful way of passing out the rewards. He told me the parable He taught in the Bible about the talents: A lord gave out the talents--large measures of gold--to three of his trusted servants. One man received five talents, one man received two, and one man only received one, and each man chose how to invest his talents of gold. In the Bible story, the man who had received five invested them and duplicated his profits, and the second did the same. The third, who had only one, had been afraid to invest it, and had kept it to himself, which had displeased his lord.

"You," Jesus told me, "are like the man with one talent. I gave you the talent of being a helpful and concerned fireman and a conscientious man in the community." My lip quivered for a moment as I thought about the man in the Bible with only one talent, how he had buried it under the ground, and I wondered what was coming next. But Jesus added quickly, "But you *didn't* bury your talent! You used every ounce that I gave you; you gave your best to the people around you. If there was ever a need, you were Johnny-on-the-spot. You listened to the whispers I spoke in your heart, you gave to others, and you didn't let Me down. You see, Hank, I saw that you gave out to others all the love that I put in your heart, and that's what I'm rewarding you for. You never had much, but you gave everything you had. I couldn't ask for any more than that.

By now tears were streaming down my face, as I understood the great mercy and gentleness of the Lord. He didn't make me feel stupid or like I was inferior! In His great love, He rewarded me for using the one talent I had, and He counted it as great. It's not like I left it at that, either. Now in Heaven I'm learning all that I possibly can, because I want to keep using everything the Lord's given me, and give it back to Him in wholehearted service.

* * *

(Jesus speaking:) Unto whom much is given, of the same is much required. I reward not only according to the loving deeds, but also according to how much truth I have given unto that person, how many talents I have given him, and how much he knows that I expect from him. From those to whom I have given much, I expect much more. So it is that those who do not know much about Me and My ways, and yet they do what they can, are rewarded greatly--for they have given all that they could or knew to give.

* * *

(From a husband to his wife:) So far I haven't met two people up here who have received the exact same reward. Each one's reward is different and it's all based on what he did or didn't do with what he was given on earth. Marge, God doesn't judge us by comparing us with the guy next door. He judges us according to how faithful we are with what we're given in life.

You know I didn't have much compared to some in the way of talents or wealth. I wasn't rich; I didn't have a lot of brains; I didn't even have a lot of brawn. I was just your ordinary fellow. You know me, Honey-bun, and how I always considered myself your typical run-of-the-mill Joe Shmoe!--Jack of a few trades here and there, and master of none.

Well, God never saw me like that. Wait till you see, Marge, the things He's given me, all because I was faithful with what I had, because I plugged along day after day and I did my best to be kind and thoughtful of others that I met along the way. I loved Jesus and I did my best to tell others about His love. Even if all I could do was assure them that God loved them, and encourage them to pray, this was big in God's eyes. I was faithful with what I had, and because of this, Jesus has rewarded me greatly.

Because I obeyed God day after day as I drove my taxi, because I was faithful to tell people about His love and pass out those little pamphlets that explained how folks could find Him, because I always tried to smile, even to the grouchiest of customers, because I tried my best to be loving and kind, I'm highly honored now.

Yep, Marge, be mindful of the little things, because that's what the Lord is looking at--what folks do and how they act and react, how they handle the little things. Little things determine what big things they receive up here.

* * *

The moment I laid eyes on my mansion, I realized that Jesus really understood my heart. He knew every desire I ever had, every special thing I ever wanted or dreamed about, and it was all right there waiting for me.

As I toured every room, investigating every corner, every single nook and cranny, my heart throbbed with joy, as the thought raced through my mind, “How could He possibly have known?” He had everything arranged perfectly the way I would have it. He had even seen to it that my most secret desires were fulfilled; all the things I never spoke a word about to others, both big and small, the Lord had waiting for me. Everywhere I walked, each turn I made, every inch of this spectacular mansion held a different surprise, including both my tiny personal desires, known only to me, and those that are more pronounced and obvious to others.

Not one detail has been left unattended or forgotten. Even the smallest of details have been arranged, like how I always wanted a bedroom with a sliding glass door that led out to a rose garden. It's been a very special touch of love to me, knowing that the Lord Himself would tend to such a minute detail.

And that's not all! Every day there are new discoveries! I don't have to work hard and hunt for all these surprises, but just when I think I have found them all, something new and exciting pops up again! It's thrilling! He's designed it so the surprises never end! This amazing estate is like one great big treasure hunt that will go on for eternity.

I've heard others here, my neighbors, all saying the same, that each mansion is full of surprises--hidden doors, secret hallways, secluded corners--and just when you think you've discovered it all, you will encounter something new. It will suddenly come alive to you and you'll uncover a new and different surprise! It's all designed to be discovered gradually, and the surprises will never stop.

Today I discovered that the Lord has given me my own private library--complete with the true account of world history since He created the world! This library is fully equipped with animated books! You just open the corresponding book to the time period you want to read about and you have the option to not only read the history, but you can choose to actually enter the pages if you want, and presto! You're right there to see for yourself firsthand what really happened. You can experience history for yourself.

Not only has Jesus included every single thing my heart could ever desire in this splendid estate, He has included all these magnificent surprises--things that my finite mind couldn't possibly think up or imagine! These are His heavenly bonuses--all these "extras" piled on. It's far better than overtime pay. This is how He gives you so much more than your heart could ever dream.

* * *

Day in and day out I scrubbed them collars. I scrubbed them socks and washed them clothes, hung them clothes, took down them clothes, folded them clothes, ironed them clothes. And the next day, I did the same, and the day after, and the day after. To most folks down there, I was just one simple ol' lady who scrubbed and worked hard on them clothes!

But that's not all I did. All the while I was tendin' to them clothes, I was sending up the prayers. I was prayin' like a house afire for all the folks who was a wearin' them clothes. I was prayin' for their happiness, prayin' for their young'uns and their loved ones, and prayin' for their souls. I was prayin' up a storm for all those folks and situations I was seein' in the papers and on the evening news--and I was sending my prayers out all around the world!

Folks down there on earth never took much notice to what I was a doin' all along, but Jesus did. He took notice of it all, and since I've arrived up here, He's paid me back real good. Some of them folks whose clothes I scrubbed was in for a big surprise when they saw what Jesus had for me. I still have to get used to the idea and all the glory and honor He's givin' me now!-'Cuz it shore is a mighty big lot! I was small to all them folks down there, but because I stuck to my job and stayed faithful in the little things I had to do, because I made good use of my time by prayin' for all those folks, Jesus has multiplied my rewards over 100 times! And He's given me a title--calls me one of His queens, now isn't that somethin'!

* * *

It didn't have to be that way, but I realize now that being raised in a one-parent home after watching my parents go through a stormy marriage that ended in a bitter divorce caused me to harden my heart to certain things in life. My parents practically hated each other, and I thought that if love

could turn to hatred like that, then I didn't want to love and that God must not love me. He must not be there after all. So I hardened my heart to God. I simply blocked Him out of my life, telling myself that surely He didn't exist.

Mom did the best she could to raise me, and there was one positive thing that came of my childhood: a burning desire I felt inside to help other kids who only had one parent, or those who had none. So I tried the best I knew how to give it my best shot. I put my blood, sweat and tears into that youth center in the inner city and it accomplished some good for some of those kids.

It wasn't until years later when I lay on my deathbed, unable to speak or move, that I finally broke down and called out to God for help. Even though I had turned my back on Him all those years, God in His mercy not only gave me His eternal salvation and He brought me home to Heaven, but to top it off, He had laid up for me rewards for the good work I accomplished on earth.

When Jesus walked me down that tree-lined lane in Heaven pointing out all the rewards He had in store for me, all I could do was stand there gaping! Then, with a great big grin on His face, He showed me clips of my life on earth: every time I was faced with a choice, every time I made a decision to do the right thing to help others flashed before me. Still spellbound, I felt so unworthy that I finally fell to my knees and cried for what seemed like hours and hours. Because I made the right choices when I had an opportunity to reach out to those kids down there, Jesus had stored up for me rewards beyond anything I could ever think of or imagine!

* * *

In Heaven everything you do in your life--your good works, your evil works, your acceptance or rejection of the truth--it all comes out in the wash up here! You'd never hear me say this while I was on earth, but now I can say it with conviction--that is, I was wrong. I was dead wrong! I went through my entire life fighting God. I was more than a devout atheist, I actually fought against God. I said I hated Him and cursed His name whenever I got the chance.

It's hard to believe that a bloke like me would make it to Heaven, but when my time was up, I was given the chance I had never been given on earth to understand the truth of Jesus and His love. As I stood there on the bank of that river, there was no denying it then, the brilliance of the light

that surrounded me and the warmth that I felt.--I could not negate the fact that this was the light and life and power of God. In that moment, I reached out my hand and accepted the love of Jesus in my heart and His forgiveness.

I now have to be re-educated and I've had to face my share of shame. I'm not proud of the way I lived on earth, how I fought God all those years, and I now spend a great deal of my time making up for lost time. I'm learning about the love of God and His wonderful truths.

But the most amazing thing happened. Was I in for a surprise! In spite of all this, the Lord nevertheless has rewarded me for the good works I did during my lifetime, the years I spent in service to others--offering free medical assistance to the poor and those in need. Even though I claimed to renounce God on earth, and He's dealt with me in a different way on that score, yet because I made the right decisions to help others in need, He's given me a just reward for those efforts.

He gives to you according to your works, and according to each decision you are faced with on earth, whether you choose to do right or wrong, you will be rewarded. Had my motives been purer on earth, had I not fought God and taught others the same, I would not have to spend a portion of my time in the correctional facilities I'm now in. But don't get me wrong, because I'm thankful for this opportunity to get straightened out, and I know that this too is part of the infinite mercy of God.

But all I can say is that God is more than just!--Because even though my motives were not pure, and I did take a lot of the credit to myself, nevertheless, when I made the right decisions, He was writing it all down, and He's repaid me handsomely for every right move I made to do good and help others. For every time I did the right thing and gave my service to others in need, God has greatly rewarded me.

He doesn't reward just on works alone. If I had done all the good things I did but then chosen in the end to reject Him and refuse the hand of love and mercy that was extended to me, I'd have gone down in the other direction! But He is merciful and loving and gave me a chance, which I know I didn't deserve just because of my works, that's for sure. Yet because I did finally choose Him and His way, and was able to enter Heaven, He then also rewarded me for the good I did do with my life.

CHAPTER 7

No More Pressure!--No More Boredom!!

Do you ever long for the kind of peace that washes over your entire being and completely refreshes you? Do you wonder whether you will find that in Heaven? Or maybe you love activity and hate boredom, and so you're wondering exactly how "restful" Heaven is--not because you long for peace, but because you enjoy activity and excitement. From descriptions we've read, it seems that Heaven has a perfect combination of both.

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I can tell you for sure that there's plenty of action and activity up here for all you who like to be on the go. There's work to be done and excitement to be had. But everything is done calmly and peacefully. You know, nothing can be enjoyed in a hurry. So since we're never in a hurry here, we enjoy everything we do and can maximize the experience. That feeling of pressure, of having to hurry, of deadlines, of cramming, rushing--it's gone, it doesn't exist!

* * *

From what I've seen, heard, felt, and experienced with every sense of my being, the one word that describes Heaven is peace. The power of the Lord fills the air, fills us, fills everything around us. There's no fear, no worry, no anxiety.

* * *

I was happy to see that there are no loud interruptions here in Heaven. Everything moves so softly and quietly and beautifully. There are no loud screeching noises or sudden shocks of sound. There's no friction. The atmosphere itself seems to provide lubrication for everything so that things don't bang into each other or make ugly noises of any kind. There's this gorgeous background music, the likes of which you've never heard on earth. It's as the sound of many waters, and yet it's not overwhelming like the

sound of a raging river, but rather it's very soft. If there are times you want absolute quiet, then you can simply wish for quiet and the background music is gone.

There's always this feeling of exhilaration and euphoria. This is caused by the Lord's love. There's always the constant warmth of the Lord's love, and it makes the whole atmosphere sort of golden. Everything turns so quietly in God's atmosphere. The atmosphere in Heaven is so quiet and beautiful, yet filled with beautiful music and beautiful sounds.

* * *

It's very beautiful here--so peaceful, so restful, so full of love, tenderness, and kindness. There's no hurt or sorrow or grief or guilt or fear or worry. I'm free from all worries and all problems. So don't you worry about me; be happy for me.

* * *

There's no time here as you know it, so for the most part--unless you're in the middle of something really important or something you wouldn't want to stop--you can take breaks whenever you like. The rush and pressure of life is gone up here. You have the opportunity to enjoy everything. If you feel like you need a pause, well, there's no boss hanging around to shoo you back to your desk after coffee break! As long as you get your assignments completed and as long as you're being as productive as you need to be, you can have a break whenever you feel like it for as long as necessary until you're ready to roll again.

* * *

It's so tranquil here, so peaceful, so restful. There's no strain or stress. There are no more frustrations.--All that is past.

* * *

(Jesus speaking:) Heaven is a very busy place, and everyone has lots to do, but no one is hurried or flurried. They are all filled with peace and joy. People who are prone to worry and fret learn to cast all their burdens on Me.

It is so easy to learn to do this in Heaven, as you see Me directly, and My love can touch you more directly as well.

* * *

Those who like to sleep or who just like to lie around and enjoy calm and relaxation, well, they'll be energetic, they'll be strong, they won't have a physical need for rest, but they can get all they like of it in Heaven. I'm a sleeper, I love lying in bed late into the morning, or taking a nap during the day, and I'm happy to have plenty of opportunity for that.

* * *

In Heaven things move at a beautiful pace. As it says in the Bible about the Lord's work, the King's business does require haste, but each one's attitude is peaceful, rested, calm, and collected. When we approach one another, there's not a spirit of urgency. We take time to show each person consideration and appreciation for their labors of love before we jump into business.

* * *

(Jesus speaking:) I promised that you would find rest unto your souls, and that there would be rest for the weary, and so you shall have it. I shall fulfill My will unto you and give you the desires of your heart. In Heaven you will be able to find total rest in My Spirit, and even at times in My arms. For I will hold you close with your head on My chest, as the sweet child that you are to Me, and I will comfort you and strengthen your spirit with complete rest, close to My bosom.

So do not worry that Heaven will be so full of things to learn, new challenges, new experiences, that you will be expected to jump right into a whole new learning experience immediately. For although Heaven is full of new learning experiences, adventures, missions, projects, and much more, all are given the peace and rest that they need and they learn and grow at their own pace.

Have I not promised that I have gone to prepare a place for you? And within that place you will have sweet, complete rest for your body, your spirit, your soul, and your mind. Here you may truly cast all your cares upon Me

and lay all your burdens at My feet. For here I will truly lift from your shoulders each weight, care, concern, or worry that you had in your fleshly life. Here you will find your heavenly rest--true, sweet, complete rest from the labors of life.

CHAPTER 8

Health and Vitality--Forever!

Are you weary with the pain and sickness of this life? The Bible says about Heaven, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4). Doesn't freedom from the pain and sickness of our natural bodies sound wonderful?

#

After battling with cancer for many long years, the relief I felt when I passed on to Heaven was indescribable. Every day and many times a day I can't help but cry tears of joy and thankfulness to God for the wonderful feeling of health and well-being that I experience now, and that I know will last forever!

* * *

You'll be happy to know that I have no more pain. I feel great. I can eat what I want to eat; I can do what I want to do. I have a new heavenly body that doesn't have any aches or pains or problems. When I was with you it was difficult for me sometimes. But you were so good to me; you took such good care of me.

* * *

In the heavenly kingdom there is no more AIDS. There is no more prejudice. There is no more fear or pain or tears. All of this is wiped away, the slate is clean, and in its place is joy, health, and bountiful blessing.

* * *

(Someone who passed on in his nineties:) You should see me now--I'm young once again--or at least I look a little younger and feel so young, 'cause

up here in Heaven, you don't age! It's wonderful. You just glow with God's love and look beautiful all the time!

* * *

(A medical doctor:) There's no need for my skills here because no one is sick. Of course, that doesn't mean that all that I learned on earth is wasted.--It's not. Many of the precious lessons of the spirit that I learned there are very valuable here--like compassion, understanding, gentleness, patience, love, giving, and the need for and reliability of prayer. All of those came along with the medical profession, because I let the Lord use the circumstances around me to teach me things, so I grew spiritually as I worked at my job. There are others like me who did so as well. But the actual medical knowledge is not needed here, because we aren't weighted down with our physical flesh-and-blood bodies with all their woes.

* * *

(From someone who died of AIDS:) Heaven is a terrific place! I've got a new body now--a body that has no more heart trouble, no more heart attacks, no more AIDS, and no more illnesses. The fun and joy of having a new body that will never get sick, never decay is fantastic! It's just wonderful!

* * *

You are going to be so happy and so relieved to see that there is nothing here that can hurt you and make you sick; nothing that can harm you. There is no sickness, no hurt, no sorrow, and no pain.

* * *

When I had that terrible car accident that left me so messed up and paralyzed, life was such a struggle from then on. I tried to be brave and strong, and the Lord helped me to be able to relearn much of what I needed to in order to live as close to normal a life as possible. But there was always a struggle; there was always pain I felt in being left behind, in feeling left out, in my dreams being dashed. There were always things I wanted to do but

couldn't, because my body was so trapped within itself. I lived out a full life, and it was touched with joy as well as sadness; but the happiness I felt on earth has been wonderfully magnified since I died, as now I am completely free of pain, never to be an invalid again. It's like being a new person, being reborn, being completely renewed!

CHAPTER 9

The “Human Interest” Side of Heaven

Once in Heaven, what will we do? What will we look like? How will we spend our time? Will we eat? Will we sleep? Will we work? Will we play? Are there sports, music, movies, books, and other such entertainment? While this isn't exactly essential knowledge, nonetheless, these questions about the inhabitants and activities of Heaven are of great interest and importance to those of us who are looking forward to the afterlife we will spend there.

#

Beautiful Bodies Everywhere!

Do you wonder if people who live in the spiritual realm look the same as they did while on earth? Or do they undergo some tremendous transformation to become super-beings so you no longer even recognize them? Are they concerned at all about their appearance? Do they wear normal clothes? Maybe you've got the idea that in Heaven everyone wears white floor-length gowns, and to you that doesn't sound very appealing because you love variety in your wardrobe and appearance. Here are some insights into one's appearance in Heaven as compared to how they looked on earth, and clues on what we can expect as far as a "dress code" goes.

#

When I arrived in Heaven, I noticed that no one thinks, “I'm too fat!” or “I'm too skinny!” or “I wish this” and “I wish that!” Boy, that in itself is a wonderful relief--not to be worried about your body, not to be dissatisfied with how you look. Everyone is beautiful! Any serious weight or health problems are eliminated, and as for the little imperfections, real or imagined, that everyone thinks they have, well, those don't bother you or anyone else any more.

* * *

I had a serious accident when I was just a small girl, while playing near the fireplace. I got burned very badly, and as a result, I carried around a terribly scarred face and arm throughout my life. It didn't bother me that much until I started going to school, and then I realized that none of the other kids looked the way I did. Then, as I got older, the teasing got worse.

By the time I went to high school I was devastated, completely depressed, as I was sure no boy would ever want to be with me, because I wasn't beautiful. It wasn't just a matter of me wanting to have hair like Sally's or blue eyes like Mary's--I was actually ugly, and no honest person would debate that. I could have been pretty, perhaps, but the scar on my face wasn't just a little mark. I was completely disfigured and there was nothing that could be done to repair the damage. This was before the days of plastic surgery that folks have now; but even if it had existed then, my parents would never have been able to afford it.

Well, I became somewhat of a recluse. College was torture, and as soon as I got out I buried myself in my writing, working at home, and avoiding people at all costs. I found some measure of fulfillment and even success in my work, but I can't say I lived a truly happy life.

When I came to Heaven, I noticed from the moment I entered the gates that no one seemed to be staring at me the way others always had before. I wondered why. I kind of had an idea, and I wanted to see myself in a mirror so bad to see if it could possibly be so. My grandmother, who was leading me around, sensed what I was wondering, and she walked me over to the beautiful crystal clear river of life, so I could see my reflection there.

I was astounded! It was gone! Every trace of the ugly mark I had carried around through life had vanished! I was actually beautiful! I never knew such a thing would be possible.

Everyone here in Heaven is complete and whole. Everyone is still recognizable and in the same basic "casing" that we're used to seeing each other in on earth. But those who were scarred or marked in some way, or handicapped or twisted, or who had lost a limb or were in any way incomplete, are whole and lovely! It's wonderful.

* * *

Most of the clothes are light, comfortable, even sexy. They're made in such a way that you feel like you don't even have anything on. The different materials are so soft and gorgeous, unlike anything that you have there on

earth. Probably the closest thing that you have there is fine silk. You never have to worry about being cold or catching a chill, because the weather is perfect all of the time, never too hot, never too cold.

You can even design your own clothes. There are lots of women here who design clothes as a hobby. It's amazing what they can do. They've learned how to embed tiny jewels and gems into the fabric. They also make gowns that have specific aromas or fragrances. They can even flatten tiny little flowers--although they don't look squished--and add them as decorations and finishing touches. It's amazing to see all the different costumes, gowns, and clothes that they come up with.

* * *

When you get to Heaven, you no longer look at things as you did before. You realize that you're loved for who you are, and that you're beautiful or handsome.--Everyone is! Everyone has something special, something unique, something beautiful about them, and in Heaven, that special something is magnified and appreciated by everyone.

* * *

The men here in Heaven who like it that way--including Jesus--have long, flowing, beautiful hair. It looks masculine and it's very attractive.

* * *

(On the styles of dress for women in Heaven:) God leaves a lot up to our preference, as far as clothes go. He wants us all to be comfortable and to wear the things that we like. He gives us a very big range to choose from; in fact, there are so many choices that it's quite hard to choose.

When you first get to Heaven, you'll arrive in a unique gown that Jesus picked out especially for you. He puts a lot of thought into the exact design of this gown. He knows your heart, He knows your thoughts, and He knows exactly what kind of clothes you like. So He mixes your heart's desires with His desires, and out comes this gorgeous gown that you get to wear on your arrival to Heaven. You'll also be given that special necklace from Jesus with your name written on it-- the special name that Jesus gave you, that name that no one else in all of Heaven and earth will have.

Of course, you won't always wear this arrival gown. Most of us keep this for special occasions. We all greatly treasure our arrival gowns. Each one is so unique, yet so perfectly designed for each of us. It's another little love gift from Jesus.

You'll find that in your mansion there will be a collection of clothes that you can choose from, all picked by your loved ones and friends up here who prepare the way for you. Of course, the choice doesn't end there; there is also the fashion fair where you can check out all kinds of dresses from any era of history. There's also an array of heavenly gowns that you've never even seen or heard of before.

God likes us to enjoy ourselves, and He knows that getting dressed up, looking pretty, and wearing nice things makes us women happy. That's why He's created all of this for us to enjoy, and He wants us to continue enjoying this pleasure up here--just like we will still enjoy all the other pleasures, like eating, having sex, sleeping, and exercising.

* * *

(On the styles of dress for men in Heaven:) As on earth, in Heaven men are generally not quite as preoccupied with their clothing as women. Of course, there are exceptions. There's really a great variety of options for those that are real "dressers."

For the most part, many of the men wear long, rather regal-looking flowing robes, like those that kings, lords, knights, and so forth used to wear in centuries past. These are sometimes of solid colors, be they bright or pale, or for the more daring, they are sometimes somewhat transparent or translucent in parts. There are an infinite number of colors, tones, and shades to work with, because you not only have solid colors to work with, but all the available hues of light, which add greatly to the spectrum of possibilities.

Besides the long robes, some men, especially those of the younger set who don't want to be at all restricted with clothes or who perhaps want to "show" a little more, wear loincloths that go from the waist down to mid-thigh; and they go shirtless. Or some guys wear tunics with a matching sort of open shirt or jacket. There are also various kinds of suits, as in combinations of pants and jackets, that are classy looking, and some of the girls really love it when us guys wear them.

Generally the style is more loose and flowing, but there are tight or form-fitting styles available as well. There's really no end to the possibilities. You can design your own wardrobe, or have the woman of your choice design yours for you. There's not an emphasis on fashion, as in everyone conforming to the same style. Everyone is free to develop his own style and dress as he likes. Yet it's also not a problem if you copy what someone else wears if you find that you like it.

* * *

Not everyone up here looks like an athlete or a model, but everyone shines with an inner beauty and everyone is content and happy.

* * *

Everything here in Heaven is clean and natural, and no one's ashamed of how they look. There really isn't any comparing, because everyone's content with just how the Lord made them. It has a lot to do with people being very much at ease with the Lord's love for them.

Up here you have some thin ones, plumper ones, short ones and tall ones, larger people and smaller people. There are all kinds of people, and everyone is beautiful, very beautiful.

#

Communication Made Simple!

Have you ever found it difficult to clearly communicate your thoughts and feelings? Have you wished that there were some deeper way to express yourself, beyond uttering simple words? Here is some fascinating insight into the ways people speak to and understand one another in Heaven.

#

Based on my experience, I would say that the term “mental telepathy” doesn't even do justice to describing what we can do here. The power of the mind and the spirit as you know it is nothing compared to what it is here.

You can create things; you think them and they are there. You think of someone and they appear to you, or think of some place and you are there.

* * *

We can read each other's minds up here to some extent. It's on different levels for different people at different times. It's not like you're walking around constantly "hearing" the thoughts of every person around you, and it's not like your every thought is blared aloud as if on a radio channel for anyone who may desire to tune in. It's a finely developed heavenly art and skill that takes practice and training.

There are different levels of "clearance"--so not just anyone can decide, "I wonder what So-and-so's thinking right now?" and always know. In some cases, yes, because you've agreed that you two have "open-ended" telepathic clearance, to be able to know any and all of each other's thoughts at any time, no matter where you are. With another person you might have "limited access," where if you're in each other's presence you're reading all the other person's thoughts, but if you're far away, then it's more like telephone communication, in that if you want to talk to each other you can, but you're not constantly "broadcasting" your thoughts to each other.

* * *

Sometimes, when we meet one another for the first time it's almost like we can know each other instantly. We get to know one another more with time and exchange, but it's so much easier to meet and understand each other. It's quite fascinating how we can do that.

What I mean by "getting to know one another instantly" is more like you have a general understanding of one another, and you feel very comfortable with each other. It's not like you have to go through the awkwardness that often accompanies first-time acquaintances on earth; instead, you feel very at home with each other and there are certain things about the other person that you can just feel, or just know. Not everything, of course. It doesn't take away the need or desire for conversation, and it's not like your whole life is an open book to the other person who you're meeting for the first time; rather it's an understanding. It's hard to describe. Maybe it's because there's so much love here that everyone is just so much more accepting of others, just like you're less likely to judge or be critical of

someone you're very good friends with or in love with--it's a similar feeling. It's like, "I may not know everything about you, but I know that I like you, and I feel very comfortable with you."

* * *

There are no misunderstandings here. Every word is spoken in purity and in love; every word is given from one heart to another and is an expression of love. The very vibrations and sounds make you feel loved.

* * *

Many of the problems with communicating that you on earth encounter simply don't exist up here. There are no misunderstandings, as when you communicate, you communicate with much more than just words. You communicate your emotions and feelings at the same time. This makes for a more perfect understanding of each other, one that engenders great love and unity between you.

* * *

I've seen that the language of the spirit world is always pure, it's always total and complete, and there is never any vulgarism or evil in the way we speak. We speak with the language of God--total, complete, pure, loving, sweet, encouraging, and uplifting. Every word means exactly what it says. We communicate very deeply; sometimes without even the use of words, we just connect. We look at each other and we read each other's thoughts and we know what the other person is thinking. Our language is the language of angels.

We speak with our hearts, and since our hearts are filled with God and His love, our language is filled with His love, and every word emanates His love. The best way I can describe it is that we communicate with our hearts and with our feelings and with our emotions. We have a romantic language, a sexy, warm language, a fun, exciting language, but never is it derogatory or degrading or hurtful.

#

Up, Up, and Away!

Almost since time began, man has dreamed of being able to fly, and only in the 20th century has succeeded in taking to the skies albeit with the aid of technology and in a variety of contraptions. But since Heaven is the place where dreams come true, wouldn't it be wonderful if we could actually glide through the air, quickly and effortlessly, without needing any kind of device to transport us? Will we do this, and if so, how?

#

Most of the time up here we don't exactly run and we don't exactly fly. We just kind of *go*! We'll be in one place and we'll think about the other place where we want to be and, presto, we're there!

* * *

When I first came here, someone guided me around and showed me things. I put my foot down a little too heavy and I started to bounce up! It was a new experience for me, as I was actually floating! I remember looking somewhat surprised, and the man next to me said, "You get used to that." By golly, I did get used to it, but I still love it.

* * *

(A child speaking:) I love to fly! That's how we get around here in Heaven. We can really fly, at the speed of thought! All you gotta do is think it and you're zooming across the sky! We kids have lots of fun zipping all around. I like to fly so much that I run errands for people so that I can have more places to fly to!

Flying is not the only way we can go places. We have big circles of light that are like cars when we want to go together with lots of people, but our circle vehicles are powered by heavenly energy and light. There are all kinds of shapes and sizes that you can pick from to go in, depending on how many people you want to go with.

* * *

I wish you could see some of the flying shows. I guess the only thing you might be able to compare them to is synchronized swimming or water ballet, or maybe some trapeze acts--but there's no water and no trapeze, just the air. It's beautiful. Some of these girls really practice and do these way cool formations and dances in the air, and it's great to watch. My sister's pretty into it, and she even helps choreograph some of them. It's her hobby, and one of those things the Lord gives those who want it and have a gift and aptitude for it.

#

Who Chooses?

Here on earth we are free moral agents, able to determine our own choices. Will we retain this ability when we become part of God's heavenly Kingdom?

#

In Heaven I was elated to find out that we can go wherever we want. God gives us freedom of choice. It's wonderful.

* * *

Once we're here in Heaven and have seen God's goodness and power and felt how His love is manifested, we want more than ever to do what pleases Him. So there's really no struggle between what we want and what God wants. Yet we still have freedom of choice, we still have desires, preferences, wants, and wills, and for the most part, since we're doing all we can to please God, He also pleases us by letting us have some choice and say-so in what we do and how we do it.

He takes our personal preferences and desires into consideration, and He often gives us a variety of options as far as what kind of assignments we want to take on. We can also choose, of course, what kinds of things we want to learn, what kind of entertainment or special arts we want to get involved with, how we want our house and yard designed or redesigned, etc.

* * *

Here, the spirits have choices as well. Each departed human from earth, each new soul created in Heaven, and each angel has the opportunity to choose their own options within all that is available--which is everything--everything that's good, that's helpful, that's beneficial, that's enjoyable.

#

No More Diets, Cholesterol, or Calorie Counting!

Eating is one of life's pleasures, as well as a bodily necessity. Will it still be around on the other side? Will we need to eat for sustenance, or will we be able to just eat for enjoyment, if and when we feel like it?

#

When I got my new body I quickly learned that I could eat if I wanted to, but I can live for eternity without food if I so choose. I can enjoy all the delicacies of Heaven with no fear of gaining weight or going over my cholesterol level or consuming too much salt or sugar.

* * *

We have every kind of food you ever imagined here in Heaven! All the different foods that were ever made on earth you can get up here! You name it--every kind of food from every country and culture around the world, and from any time period in history! The big surprise is there are even some *new* ones! We have foods here you never even heard of! Delicious heavenly treats! There is every kind of food you can possibly imagine, and plenty for everyone if they want it.

You might think that with so much food around, we'd spend a lot of time eating. Not really. In fact, we only have to eat if we want to. If we want to sit down and enjoy some nice yummy food, a nice meal, or some snacks and treats, we do; but if we're too busy doing other things, we don't miss it!

Sometimes my friends and I like to go around and taste all the different kinds of foods. We all have our favorites!

I have fun watching the demonstrations and learning how food was

prepared down through history.

If you're wondering about meat, well, there's no killing in Heaven, and that includes killing of animals for meat. But God, in His own special way, has created "taste-alike" substitutes so that those who like meat of whatever kind can still enjoy the taste of it.

* * *

(Jesus speaking:) You think that the chocolate you have there on earth is fantastic? Wait till you get up here and see what I've got in store for you! There are exotic flavors and indescribable tastes! Each kind of chocolate up here makes you feel a different emotion-emotions that you haven't even experienced yet, because they're only available in Heaven. I can't wait till you get here and I can surprise you with all of these gifts of love. There'll be a beautiful golden platter of goodies awaiting you in your mansion. Together we can talk and relax for hours, while enjoying your favorite food--chocolate!

#

Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep!

One of the requisites for good health is getting sufficient rest and sleep. Yet as much as we know we need it, and even as much as many of us enjoy it, it often seems difficult to find time for enough of it and still do all we have to do. Though there will still be plenty to do in Heaven, and though you'll have a stronger, renewed body, some of you could well be looking forward to getting caught up on some rest on the other side--and it looks like you will get your wish!

#

I was amazed to see that there are times of rest and sleep, and you have the most beautiful golden dreams. There are no nightmares or bad dreams, only good and beautiful dreams, like good and happy movies. Of course, you don't *have* to sleep, and it's not needed for bodily strength and regeneration, but it's for rest and calm.

I love to take little naps and dream dreams. As you sleep, your spirit is still conscious of other things and you can be awake and out of sleep in a

moment, so there's no drowsiness. If you don't want to sleep, you can just rest, and it's so calm and peaceful.

* * *

In Heaven you don't have to sleep if you don't want to, but you can rest and enjoy the pleasures of tranquility and blissful, heavenly slumber.

* * *

We have times of quiet, similar to times of dusk or twilight on earth when the sun is setting, the day is done, and you've accomplished all you needed to, and it's time to rest and refill. We have periods like that in Heaven as well. There are definitely periods of rest, peace, and quiet, when you want it or need it.

* * *

Even here we need to rest. We don't have to sleep like you do on earth, although we can if we want to, but we do have to rest because we need to get quiet in order to hear the Lord's instructions, to know what He wants us to do so that we can do His bidding. So rest is real important even in Heaven, and it's real easy to have it here, because everything is so soft and beautiful, without friction and noise.

#

That's Entertainment!

What do they do for fun in Heaven? Music admirers, literature lovers, and all those who enjoy a good night of entertainment on the town, take heart. It sounds like they've got some extraordinary stuff lined up for us!

#

If you think you've seen some fantastic movies with incredible production and spectacular graphic effects on earth, wait till you get here! They have 3-D TV up here; can you believe it?

* * *

The things that are the most fun on earth, you get to do here too. Like in the heavenly fairground, there's a roller coaster--only it's different than on earth, because you don't have to sit in the seats with the safety belt on! You can just hold on to the handle or the rail and sort of fly along with the roller coaster. You zip all around, up mountains and down into valleys. It's like a roller coaster on earth, only it's about a hundred times bigger and the drops are a hundred times further and the highs are a hundred times higher. It's just a blast!

If you think you've had fun on earth, well, you haven't seen anything yet! So don't worry about leaving things behind.--The Lord's got more for you than you can ever imagine! I think He told you that in the Bible, but I'm telling you too, from someone who's seen it and done it. I've been there and done that--and it's fun!

* * *

The heavenly symphony--there is nothing like it, as it plays melodic heavenly tunes that take you to heights and realms beyond your wildest dreams--of not only heavenly *sounds*, but heavenly sounds mixed with heavenly *sights* and *thrills* that lift you into the heavenlies, to heights unknown! I can hardly describe it.

* * *

You're not stuck with choir music up here. There's all kinds of music. Some like that concert, classical stuff. Then there are us guys who like a little rock 'n' roll type stuff--something to wiggle your hips to. There are a few new arrivals who play musical styles that are even a little too far out for me. But hey, if it's not hurting people, then it's not a problem.

* * *

Hey, the best is up ahead! I mean, you talk about beauty, you talk about girls, you talk about music--this is the place!

* * *

There's all kinds of music up here, not just the background music, the sounds of many waters, but there's also rock 'n' roll for those who want it. There's music for everyone.

* * *

We do a lot of the same things here that you do on earth, like, for example, partying and dancing and singing and get-togethers, playing music together, creating new music. We create new music and new sounds that have never been heard before! We even create new instruments to make those sounds.

* * *

The moment I arrived in Heaven the most beautiful melodic tune filled my ears. This song was nothing like I had ever heard before, yet I naturally started humming right along with it as if I had known it all my life. It seemed to be part of me. Then I came to know why this song was so outstanding to me.

“Ahh, you like that song?” my guide asked. He then went on to explain, “That's your own special song. You see, the moment you opened your heart to Jesus on earth and accepted Him into your heart and life, in that instant the Lord Himself ordered that the heavenly musicians write and record a new song especially for you, in your honor. This is your special song, from Heaven's heart to your heart. It's the song that God Himself puts in your heart when you receive Him. Each one who receives His love has their own special song, and that same song is playing in Heaven the moment you arrive.”

* * *

I hope you don't think the music stops when you pass on from that life to this one. The music is just beginning and you haven't heard anything yet! Wait until you get here, you'll really learn how to move those hips and feet!

* * *

Music is an important part of our life here. There is much music, beautiful music! There is every kind of music. It's heavenly music--music that feeds us in the Spirit!--Music that brings forth our praise to God!--Music that brings us great joy and enjoyment! It's everywhere!

* * *

(From a professional jazz musician:) Oh, was I pleased to see that there's tons of music up here. All the musicians of the past that have come across the veil have been able to express themselves in music here even more than before. They've been able to learn from musicians who were born in the spirit. The angels can really give you the tune! I even heard a complete choir of nothing but trumpets and I was able to join in and play! Now if that isn't a thrill! I don't know what could be more exciting than all that I've been able to hear and feel in the realm of music since I've been here.

I knew that music had something to do with the spirit, but it took coming here to know how spiritual music is. Ah, the wonders of God's gifts of the Spirit that you can pass on through music. When I saw and heard all that was available in the world of the Spirit, I just couldn't believe my ears. I spent hours and hours and days and months up here just *listening* to music of freedom and music of the soul, music of the heart, and music filled with love.

* * *

Up here there always seems to be the feeling of music around, even if you can't quite hear it.

* * *

(From a rock guitarist:) Music here is communication, man, just like it was there. But there's nothing to communicate here but love, life, happiness, joy and fun. I wish I could play you some of the music we have here. It would blow your mind! You talk about a trip, you talk about freaking out, man, this place is a continual high! And it's never gonna end.

* * *

In Heaven we still write books, stories, and novels. We still make movies from such books and stories. So we still have actors, and we still produce plays, ballets, operas, and movies. Of course, there is a difference between the way we write stories up here and the way that they are written on earth. First of all, any story or play that is written has a purpose, a message, a lesson, or something that makes it worthwhile. We don't spend time in entertainment and amusement that's pointless, or devoid of all spiritual or moral value. We have lots of fun, lots of enjoyment, but it's all with a purpose. It all somehow glorifies the Lord, uplifts the mind or the spirit, or in some way contributes to the edification of those who participate. There are no silly and meaningless movies that leave your heart and your mind empty, hollow, and dissatisfied. Everything has meaning, purpose, depth.

* * *

We still have stages and theaters here, much like there on earth. We have actors and dancers that perform plays and ballets. Oh, you should see the ballets. They're absolutely gorgeous.

* * *

One way we make a "movie" is by gathering together all the best and pertinent scenes straight from history. We weave them together much like the movie editors on earth take all the different shots of the actors and run them together in a certain order. The only difference is, we don't use actors, we use the actual scenes as they happened.

* * *

There is a great library of books here. Everything you could have ever wanted to read about or learn about is available, and so much more! There are all kinds of stories, novels, and plays, as well as true history, of course--just the way it really was. The words of Jesus and of the great men of all ages are recorded for eternity. There are also books of instruction about most any topic, as well as biographies, insights, analyses, theses--anything and everything good, useful, uplifting, or educational in any way can be found in the great library of Heaven.

* * *

In Heaven there is beautiful art--wonderful, magnificent works of art and beauty!

* * *

Here you can not only *learn* all about history--you can *experience* it. You can even witness different events and how they really happened! It's like going back in time, only it's *real*, because time as you know it doesn't exist here. It's fascinating.

* * *

Regarding world history, well, unfortunately you can't believe everything you read on earth, because what is taught depends on which side is writing and which angle they're looking at it from. But up here we can fully understand and know the truth, which one day will be made public to all. In fact, all the material is available at our fingertips, the exact accounts of what transpired. And not only can we go back in time to watch it on a viewer, but we can actually go back and be on location as it's happening!

* * *

Being the history buff that I am, you can imagine my reaction when I learned that here you can time travel back into history--any time of history--and watch the events there as they really happened. It's really awesome, and I do it all the time. You can time travel to any time period and any place you want, and watch history happen before your very eyes.

* * *

You'll be able to know all the history in the Bible that you wanted to know. You can watch it in the great theater. There are many different theaters and auditoriums and performances in Heaven, but at the central theater, you can watch amazingly accurate renditions of historical events, a different one being performed constantly. Of course, you can also watch the

events live by traveling back in time or by viewing them in the crystal globe “TV sets” that are available for such purposes. But for some of us, there’s nothing like a great play or theatrical performance, and up here we’ve even got the best actors, and the costumes and scenery and everything is completely authentic.

#

Let the Games Continue!

Sports fans might be curious to know what kind of events you can look forward to participating in or watching in Heaven. I think you’ll be pleasantly surprised to see how much variety is available.

#

(From a professional tennis player:) You’ll find me in the "courts" of Heaven where I "serve" God and love Him. There *are* sports in Heaven--as well as humor! There’s a great variety of sports up here, and a great variety of sportsmen and women. Maybe we can play a few games of tennis, a few sets. You don’t get tired up here, and, boy, you can make some tremendous shots!

* * *

There are sports in Heaven all right! We play sports for the pure fun of it! The best thing about sports in Heaven is that there are no accidents! With our spirit bodies we don't get hurt--no broken bones or sore muscles, no scrapes or bruises. Besides, folks here are very considerate and everything is done in love, so accidents just don't exist.

* * *

You know what? We can even roller blade up here if we want! I've tried it, and I like it! You know what else we get to do? We get to play all kinds of sports and games.

* * *

I've played baseball many times here. I've played with many of the so-called "great ones," the great baseball players.

* * *

(A child speaking:) There are lots of things that I like here, especially the big fields to play games in. You should see all the far out games there are here! There are so many kids my age and we play super games.

* * *

Believe it or not, I enjoy watching some of the very same sports you have down on earth, like basketball, football, and soccer. We have similar things going on up here, though quite different for a number of reasons. I guess the main difference is that up here everything is fair play--no one cheats, fouls, or gets violent. We play some of the very same games, but minus all the rough stuff, as well as minus all the politics that influence sports down there.

We just play for fun, basically, though we do sometimes have championships, sort of similar to the Olympics, though on a much wider scale, with a much greater variety of sports. We don't come representing different countries, because we're all one country, one nation, one family. But we organize ourselves into different teams or groups, and yes, we actually "compete." Even our competition, though, is for fun. There are no hard feelings when you "lose," nor are there problems of people getting proud or stuck up when they "win" or when they're good at a particular sport. We don't use those words "lose" and "win," but we do have methods of keeping score, and it's a challenge for people who enjoy these sports to improve their skills.

There are other games, though, new games that you all have never heard of, and even variations of some of yours, where we use our super powers, which adds quite a fun twist to some of those games, as you might imagine! We kind of tone down everything a bit, to make "the chase" more fun. It's a game, so we volunteer of our own free will to relinquish certain abilities that we would have in other situations.

As you might have figured, it's similar with other games too, games where you have to use your mind and get those brain cells moving--figuring, working puzzles, solving problems, and that kind of challenge. Of course our

minds are much more advanced; we've gotten much more education, input, and information, so any games that involve such skills are on what you would think to be an incredibly high level. But those of you who get off on that kind of stuff can still do so here, and it can be fun challenging your mind and sharpening your knowledge and problem-solving skills and logic, etc.

We get together every now and then for great big festivities, not just centered around sports, but we have them too. We also enjoy a lot of other things all together, like eating, or listening to beautiful music, watching dances, plays, live history, or dancing, singing or playing music ourselves--sometimes all at once. Here in Heaven you can develop all the talents and skills you're interested in, and you have a lot of time to do so, as well as increased learning abilities.

* * *

(Jesus:) In Heaven there's the Magic River of Life that you can swim in and enjoy. The water is always the perfect temperature. It's never too cold, it's never too hot, and it's always pure and clean. You'll love to swim in this river! This water is both physical and spiritual. When you go for a swim you feel physically re-invigorated and spiritually inspired and full of life.

You'll also be able to swim under water without having to come up for air. You'll be able to breathe and even talk under water. There are also lots of fun things to see and do under the water. There are smooth stones on the bottom of the river; you'll even find some jewels embedded in the stones. There are gorgeous flowers and plants that look like they aren't even in the water. They grow upright and they shimmer and are fresh and clean and never die. Even if you accidentally step on one, they'll just spring right back up again. You're really going to enjoy My underwater creations that I've made for you who love to swim, My dear water babies.

Then when you get out of the water you are instantly dry. You don't have to worry about carrying towels around with you, because you don't need them. You also don't have to worry about wearing sunscreen because there are no harmful rays. In fact, in the Heavenly City there will be no sun, for the light will come from the throne of Heaven.

* * *

One of the things I like best is the river! It's crystal clear. You can see

all the gorgeous crystals on the bottom--crystals that you could never imagine. Big and small, they're so sparkly, so shiny, they give the water such a heavenly glow. You can swim in the river. You can stay under the water as long as you want. It has the most beautiful colors in it. The fish in it are beautiful, their tails flow so gracefully. Such gorgeous colors are in the water. Swimming is great! You can see the kids. So many kids riding on the giant turtles. They're so cute!

* * *

There's swimming here in Heaven. It's like nothing on earth because the water is not like earthly water. It's cool, refreshing, but it's not wet. It's incredible. You don't need to worry about not being able to breathe because you can breathe, you can float, fly, swim, all underwater for as long as you want, and then you don't have to dry off afterwards either.

We have team swimming where we do a lot of fun things together underwater. Just like you see skydivers on earth fly in formation, well, we do that underwater and do a lot of stunts and tricks and see how synchronized we can get.

* * *

You know what we do up here sometimes to get rejuvenated? We swim! I love to swim.--I always said it was like flying! Boy, you should see what the swimming pools are filled with up here!--Not just ordinary water, oh no. It's waters of life, rejuvenating waters! Oh, it's so good, it's ecstasy to swim and revel in. It's thrilling and filling and invigorating! You can just drink it right in, and the strength you get from it is a real rush!

* * *

In the first days of my exploration of Heaven with my guide I found a beautiful lake. We dove into the water. It's not really water, as it looks more like translucent stardust that flows and moves and embraces you with flowing love. The water is perfectly clear and is a fascinating world of its own. It's filled with all kinds of wonderful coral and fish and lovely creatures you've never even seen. There are fish that glow with different colors and there are miniature dolphins that swim with you and lead you everywhere to show you

the wonders in this world. There are lovely moss-covered rock formations everywhere, including arches and what look like miniature palaces, complete with windows and doors. Fish swim in and out of everywhere and seem to dance in lovely and graceful formations.

We can breathe and communicate telepathically underwater. In the center of the lake there's a lovely glowing spring bubbling up and feeding the lake. It bubbles up with a fountain of air bubbles as it disperses delightfully fresh water into the lake. All around this area there are lovely rock formations and arches from which drape and softly sway a kind of plant which looks like the weeping willow, and these create a soft aquamarine and green curtain that sways back and forth in lovely slow motion. The ground is both sandy and covered with flat rocks of all colors and designs. The pebbles are precious stones of every hue and size and shape, piled up everywhere

#

Never a Dull Moment!

Is Heaven all pleasure, fun, and flying? Or will we still have responsibilities to attend to? What about all the talents and skills we've acquired on earth? Will they be of use to us and to others in the next life? How? In these messages from the departed, you'll get some interesting insight into the work they perform and the services they provide.

#

I never would have thought that there is work to do too, but Heaven is a city and a kingdom, and there are citizens to care for. Life on earth is just a shadow of the things to come and life in Heaven is very real, just much better and without all the pain, heartbreak, injustice, and evil of this earth that we know so well.

I'll tell you, just floating around all day, aimlessly roaming from pleasure to pleasure is certainly no picture of life in the Heavenly City. All have responsibilities and they are active, busy, and fulfilled in carrying out their new heavenly duties. There are different jobs, different responsibilities that reflect your life and experience and training on earth. But no matter what your job or responsibility or place in Heaven, happiness, contentment, fulfillment, and peace of mind pervade the life of every heavenly citizen.

* * *

I want to tell you about my work here in Heaven. I'm in charge of overseeing new arrivals who have suffered accidental deaths like mine. It's a shock for some people to come here when they're not really prepared for it, so I greet them and help them to adjust to their new surroundings. Of course, they have others meet them also, like their loved ones and family members, but my job is to guide them into their new surroundings and help them get acquainted with others.

There are many of us who do this job, greeting the thousands of newcomers who arrive constantly. It's a wonderful ministry, and it's beautiful to see how the Lord loves each individual so much, and asks us to help those whom He knows will feel the most comfortable with us or who we can help the most. Nothing is done randomly.--It's all coordinated with the greatest love and concern and understanding possible!

* * *

Each one here has a role. The role of some is learning and growing, being in school. The role of others is a job, a ministry, or a calling, a specific thing they're doing for the Lord.

* * *

(From an architect:) I'm still doing things up here, still designing, still coming up with some new ideas. Sometimes we're able to influence some of the designers and engineers down there, giving them a flash of inspiration now and again. That's when they come up with some of the better ideas. If someone has really got his mind a workin' and he's got his mind open, sometimes it goes kerplunk right in there, and boy, he connects and he gets the idea and he goes ahead and does it. This is especially true when it comes to helping the poor. Jesus likes to give people ideas on how to build things and how to make things cheaply so it can benefit the poor, because He loves the poor.

* * *

(A medical doctor speaking:) I help to greet those who arrive from sudden death or those who have suffered from disease. I comfort them when they first arrive. I also work helping godly doctors on earth to accurately diagnose their patients' problems. For you see, lab tests or patients explaining their symptoms aren't always sufficient for diagnosing a disease or problem. It also takes supernatural insight to understand a person's needs.

* * *

Father still builds. He's preparing a special place for you. He's fine and healthy, strong, and handsome, and is able to do so much! He builds. He carves. He makes beautiful cabinets of a wood so heavenly, fragrant, easy to handle, yet sturdy and strong, not splintery or hard. And he enjoys teaching others. It's very peaceful here, yet busy and fulfilling.

* * *

Here in Heaven there are those who are builders, engineers and planners. There is much to do! We are some of those who work here, who work away with all we've got to build the city which you will all one day live in! Someone has to build it! We count it an honor and a privilege to be among those who have this task. Of course, Jesus is the Master Builder, and this city is a work of His art, a masterpiece prepared with great love for His bride! But He's let a lot of us help with the little finishing touches, especially on the individual homes as people are due to arrive.

* * *

Things that we do here in the spirit world do still take some effort. It isn't that we just snap our fingers and it's there, because then there would be no fun, no challenge in life. Things are much easier and we aren't hindered by many of the things that hinder you there on earth--the feeling of tiredness, the pressing responsibilities, much more to do than we could ever get done. And of course, time isn't a factor; it doesn't control and restrict us like it does on earth, which is a great and wonderful freedom. But doing our work still does take some effort.

* * *

Here in the halls of Heaven, at last I can help the children, the ones who are beyond human help, whose lives continue to be cut off before their time. My sweet Jesus has given me my heart's desire! Each day when the new arrivals come here to Heaven--those who were ruthlessly torn and mangled in their death, or snuffed out before their time, but are made beautifully whole upon their arrival here--I help to greet them. I take them into my arms and comfort them, care for them, and help them get situated. This is one of my many fond assignments--my heart's desire--to love and hold the children that folks didn't want on earth.

Oh, it's beautiful how the host of Heaven greets them and cares for them and receives them with open arms. But those who know what they're doing when they wage wars or promote abortions and who refuse to heed the call of truth in their hearts will be held accountable for their deaths. Those who are innocently led astray the Lord forgives, but those who lead others astray will be held accountable.

* * *

Here, once I'm into something I can just keep working on it until I'm finished or at a place where I feel good about stopping. Oh, I just love it! There's no tiredness, nor the call of hunger, nor the other little nagging discomforts and unpleasanties of life, including those necessary but mundane chores that often interrupted me before.

There also isn't the same framework of schedules and deadlines, nor the pressure that accompanies them. Since we enjoy our work and see the need for it, we of course try to get it done as quickly and as thoroughly and well as possible. But it's not done only out of a sense of duty or obligation.--It goes far beyond that.

* * *

We're all *busy* here and it's wonderful! There's such a good balance between doing the things that we have to do, and enjoying all that there is here for us.

* * *

I get to help look in on mommies on earth who are struggling, single mommies. There are so many poor, sad, dejected mommies. They don't understand what's happening, and they feel lost. My biggest desire is to help the ones who have been on drugs, on the streets.

* * *

Up here, things are much simpler. We have our jobs and we do them, one after another. We don't feel the weight or the pressure so much, because we can actually see the heavenly beings and Jesus Himself carry the weights.

* * *

I often help with the children. I help teach them, I tell them stories. I explain to them what life on earth is like, and I care for them and love them and watch over them just like I would my little brothers and sisters if I were back down there again.

* * *

I have not stopped writing since I came here. The heavenly realm is such a fertile world for the imagination. It sets the mind aflame with new ideas, experiences, insights, spiritual truths. The resources that we can access, that we have at our fingertips, are astounding! We can avail ourselves of insight into every person that ever lived on earth, every age and era and historic event, and even more so, for Heaven is so full of wonderment, surprises, and truths.

Jesus takes great pleasure in the workings of our minds, in the curiosity that we display, in the products our imaginations produce. He takes great pleasure in them, for they are praises to Him from us who delight to serve Him with our pens.

* * *

My job in Heaven is to help the many refugees that come here. The refugees are the ones who fled from their lives of selfishness at the last moment, those who with their last breath, on their deathbed or as their

spirits were slipping from their bodies, repented; those who had heard the truth but either had gone against it or were not sure whether they were ready to accept it, but then, when facing the end of their life, they felt the fear of God and wanted to go the right way. These fled to God's kingdom, to God's Heaven when they had literally gained no value and learned no lessons of the true spiritual life. These will enter Heaven, but some need a break, a breather, and so pass through this way station on the way. There are also refugees from the netherworld whose tongues and toes were dipped in the suffering and the torment that is there, who repented and were released and then were admitted into Heaven after a time of waiting and discernment, a time of decision and a time of watching, to see if their hearts had really turned.

So my job is to work with these refugees here in the kingdom of Heaven, although for some of them it's slightly outside of the Heavenly City. My job is to teach them how to give, to teach them the ways of love, to feed the refugees with comfort, love, mercy, understanding, and compassion. To feed them with understanding, and to talk with them. To help them to grow and overcome their wounds. To talk with them about the problems they had in life and why they didn't make [the right] decisions, and to understand them, not to condemn. But then to eventually instruct them in how to grow, how to overcome their bruises and their wounds and their gashes. To help them to mend. This is my job.

I work in the way station. I work with the refugees that are coming across the borders--the borders from life on earth to life after life; from the borders of this world, which is now the Devil's area of operation, to God's Kingdom of Love; from existence in the netherworld to a place of God's mercy. I show them the ways of love, and how they can't really enter until they have agreed and understand in their own hearts the importance of letting love rule.

Love is the rule in God's kingdom. It's not only the rule, though, it's the excitement, it's the thrill and it's the pleasure of God's kingdom. It's the life, and it's the motivating force of God's kingdom. It's something that makes everyone complete and gives everyone the fulfillment that they've always wanted and the excitement that they've always wanted, the love that they've always wanted, the thrill that they've always wanted, the eternal joy and sense of accomplishment and fulfillment and purpose.

* * *

I spend a lot of time whispering ideas and speaking to those on earth who are sincere seekers of truth. I myself wrestled and struggled with deep and weighty questions and mind tangles. So in my life here, I am allowed to try to get through to those who seek and instruct them, whisper to them, and help them understand, help them grasp the spiritual and the way God works.

CHAPTER 10

Forgiveness At Last!

We've all done things that were wrong and acted in ways that to some degree or another hurt others or messed things up for them. Some of us have also suffered at the hands of others, and we resent them for that. Many of us carry a burden of either guilt or grudge around with us through life, some finding or giving forgiveness, others not. The following accounts are from those who had to settle their accounts with those they had hurt or been hurt by once they arrived in Heaven, and how they went about seeking forgiveness or learning to accept it.

#

I took someone's life. It was not intentional, but nevertheless, I was the one at fault. It was a terrible accident, and had I been a little more alert, had I not had too much to drink and thus been distracted and slow at the wheel, the boy would not have died. I could not accept that I would truly be forgiven. I felt I would need to somehow pay for my sin, and thus I carried it around with me everywhere for the rest of my earthly life.

When I arrived here, I was taken aback by the love and mercy that was shown to me. Jesus greeted me and held me in His strong arms for the longest while. My family was there, and they, too, didn't mention a word about my negligence, but rather took me in their arms with complete love and acceptance. I thought perhaps there had been some mistake, or that they hadn't yet found out.

But when I saw who else was there to greet me, I knew I was wrong. The boy whose life had been cut short was there. And not only him, but his loved ones and closest friends who had since passed on. They all greeted me so joyfully, so lovingly. They were happy to see me! They knew I had done them wrong, and yet they loved me anyway!

But I had to accept their forgiveness. I had to humbly acknowledge my fault and then put it behind me. I had to show them that I accepted their forgiveness, and that I would also strive to build the love between us. It was a two-way street. They needed me to accept it as much as I needed it for my own sake and peace of mind.

The Lord knew I was ready, so He planned that all that would happen as soon as I arrived. It's not like that with everyone, though. Some people are not yet ready to forgive or be forgiven, so they face that decision later, after they've had time to adjust to the heavenly life. But the Lord knew that the weight on my shoulders was so heavy that I wouldn't progress or acclimate properly unless I accepted forgiveness. And oh, what a difference it made!

I wish I'd accepted the Lord's forgiveness long ago, for I could have done so much more with my life and could have been a much greater blessing to others. I would have had to wait to accept this young man's forgiveness, for he'd passed over to the other side before I did, but accepting the Lord's forgiveness would have given me the peace in my heart that would have given me a happier life on earth, being able to freely forgive and be forgiven by others.

* * *

(From a husband to his wife:) I've talked to your mom and dad, and we've made up and forgiven each other for all the disagreements and hurts of the past. We're all reconciled; everything is understood. Some of the grudges and the walls that had built up between us were really over such small issues. We can see that now, and we can get those things out of the way, and it's great!

* * *

I used to tease one of my classmates. Her name was Rosemary, and she had buckteeth, big ears, and freckles. On top of that, she always seemed to smell bad, seemed like she hadn't brushed her hair all week, and looked like nobody owned her. I thought I had every right to tease her, and felt justified in doing so. Instead of helping her out as a friend, I was killing her with my words, with my tongue, with my looks, with my gossip--all seemingly "for fun."

After two years she moved to a different school, and years later I found out that she'd gotten into drugs and died of an overdose. All I could say at the time was "poor girl," as my heart was so numb that I didn't even feel the prick of my conscience, and I didn't take any notice of the memory of how badly I had treated her.

Years went by and I had a short-lived career in modeling, which ended

abruptly after an overdose of diet pills and other pills that I took to keep my weight down and to achieve the matchstick figure that was in vogue. I never had a chance to receive Jesus while on earth, so at the time of my death and entry into the spirit world, I was given the chance to ask Him into my heart. I gratefully accepted.

I was shown my whole life--the good and the bad. Unfortunately, I'm ashamed to say that the bad far outweighed the good. After seeing my whole life scroll before me like a movie, I had some major thinking to do. What could I do? Could anything be done to undo the damage that I'd done? I won't elaborate on all of the wrong things that I had done, but I will tell you about Rosemary.

I learned that I had played a part in her self-degradation through my teasing and belittling, which had eventually led to her depression, drug use, and final death. It took me a good amount of time to gain the courage to go and see her. I had to get my heart right first; I had to ask Jesus for forgiveness, then I had to humble myself and ask Rosemary for forgiveness.

I went over to her mansion, and she was so kind to me. She invited me in and showed me around. The whole time my heart was feeling so ashamed as I realized that she held no grudges against me. She loved me in spite of what I had done to her. I asked for her forgiveness, which she readily gave me, then I felt a warm sensation all through my body. I heard Jesus' voice in my heart saying, "Old things are passed away; all things are now new." Since then we've become best friends.

By the way, Rosemary's beautiful now--or maybe it's just that I never noticed the beauty that was there before because I was so busy looking at the imperfections. I'm sure that with a little more love and understanding and attention when she was young, she could have blossomed and become more beautiful. But she never had the chance to do so, because we put her down so much.

This is only one example from my life. I had to ask forgiveness of so many people. It's not easy to ask for forgiveness; it never is. In fact, in Heaven it's a little more difficult, because you're faced with the full realization of what you've done, how you've affected another's life, as well as the disappointment that you've caused Jesus. But, you have to forgive and ask forgiveness. There's no way I could have lived with the thought of what I'd done to others. I had to ask for forgiveness, even though it was hard, because that's the only way you can have perfect peace in Heaven.

But the most beautiful thing about forgiveness in Heaven is that once

you've been forgiven, all is forgotten--and your sins aren't remembered any more. People don't hold grudges in Heaven, and Jesus' forgiveness sweeps across your life like an ocean wave--leaving you all fresh and new, renewed by the knowledge of His love and mercy.

* * *

Here there is no room for differences held against others. Differences are like an ugly weed in the midst of a beautiful garden. They are so out of place that they can't remain. But it's still a decision that each person must make in their heart--to live in love--and part of living in love is forgiving and being forgiven.

* * *

(Jesus:) Heaven is a place where the hidden things are revealed, the wrongs are made right, and yet people must still choose to forgive those who have wronged them when they arrive here. There are people here in Heaven waiting to meet those they have wronged on earth, for those who have wronged others can never be completely free until that person has forgiven them.

I make everything crystal clear. When two people see how a situation developed, including the feelings and thoughts and motives, often both arrive at the realization that neither was completely in the right, but that in some way or another both were in the wrong. Then it is simply up to them to forgive and make up. It's a requisite for going on in Heaven, for unless the hostilities of earth are left behind completely, your freedom of heart and fulfillment in Heaven will be hindered.

The joy and happiness, the light and freedom washes the soul clean, so that there are only desires to live and love, to forgive and go on to enjoy the ecstasies of the new life. It is your choice, yes, but one which, in My great mercy, love, and desire to see you set free from all the ties of the earth-life, I have made easy, so you can leave it behind forever.

CHAPTER 11

Who Gets in Those Pearly Gates?

Most Christians believe that in order to enter Heaven, you must believe in Jesus and accept His gift of salvation here in this life. However, there have been billions of people throughout history who died without ever having heard of Jesus, or who did not have a clear understanding of Jesus and His love and how to receive Him. When hearing those in Heaven talk about the wonderful love of God, it's hard to imagine that He would be so cruel as to stop the billions of people who never heard about Jesus from entering His heavenly realm. If God is a God of love, if He is fair and just, it seems He would give those who never had sufficient opportunity to hear of or learn about Him in *this* life the opportunity to know and accept Him in the *next*, wouldn't He?

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The simple faith in Jesus that I had learned as a child was of such tremendous value, because it was the key that opened the door to the kingdom of Heaven for me. Such little tiny faith, like a little mustard seed, was enough to open the door to a heavenly paradise and eternal life for me, even though I knew I didn't deserve it! The beauty was overwhelming and the peace of mind and warmth that I felt in my heart was unlike anything I had ever felt before. Suddenly all of my burdens were lifted and I was at peace, and I knew that everything was going to be okay. Then I knew that Jesus, our Savior, the Son of God, was the ruler.

* * *

Amazingly enough, I have seen that those of us who die and enter the spirit world not ever having had a chance to receive Jesus as our Savior--we who were undecided, or who never understood what we needed to do to receive eternal life and passage to Heaven--got our chance over here after we died. When I died, I hadn't realized yet what it meant to accept Jesus, but as soon as I passed over into the spirit world, I was presented with the choice and I immediately accepted. I hardly had to think twice about it. And

as soon as I accepted and believed in Jesus, the Lord granted me access to the heavenly kingdom.

* * *

You might be surprised at some of us who have made it into Heaven. Many of us did not exactly lead exemplary lives, and many of us did not know about Jesus either. But because we didn't know, He didn't judge us just on what we'd done or not done. His first criteria was, what had we been given? What had we been taught? If we knew nothing about God or Jesus or salvation, then He taught us then and there, and gave us an opportunity to understand and to be saved. There are multitudes of us who got here this way.

* * *

I grew up in South Africa during the apartheid era--and I died in it too. I resented the segregation and the way we black people were treated as inferior, and I devoted nearly all my time and energy to trying to protest in whatever way I could. I wanted to change things and make things better. I wanted a better way of life, not only for myself, but for my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and my bride to be, and I was willing to fight for it. I lived a dangerous and violent life, and thus one that was snuffed out while still in its youth.

I did not know much about Jesus. I had heard His name, but from what I had seen, I doubted that He loved or cared about me.

When I left my body and entered the spirit world, a beautiful woman, who looked a lot like my betrothed, came to greet me. She told me how Jesus had seen into my heart and He knew that I wanted to do what was right, that I wanted to help and love and make things better for others, but I didn't know how and so I was led astray. She told me that many of my actions had been wrong and hurt others, but that if I would accept Jesus and His love, He would freely forgive me, and He would teach me His ways.

I felt such love and light from her. And the way she spoke of Jesus, I knew He was powerful, as well as loving, and that this was the truth; this was the right cause to serve in life or in death. I accepted Him, and then was brought into this heavenly kingdom of love and light, where there is peace and unity for all. This is how I longed for the world to be, but I did not know

how to make it so. Now I know the truth, now I know the way of salvation, and I thank God for His mercy.

* * *

When I left my earthly body and entered the world of the spirit, I had no idea what I was embarking upon. I was completely ignorant of any and all spiritual truths. I had no idea what was happening. I didn't know there was a life after life; I didn't know who or what God was. I had heard of God, but grew up in an atheistic home surrounded by atheistic parents, relatives, and friends, in a society where God and religion were considered something old-fashioned, outdated. It was a materialistic life.

I was considered successful and my family had always been well off, but I always felt an emptiness, an ache in my heart. I couldn't shake the feeling that something was missing. Perhaps I was too busy, or just too ignorant, to go about searching for something more. But if I would have found the truth, if someone would have told me about the deep things of life or explained the story of Jesus and how I could receive eternal life and salvation and access to Heaven through asking Him into my heart, I believe I would have done so.

I wanted something more than what my life had offered me up until that point. I just didn't know what I was looking for, or where to start looking. Thus I lived out my miserable and empty existence on earth, devoid of meaning or purpose, until I passed away after a brief but terminal illness when I was in my 50s.

As the blackness of the tunnel swirled around me, I was met by an angel of light, a messenger from Heaven, who revealed the truth to me. My eyes were opened; my mind was enlightened; my soul was at last made alive. I was elated, delighted, overjoyed at the opportunity I was receiving. I accepted Jesus and His message, and was admitted to Heaven. I still had much to learn, but I was here, and how grateful and unworthy I felt.

I also felt a sadness, a disappointment, upon realizing how much fuller and richer a life I'd have had on earth if I had known the truth. I knew some people who called themselves Christians, but they never told or showed me anything that would have helped me realize what I was missing out on. I had passed by churches, but their icy atmosphere drove me away.

I could have done something useful with my life. I could have had fulfillment and enlightenment. I could have been a more loving and caring

father and husband. I could have kept my marriage together and taught my children about God rather than have them continue on in the bitter atheistic tradition. I could have helped others in need who were sad and empty. I would have done good deeds for the poor and those who had no one to care for them had I realized that it meant something to God if I would do so.

I can't excuse every bad thing I did or good thing I didn't do, but I can say that I truly wish someone would have shared the truth with me. I'm glad I have it now, but I would have given anything to have it in my life on earth. I've been up here quite awhile now, but I'm still nowhere near to having with the great wisdom and power that those who entered here having known Jesus on earth have. I'm a ways behind them and it'll take me some time to catch up. That's just the way it works. I was given great mercy and was rescued by God's amazing grace, and my life is now wonderful and beautiful. My life on earth, though, was in fact a living death.

* * *

It's difficult to understand exactly what happens or what the process [of salvation] is until you leave the flesh behind and come over here, to the world of the spirit. Only once you're in this world beyond, once you pass on to the other side, can you fully understand how it all works. Then you can see the vastness of the Lord's mercy and His love and how He operates.

Some enter the spirit world and immediately have a chance to enter the Heavenly City if they accept Jesus. Others are not quite ready to be saved and have to go to limbo, purgatory, or hell, for a time, in order to atone for some of their sins and repent. But that doesn't mean their chance has ended, either, or that they won't be given an opportunity to enter Heaven in due time. There are many factors involved, and the main one is what each person chooses whether or not they are ready to accept the Lord and go His way. Not all are, but all have a chance, all are given sufficient opportunity. Only the Lord knows and understands the heart, and He judges fairly and righteously in every case. None is thrown out or cast aside without being given the opportunity, whether in this life or the next, to enter Heaven's gates.

* * *

You might wonder, if some of us can come over to the other side

without having known or received the truth, and still get our chance to enter Heaven, then what's the advantage of confirming your ticket to Heaven while you're still on earth? Speaking as one who did turn to God, albeit only in the final years of my life, I can testify that it does have its payoffs. In the Bible Jesus told His disciples that those who believe without seeing are more blessed than those who see and then believe (John 20:29). Our lives on earth are an age of grace, an age of decision. God's given each of us a mind and will of our own, and all He does is present the truth to us and let us decide whether we want to accept it.

There's something He really loves about pure and simple faith--the kind that doesn't wait for a sign or proof of any kind. He gives some people proof, if they need it, in the form of some kind of sign or miracle--but even those take some faith to believe in, don't you agree? I never saw any proof--that is, other than looking around at this beautiful world and knowing Somebody must have put it together. Plus I just had a feeling inside me, an instinctive knowledge, perhaps, that when I died I'd meet my Maker, no matter how much I'd claimed before I didn't believe I had one.

I'm telling you, the Big Man honored my simple decision of faith, and when I came here, would you believe it, He told me I was in line for the "more blessed" title. Everyone who enters these gates is blessed beyond description, but, believe it or not, there are some special little treats the Lord saves for some. Just like He rewards us in part according our works, and some receive more reward than others because they did more for Him, likewise those who had more faith on earth get a few extra benefits compared to those who make it here after their life on earth, after their personal "age of grace" has ended.

* * *

(Jesus:) There are many who come to Me [in death] day in and day out who know Me not, who did not hear of Me, who did not understand Me, who did not understand My role, My salvation. Do you think that I cast these aside as worthless and as irredeemable? Would this be love?

There are multitudes who come unto Me who have known Me not, but who have not rejected Me. These I gather into My arms and love, for I judge them by their hearts, by that which they knew, by the love that they showed, by the obedience to that which they knew to be right--whether by their law or whether by their heart. These I receive, and they learn of Me. They learn

of My truth. As they begin to understand, so do they receive Me, and so they are accepted, and so do they have their salvation.

I am merciful. I look to the hearts of these and I know what is there and I judge accordingly. Those who have truly rejected Me have truly rejected their ticket to Heaven. But those who, because of the ways of the world, because of their culture, because of what they understand and believe to be true, know Me not, or who receive Me not because they do not understand, I look upon with great mercy and great love. These do I judge according to their heart, according to My love, and these do I show the truth and slowly bring along and teach and train, that they may know and understand My salvation and receive Me.

CHAPTER 12

Do We Really Reap What We've Sown?

Will we be blessed for the good and judged for the wrong we've done? Since God forgives, will the bad things we do just be forgotten about or ignored? Does God keep books on all of us and really notice everything we do? And how will our deeds and decisions here and now affect how things turn out for us up there? Upon arriving in Heaven, do we have regrets about the life we lived on earth, the big dreams that were never realized, or possibly even more so, what we lived for that seemed so important at the time?

#

I'm ashamed to admit that I ever questioned while I was on earth whether God was always really completely just or not, because one thing that's plain here is that God is fair. It all comes back to you in Heaven; your deeds follow you.

I trudged along for 30 long years, day after day, working in that mail room. Through thick and thin, I stuck it out and tried to be cheerful and bring a little happiness into the lives of all those who passed my way. I determined to always stay positive, no matter how I felt, and my motto was "Smile, darn ya, smile." I figured folks needed some cheer in the bleak world around us.

And wouldn't ya know, here I arrive in Heaven only to find that some of those big guys who were higher up in the company are now shining my shoes! Well, that's just a figure of speech; we really don't have to shine shoes in Heaven, but I thought I'd put it in terms you folks can relate to. The point is that some of those wayward executives who were involved in a little shady conduct on earth are now having to take a few grades over, while some of us mail clerks--take me, for example--we're supervising and overseeing that lot!

God has given me a high-ranking position in Heaven all because I steadily stayed positive and cheerful those many years, no matter how I felt inside.

* * *

I always knew that God was fair and just and righteous and good, but

when I got up here and found what the Lord had in store for me, I saw that He was way more than fair!

All those years I stood by and watched Richard take the glory and credit when I knew it was my idea in the first place. I was the one who had the idea, I was the one who did the inventing. I was the one who constructed that masterpiece, who made that patent possible, who egged Richard on and pumped him up with the vision to market “our” prize-winning invention. We were going to make it big, get a big break, and have smooth sailing from then on. Business was smooth sailing all right--for Richard, who to my surprise made off with the patent, took all the credit to himself, only to leave me behind in the dust.

All those years, as I struggled to make ends meet, I could never bring myself to fight him in court. I figured it would catch up to him sooner or later. Well, it finally did. God knew my heart and He knew Richard’s heart, and up here in Heaven it all evens out.

I spend my days honored as one of the heavenly inventors as I enjoy the amazing inner workings of the universe. I even get to help the Lord on different projects in the works, while Richard, he’s in retraining. He’s in rehab now, having to learn about honesty, harmony and unity and working together in teamwork.

* * *

At first, for a split second I was very nervous as I was escorted to view my life, because I knew in my heart exactly what my greatest lost opportunity had been. Then, as Jesus so lovingly and gently held my hand and introduced me to my daughter, all my fears vanished. I could feel peace and love and great warmth. Still, I felt some sorrow as well. How could I have ever aborted this precious life that He sent me to love and care for while I was on earth? Jesus wiped away my tears as I sat and watched what might have been her life on earth, had I not stood in the way by making that rash decision for fear of what others would say.

It was painful to realize all the lives on earth that would miss her presence and never know the joy of her smile, the kindness of her spirit, and her heavenly ways. Those moments were difficult. Yet in His love and mercy the Lord was giving me a chance to make amends. Gladly I accepted His offer to work with the children in the heavenly nursery. I’m so very happy to at last know my own little one.

This is part of the great mercy of God--that I'm now able to care for the same child I rejected on earth. At last I'm able to learn how to be the mother I refused to be on earth. I feel very unworthy of this second chance, to be able to get to know my daughter and to love her, and to learn all the important lessons of motherhood that I missed down there.

* * *

When I got to Heaven I could see things so much clearer than before. I saw that all my good works on earth were nothing without my love. I saw that all those long hours I put in at work, sometimes 15 or 16 a day, to provide those extra material luxuries for my family, didn't hold a candle to the real values in life that I failed to give them. I saw clearly how deceptive worldly wealth and riches can be when we allow those things to monopolize us and be the center of our lives. I began to see clearer that what my wife and kids really needed and desired all along was *me*--my time, my heart, my understanding, my listening ear, and my love. I saw that they would rather have had a little more of me and a little less material wealth if it meant we could enjoy the true pleasures of life together.

I saw more clearly what the true values in life are--love and the Lord--and that material possessions did not bring lasting happiness. I saw that the simple joys of life are the true riches--a walk, a talk, taking the time to enjoy a sunset--and how I had sadly missed out on these while I was on earth. I saw that true satisfaction in life comes from the simplicity of Jesus and that it's wise to be simple. I saw that true happiness comes in making someone else happy, not in seeking it for myself. I saw that truly loving and caring and providing for my family was not in trying to make an extra buck in order to "keep up with the Joneses" but in opening my heart and life to them, in being there when my loved ones need a shoulder to lean on, a hug or a kiss, or a listening ear.

* * *

When I was on earth God was calling me to take more of a hand in caring for the employees that I had in my care. One thousand factory workers were under me, and I held the power in my hands to greatly improve their working and living conditions. I wasn't a complete tyrant. I was friendly. I did help them out here and there, but I failed to do all that I could do.

Up here, you're held accountable for your life on earth--not only for what you did, but for what you didn't do that you knew you should have. There's no escaping that. While I was on earth, God wanted me to stand up and fight for better job benefits for those employees in my care. I had the power to help them get better health care and I failed to push it through. Then I made the grand faux pas of all time in failing to help institute our own company-run day care center. God was trying to speak to my heart about this, yet I was afraid. I was reluctant to stick my neck out, afraid to buck the tide of those who opposed the plan for selfish reasons.

My problem was I tried to please all the people all the time, and I often found myself caught between a rock and a hard place, between trying to please higher management and doing what I knew in my heart was right for labor.

Now I know that if I only had followed God, if I only had followed through on what He was trying to lead me to do, everything would have worked out just fine. God would have provided and guided and worked it all out, even against all odds. God knows what He's doing, and it pays to follow what He is speaking to your heart about.

But God is fair and just, because now I'm getting my chance. Now I'm learning to follow through, to be responsible, because now I know I'm accountable. Here in Heaven I'm learning to not only listen to the voice of the Lord when He tells me to do something, but to follow through on what He says.

* * *

(From an entertainer:) There are lots of laughs here in Heaven, but there weren't many for me for a long time, because I didn't arrive a great celebrity, but rather in shame and contempt for refusing the Lord when He asked me on many occasions to lift Him up. I sure knew how to tell a good joke and make the crowds laugh. I wasn't shy by any means, but sad to say, time and time again when I had the opportunity to mention God, I didn't. I simply chose to ignore Him. I knew He was speaking to my heart, telling me to mention His name, to include Him in my scripts, to acknowledge His existence, but I wouldn't.

Here I was standing in front of large audiences day after day, week after week, and people listened to me. I held their attention; I had a captive audience night after night and I failed to get in a mention about God's love

and all the good things He had done in my life. I didn't give Him the credit for saving me out of the slums and giving me a useful life where I could make others happy.

All those times when my fans and admirers would praise me and tell me how great I was, how talented I was--what did I do? Did I ever acknowledge the Lord, point to Him, and remind people where all that talent came from? No, not once. I took the credit to myself and I gloried in it. Time and time again, I simply kept my mouth shut, choosing rather to let people draw their own conclusions.

I should have been willing to give God the credit in front of others, or at least acknowledge that He was the one who had given me the talent, and that I was thankful to Him above all. I saw that part of God's plan for my life was to bring Him to others, or help others to come to know Him better through little things. Even though on earth I had a very successful career, when I came here I found my life appeared very empty, because I hadn't fulfilled God's primary purpose for my life, just because I was too proud to bring Him into the picture the many times that He asked me to. This was my sad failure and my sad story.

* * *

I knew immediately that I was getting exactly what I deserved. This time in Heaven to learn lessons on giving is just what I needed, to somehow try to make up for all those times I refused to give, all those times I passed up the poor and selfishly hoarded my material goods, all those times I enjoyed the luxury of comfortable living, while those around me, even some in my own community, went hungry, were cold and lacked the basic necessities of life. Yes, I know good and well that I deserve this time of relearning, I have so much to learn about giving.

* * *

Some of us up here have had to face our lost opportunities. Jesus in His love and mercy is able to soothe the hurts and help us to learn and grow and make amends. Sooner or later, each one needs to make the grade, and what is not learned there on earth will catch up with you.

* * *

Some folks just have to learn the hard way and I'm one of them. What I refused to learn down here, I'm now having to learn up here, and that is that it pays to go slow and enjoy life along the way. Life in the fast lane for me didn't lend itself to taking time out for others. There was too much to get done, or so I thought, to afford the time to slow down and show genuine love and concern for those around me--my family, friends, business associates, and acquaintances.

I was always on the go, a devout workaholic. The word "relax" didn't enter my vocabulary, and I simply didn't know what it meant to take time out for others, just to be together and share our lives. Life was one big go, go, go experience for me, until the very end. In fact, it was the frantic fast pace I kept that put me in my grave too soon. I was not only talking on the cell phone with my mind racing full of facts and figures that day my car came crashing to a halt, I was speeding way over the limit as well, rushing to cram one more business appointment into my already very hectic day.

But now I'm learning what it means to slow down and get a good balance between necessary work and spending time to enjoy life and others around me. And would you believe? Ha! You want to know the corker about this whole process? My mentor up here in Heaven, the one who is assigned to teach me the art of slowing down and moving at a godly pace and taking the necessary time to show love and appreciation to those around me is Mr. Zazinski, that ol' rascal, my neighbor who lived across the street, of all people!

Funny how I always felt sorry for him after his illness. I remember thinking, "Poor guy, he really can't do much now and he has to take things at a much slower pace." But now I'm seeing he was much better off than I was all along. He had time for his family and friends and loved ones, time to love and care, time to share all the simple joys of life. This is what I'm having to learn now.

Nobody is in a hurry in Heaven. God didn't intend for man to live in the fast lane. Everything and everybody here moves along at a graceful and peaceful pace, in perfect synchronization and harmony.

* * *

Each person is handled and judged according to what they've been given and according to what they did with it. God is a righteous God, and

everybody gets rewarded and handled accordingly.

* * *

(Jesus:) I do not judge all men by one rigid standard. I judge each one as an individual, according to what I see in their heart. I do not compare one person to another. I bring each through their various experiences, the tests and crossroads of life, and I judge them according to their decisions. I do not judge one according to the deeds or actions or choices or opportunities of another. I judge each one according to their own worth, their own choices, and reward accordingly. Each one is weighed according to their own counterbalance.

I judge not according to the manner of the law, but according to the manner of love. For each one is an individual. Each one is individually loved by Me. Each one is individually judged and rewarded according to My Love, according to My wisdom, and according to My justice--the justice of love, the justice of understanding.

* * *

In a flash, it's as if my memory was opened. Every detail of college days became alive and very clear in my mind. I had forgotten all those details--how stubborn I was, how hurtful I was in my speech, and how I thoughtlessly and cold-heartedly spread all that ugly gossip just to look good in the eyes of others. And then I began to see clearly how these bad habits had spilled over into my adult life. As I remembered all these details, I knew I was receiving my just rewards.

I had to go apologize and make amends. I had to speak to each person I had hurt who was already up here, and to the others whenever they would arrive, and tell them I was wrong and I was sorry. I had to ask for and accept their forgiveness, and some of them had been very hurt, and it wasn't easy for them to forgive. Many of them told me their stories of how the unkind or hurtful things I had said or done affected them, how I had influenced or tarnished their lives or happiness in some way. Having to sit through those sessions, during which I could see things through their eyes and feel what they felt in their hearts, made me more sorry every minute. I know the Lord has forgiven me, and they have as well, but I still felt very guilty for a while, and very pained because of the pain I had inflicted on others. I had to feel

their pain, I had to be put in their place and find myself at the other end of my sharp tongue and unkind manner.

* * *

I was born into a Christian home and I knew all about God and His love, but sad to say, I was lazy in my Christian life. I thought one hour of my time on Sunday and a few extra thrown in throughout the year for special holidays--Christmas, Easter, and an occasional wedding or death in the family--were all I could afford to give God. Following tradition, I faithfully tithed my earnings, knowing it was the expected thing to do, but when I arrived up here, I had to face a rude awakening.

I was not shown all that I had done for Christ, but all that I had *not* done. My meager 10% tithe didn't hold water to all the savings I had left over. God wasn't looking at what I gave, He was looking at what I had left--and sad to say, I wasted those large sums of money on selfish, frivolous living. God wasn't looking at that one hour I put in on Sunday, sitting in that church pew half-asleep, as much as He was looking at how I lived all week long. He was looking at how many times I reached out to others, how many times I showed His love to others throughout the day, how many times I lent a listening ear, how many times I extended a helping hand, how many times I offered my services to others, and how many times I was a sample of Christian love, not only in my words but in my actions. He was looking at how many times I took the opportunity to speak to others about His love all week long. He was looking to see how faithful I was to live the truth I had been given.

Sad to say, my rewards match the way I lived.--I gave little of myself down there, and I've received equal proportion up here. I gave poorly, and I have received poorly. It's not that I've received nothing--for I did give of my time, services, and finances somewhat, and the Lord rewarded me for that. I have it better than those who gave nothing to God. But it's obvious to all that compared to what I *could* have received had I given more, and compared to what others here around me have received--people who gave their all, who did all they could for the Lord and to help others--my reward and my honor here is meager by comparison.

CHAPTER 13

Love's Reward

Many judge their success in life by their accomplishments, by the amount of money they make, by the honors they receive, and their good standing in the community. Apparently, though, God looks at things a bit differently than we do. When sizing us up, He looks beyond the deeds we do or don't do and sees into our hearts and examines our motives. So what is the virtue or attribute most rewarded by God?

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(Jesus:) Many who have already come here into My heavenly kingdom have been surprised to see the high honor which is given to love, and the great reward bestowed on those who lived in love. The unseen acts of love, kindness, and giving are given the greatest honor and blessing here. For to be loving is more important than riches, more important than accomplishments, more important than acclaim, fame, or popularity. To be loving is the greatest destiny anyone could fulfill.

* * *

I was a dairy farmer, and I had a few odd crops on the side to help feed my family. My parents were rich once upon a time, but during the Great Depression they lost it all. I was only a young boy at the time, barely 9 years old, but I remember the great loss and how it affected my mother and father. My father turned into an alcoholic, and my mother turned to God. Unfortunately, my father's drinking led him to his death shortly thereafter, which was a sad loss to us all--my mother, my three little sisters, and me.

I was tempted to get bitter at God and everyone else for what had happened to us, for the losses that we suffered, but my mother drew us to her as she drew nigh to God. Slowly, we joined her in her times of worship, and grew up trusting in Him--after all, we had nothing else to put our faith in, we had nothing else to depend on, no assets, no money, and barely enough

food.

The years passed and we never lacked; we never missed a meal. I studied dairy farming and slowly but surely we began to increase our herd until we were able to sell the milk as a means of support. Life wasn't luxurious, but it was good, and we always tried to share what little we had with others. We knew what it was like to be in want, and we also knew that God often likes to use people to answer the prayers of others. I shared what little I had with those in need, and tried to be kind to others less fortunate than myself.

I lived to a ripe old age, surrounded by my beautiful children and grandchildren. When I got to Heaven I didn't expect to find many rewards for me. But Jesus was so loving; He took me in His arms and said: "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, you have done it unto Me" (Matthew 25:40). He told me that love was the most important thing, and that because I had loved, He had a beautiful mansion prepared for me, and rewards to boot.

I felt bad because I wondered if I could have done more for Jesus, but He said that I had done what I could. He said that I had done the very best with what I was given. I had loved. He said to me, "I don't judge you by your great accomplishments, I judge you by your love. I called you to a simple life, and because you lived that life in love, you are greatly rewarded. No matter what his calling in life, everyone is called to love."

* * *

While I lived on earth I was too proud to ever admit I needed others. I had tried to live my life like an island, alone and to myself, independent of others. I refused to open my heart to anyone. I shared my innermost thoughts and feelings, longings, and desires with myself and myself alone. I was a loner, and consequently I lived a selfish life. After all, pride, selfishness, and the independent life all go hand in hand.

I had many talents, and in spite of my self-centered disposition, I was successful in the business world. Therefore I had many acquaintances, but sad to say, no real friends. Women chased me for my money. I had many affairs, lots of sex, but no real love because I wasn't willing to truly open my heart to another. As far as I was concerned, there was no room in my life to share intimately with another.

It was my own mother all through the years who would faithfully chide

me. She'd tell me that if I'd only reach out and act kindly to people, show them love and consideration and go out of my way to help them--even if I didn't exactly feel like doing it, or didn't consider them "special" or "worthy"--then happiness would find me in return, but I refused. I didn't want to be bothered.

Here in Heaven at last I'm learning to love. I'm learning here what I refused to learn there: to set aside my pride and selfish ways and open my heart to others. And it's wonderful. I've come alive as I discover a whole new world of life and love.

I have many helpers and sweet heavenly folks to teach me about love, giving, needing others, and sharing my heart. And Mom, bless her heart, she's right here to always encourage me and cheer me on. At last her dreams are coming true. Her prayers are being answered and I'm learning that no man is an island.

* * *

It's so rewarding to come to Heaven and find the sweet fulfillment of the saying that "you reap what you sow." I had lived my life peacefully and quietly, just trying to be the best mother and wife I could, and also a good neighbor, to lend a listening ear or a helping hand whenever I could. It sure paid off! So many people, some of whom I had even forgotten doing anything for, have come to thank me and want to be my friends here. Everything I did for Jesus and for others, everything I did out of kindness and in love has been rewarded.

* * *

I thought I was a great person on earth. I was rich. I was famous. I was a star. But I didn't treat people very well or very kindly--especially those who I looked down on for one reason or another. I didn't realize what a bigot I was. I thought I was pretty open-minded, but in looking back over my life I see how in my mind, attitudes, and actions, I put others down and was inconsiderate of them, especially those of lower income, or a lower class or position in society.

Now in Heaven, facing those who on earth lived for others and were constantly loving and giving, and seeing how they have been rewarded by the Lord, as well as rewarded by the love and appreciation from those they were

kind to, makes me ashamed. I see I wasn't so great after all, and a lot of what I accomplished doesn't count for much up here. If I would have been kinder, if I would have looked into each person and not just at them, I would have been able to take advantage of so many opportunities to give love--but sadly, as I was so full of myself and striving to fulfill my own ambitions, I missed these priceless privileges.

* * *

I was a busy and hardworking man. I loved my wife and my family, and I thought I showed that sufficiently through what I did for them. When we came here to Heaven together, after we died in an accident, I was shocked to see that the way they saw me was quite different from the way I saw myself. They felt like I ignored them, like I didn't care much about them, and it was because I didn't put my feelings into words and tell them how much I cared about them. I just didn't take the time for them. All my hard work didn't mean much to them, or to God, because I was missing out on what matters most, both in this life and the next--love!

* * *

My mother was even more of a saint than I realized. I always knew she was special. I always felt that caring touch from her. Well, it was more than that. My mother not only showered kindness and compassion on me and my brothers, but she was like that with everyone. I mean everyone, from a distant relative to a beggar or peddler. That was her life, that was the way she was. It was because of her deep love for the Lord and her commitment to do what she could to bring His love into the lives of others.

She always seemed to have time to speak a kind word or to lend a hand to someone, whenever they needed it, whether it was convenient for her or not. Others always came first. That's what counts most in God's eyes, so when she came up here, boy, did the love and rewards for her abound! The Lord was so proud of her, so pleased with her. She still cries tears of joy when talking about the words He spoke to her. And there are so many others up here who are eternally grateful to her for her loving care and concern, and that's a great reward to her!

I should have been more like her. I saw her example and how beautiful it was. If I had followed it, I would have had both a richer life on earth and

greater fulfillment when I arrived here in Heaven, knowing I had done all I could to share God's love with others, when He had taken such good care of me and given me a mother who showed me His love.

* * *

I've seen that when you come over here and see things from this side, it's amazing how your priorities change and how differently you see things. Really, the only thing that matters is how much you love--your love for the Lord, and your love for Him that is manifested in love for others.

CHAPTER 14

The School of Repentance

Not everyone who arrives in Heaven receives the same wonderful and glorious rewards. As was mentioned earlier, there is a type of merit system for good and loving deeds, and there are consequences to be faced for wrongdoing.

The accounts in this book show that if a person accepted Jesus at some time in his life, he is admitted to Heaven no matter what direction his life ended up going. But in a case where someone, although destined for Heaven, turns to a life of crime or destruction, how does God handle him once he gets there? Is he instantly a full-fledged heavenly citizen, or are there some things he has to do first? Find out in the following testimonials from those who made it to Heaven, albeit carrying great burdens because of the wrongs they had done.

#

On earth, I didn't live a good life or a loving life. You might wonder then how I made it to Heaven. When I was a child I said a sincere prayer to receive the gift of God's love, Jesus, into my heart, and from then on I was saved. However, as I grew older I rejected the truth that I knew, and slowly my heart grew harder and harder, and I became more callous and unfeeling in the things I did.

I was successful in the eyes of the world.--I was a lawyer, and I defended people who I knew were guilty. I lied and pulled all sorts of tricks to get them off, all the time knowing that they were guilty of murder, theft, deceit, and terribly ruining other people's lives. Because my heart was so hardened, I didn't see it that way. I was just doing it to make money, and for the fame and position that my work afforded me. What I didn't see was behind the scenes--how I was hurting and even killing innocent people by helping these guys go free.

Sure, I knew they were guilty, but I wondered, "What's one more in today's world?" That is, until it affected me personally. One of my

clients--who confessed everything to me in a moment of desperation, and became afraid that I might expose him for the crimes he had committed, which were much more than the minor infractions he was on trial for--murdered me in the night. I'm thankful for that now, as I was only getting deeper and deeper into evil, and more and more hardened to the voice of truth.

Since being here, I've seen how wrong I was. I've received forgiveness, but not without being very, very sorry as I watched the lives I hurt, the effects of my actions, and the irreparable damage which was done. Well, you might say, it's not really irreparable, because in Heaven everything is made right. Yes, that's true, but I'll never be able to go back and undo the choices I made, which affected lives on earth. Once those people pass on to the next world, they're also given a chance, a choice, if they haven't already received Jesus, or had ample opportunity to do so, and they're given a new life according to their own choices--not affected by anything that I did to them. So they'll have a start at a whole new and beautifully happy life, which in time will wipe away all traces of the difficulties they experienced. But in the meantime, it's very difficult to see them suffer because of my wrong choices. I would much rather have been exposed down there on earth and suffered the consequences for my sins earlier on, rather than to have continued on and caused more hurt and suffering.

But Jesus is very merciful, and He forgave me the moment I asked for forgiveness. All those who have passed on who my life on earth affected negatively have also forgiven me, and the slate is wiped clean between us. I'm so thankful for the undeserved mercy that I've been shown.

All that to say, while there is no punishment here like the kind I would think of on earth, there is punishment in that you receive just consequences for your actions, just enough to make you truly sorry in your heart and repentant. Sometimes part of the punishment is doing something to make the circumstances right again. Sometimes it's having to see how others were hurt because of your offenses. In every case, though, it's dealt out with great love and fairness, and only continues for as long as is needed to learn the lesson. Then it's over and done with, forgiven, and put behind you. At times I've been allowed to help from this side to try to make things right, and the wonderful thing is that some situations can be helped and made right again. Others I can only pray for, and trust that when the dear ones come to this side, I'll be able to seek their forgiveness and do what I can to show them my repentance.

* * *

Believe it or not, I made it to Heaven. It wasn't those trips to church that mom insisted on that got me here, it was the simple prayer I said as a child to receive Jesus into my heart. That simple prayer was my ticket to salvation. That got me in, but I sure didn't have much to show when I got here, and it was a mighty rude awakening. Outside of my stealing habit, I always thought I wasn't so bad a fellow, ya know? I didn't have many good works that went on before me--but I sure had a whole long line of bad ones to pay for. That's how it works over here on this side--good or bad, you reap what you sow.

I never got caught red-handed. Well, not until that last stunt that landed me in my grave. All that time, I thought I was gettin' away with it. Since I never got caught, there were no immediate repercussions, so I thought it was done and over with. This led me into a false sense of security.

In looking back, I see that it would have been much easier to have gotten caught and straightened out, because, believe me, all that time I thought I was fooling others and gettin' away with something, man, I wasn't gettin' away with nothin'! It was all goin' down, getting recorded, and the consequences for my bad works were stockpiling for me up here! Your works follow you. Good or bad, they all follow you; there's no two ways about it and no escaping it.

I've had to go through rehab. I've had to see the error of my ways, and try to undo the harm and damage that I'd done. The biggest hurt I've had to face is that many people's lives were hurt and changed and affected because of my wrong choices, because I died before my time, because I failed them, and went miserably astray from the path my life should have taken. Even though the Lord has forgiven me, and eventually all will be made right, I still can't go back and change the past, and I'll have to spend all eternity living with that reality.

Take my word on this, you won't want to face that kind of shame and pain up here.--That's all I can say. It's not what I would have chosen. If I could only go back to earth and do it over again, I would never have done the same. Man, are you kidding? No way!

In order to help me see the seriousness of my deeds, to help me see where I had gotten so off track, so I could receive healing and forgiveness here, Jesus, in His loving mercy, took me for a walk one day. We walked and talked and took a look at my life on earth, and He opened up to me some

amazing truths. It was so clear; in living color right before my eyes, the truth unfolded. He showed me what was behind the scenes--how through hardening my heart and turning away from the truth and love I'd once been given, I'd opened myself up to be influenced by evil. The Devil wanted to corrupt me and destroy me and use me to hurt others, and he was able to get me to do quite a bit of damage. If I'd held on to the simple faith I had when I was a child, I would have had the strength to resist and refuse his temptations.--But I didn't.

Remember, whatever you do down there makes a difference up here! It's preparing the way for up here! It's what's up here that counts! Up here is forever! Man, up here is all eternity! You're not going to want to have any flack up here, or have to mess around with relearning things you should have learned there, or righting a whole lot of wrongs you shouldn't have done down there.

* * *

I've learned from my own experience and from observing how things operate here in Heaven that the basis for divine forgiveness is that people seek it, they desire it. They're truly repentant and contrite. They know they've sinned and are sorry for those sins. They're not just saying they're sorry because they know it'll get them out of trouble, but they really are sorry for the trouble or hurt they've caused or wrong they've done. When people have that kind of attitude and that seeking of forgiveness on earth *before* they go to Heaven, then the Lord doesn't have to make them go through the school of repentance, the school that involves some suffering for their own sins in order to soften their heart and make it penitent.

Those who are saved, or who accept the Lord's salvation, even though they don't fully realize how wrongly they lived and thus are not sorry or repentant, the Lord allows to be brought to true repentance in Heaven by the school of repentance, where they personally see the consequences of their wrongdoing. But those who seek forgiveness and are truly repentant in their hearts *before* they go to Heaven don't have to go through the same school of repentance and suffering in Heaven, because they're already sorry for their sins.

The Lord allows some suffering of the conscience in Heaven, even though He ultimately will bring them peace through His forgiveness. He will wipe away all tears, but some of those tears are there for some people

because they need to repent, *then* He can wipe them away.

* * *

Although it was very beautiful to experience the wonderful love and mercy of Jesus, and to see how the Lord had forgiven me long ago for all my sins, there was still some work that I had to do--to do things that I had left undone, and to learn some things that I was meant to learn on earth, but had just chosen not to. With some of the decisions that I made on earth, I wasn't keeping in mind that Heaven is a *continuation* of life on earth.--In some ways it's a whole new start, but in other ways when you leave things unfinished, or you don't learn things that you were supposed to learn on earth, then you have to finish them or learn them when you get here.

The same with the different mistakes I made and even the sins I committed. Those that I was sincerely sorry for on earth and did my best to make right were completely forgiven and not even mentioned to me as something I needed to pay for when I got here. However, those which I was not really sorry for or had only tried to get out of but not really learned the lesson from, or had not tried to make amends for, I had to go back to and see the effects of, and that was very difficult for me. It was like whatever was unfinished on earth, I went back to in Heaven. But those things which I'd learned or completed or made right on earth, although they were a part of my life's review, they were clearly in the past; they were completely forgiven, and no charges were held against me.

* * *

(From a former head of state who sent many young men into a cruel war:) I sort of came in the back door of Heaven. I didn't come in to a great fanfare and a hero's welcome. I came in with a wreath of mercy laid about my shoulders. I wasn't given a crown of rewards.

I noticed up ahead all of these rewards going to others who came here around the same time I did, and I was kind of wondering what was going to happen to me. Then this pretty woman walked up, holding a wreath. I asked, "What's this?"

She said, "This is a wreath of mercy." She took me in her arms and hugged me, and kissed me on the cheek, and said, "You're going to need this."

I said, "What am I going to need that for?" So she took me and she led me along to the hall of my remembrance. At that point the light that had been around me went out. She stayed with me, along with this wreath of mercy that she had laid over my shoulders. It was like one of those leis they give you in Hawaii. It was beautiful, and it gave off a warmth that went around my body.

She looked sweetly and sadly into my eyes and said, "I'm sorry, but this is your time to understand what you've done with your life. I can't carry you forth to the treasures of Heaven until you shed this past. God loves you. He asked me to give you this wreath of mercy and to stay near you. He asked me to take good care of you, and to shelter you."

I asked her, "To shelter me from what? I don't understand."

And she looked at me and said, "To shelter you from yourself. I'm here to shelter you as you walk through your past and see the damage you've done."

And then it began. I was on those fields of battle. I was right there, and I saw the boys dying, and I saw the mental torture. No, no, no, I didn't just see it, I felt it. At one point I was about 21, and I was lying there in some little muddy ditch, mosquitoes buzzing around, slime under me, feeling like, "God, I am so forsaken. How can I be here? I'm so lonely! I just hate this life! I'm so miserable!" I went down, down, down, down, down to such depths, such fear and torment. The shells were going on and on and on, and I was being tormented and killed.

Then I was in another scene, tortured and tormented. I was in scene after scene. I felt so much pain, such pain! I was screaming and crying out! Suddenly, this dear one who was with me reached out and grabbed me, and said, "Come, come, come." And she pulled me up out of those depths of despair. Then she put her arms around me again and said, "That is enough for now. You must see the torture. You must see this so you can shed your past and move on to the future, but I am here to protect you. God gave me to you to protect you from the pain of the past. Have you seen what you have done? I know you have seen. I know you have seen these horrors of war. I do not relish doing this, but in order for you to shed your past, I must let you see the full scope of what your actions did in others' lives.

And there I was again. I was a mother in a little village with a baby on my back. I was in the rice paddies, you know, where they walk out there and plant those little sprigs of rice one by one. I was out there planting the rice with my baby on my back. Then I looked around, and there my village was.

Well, there my village wasn't. There were screams, these horrible, horrible screams. There were water buffalo running, and these horrible screams, and smoke going up. And I thought of my oldest son, my fifteen-year-old son, and my three daughters. I thought of them back in the village, or off in neighboring villages, and I screamed and I ran and ran and ran! And as I ran I was shot at, and it was my baby that took the bullet.

I felt it. I felt the pain of this mother. I knew what she experienced. I felt the pain. (Cries.) Then this angel of mercy threw her arms around me, and again she pulled me into her arms and comforted me. As she led me away, she said, "This is enough for now. Are you understanding?"

It was enough, I understood.

This was just the beginning of the many things I needed to see, feel, experience, and understand. But in spite of the pain and the horrible regret I felt, God's great mercy held on to me and helped me through.

* * *

There was so much I had to learn when I came here to this heavenly place. I thought I was so great. I was such a renowned and famed poet on the earth, but when I came here, I found out how small I really was. It was such a shock to me, such a surprise. But God's mercy is so great. He had mercy on me because, though I glorified myself so much, I did give Him a little glory. He had to teach me so much about what it really means to be faithful to Him and to glorify Him above all.

When I came here, I had to have the pride washed from my heart. I needed to learn about humility and the truth of the Spirit--for in Heaven there's so much to learn, and so much is opened unto you. Although it was painful to see how far I'd erred from the simplicity of love and truth, yet it was all shown to me and delivered with much tenderness and mercy.

I was allowed to tell little stories to the children. I felt it a great privilege to even be able to speak with those little pure beings, those darling children. When the Lord saw that I was getting my lessons and learning the humility that was truly of Him, then I was asked to write down some of those stories.

I've truly seen how nothing I really am, and how anything I ever did in my life is all God's mercy. He had me speak with the great King Nebuchadnezzar, for he too glorified himself above all and had to learn through many difficult times that it was only the God of Heaven that made him what he was. He told me his story. It was a turning point and I saw the

truth of the matter. I bow my head now and raise my arms to glorify Him, who is God above all, who is merciful and kind and whose love is everlasting.

Footnote:

Nebuchadnezzar, a mighty king of the Babylonian Empire (ruled 605—562 B.C.), captured Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple, and carried the people of Judah into captivity in Babylon. During his reign he accomplished an immense fortification of Babylon, including the building of its great wall. Among many other things, he built the famous Hanging Gardens of Babylon--one of the seven wonders of the ancient world--to cheer his wife, who was homesick for her native Median hills.

The Bible records Nebuchadnezzar making an arrogant boast about all that he had achieved. He was then stricken at the height of his power and pride by God's judgment and driven out of office, living with the beasts of the field and eating grass like an ox. His health, reason, and position were only restored when he was willing to humble himself before God and praise and honor Him (Daniel 4:29—37).

* * *

(A famous pop singer:) As I look back now at my fame and fortune, and the very shallow life that I lived, I'm ashamed. I'm ashamed that I didn't do more with it. I'm ashamed that I lived so selfishly when I could have given so much more.

I can't say I was a very religious person, though I did believe in Jesus and I had an inner faith in God. That's what got me here. But it didn't take long for me to realize how blind I'd been most of my life, how dull I'd been to the things of the spirit, and how far behind I was in my spiritual growth and understanding of the things of Heaven.

I've had many days of remorse and regret for the way I lived my life, for the values that I held throughout my days on earth. But I'm drawing faith from the happy faces, loving embraces, and kind words of those around me. I have so little faith, but I'm strengthened by their faith. I somehow know by looking at them that I too will someday grow in my faith and understanding and love for others.

Though I've had days of regrets and anguish of heart, yet at the same time there's a peace and tranquillity that I feel which is much greater than I've ever experienced before. Though I have this regret and this twisting and

squeezing of my heart, yet there is a peace and serenity that pervades my very being. I have hope and faith knowing that all is well, and that I will learn my lessons and grow.

* * *

(A former head of state:) Now I am in a time of great learning. It is like a university, a heavenly university for world leaders like myself, those who need to know the ways of God, those who need to learn the ways of love. We study from God's Word--both from the Bible, and other writings of various men and women of God, to whom He had revealed the truth. We learn even from angelic beings and from prophets and prophetesses of the past, and sometimes we learn even from Jesus Himself. He has become our great teacher. We are the students and we have learned that as we humble ourselves and seek to learn, then He extends His hand to us in honor.

We are learning that the ways of the former life, the ways of the world, are not the ways of God. We are learning that the ways of aggression and war and hate and suffering are not the ways of God. We are learning that when some have so much and others have so little, that this is not of God. When babies starve and children suffer and people are alone, this is not of God.

I have been humbled, I have been brought low before the God of love. I have acknowledged my wrongdoing, my shortcomings, and my weaknesses, and He has had mercy upon me. And because I have been willing to admit that I am weak and that I was wrong and that I need His love and mercy, He has extended His hand of forgiveness to me. He has honored me with great honor that I was not worthy of, as He has opened the doors of His heavenly kingdom unto me and I have learned of and received and now know the love of Jesus.

* * *

Here, things are handled very differently than the way things are handled on earth, and you learn a lot by getting to experience the way you made others feel. The main lessons that are being taught to those of us who didn't get a chance to learn them while on earth are the basic lessons of love.

We are in what you could call a heavenly kindergarten, where we learn all the basics of loving others and putting others first. The only way to really

be happy here in Heaven is to put others first and think about their happiness, not your own! There's no room for selfishness and thinking about yourself here, as you really aren't allowed to fully enjoy Heaven while you still have a selfish attitude. So those of us who hadn't learned those basic lessons of love while on earth are now having to attend this school in sort of a waiting hall, an entrance area of Heaven. And we'll not be allowed to go on to the next room or area until we have learned these lessons and will therefore not disrupt the happiness of the others who have already left behind their selfish self, and live in heavenly bliss.

We now have to learn from A to Z! But we're thankful and happy for this chance, and we're all really applying ourselves to learn these lessons, because we've seen the happiness of those who have been allowed to go on to the next level. We all want to get there and enjoy all the things that we aren't allowed to enjoy yet!

CHAPTER 15

Heaven, a Classless Society?

If someone arrives in Heaven needing rehabilitation, does such a period last indefinitely? Once it's over, does he (or she) then have equal standing with others who arrived in Heaven having lived unselfish and loving lives? Or does he work his way up little by little as he learns and as he makes things right? What are the determining factors in a person's placement and the abilities or privileges or knowledge available to him or her? Are some more loved or closer to God if they are on a higher "level"?

#

(Jesus:) There are levels in Heaven. There are levels of reward. There are levels of place of service. This does not mean that those in lower levels are unhappy; they are thrilled to be here. But they don't have the same knowledge, wisdom, stature, importance, and responsibility of those that served Me, those that lived a life of faith, those that abode in My Word and had Me abiding in them.

* * *

I want to explain that there are all sorts of levels and areas of growth in Heaven. Not everyone is on the same level. We all love each other. We're all a part of God's wonderful family and His kingdom of Heaven. We're all citizens, but we're all in different stages of our growth. We have different responsibilities, we have different jobs, and we have different callings, so much like you there on earth.

* * *

Everyone in Heaven benefits from salvation; we all enjoy the wonders of Heaven and the pleasures and joy, happiness, peace and contentment that are found in Heaven. But there are different levels in Heaven. People have different jobs and different responsibilities. Some have different privileges, and all have various callings, but all receive the Lord's love in like measure

and no one is left out or neglected or slighted in any way.

* * *

(Jesus:) Have I not said that some will be raised to everlasting glory and others to shame and contempt? (Daniel 12:2). Do not some come here to My kingdom and receive great glory and great reward? Do not others come ashamed because of the lives they led, the things they did, the sins they committed? Surely I have given them their salvation, the gift, but the works that they have done are as wood, hay, and stubble. (1 Corinthians 3:10—13). Because they would not receive the love of the truth when they walked upon the earth, even though they received Me, they believed a lie and were deceived by the Evil One to do those things which were not of Me. Yet they lose not their salvation, for I have given it freely unto these that call unto Me, that receive Me (John 1:12).

These do not come into the heavenly kingdom with the same stature, the same standing, or the same place as those who loved Me, those who did good, those who showed love. For though all in Heaven are loved by Me equally, all are not rewarded equally. Some come with a great knowledge of Me and My Word, My ways, My love, My will. Others come knowing nothing, not even remembering that they received Me. They know nothing of Me. These ones need to grow, to come to a knowledge of Me.

* * *

(Jesus:) Those in Heaven have only to go forward as I lead them--gently, lovingly, at the pace they are ready for and willing to go. Because there is so much for them to see, to learn, to receive, they want to progress. The more they accept, the more is given to them of the truth and freedom and beauty of Heaven. If they do not accept, they stay at that level until they want to go further. The choice is clearly in their hands. It is only a choice of whether they wish to go further or remain where they are. Some people find a level they are comfortable with and remain there, because that is where they feel happy.

CHAPTER 16

Who's Who?

You might wonder whether your position in earthly society will affect your standing in Heaven. If you were famous on earth, will you be famous in Heaven? Is there some benefit in the afterlife to being well known or popular in this life? Do world leaders, CEOs, movie stars, or other celebrities have a higher standing in Heaven? What is God's criterion for greatness?

#

Some people who weren't thought of as so great there on earth are very great here, because they were diligent with the little things which were really important; they were kind and considerate; they did things for love. On earth I just didn't see things the way God does--nor do most people. The natural tendency is to look on the outward appearance, on the position, the abilities and talents, the charisma, the outspokenness, charm, beauty, or wealth. But God looks at the heart. He measures the loving actions, the faithfulness, the doing what you know is right, the following through on the little things.

God really rewards those who receive no reward on earth for their loving deeds. They are His heroes, the honored and rewarded ones--those who did what they did for love, never being noticed or acclaimed. Those who have received a lot of recognition and credit for their work already on earth don't get as much up here, because they've already received part of their reward. But what everyone is really rewarded for up here, regardless of whether you got praise on earth or not, is for your love for the Lord, your faithfulness and obedience to Him, and the yieldedness of your heart. Those are things which are not often accurately judged on earth, but boy, the Lord sure hands out the credit here--and He bountifully rewards those who are humble and loving before Him.

* * *

(An actor/comedian:) I was very famous on earth, and everywhere I

went people were in awe of my accomplishments. But here I'm just like everyone else. I didn't receive any special welcome for the illustrious life I led on earth. In fact, I like to forget about my life on earth as much as possible, because it was very selfish and conceited compared to the way I should have lived. Seeing the lives of others and how much they gave of themselves makes me ashamed, and the rewards which they were given here far outshine mine. As soon as I got here I threw myself fully into learning about this new heavenly life, and the realities of life--giving love and doing things to make others happy! Those are the real realities, the real accomplishments!

* * *

(Jesus:) You'd be surprised at how many little people I have in Heaven who did not have what most would consider "great" callings. But in My eyes, they did have great callings, for they diligently cared for that which I had entrusted them with. They ministered to their children, to their husbands or wives, to their neighbors, to their friends, to the poor in need. Thousands upon thousands upon thousands upon thousands of little people make up My kingdom.

CHAPTER 17

Is There a Race to Get Ahead?

The inhabitants of Heaven are not all at the same stage of spiritual growth, nor do they receive the same rewards nor have the same position of service or responsibility. This gives rise to the question of whether those in Heaven are content or whether some are dissatisfied with their place. Is there envy or competition?

#

Before I came here I constantly compared myself with others. I always looked at others and what they had, or the way they were, and wished I could have some of the attributes that made them so attractive or so successful, or some of what they had materially. It made me miserable, because it seemed everybody had something I wanted.

Well, up here the material blessings are certainly no issue, because we all have all we need and even all we want, really. As far as envying the position or success or beauty of others, I don't know quite just how it happened, but I don't do it anymore. I can still look at others and notice outstanding qualities about them, including those who are "seniors" here as compared to me, and some who are my overseers or teachers. But I don't want to be them, I don't want to have all they have, and I don't feel that I'm inferior to them.

I'm newer here and I have more to learn, and I'm not as skilled or knowledgeable. That's a fact, and up here it's not something hush-hush or that you're afraid to talk about or that you pretend to ignore and treat like it doesn't exist. It's pretty matter-of-fact and straightforward. Some people are more advanced spiritually, but we're all learning and growing in the areas the Lord wants us to, so there's really no rush.

As far as looks and abilities, I've just come to understand that we're all different and each made to fill a different place. Besides, I know that I can now learn whatever I want and develop whatever skills I want, so what's the big deal if I don't have them all yet? It'll come with time.

* * *

I've been around a long time and I've seen a lot, both on earth and in Heaven. I can say that the Lord has blessed me with a lot of wisdom, and He's made me a guide and teacher to many new arrivals. You might think I get tired of instructing them or frustrated with them sometimes, or perhaps that I look down on them or see them as inferiors, but it's not that way. I see each one as a precious and priceless individual, someone who has something to give--yes, even to me, and even to this heavenly kingdom.

You see, Heaven is made up of individuals, and God created each person with their own special attributes, and the universe itself would not be complete without that special addition of that unique life. I consider it a privilege and honor to welcome these new ones, and to help them feel at ease by showing them that they're needed and appreciated.

* * *

(Jesus:) Those here in My heavenly kingdom in the realm of the Spirit are all happy and fulfilled, because they understand that they have a role to play, a job to do, and they understand My love for them more fully. They do not question whether I love them, for they have experienced the depth of My love for them. They have great peace and great joy and great contentment in being used in the position wherein I have placed them, knowing that those things which I give them to do are My will for them.

There is no competition or feeling that this one is greater or that one is greater, because they have contentment as they do My will. What joy they have in this contentment, in this knowledge that I love each of them for themselves! They understand that each one is precious to Me. They understand that I died for each one, that I have redeemed each one, and thus each one is very special to Me.

And why are these here in My heavenly realm content and happy and praiseful and joyful?--Because they understand these things! They understand that not *all* can be called to this one task or to that one task. They understand that I love them for what they are. I love them for what they do, whether big or small in the eyes of man. I love them because they love Me, and they love Me because I love them.

* * *

Heaven is such a wonderful place--so beautiful, so many different kinds of people living and loving and working together, preparing special places for their loved ones--preparing special places for special friends that they'll have in the days to come, new friends, new faces, new exchanges of love and experiences. No one has to feel shy, incapable, foolish, unlearned, or homely. There's no comparing in the negative ways. There's none of that feeling that one has more than the other, for you're so thankful for each other, thankful for all that the Lord helped you go through to get you where you are. You're so busy being thankful and learning and growing together, there's no place or need for comparing.

* * *

(Jesus:) Those who have made wrong decisions on earth and are having to learn things in the afterlife that they should have learned earlier are not given the same benefits in Heaven until they pass certain grades. They know that they are at a lower station, but they are thankful to Me that they are in Heaven at all, and this keeps them from being discontent.

For many, just seeing the review of their own life is very humbling, and takes away the feelings of pride or jealousy or discontent. Afterwards they are thankful for whatever station they are given--and it is no longer a battle of comparison, for they see that they are given what they deserve. There is no question about whether or not it's fair, or whether the judge has seen things clearly, for I am the judge and I judge fair and righteously.

CHAPTER 18

What About Suicide?

Those who have had a loved one commit suicide often agonize over whether their loved one is in Heaven or whether they can ever go there. You might wonder whether God allows people into Heaven who take their own lives. If so, does He consider suicide a sin, and do those who die this way have to undergo some type of punishment or rehabilitation? The following messages from folks who died at their own hand give some insight on the subject and answers to the above questions.

#

(Jesus:) Those who choose to take their own lives will yet have to learn and grow and pass many tests, and this healing will require a good amount of time. I would that no man take his life, for there is an appointed time for each one to die, and only I know this time.

I am a God of love and mercy and understanding. Even suicide, I forgive. As sad as it makes Me that someone would throw away the gift of life that I have given, that they would take into their hands that which is not theirs to control, that they would give up on the life that they could have, yet I forgive them if they ask for forgiveness.

It is a sin, but I died so that I would have the power to forgive sin. And so, those who take their own lives, though they do not receive the reward that they could have had, I welcome them nonetheless if they have received Me; and those who have not yet had sufficient opportunity while on earth are given a chance at the time of their deaths to receive My love.

Although they have much to learn, and they often have to pick up in Heaven right where they left off on earth in learning the things which I have for them, still I love them and care for them, and I will forgive them if they ask Me.

Those who are hard and unrepentant I can do nothing for; they must carry the burden of that sin with them. But those who acknowledge their sin and seek My forgiveness are forgiven, though they must often learn the hard way and go through some special training and rehabilitation.

* * *

Because I had arrived in Heaven prematurely, I still had things I needed to learn and experience. I was not yet ready for what the Lord had intended for me in His heavenly kingdom. So I spent time in a type of a school.

This school is a combination of a support group and counseling sessions.--It's rehabilitation. There were others there, like me, who also had taken their own lives and who also were not yet ready for the full joy and reward of Heaven. We each had a counselor assigned to us, most of whom had either committed suicide themselves and already gone through their rehabilitation, or ones who had a loved one or someone close to them who did so.

In either case, they first walked us through the pain we had caused others. They helped us to see it from their end. Then they showed us all the scenes of what could have been if we had stayed on, if we had stuck it out. They showed us the people we could have helped, the happiness we could have had and could have brought to others, the love that could have been in our lives, and the satisfaction and reward we'd have had at the end, if only we wouldn't have made that fatal choice.

They showed us how the lives of our loved ones would be changed, and the vacancy that would be there, because we weren't meant to be gone so soon. It was really, really sad, and we had to spend some time in sorrow and remorse in order to fully learn our lessons. But once we had repented and were ready for forgiveness, the Lord gave it to us freely, and then He washed away the hurts and grief of our past and gave us a new start.

Another part of our training at the school was learning to help others on earth who are tempted with suicide--to help them not to do it. We had to learn a bit about the way things operate on this side, how we could affect others from this realm, and then we each got assignments to help others. These assignments had two purposes: one was to help us complete our training and understanding, and the other was to try to keep another soul from coming to the same early end.

We each got an assignment, and from there some of us went on to other things, and others of us continue with this calling. We do what we can to influence the minds and hearts of those who are weak or wavering, and to encourage them to continue on with their lives, to put their trust in God, to let go of fear and hate, to embrace love and hope and the things that are

good in life. We try to encourage them and plant thoughts of hopefulness and joy in their minds and hearts, to help them see that life is worth living. We aren't always successful, but at least we try.

* * *

You certainly wouldn't want to come here prematurely; you wouldn't be ready. You wouldn't know the things that you need to know. You wouldn't be the person that you need to be.

* * *

(A famous young actor:) I wasn't planning on dying that particular evening, but I did know that my lifestyle and the drugs I was taking were going to kill me sooner or later. But I didn't care, because I wanted to get out. So in a way, you could say I did commit suicide, even though it wasn't deliberate suicide right then, but I did make a decision that I knew would kill me before my time sooner or later.

So when I got here to Heaven, I had to suffer the consequences of my decision. Actually, I was a bit surprised that I'd even *made* it to Heaven, because I knew that my life on earth hadn't been so great, and I wasn't exactly sure whether I was going to make it here or not. But I did. That's the good news, that even if you do cut your life short, if you believe in Jesus you still make it to Heaven. The bad news is that you lose whatever rewards would have been yours from the time you were meant to live on earth, and you have to spend quite a bit of time learning the lessons that you should have learned on earth.

God lets you carry that burden of guilt for a while, as your punishment for not having trusted Him enough to live your life out to the full, for not letting Him take you in His time. You decided on your own when to quit, when that's a decision that you should leave in God's hands. So He's not too pleased. He wasn't too pleased with me, and it's not a very nice feeling to know that God isn't too pleased with you. I knew that He still loved me, and I knew that He was going to forgive me, but I also knew He was unhappy with my decision.

So it was a very difficult time, and it lasted a very long time. It seemed like an eternity! Up here, time is different, so it can't be measured in days or months or years, but it did seem like an eternity to me. At times, I wondered

if it was ever going to end, if I was ever going to find the complete peace in my heart that I needed, that I wanted. I did have a measure of happiness and a measure of peace from being in this wonderful place and being around wonderful people, but I wasn't allowed to enjoy it to the full. I had to carry this burden with me, and I wasn't allowed to throw it off.

I had to live with regrets. I had to live with some sorrow. I certainly wouldn't recommend it for anyone! If I was back on earth again in the same state that I was in before, I wouldn't have wished for my life to end like that. I wouldn't have taken the easy way out, because it *looks* like the easy way out, but you find out that it's *not*. The easy way out is to ask God for help, to call out to Him.

I know He could have helped me find a way out, because upon arrival here I was able to see what would have happened in my life if I'd only made the right decision not to end it prematurely. God let me see how He could have helped me. There was another way out; there were other answers.

Then the time came when I think I'd finally learned my lesson, and I guess God knew that I'd suffered enough, that my punishment had been enough, so He let me cast off the burden. He took my burden away, and I was then able to enjoy complete freedom, joy, and happiness! Instead of only a measure of it, I was able to have it to the full, and it was such a wonderful feeling of release! The guilt, the remorse, the sadness were gone forever!

But the period before that was a very difficult one, and I wouldn't want to have to go through that again. It was like being so close to something, so close to attaining your dream, and yet it was still beyond reach! I was in Heaven, and all the pleasures and rapturous joy and the excitement and the love were right there in front of me; I could see them, but I was not allowed to fully touch them.

It was very difficult and very frustrating. God has given us the power to make our own decisions, to choose between right and wrong. But there's one decision that's reserved for *Him*, and that's the decision of when your time on earth is done. It's best not to make that decision yourself, or believe me, you will regret it, as I did.

* * *

(*Jesus:*) Those who commit suicide come here early--before they are meant to be here. In that way, they not only miss out on the blessings and

rewards that would have been theirs for their fight and endurance and victories on earth, but they also have a long while to wait up here, without the great happiness and complete freedom that they were expecting.

Yes, I still love them, and they do not lose their place in Heaven. But the happiness and joy and peace that was destined to be theirs is not, at least not for a long while. They have to struggle with tests and battles, they make slower progress for they are not in My perfect will for them, and they see the sadness and the loss that they have caused through taking their own life; all this together is, in many ways, equal to the tests they would have had had they continued living on earth.

If you come to Heaven early, through suicide, there are things which you will never learn here as well as I planned for you to learn them on earth; in that way, you will always be behind, or lacking that experience. You can learn through watching others, but having that experience yourself, and the wisdom and endurance and faith and gifts that those experiences bring, will not be yours to the same degree. That is a great loss.

In some ways the things you must learn in Heaven when you take your own life are just as difficult as the trials on earth--only they take longer, and there is no escaping from them.

* * *

Hello, my name is Jim. I came to Heaven before my time, but the Lord had mercy on me and welcomed me home anyway. I was dying of terminal cancer and was in so much pain. The doctors couldn't give me drugs strong enough, and because we didn't have much money, after a while they just sent me home. My poor wife. It was so hard on her. She would just lay beside me and weep, because it hurt her so much to see me in so much pain. I wanted so badly to leave this earth.--I knew that my death would be easier for her than watching me suffer.

I was a believer. I wouldn't say I was a Christian in the way most people think of the term, because I didn't go to church, and didn't even think too highly of established religion. But I sincerely believed in a God of love and mercy and understanding, and I believed that there was a beautiful place that we go to when we die. I so wanted to go there.

Finally, one day at my checkup with the doctor, I asked him to give me something very powerful. I knew it would kill me, but I was happy about that. I knew my wife would be okay.

Jesus forgave me for taking my own life, although I did have to go through some retraining and backtrack a bit to learn the rest of what He wanted me to learn on earth. It was almost my time to come home, but I jumped the gun. Even though I had what I considered to be good motives, the Lord still knew best, and I blew it by taking matters into my own hands. I'm very sorry for that now, and I can see that if I would have just waited, He would have brought me here Himself--and that would have been much better. I would have had a more honorable homecoming.

But He welcomed me nonetheless and took me in His arms and wiped away all the tears and memory of the pain. He sent a special angel of comfort to be with my wife. He taught me that it would have been better to wait for His hand--because He does all things well, and in the perfect time. He forgave me for taking my life, although He showed me clearly that it was not mine to take. But He was very understanding and very accepting. Weak as I was, He loved me just the same.

* * *

I know now that Jesus still loves me. But if you come here before your time, things are not exactly the way they would have been had you come in the Lord's time and when He calls you to come. Nevertheless, I know now that the love of God is for real, the kingdom of God is for real, and Jesus' forgiveness is for real. Even if we take the precious life that He gave us, He still loves us, accepts us, and receives us. It's unbelievable! After the condemnation I fought and the depths of despair that I had fallen into, I could hardly believe that I could be so loved in the kingdom of God.

* * *

(From a young woman who took an overdose of pills, not meaning to actually commit suicide, but who died in the process:) There are tears in Heaven, and some of us do come here ashamed of ourselves and some of the things we've done and some of the decisions we've made. I've done a lot of crying. Our emotions follow us into this next life. Yes, the Lord forgives and gives freedom from guilt and condemnation, and that's wonderful, but it doesn't all happen in just a second.

I'm being rehabilitated, and part of that rehabilitation process is to live with some of the feelings of sadness and guilt. The Lord doesn't take them

away completely once and for all right from the start. I know that He loves me, and I'll never doubt that again. But I still get hit with sadness, overwhelmed with emotions, and start weeping in shame; and I'll have to experience that for a while. That's part of my punishment or retraining, you might say.

The Lord is letting me feel the hurt and pain I've caused my parents, my brothers, and my sisters. My mom and dad, and lots of other people and teachers I had, and my older sisters, gave me a whole lot. I had no excuses, really. I had a lot going for me. To the casual outside observer, I would have seemed, even just a few days before I did it, to be a fairly happy, normal young person. I'm goodlooking, charming, bright, energetic and lively, a quick learner ... but I threw it all away.

I can't blame it on anybody else; I can't even blame it on the Devil. I knew that the voice in my head telling me to take those pills was not of God, but was from the other side, and I could hear the Lord inside me also saying not to do it. I was the one who made the wrong decision, who yielded to what I knew was the wrong side. It was a conscious decision, made in a moment of weakness--a rash, angry, frustrated moment when I lost control over my own spirit because of listening to the negativity of the dark side.

I was playing with my life, treating it like a game. You know, you see that in the movies and TV shows all the time, and you get desensitized. People play with life, people take others' lives, people take their own lives, they take their babies' lives through abortion. There is very little regard shown for human life, and the sanctity of life--the sacredness of each human being--is degraded and downplayed.

I took the pills to be tough. I wanted to make a statement. I wanted to show that I could be daring, that I could get really angry. I think secretly I also wanted to break down and show people that I wasn't as together as they thought. I wanted them to know that inside I was depressed and discouraged.

After I did it, when I started feeling sick and the air was going out of me, I realized what I had done. My life flashed before me, even while I was still alive, and I knew that dying wasn't what I had wanted.

We're going to be in Heaven forever, so there's really no rush to get here, and believe me, you don't want to get here before your time. It's not like there's this big issue made; it's not like anyone is criticizing me or berating me or making me feel bad. That's not it at all. It's my own heart, my own emotions, my own feelings that cause me the pain. I hurt because I'm

not where I'm supposed to be. I'm not even where I want to be. I want to be down there on earth. Time is precious and every bit counts, and I'm not at all happy with myself for the way I've used mine.

I don't know whether you realize how unhappy a person can be, even in Heaven. It's not like permanent sadness or anything, but we have to continue on where we left off on earth, continuing learning the things we were destined to learn, and until we make it through that stage, it's not like bliss or anything. Of course, because we have Jesus we're happy.--I'm happy, and I'm very thankful for the Lord's mercy. But I'm also very ashamed that I threw away the life He gave me, and until I begin to make up for that and find my calling here in Heaven, after learning what I need to learn, I'm not going to be completely happy.

It's not like that's what everyone goes through when they come here, though. Most people are relieved of their burdens, because they endured to the end through them, and so they are given a wonderful release from the things which made them sad or kept them from being completely happy. But those of us who cut our lives short, who didn't endure and learn what we needed to on earth, we have to do that here, and so it takes a while before we enjoy perfect happiness.

But it's a wonderful relief to know that the Lord loves me as much as He always did. He's not angry with me. I hope my mom and dad aren't either, although I'll understand if they are and if it takes them awhile to forgive me. I know they will eventually, and by the time I see them again everything will be resolved. But it'll be awhile yet, and we'll be somewhat separated during that time. I'll be able to come speak to them more, but for a while I'm really going to have to "keep to myself" a bit and spend the time I need to up here with the Lord and my heavenly teacher and friend. Her name's Rita. She killed herself too, many, many years ago, and she made a lot of other people's lives miserable in the process. Her parents and sister kind of went crazy afterwards, and her boyfriend killed himself too. Horrible, isn't it?

Rita had received Jesus before she died, but hadn't had the opportunity on earth to grow or progress as much spiritually as I had had. She said she spent years (earth time) getting herself together even once she got up here. My process is going to be quicker, but it definitely is wonderful to have someone alongside me who I know can relate to what I'm going through and understand. Yet she's come through it all and has been around in Heaven for a while now. Her past is completely washed away from her heart and life, except for when she needs to bring it up to help others, like

me. She hasn't been called upon for this kind of work in a while--it's still a little difficult for her--but she's doing it because she loves me. She's had a chance to spend a lot of time with the Lord soaking up the truth and spirit of Heaven, and she just glows now.

She's been telling me about lots of the different parts of Heaven that I'll get to go to when my time is up. I have a smaller boundary area right now; I can't go too far from home and I don't spend a lot of my time touring or visiting or enjoying amusements, because I'm just not ready for it. I don't spend a lot of time with other people either, except for Rita.--That must be why I'm talking your ear off now.

The Lord is in control, He has a plan, and He has a life in mind for each person, a destiny to be fulfilled. If you miss that destiny, both you and others will suffer. I'm going to have to be looking for a new one soon, since I missed mine. I will find one, because the Lord has such compassion. But I had such a wonderful one that I could have lived out, and I miss it already.

Live your life to the full, because it's not going to last forever, and once you get up here you'll realize how valuable each moment was. You'll be thankful for all the ones you used to the full, and remorseful for all the ones you didn't. You'll be especially remorseful if you never live out your destiny and fulfill your calling--because that's the greatest experience and most wonderful fulfillment that exists, in Heaven or on earth or in the whole universe!

* * *

You could hardly imagine the immense feeling of disappointment and remorse that I felt when I came to this side at my own hand. I arrived in Heaven and found forgiveness, but oh, how I wish that I would've had the faith to hold on through the dark times of life rather than giving it up.

I was in so much torment of spirit, my heart was broken, my business was ruined, my reputation marred, and I felt I had no reason to go on. I felt that the only way to escape was to end it all. I believed in Heaven and the afterlife, and I thought nothing could be worse than the life I was living. But I was wrong. Coming here the way I did didn't bring the relief that I thought it would. I realized only too late that there was no way back. It was finished, my life was over, and I wouldn't have a chance to do the things I was destined to do. I realized as soon as I got here that there could have been so much more. There could have been a way out, there was hope, there was a new start

waiting for me on earth, if I'd only held on a bit longer.

* * *

(Jesus:) This present life on earth is for a reason. There are lessons to be learned to prepare you for Heaven, and it is wiser and best to live your life through to its end on earth in order to be prepared and learn what you need to learn before your arrival in Heaven. I know when it is best to end your life on earth, when you have learned what I want you to learn and when you are prepared for the next stage of life. It is different for every person, and those who really want to please Me will leave that decision in My hands.

You who are tempted to end your life because of the problems and difficulties you face and go on to Heaven where it is more beautiful and where things are not as difficult, must know that that is not always the case. Although Heaven does have many more beauties and glories, and you will be free from the pain and suffering as you know it now in your earthly life, if you do end your life prematurely you still have to face the consequences of having done so once you get to Heaven. You will still have to learn the lessons which I want you to learn. You will still have to face the sorrow and pain and suffering you have caused your relatives and friends and loved ones.

I want you to know of your eternal reward of Heaven, but this reward can only be enjoyed to the fullest and received with faith when it is left completely up to Me and in My hands. It is not a decision which man should make in his own natural reasoning; and if he yields to the temptation to take his own life, he will still need to learn the lessons where he left off in his earthly life--lessons of trust in Me.

CHAPTER 19

The Education of the Future!

Is there something you've always wanted to understand more about or learn how to do, but for some reason you were never able to do so? Maybe you lacked the opportunity, the time, or were held back for financial reasons. Well, you'll probably be very interested in hearing about the wealth of learning and training opportunities that are available on the other side.

#

One of the thrills and attractions of Heaven is that there's always more to learn and discover! Once you get here you'll see how very much more there is to see and learn! There are no worries about getting bored up here! Besides the fact that there's lots to learn, lots of work to keep us busy, and a whole new life to adjust to, there's absolutely limitless space to explore and so many mysteries to solve that you could never discover them all! They're like presents from the Lord that we're going to be discovering and unwrapping for eternity!

* * *

One thing I always wanted to do during my life on earth was to play a grand piano. That was a dream out of my reach, as we were very poor and had no money for lessons, much less for a grand piano. But when I came here to Heaven, I found that the Lord had placed a beautiful piano in my home--the beginning of one of my dreams come true.

I wondered if I was just going to be able to play it without having to learn--since this was Heaven, after all! But no, even here we learn things--and that's part of the fun! After I'd settled in to the heavenly life, a beautiful woman came by and asked if I'd like to have piano lessons with her. She was such a good teacher, and I was able to learn quickly.

Once I mastered the basics, she invited me to come to their big rehearsals, where I learned to play in a type of symphony orchestra. Oh, it was awesome! Some of the great music masters were there--Bach and

Beethoven--and they would come around and give us tips. Now I play quite well, and it's still one of my favorite forms of relaxation--to play my beautiful grand piano, which was a gift from the Master Himself!

* * *

Besides learning to progress spiritually in areas that we were weak or deficient in on earth, there are other kinds of learning in Heaven. Learning is easier and quicker here because our learning capabilities are enhanced as we are freed from the limitations of the flesh.

* * *

Here in Heaven there are no barriers to knowledge of any sort. There are so many facets of learning. It's so different than book learning and education as you know it. We do learn much from books and teachers, but more than that, it's the experiences, the being able to see and understand things as they really are that adds a new depth and perspective to all forms of learning.

* * *

There are limits to what you can understand with the human mind. That's why you're going to be liberated from that and have a new body and a new mind up here where you can understand so much more. You'll still retain everything you have there, but you'll be able to expand it, and so many things that didn't make sense to you on earth will make sense to you here.

* * *

Once you get here you're not going to automatically know everything there is to know and be able to do everything there is to do. Learning never stops, and after you get to Heaven, you keep on learning and gaining experience, not only in areas you're familiar with, but also in work and responsibilities that you never had a chance to work in or grow into while you were still on earth.

* * *

On earth I was a doctor--a podiatrist, or foot specialist. I enjoyed my work, because I enjoyed helping people, and I felt that through my work I was helping God to work the miracle of healing. Here in Heaven no one needs a doctor, because there is no sickness, so was I ever surprised when the Lord asked me if I would like to continue my education as a doctor and learn more about my area of specialty.

I wondered why, what it was for, and He explained that while no one here needs a doctor, there are people on earth who need help. There are doctors who don't have enough training, yet they're called upon to help in emergency situations. There are missionaries who have no professional medical training, and yet because they work with so many that need help, it's advantageous for them to know a bit about the body and how it works. It amazed me to find the role that Heaven plays in helping those who are still on earth.

So I was overjoyed to be able to learn more--and education down there doesn't even compare with the way it's done up here. I began going to a sort of school, and we had instructors. But the teaching aids they use here--they're really far out! We had what seemed like a virtual reality simulation of a foot, and we were able to actually go inside it and see the different parts and how it worked. They would create representations of the various potential problems that could arise, and take us through the steps of healing and how it's done. It was just amazing.

Then we also had classes on how to communicate with those on earth who we were being trained to help. Of course, a large part of that is that they have to want the help and be open to it. But we had to learn different ways to get their attention or point things out. It's all so interesting.

After I'd worked for a while as a foot doctor, I moved on to another specialty and continued learning. I love learning--and was overjoyed to find that in Heaven it doesn't end; to the contrary, it continues better than ever!

* * *

(A child speaking:) I'm kind of little still but I'm learning so much. There are so many secrets and mysteries and treasures to learn and find out. When I have a question, sometimes it's like a giant treasure hunt. I go to the library and look. I learn so much.

* * *

I was born in Chicago to a very poor family of six--my dad and mom and four of us kids. My dad was taken ill and passed away when I was two, and I didn't live that much longer; I lived to the age of 17. My whole life I wanted to be a dancer, but it was just never possible while on earth. Our family was so poor that we barely had enough for one decent meal a day--and that was decent by our standards, not what the majority of the population would consider "decent." I gave up all of my dreams of becoming a dancer, 'cause I just didn't think it would ever be possible.

My mama taught me about Heaven, at least what she knew, but she didn't know that much. At least I knew there was some better place that I was going to when I died--some place better than this world.

Boy, was I thrilled when I got up here and discovered that Jesus loved me and wanted to give me the chance to do what I always wanted to do my whole life--dance. There are so many different styles of dancing up here, and it was hard to choose what I wanted to major in. I decided to begin with ballet--not classical ballet, something a little more modern and contemporary was what I was interested in. I started taking lessons from some heavenly instructors and it was amazing how quickly I picked everything up.

The teachers here are very good, and the best part is that you don't have to pay; it's all free! Everything is free; there's no such thing as money here. The dancing instructors really know how to teach. They don't get cranky on you, and they're very patient.

Something that I found very helpful in learning to dance was the ability you have here of replaying events in your mind. In other words, you can store the dance sequences, moves, steps, and even a full choreographed dance in your mind, and then replay it, like a video. I never did have a very good memory, so this handy little tool helped me as I would practice my steps throughout the day.

So far I've learned a form of more modern ballet, close to what you'd call jazz ballet on earth. I've gone on from this and have been experimenting with different forms of this style--like underwater dancing and air dancing. Yes, that's right, you can learn how to dance underwater, because up here you can breathe underwater. Air dancing is also beautiful, but both take a lot of skill and I'm only just learning the basics.

Up here in Heaven there are different dancing performances and entertainment shows all of the time, and they're just beautiful. It's a wonderful way to glorify the Lord and praise Him for His wonderful works.

Some people like to give honor to the Lord through their singing or through their playing of instruments, but My favorite way is through dancing, glorifying Him through the movements of my body. I'm so thankful that I got the chance to learn this cool art since coming to Heaven.

And I'm not just learning it for myself; I'll be able to teach others too. I've already begun teaching some of the little girls up here who are interested in dancing. Then when Heaven comes down to earth I'll probably be able to teach dancing--good, godly dancing--to some of the children who will still be on earth. They'll be interested in dancing, just like your average girl on earth now. Of course, they won't be able to do all of the stuff that is available in Heaven, but we can teach them a lot. So, I'm also learning things in preparation for one of my future jobs. It's so much fun!

* * *

I've learned to do many of the things I've always wanted to do. I'm a musician now, and an artist, and I speak new languages. I'm also a teacher and I'm involved with some of the counseling and planning of the new projects up here. I work with the landscaping and the new neighborhoods, new heavenly mansions.

* * *

(An engineer:) We're quite a lot smarter up here than we were down there. Things are a lot clearer; things click a lot quicker. So we're able to figure out fabulous designs and inventions and actually put them into practice and build them almost immediately, and they're quite outstanding.

* * *

I was surprised to see that in Heaven you still have to learn. Everything isn't just handed to you on a silver platter. For example, if you want to acquire a new skill of any type, well, you can learn it very quickly, but you do still have to apply yourself and study. If you were tone-deaf on earth you don't necessarily play a part in a symphony in five minutes! If you were already musically inclined, it might be a little quicker, though, than it would be otherwise. All that you learn on earth isn't just going to be wasted once

you get to Heaven.

* * *

Ever since I was a kid, my dream was to be a cowboy and ride a horse. I never had the chance to make this dream a reality while on earth, because when I was young I was involved in a serious car accident, which left my body partially paralyzed. Since coming to Heaven, though, and having received my new body that no longer has the same handicaps, I've been able to learn the art of horse riding.

I've learned a lot about horses in general, through going to the heavenly libraries and studying up on every aspect of the life of a horse. I've also been privileged to receive extra heavenly information about how horses were created, which helps in understanding them more and knowing how to handle them. There's a difference between horses on earth and horses in Heaven, just like there's a difference between earthly bodies and heavenly bodies. Heavenly horses don't ever get sick, because there are no diseases here, but I've still been studying up about the sicknesses and diseases that are common to horses, because in the future I'm going to be helping to teach others about the godly care of horses on earth.

There will still be many, many horses on earth which will still need a lot of care. In fact, horses will be used a lot more in the future, for transportation and much more, so there'll be quite a few of them around. Since I've been receiving this education in Heaven, I'll be able to teach others and instruct them in the care of their horses and teach the young or inexperienced ones how to safely ride.

* * *

(A child speaking:) I came here before my parents, so my sweet auntie took care of me. When she told me that there was school in Heaven, at first I was sad, because I didn't like school so much on earth. It was really boring for me. But she told me to just try it and see if I liked it. Now it's my favorite thing!

I'm so excited to go to school, because it's so much fun! When we're learning about something, like the planets, for example, the teacher will bring in miniature planets, and we get to see how they move around and learn their names. We even get to travel around to the actual planets

sometimes. It's so much easier because we get to learn everything by seeing and doing.--We don't have to read very much from books, unless we want to. Some of my friends like to read books, so they can. But I like to actually go to the places that we're learning about, and taste the foods, and hear the sounds, and feel the experiences. That helps me to remember it much better.

We don't have hard tests. Sometimes we do have tests, but they don't flunk us if we can't remember. We just get to watch it again on our little TV communicator, and remember the answers, and then try again. So I'm really happy with my school, and the teachers are really nice.

* * *

I've gone around and met some of the other popular singers and performers who've come here over the last couple of decades and we've shared a lot of notes.

I'll just let you know that there's no pressure here. There's time to enjoy things and meet a lot of people, and it's really fascinating from day to day. There's a lot of love, and there are a lot of heavenly skills and talents to learn. There's a lot to do.

* * *

I've learned a lot of things since I've come here. It's beautiful. It's glorious. The learning is wonderful. It's almost like being a child again, where all the learning is done through playing and through experiment and enjoyment. You don't feel like you are going to class or having to learn painful lessons. It has nothing to do with that.

It reminds me of when we were kids, playing sports. We never thought of *learning* to play baseball, we just *played*. We just had a blast out on the field. It was even hard to pull away from our games. We never thought that we were actually *learning* things and lessons.--We never saw it that way. It's a lot like that over here. Everything is discovery and challenge and fulfillment.

CHAPTER 20

Heavenly Spiritual Growth

Besides all the practical knowledge and experience we'll be able to acquire in Heaven, what about the deeper things of life? It seems that there is much wisdom to absorb not only for our minds, but our hearts and spirits--a wealth of spiritual information, understanding, and enlightenment available in a way not known anywhere else.

#

If when we arrived in Heaven, we were perfect, then we would be bored because we would know all and be all. There'd be no progress to be made if we were perfect. But we have to keep moving and growing and progressing, and that's part of the fun!--Learning, growing, progressing. It's part of life. Life continues here, and we continue to love, learn, grow, and progress.

We don't look at our weaknesses and our faults and failings negatively here. We just accept that we have them and that we need to grow. We work on them and we move forward in them.

You see, it's much different here. Down there on earth, though some of you may not realize it, one of the reasons you tend to see things in such a negative light is because Satan goes around, or sends his little imps around, to discourage and dishearten you, to depress you and make you give up hope and just see all the bad in a situation. Well, he's not around up here, and so we look at everything much differently, much more positively. We look at things in the same light that the Lord looks at them, instead of the way that Satan looks at them. And when we hear about situations or people, we hear about them from a positive point from the Lord instead of from a negative point from Satan. That makes all the difference in the world.

* * *

Here you learn many of the same types of lessons that you learn on earth, only it's easier. We don't look at the lessons that people are learning here in Heaven as problems; we look at them more as challenges, as grades

to pass. Kind of like the Boy Scouts or the Girl Scouts. You study the manual and you take the test; if you pass, you get a merit badge and you move up to a different level. You can choose to stay there if you want, but usually you want to move ahead. Everyone here moves ahead eventually, but most folks are eager to keep making progress and keep moving ahead.

* * *

I've met kings and great men of the past, people I've admired. I'm learning from them. There is so much to learn here. Great men and rulers who have had responsibility, who have owned lands and kingdoms, or who have led or inspired many men to follow them, acquired much wisdom and insight into the human character, even in their time on earth. And of course all that knowledge and wisdom has increased since their arrival in Heaven, so they have many interesting and enlightening things to pass on.

* * *

Here in Heaven we still have weaknesses and shortcomings. We aren't translated into a state of perfection the minute we arrive. We still have much learning to do. We get all washed and renewed and refreshed day by day as we sit at Jesus' feet and learn of Him, as we bathe and bask in His fresh mercies which are new each day.

* * *

Our learning carries over when we come to the other side, and that doesn't only go for the practical realm, but the spiritual as well. The things that we just didn't really "get" or master so far, we still need to work on now.

I always considered myself a very smart person, and I have even increased my mental capabilities and knowledge since coming to Heaven. But I would say that more significant to me are the things I've learned about people, about life, about love, about godliness, about God's Word.

I can see that I was a very insensitive and completely unspiritual person on earth. I didn't have empathy or compassion, that insight that helps you understand another person, to anticipate their needs or what they might be going through. I didn't know much about the Bible or godly values, and therefore didn't have much strength of character or high principles.

Yes, I've had a lot to learn since coming here, but somehow it's pretty easy. We seem to make progress a little faster--or a lot faster in my case, since I was so dense before--having seen the Lord face to face, and seeing up close and personal how things work in the realm of the spirit.

* * *

Of course, I've still got a long ways to go, because up here we're still learning, and you know I've got my problems. But I think you'd be proud of me if you could see the areas I've made progress in. I hope and pray that you will be proud of me the next time I see you.

* * *

The next world is not all that different from the world as you know it right now. Everything you're learning right now is going to help you in some way when you get over here; and everything you don't learn right now, the things you don't advance in right now, you'll have to make up for in some way over here. So it pays to make all the progress you can right now.

It pays to do all you can to learn about Jesus and do what He wants you to do, because all that you learn there is going to help you when you arrive over here. Those who know the most about God, those who are most accustomed to following His teachings and who have been consistently trying to do so during their lives on earth, will be the ones who are most prepared when arriving in Heaven to be entrusted with greater responsibility and even more opportunities to learn and progress right away.

* * *

The Lord teaches others so that they can teach others--the clinical method. It's very efficient and one of the ways He multiplies Himself. We go through something similar to internship, and we're all in training under the Lord.

* * *

I did quite well in the educational aspect of heavenly learning. I seemed to just whiz through some of those courses. I didn't feel so great or special about it, because most people made pretty quick progress. It's not

like I had any exceptional smartness, it's just that we learn fast up here.

On the personal side of things, you know, the spiritual training and learning, what you might call moral instruction, well, I've realized that that's my weak spot. I didn't see some of what I now know are weaknesses and even sins, as such. I didn't realize that my quick temper, my sharp tongue, my self-centered mindset were so displeasing to God, so different from the ways of Heaven.

It's not like anyone had to preach at me about it, I could see right off from the way everyone behaved that my way was not Heaven's way. But now I'm understanding more. I'm learning the whys and wherefores, seeing how Jesus sees things and what He likes and dislikes, and I'm sort of getting "reprogrammed" in my responses and reactions and the way I see things. I'm learning to be patient, understanding, kind, generous, and all these virtues that I thought before you either had or you didn't have--and I was one of the didn't-haves. I didn't realize until now that these things can be learned, and boy, am I glad to be learning them!

* * *

Jesus is all ears. Sometimes we joke about that, Mr. Ears, because He always listens so much to us. We need Him so much, even here. Things are perfect here, but we don't come here perfect. We need healing and repairing of our hearts and minds, and it takes time. But it's a lot easier doing it here.

* * *

Since I've been here in Heaven, I've been having to attend some classes. (I have to call them classes, because that's the only way you can understand it--although they're not really classes like those on earth. It's not where you get bored listening to a teacher who doesn't have a clue about what's going on in your heart and mind.)

These classes are special because the teachers know their students personally. They've seen clips of parts of our lives--the parts that we're learning about--and they understand us and understand how we think. That helps us learn much faster, of course, because they're able to adapt the lessons to what we need, and they help answer the questions we have without our even asking. When we need special instruction to learn a certain lesson, they help give that as well.

Sometimes special instruction involves actually going to a certain situation and seeing how things play out. It's not like we actually go to earth, but we can be right in the middle of the situation while still staying here, almost like talking on the telephone from far away, yet you hear the person on the line very clearly. So these little classes are very helpful, and very interesting and enjoyable.

* * *

(Jesus:) All who come here still grow, still learn, still progress. Yet it is in an atmosphere of great love and understanding; for I am a God of mercy and I bestow great mercy upon My children.

* * *

I'm going through some training courses on all sorts of things, hearing far-out speeches from some men and women of old, and gaining wisdom from each of them. We have seminars or meetings, and we learn a lot from them. They're so interesting. I attend as many of those as possible, 'cause I need to learn all I can.

There are so many people here who have so much input to offer, and all of us young people are really into it. We get to hear their life stories, and we also get to learn new things, and we also get to watch scenes of their lives and different experiences they had--how they followed the Lord, what they learned, and all sorts of neat stuff. Some of these people lived a long time, have done a lot of different things, and they just know so much. It's not just knowledge of places and happenings, but understanding of humanity, understanding of God, understanding of the way things work in the spirit world and in the hearts and minds of people. It's also a faith-building experience to see how God helped and led and blessed those who obeyed Him and followed Him. It helps us understand the Lord better and how He works and how perfect He is in every way.

* * *

I wasn't anything really special on earth, but when I got up here I progressed quickly through many grades of spiritual training because I was hungry to learn. I guess one benefit to dying young is you don't have time to

get hardened on earth, so in Heaven you're a little more ready and willing to learn than those who come later in life, who sometimes think they know a lot by then.

* * *

Sometimes the old life still has little vestiges of thought patterns that need to be changed, and from day to day the old passes into the past and is gone forever, and with every passing of the old is a coming of the new. As we open our hearts more and more to the truth, we are transformed with new thoughts and new ideals, new love, always new. Every day there is something new about this life.

* * *

Up here we become all the wiser. Do you know why? It's because through sharing our lessons we are able to learn from the mistakes of others! We listen and we learn from the mistakes of all the great men and women of history. A large part of the wealth of knowledge that is available here in the heavenlies is in learning from the mistakes of others. So we listen and we learn from all the experiences of others. We learn what not to do as well as what to do!

* * *

When on earth I read the Bible, I loved the Words of Jesus, and I tried to live up to the godly virtues that I knew about. But up here, I can take that learning so much farther. What we learn on earth, even from reading the Bible, is really just the basics, just scratching the surface.

God's ways and workings are deep and endless. His love is limitless, and the love that we can have, the understanding and compassion and kindness that we can share with our loved ones and acquaintances, is something we can always go further in.

As good as I tried to be down there, I realize that what I was doing was more like trying to *not* do the *wrong* things. Now I'm learning to go out of my way to do not only the "right" or "righteous" things, but the loving things, the things that will help people feel cared for, understood, included, appreciated.

CHAPTER 21

“Oops! I Made a Mistake!”

So we've got lots to learn once we get there. But will we keep making mistakes? Or is that over and done with once we leave this earthly life? If we do make mistakes, how are they looked upon by God, by others, and by ourselves?

#

(Jesus:) Those here must learn, must grow, and they, too, err at times, that from these errors they may learn and grow in ways that they would not otherwise. Life here is similar to the life there. You are you when you enter into the world of the spirit. You retain your personality. For it is only your body that dies, that is left behind. Your spirit, which is the real you, carries on, keeps on living. You have only shed the clothes of the flesh, and you enter into this world and you begin to learn the ways of the kingdom of Heaven. Yes, some mistakes are made. But here you learn very quickly, for you are not buffeted by Satan.

* * *

It's not that we don't make mistakes anymore once we arrive here, because the fact is that sometimes we do. But our hearts and intentions are right, and we're all trying to do the right thing, so even our mistakes don't turn out that bad, and the Lord keeps us from causing any harm or trouble to others through them. We're trying to please the Lord and do what is right, and that is our directional force. Love motivates and guides our every action and deed, and it keeps us on course, and thus we can't mess things up too bad even if we don't quite get it right every time.

* * *

Up here we're working together in unity. When somebody makes a mistake they just apologize. If they were hasty or thoughtless, they admit it. If they misunderstood or misjudged, they explain. They just ask for

forgiveness and make their amends right away. We do make mistakes up here, did you know that? We all do. Sometimes it's just part of the learning process.

* * *

You see, that's what it's like up here--even when you make a mistake, you see the good side of it.

* * *

I blew it just the other day. I've been here a relatively short while, and for the most part I've been complimented by the Lord and my friends that I've been learning quickly and doing well. But I've always had a quick tongue and sometimes tend to let it run off before thinking, and unfortunately, I did that to one of my friends. I said something that really cut her down. It was sort of in jest, and it wasn't a big deal, and it didn't terribly hurt or devastate her, but it was definitely out of order, and everyone looked at me with this look of disapproval.

Jean, the girl I had offended, got kinda misty-eyed, and just that look made me feel so awful. I think she almost felt more sorry for me than for herself, because it was a sign, in front of all my friends, that I have a ways to go and still have some of the harsh ways of my previous life to get over. But they're all so sweet about it. That little incident was forgiven and forgotten--by them anyway--almost as quickly as it happened. As for me, well, I chalk it up to experience and part of the learning process. That's one thing I don't think I'll do again any time soon.

* * *

We're not perfect. We still make mistakes and have our shortcomings, but we look at them differently. We see them as areas to grow in, but we don't let them discourage us because we know it's just part of life. It's part of what we are; it's part of our makeup. It's part of the continual process of growth in the spirit.

CHAPTER 22

Can Our Lives Be Influenced by *Ghosts*?

Does everyone stay put in Heaven once they get there? Or is there some traveling to be done? How does it work as far as departed spirits communicating with the living here on earth? How do they manage to exert any influence over us or speak to us?

#

We here can help you from this side, if you let us. We can communicate with you via the spirit. All you have to do is listen.

* * *

Some helpers from the spirit world are given to a person to stay with them through their entire life on earth, from the moment of birth until the moment when they escort that person to the world beyond. Other spirit helpers are sent on missions for short periods of time, on special assignment, when there is a great need. When a person's present spirit helper is needed elsewhere, they are given a replacement. But other helpers come as answers to your prayers. If you pray for specific help in a certain area, they come to answer that prayer, to fill the need for as long as you need them. Or if you know someone else has a need and you pray for them, through your prayer you send them the helpers that they need for their job.

* * *

(A husband to his wife:) There's just a veil there, Honey, and I'm right behind it. I can be there and I can speak in your ear and I can encourage you and whisper to you; and if you have the faith, you can hear me. You can feel my presence; you can sense my words in your heart and even in your mind. You can talk to me anytime, Honey. I can even talk back to you, if you're really listening. So open up your heart and your mind, and have faith.

* * *

When I came to Heaven I was able to meet the one who had been my spirit helper throughout much of my life. She was a very wise woman, a simple and godly country farmer's wife, who had taught and trained her children well, and one of her sons went on to be a great statesman who influenced many people for good. When she passed away, the Lord asked her if she would be willing to help other mothers raise their sons right, and then she was assigned to help me--me, a young, frazzled, inexperienced mother of two young boys. Later, I had another son and a daughter.

I can remember, now that I realize it, that things were different starting about when my eldest boy was nearly two and my second was just a few months old. Things started getting easier, calmer somehow, and I started getting ideas of things to teach them and do with them.

I started reading them Bible stories and teaching them the parables of Jesus and things I wasn't even so familiar with myself, though I'd learned some of them in Sunday school as a girl and later in church as a young woman. I would get thoughts and ideas throughout the days of ways that I could give my boys good input and a solid moral foundation. I also would get practical ideas that would make my workload easier. I had no idea then, though, where they were coming from.

Then when I arrived on this side I met Martha and found out that it was she who had inspired me with those thoughts, and had infused in me the vision of what my boys could become if I only helped them get that way. It worked, and I'm so proud of my boys now. They aren't perfect, of course, but they've made something constructive of their lives; they're productive and happy, and now have families of their own. If I'd had to raise them on my own, only knowing the little I did and having the meager foresight I had at first, I know for a fact they wouldn't have turned out as well. So thanks, Martha, and I thank Jesus for sending you to me.

* * *

(A father to his daughter:) I'm right here beside you! I can see you and I watch over you all the time. By no means have I forgotten about you, just because you're in one realm and I'm in another. While to you it may seem like we're worlds apart, and in some ways we are, if you only knew how entwined those two worlds can be, and how close I am to you, you'd be amazed! Well, your mind just wouldn't be able to comprehend it, actually,

because it's one of the mysteries of Heaven, one of the many wonders of God's kingdom!

* * *

(To a teenage unwed mother:) Do you know who looks after you?--Your great grandmother. You know, she ran a home for young mothers who were kicked out by their families for being unwed. Plus, she loves children so much. She thinks they're one of the most wonderful things. One of the Lord's sweetest ways to show His love on earth is a new life--the inspiration and hope a new life gives! So, she's watching out for you too, and she's inspiring those around you on earth who help you.

* * *

I had read in the Bible about the “great cloud of witnesses” that surrounds us, but, while I was living on earth, it was kind of hard to relate to the concept that there were all these other people, angels or beings or whatever, around me that I couldn’t see. I didn’t even really try to picture it or imagine it, it just seemed so unusual, so unrelatable. But man, now I can see what they were talking about.

Sometimes when a group of people get together in a room or hall, if they’re all Christians and the Lord's children, there can be quite a major crowd of spirits around--besides the crowd of people, I mean. Everyone has their guardian angel, plus often another departed spirit helper or two, and if you’re seeing things in the spiritual realm, it’s quite a different sight than when you’re just seeing with your natural eyes. There really are a lot of helpers around, and they’re available to those who need them and ask for them.

* * *

(A husband to his wife:) I was so happy when the Lord said that I could come back to be with you, to watch over you, to help you, and to love you. Oh, the Lord knows every desire of our hearts. There's nothing in Heaven or on earth that I would have wanted more than the assignment to be with you and help you. You probably don't realize how much we who have passed away can influence you. We influence your thoughts.--That's largely how we

lead and guide you. The more conscious you are of our presence, the easier it is for you to be attuned to us.

* * *

Now I understand clearly that there are certain things we who are on this side cannot do for you there. There are limitations and boundaries, and we must work within those limitations and boundaries. Watching you operate is so funny sometimes. We want to step in and jump in and try to steer things and control things, but we can't. We're limited.

That's simply the way God has set things up; everyone has a choice and the power to make that choice. We can't intervene. We can't stop you from doing what you want to do. We can't *make* you do the right thing. We can't even make other people do the right thing so that things work out well for you. We can only speak to your heart, your thoughts, your spirit, and try to influence you for good.

* * *

(From a spirit helper to a couple whose child died:) I know it's been difficult for you, losing your boy in an accident like that, and I've come to help you through it. I know what it's like, because the same thing happened to me once, a very long time ago.

I've come to encourage you that he's all right; he's safe in Heaven, and you'll be together again before long. I've also come to tell you that if you want to make the best of your life now and enjoy what you have left and have the strength to keep going, you've got to let him go. You've got to accept that he'll be gone for awhile, and just treasure and cherish the memories and happiness you had together.

There are other children, other family members, other friends--many others to love and who need your love. Show your love for your son now by loving others, by being kind and thoughtful and friendly, like your little angel boy always was. I know it's difficult, and it will be for a while, but I'm here to make it easier for you.

I'm here to be a friend, and though you can't see me, you can talk to me and know that I understand. You can spill out your thoughts and feelings to me, and then when you're around others, you won't have to do that. You'll be able to be cheery and positive and kind toward others, and be a

pillar of strength and support to the rest of your family. They all really need you now. I know it's difficult for you to even tell anyone how you feel and how much you hurt, but that's why I'm here. Jesus sent me to you to be your counselor, to be a listening ear, to help you bear your burdens bravely, and to help you be what others need you to be.

* * *

(A husband to his wife:) I watch over and guard the kids from this side, through thick and thin, through the good times and the hard times and tight times. I've been helping you in very real and tangible ways. I don't expect you to understand it all right now, but you'll see clearly one day, when you arrive here.

* * *

(To a young missionary headed for Africa:) I know you feel nervous; you feel a bit frightened. You know this is what God wants you to do, but it's unsettling going to a new place, to a new life, leaving your family and friends and all that you know and are accustomed to.

I've come to help make it easier for you. I lived and worked in these lands once as a missionary and medical doctor, and I know and understand these people. I love them with all my heart.

I'll help you, too, to learn to understand and love them greatly. I speak their language, I understand their customs, and I'll help you to learn and pick them up quickly. Don't worry that you've never learned a foreign language before and that you know so little of their ways. You have a job to do, and it's God's will for you to do it, so if you will stay close to Him, and listen to me and call on my help when you need it, we'll help you get that job done, and done right.

CHAPTER 23

Angels Watching over You

What about angels? Do they exist or are they just the figment of some people's imaginations--or characters of myth and legend that some choose to believe in because it makes them feel good? If they do exist, what is their purpose and what do they do? Are there guardian angels, and does each person have one? Is there a difference between angels and departed spirits who have passed on to the heavenly realm?

#

(Jesus:) My angels of love are everywhere. Each eternal soul that is born into the world is accompanied by one of My angels who is assigned to watch over and care for and protect them, and try to help them make the right decisions. These angels are My angels of love and mercy. Even if people make the wrong decisions, they are never left alone, but are always accompanied by their loving angel. The more they make the right decisions, the more power their angel has to help them and protect them and guide them. The more they choose evil, the less their angel can intervene to protect them.

Besides these guardian angels of love and mercy, there are special assignment angels that are sent from My throne to bring messages of love and encouragement and direction, some who are sent as messengers of healing, and others who are sent to accompany the souls who are leaving the earth to come home. Special angels are sent in response to prayers prayed by loved ones; or if the person himself prays, I also send angels to help. Prayers are powerful in sending more reinforcements to difficult situations, and the angels are so happy when people pray, because it gives them much more power to help.

Many people are not aware of the many angels that surround them, but you can be sure that as many people as are with you, there are at least that many angels standing guard, and possibly many more, depending on your prayers!

* * *

(Angel speaking:) I am not a man of many words; in fact, I am not a man at all, but an angel of God. I come now to give you a brief glimpse into a society and world that is far beyond and above the one you now live in.

I come to tell you of the ministries that we perform, of the life that we live. We are similar in many ways to the departed spirits from earth who come to Heaven, in the sense that we have supernatural bodies, great heavenly knowledge, wisdom, and power. But we are different from them in many ways also.

We were never on earth, never created as humans. We were created to be guards, emissaries, and messengers for God. We do not age as humans do, and we never have. Those of us who are fullgrown were created that way. Others were created as children and remain that way, for that is their ministry. They are not as children in their understanding, however, for though simple, kind, and loving, even they possess much more wisdom and understanding than an earthly child ever could. They are used as ministers of love and encouragement, as well as to convey protection and healing, mainly for the children of earth. Children are more attentive and receptive to the things of the spirit. Children often sense and know that there are angels around them, and when there is a child angel with them, there is an extra bond of understanding and communication.

All people have need of protection and guidance throughout life, and so, as each new human soul is created, God assigns one of us to that person's care. It's fascinating being the guardian of a mortal. I've guarded many throughout my existence, and each one has been an incredible experience.

Sometimes it's difficult for us to understand why you humans act or react in a certain way, for we have not lived a life on earth as you have. But as we spend time with you, watching over you and helping you, we also learn much. We learn how you think and operate, your methods of reasoning and understanding, and this helps us become more mature and developed in our expertise as well.

Those of us, like myself, who have been around a long time and worked with many humans, are sometimes called upon for advice by novice angels who do not know as much when they start off. We also can avail ourselves of the knowledge of departed human spirits, who, while they have not the pure and perfect heavenly training and origin that we do, nor the power that we possess, they have a very valuable asset--that of being able to relate to and understand other humans.

So we all have much to learn from each other. God has ordained it this way, that no soul, human or angel, knows all from the start, so that we may live full lives, rich in experience, discovery, and growth.

* * *

(Angel speaking:) On my first assignment to earth, I was awed at the transformation of myself that took place. I had always been in Heaven, arrayed with robes of multicolored light, crowned with an aura of light, and bearing shimmering white wings that decorated my form and sped me along in my flight. I was accustomed to these things and they were part of me.

But my first mission was to be an angel in disguise. I was to appear to a woman at a difficult moment in her life and speak a few words of comfort and cheer. It was not an assignment requiring much training or experience; I simply had to give my message and then leave the decision with her. But it was unlike anything I had experienced before. From one moment to the next there I was, walking and not flying; no wings, no glowing light around me, no shimmering colorful robes, just a simple long skirt and pullover sweater.

I'll never forget those first few moments on that park bench, watching the birds flying around above me and realizing my feet were stuck to the ground. I wondered why it had to be this way. Why had God taken all my powers away for my assignment? Then I realized that if Maryann, the woman I was to speak to, had seen me in my usual state, she'd have probably fainted. It would have been too much for her. Instead, God had me appear as just another woman relaxing in the park, someone she felt she could relate to, someone who would speak just the right words at the right time to help her make the right decision at a trying time.

We were successful. It worked, and her life was made better as a result. As for my life, I've gone on to a variety of assignments since then, but that first one will always have a special place in my heart, for it was the first time that I was privileged to interact with your kind, to feel as if I were one of you. It was when God placed a special love in my heart for all mankind, and a desire to help, care for, protect, and serve the precious souls that God has placed on earth.

* * *

Now that I'm on the other side, I've seen for myself how there's a

great conflict of good versus evil in the spirit world. Just as there are many beautiful, powerful angels of light and love and protection, so are there many dark, evil, wicked demons who try to destroy and devour--demons of fear, hate, guilt, jealousy, pride and deception. There is a fierce battle around you--good fighting evil, God's angels of love and mercy trying to protect you and speak to you and lead you in the right way, and the Devil's demons of hate and greed trying to speak to you and lead you in the wrong way!

The Devil and his demons, who are all fallen angels, have very little power compared to that of God and His angels. Their only real power lies in fear and in their power to persuade man to listen to them and go their way. They are not to be feared nor heeded, and in due time their evil workings will be stopped.

So much that happens in your life and in the life to come depends upon the choices that you make, whether you choose to love and to do good or you choose to hate and to do evil.

* * *

God and His angels have power to protect you, but they can't do it all without your help. Much depends on your following their signals, and also on whether you call on them and let them work. By praying, you release their complete power, and through them, God protects you.

* * *

(Angel speaking:) We have great power, and we are constantly working in many ways to protect and guide your lives. Much of what we do goes unnoticed, and that is intentional, for this life is one in which you walk by faith. But if you can believe it and if you can receive it, you'll be fascinated to hear about some of the things that we can do.

Everyone has a guardian angel who is with them from the moment of birth, and so, of course, guardian angels are available to guide and counsel people even before they know about Jesus. While we aren't able to work to our full potential--using our abilities to counsel, guide, direct, and smooth out life--until the one we are watching over has made a connection with the spirit world, we are entrusted with protecting our charges from serious harm or hurt, until such a time as they are given a choice of which way they want to go in life, and decide whether to follow good, and God, or not.

Once a person makes such a choice, they are more accountable and thus they have more influence over what their guardian angel can or cannot do. Before the choice, we restrict ourselves to basic protection skills, and some people, especially young people, need a lot of that.

You know all those times that little Johnny goes riding his bike, takes his hands off the handlebars and your mother's heart just groans, and if you're a praying woman you pray--and probably scold him later? Well, many of those times he doesn't fall when you're sure he could have, it's because one of us was there, making sure he didn't get snuffed out before his time.

Kids need a lot of protection. There's a lot they don't understand yet, and a lot that they have yet to learn and experience. Once they do, they're more accountable, and sometimes we have to let them live with the consequences of what they do. But when they're young, when they don't really understand the dangers or ramifications of a thing, well, we're just basically rescuing them from one thing after another.

Everyone does have an appointed time to leave this life, though, and therefore sometimes we do not intervene and protect, because God has given us the order to step back and let things be.

Our job is to help you fulfill God's plan. Of course, we work with you, and we can only influence you when you're listening, when you follow our nudges. Unfortunately, many people don't, and thus they can't avail themselves of all the help and assistance we're able to give and they have to muddle through on their own.

We have to limit ourselves to working somewhat within your mortals' choices and actions. The more you listen to our advice, our warnings, our nudges, the more we are able to help. Conversely, the more you ignore us and God, and especially if you choose to deliberately do wrong or evil or go against God, the more we step back and leave you to your own devices.

There are times when for some reason or another, even if you are doing the right thing and worthy of our protection, God wants you to have a certain experience, even if unpleasant. There are times when, instead of diverting you from an accident, we leave things alone and allow you or your vehicle to be damaged. There are many reasons for this, and you who know that God loves you can believe and trust Him that it is for a *good* reason, and because He wants to use it in some way to make you a better person, to soften your heart or the hearts of those around you, or even to do a miracle of healing.

* * *

(A missionary:) It was really amazing to me when I got up here and was allowed to look back on my life and the lives of those around me and see how many times the Lord protected us, often supernaturally, from the crime that was so rampant in many of the poor countries where we lived. Now I see that the Lord's angels were always there, guarding and protecting us, and they're still there for all who love the Lord.

* * *

(Angel speaking:) I've always been right beside you, watching over you. I have protected you many times and brought you through many tough places, as well as the frustrating times, the times when things didn't seem right. When you didn't have anyone to talk to, or your mom was busy or your dad was away, I was there. When you were crying, I put my arms around you. I sang to you at night when you slept. I tried to bring you comforting thoughts, positive thoughts, uplifting thoughts, thoughts that encouraged you not to look on the negative.

* * *

(Angel speaking:) There are many of us watching over you, many of us that protected you even last night, through the terrible storm and lightning that struck all around you, but did not touch your house. That is our mission and our job; we stand watch over you by day and by night. We are your guardians.

* * *

Now that I'm in the spirit world, I understand the work of spirit beings much better than I ever could have imagined while living on earth. There are the angels who have a great deal of experience dealing with humans, working in the spiritual realm, but among beings of flesh. Then there are those departed spirits who know what it is like to be in the flesh. They, like Jesus, have had the human experience and know what the rest of us go through, and they can often understand us better than the angels, who have lived all their powerful and magnificent lives in the spirit. But the angels, in their own

turn, are much better equipped to battle against the forces of the Devil and of darkness. The angels have much more experience dealing with and overcoming the dark spiritual forces.

This is, in general, the kind of angel the Lord assigns as a permanent guardian angel. Of course, there are times when a departed loved one also goes to be with someone on earth, sometimes even for an extended amount of time. There are times when those of us up here are allowed to go down and help, sort of be an "assistant guardian angel" for you. But for the most part, your protection and spiritual force field is monitored by your own powerful guardian angel.

* * *

(Angel speaking:) I'm sorry that I had to let you get burned. I couldn't protect you from that accident with the campfire because you weren't listening to me. You were drinking too much, acting too silly, and being careless, and you weren't listening to me or to your friends around you, who were trying to help you calm down. So we had to let you fall.

You know Jesus, so you know how it works with His protection. He sends us to protect you and we do a good job, but when you deliberately do something you know is foolish and you resist the voice of your conscience, which is really the voice of God or of us, your angels, then we simply have to step back and let you be, until you come to your senses. I'm sorry we had to let that happen, but you can be thankful it wasn't worse. You'll heal quickly, and next time you'll remember not to be so foolish.

* * *

(Angel speaking:) Jonathan came home to Heaven last night. He didn't even realize Heaven was his home, and in fact, if he ever thought about it, he probably figured he was headed the *other* direction. He hadn't yet heard about the Lord or found himself a belief in anything when he died. He was pretty much headed the wrong way, getting himself into all sorts of trouble. That's why the Lord told us to leave him be this time.

He was speeding away from the cops, driving like a crazy man to get away, because this time he'd gotten himself spotted robbing a bank. We'd protected him from many a brush with death over the past few years, on God's orders, trusting that in due time he'd see the error of his ways, right

his wrongs, and make his peace with God and with man. But he was simply going further astray.

He wasn't wicked in his heart, just misled, or rather unled. God knew now that the best hope for Jonathan would be if he'd be stopped from going further astray and making his life and others' lives worse, so He told us that He wanted him on the other side now. Although we had the power to protect his body this time, too, like we had all the other times, we held back, restrained ourselves, and left him to his own end.

Scared as he was, Jonathan lost control of the car and went tumbling off the cliff. When he died, we were there to meet him. In just a few brief moments we'd taken him through a review of his life and told him that Jesus wanted to give him a chance now to ask for and accept forgiveness, and to start over; that if he wanted to, he could be a new man and come to Heaven. He cried and cried, saying, "But I'm such a *bad* man, how could Jesus love *me*?" We assured him over and over that He did, and Jonathan thankfully accepted the mercy and forgiveness that was being offered him.

* * *

(Jesus:) All things are possible in the realm of My spirit world, and there is not a clear, across-the-board explanation to be given of how the angels and spirit beings and heavenly inhabitants live in Heaven. For there are many different levels, and there are many different modes of operation.

There are many different kinds of angels, many levels of helpers, ministering spirits, guardian angels, and heavenly messengers. Each fulfills their own callings, their own portfolios, their own ministries and tasks.

The angels in Heaven learn, they progress, they attain to new and higher levels of divine knowledge, and so some are greater and more experienced and learned than others.

CHAPTER 24

Where Does Prayer Fit In?

Some people seem to have the impression that the inhabitants of Heaven do nothing but perpetually and solemnly pray and praise God. It appears true that there is plenty of prayer and praise to God; however, the way it's carried out is informal and enjoyable--possibly much different from some people's perception of prayer and spirituality.

#

(Jesus:) The fragrance of your prayers wafts up into My heavenly chamber, filling it with the scent of roses! Your petitions come to Me in the form of rose petals, fragrant and sweet. I look upon your every request with delight and happiness, for to hear the words of your mouth and the desires of your heart brings Me satisfaction. I rejoice in seeing your dependence upon Me and upon My power, which is almighty. I delight in showing you My gracious, omnipotent hand, and in performing many mighty works for you.

* * *

Not one prayer is missed, not one prayer goes unheard, not one prayer is unanswered in some way. Talk about powerful computers--the world ain't seen nothin' compared to what God has got running *His* business! Your prayer is no sooner uttered than it registers on the "computers" (for lack of a better word) up in Heaven. The Lord can see them, feel them, and hear them as they arrive, and He gives the order for them to be answered.

I'm sure there are better ways of describing how it works, and I don't know all the ins and outs yet, but it is awe inspiring. It's amazing how quickly those prayers mount up. It's amazing how fast everything goes into action when that little prayer is registered. These guys really move fast, and angels are constantly coming and going! Projects are being assigned and angels released as the prayers are received and funneled along.

* * *

I'll let you in on a little secret: We have many prayer halls here in Heaven!

* * *

Yes, we in Heaven pray; we have this same method of communication that you do. For it's a wondrous miracle how two spirits can be merged as one. This is what happens when one prays: His spirit is merged with the loving Spirit of Jesus and of God. It is a wondrous and miraculous occurrence. It's the same for us here.--We're often able to see and hear and visit with the Lord, but at any moment, any instant, we have the wonderful privilege of being one with Him through prayer.

* * *

Here in the spirit world we pray and acknowledge the Lord. You might have thought that once you get here, you've attained such a state of spirituality that you don't have to pray anymore. Well, quite to the contrary, once you get to see behind the scenes how the Lord has, in most cases, limited Himself to intervening only when we pray, and how very much He would like to be able to do for us if we would only ask, and how much doesn't get done because of *lack* of prayer, it makes you want to pray all the more, all the harder.

Of course, our prayer life here is in somewhat of a different dimension, since the Lord is visible much of the time to our eyes and we can hear Him with our ears. They aren't our physical eyes and ears; I'm not quite sure how to explain it. It doesn't take as much faith for us to hear and see Him, because we're living in the same dimension as He is, so to speak. Anyway, we're constantly acknowledging Him and asking Him for help and guidance.

* * *

We pray often for you who have lost loved ones. We pray that Jesus comforts your hearts, makes you happy, fills up the empties, that your personal spirit helpers can whisper to you the answers you seek, and that your special angels will take good care of you.

* * *

When the prayer requests come up here to Heaven, the Lord doles them out to different individuals to take care of. It's sometimes our job to engineer things in such a way that those prayers are answered. It's quite an interesting job, and a lot of folks have a lot of fun doing it, including me!

* * *

(A mother to her son, asking him to relay a message to his father:) Tell him that I still love him and I will watch over him from up here. I will keep a close eye on him and I will be praying for him. Yes, we too pray for people. We pray before the throne of grace and we ask the Lord's mercy and protection for our loved ones.

* * *

Prayer is a lot more casual here and more a part of everyday life than it is for a lot of you folks there. Prayer is like second nature; it's like talking. It's just so easy to pray. Everything around you reminds you to always have praise or a prayer on your lips, when you see the beauty around you, when you partake of the inspiring answers to prayer and miraculous accounts of things the Lord does on earth, constantly working miracles. You can't always see what happens as a result of your prayers when you're down *there*, but from *this* vantage point you're constantly seeing the fruit of prayer and the results of prayer--so you just can't help but want to pray!

* * *

Believe me, when I got over here and saw how much prayer can do, I wished I'd prayed more! It's powerful and it changes things.

CHAPTER 25

“Make a Joyful Noise!” [[Psalm 100:1]]

In Heaven, praise to God seems to go even beyond it being an inherent part of prayer. It seems to be a way of life, and even a mysterious force that gives additional heavenly power to its participants.

#

Praise is very important here in Heaven, for we praise God all the time! It's very natural. It's part of being here; it's what we do. When you see it from this side, you see how important it is and how much you want to do it. It's beautiful to hear the many ways to praise the Lord here, and to see that *all* things praise the Lord. It's wonderful! I can't even explain it.

* * *

I'm Nick, and I want to explain to you what praise time in Heaven does for me.

When I first arrived, my friends introduced me to the experience of stopping for a few minutes to glorify and worship and praise the Lord. It was absolutely overwhelming.

Everything around us in Heaven is beautiful and radiant, and I felt as though I couldn't be any happier, until that moment. When I lifted my arms upward and my friends and I in turn thanked God for the happiness He had given us and the beauty He had placed around us, I felt a rush go through my body from head to toe. I felt His gratitude for my praise in a *tangible* way. It's difficult to explain. That feeling grew as I continued to stop for times of praise to the Lord.

There aren't set times to praise Him, although there are times throughout the "day" that beautiful praise music wafts through the air. There's a lot of music to be heard in Heaven, and it can be heard at any time, all the time, but this praise music has a special sound to it, and people are immediately moved, no matter what they're doing, to pause and praise the Lord.

Like I said, it's difficult to explain, but I'll try. The praise music is

surrounding me, and the moment I begin to praise, it's like the power in this special music enters my very being, and I am reinvigorated and refreshed and made new again. I feel like praise is a privilege, because it's just another excuse the Lord uses to shower His love on me.

Praise in Heaven, to me, is like playing that tag game on earth, where the moment you tag someone, they try to tag you back. The moment I praise Him, He pours back the blessings. Then I praise Him more, and He just increases the blessings. He always gives me much more than I can praise Him for, and this is His wish and His privilege.

At the same time, I know that He loves my praises, and He never scorns gifts of praise and gratitude, no matter how ineloquent they may be. Despite His majesty, He is grateful for my humble gifts to Him, and responds with such humbling fervency.

Praise in Heaven is part of my recreation. Nothing refreshes me more when I'm going about my day.

* * *

(Angel speaking:) We here in Heaven have much to praise about, much to be thankful for, just as those of you on earth do. There is so much variety in our way of praising here, because no matter what we are doing we are in essence praising.

Everything we do glorifies the Lord in one way or another, whether we are verbally praising and singing and rejoicing in the Lord, or whether we are just appreciating His handiwork, accepting His overwhelming love, and enjoying our heavenly lives of love. Even when we are sent to earth on a mission of help or strength or encouragement, it glorifies His awesome power and greatness.

One of our favorite ways of uniting in praise is in singing. Music is one of the most popular ways of praising up here. Why? Because Jesus loves music and song, and He loves to hear our voices raised in praiseful harmonies and choruses. Also because we love singing. Many important events through the ages have been (or are) heralded with choruses of angels singing and praising. Up here everyone sings, everyone lifts up their voices with a joyful and praising noise.

Along with the singing there are also music and instruments of all kinds, both known and unknown to folks on earth. Indescribably beautiful sounds reverberate throughout the city, and the singing and dancing begins almost

involuntarily. Everyone joins in praying and praising in song and in dance. We have our musicians and our songwriters, some of whom are good dancers, and some of us who just praise and love Him in tongues. He revels in the praises of each and every one.

We also put on shows, rewatching the creation of the world and other fascinating events caused by the Lord's mighty hand. As we watch, we all praise and lift our hands toward His throne room.

* * *

(Angel speaking:) The Lord feels our praises and will frequent our praise sessions with a royal appearance. We have so many kinds of praises: the light and happy kind where we all dance and sing and laugh and praise, the majestic and reverent kind where we hail Him as Holy and Almighty, and bow before Him in silent adoration.

Jesus comes and joins in our singing and dancing or our loving, whatever we're doing. He likes to be there and see our praising faces and feel our grateful hearts and joyful smiles. I think He knows that His presence is a very special treat for all of us, and He enjoys making us happy by His joining in.

Since everyone enjoys it so much, it turns out to be quite a frequent event that we all gather together for a big "praise jam." Or we'll call some of the children in to lead us in our praises. Those are some of the most touching praises, as they will praise with such sincerity, devotion, faith, and love, that many of us are moved to tears by their love for Jesus, simple, yet mature.

* * *

(Jesus:) My children want to praise Me and show their love to Me at every opportunity, and they never tire of whispering their words of love, loyalty, dedication, and thankfulness to Me. The words of praise are always in their heart and they want to have them on their lips, that I may be honored.

CHAPTER 26

Friends, Neighbors, and Lovers

What will things be like in Heaven as far as our personal relationships with others? You've already seen some references made to friends and loved ones being reunited. Here are some more interesting insights about friendships and relationships in the world beyond.

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(Jesus:) What is friendship? It is a special bond of love that I place between people to keep them close. It is a special gift of love that I give both to bring happiness and to lighten the trials and the troubles. It is a commitment on the part of the individuals involved--a commitment of love and unselfishness. All of these many aspects of love abound in Heaven, and friendship is perfected here! There is no jealousy or misunderstanding, no distance or circumstance that comes between you here, so friendship is enjoyed to the full!

One of the great rewards of Heaven is the precious friendship which all enjoy--both with their friends and loves of earth, as well as the many new friends they meet here. Though all of Heaven is in harmony and there are no strangers here, yet there are still special loves and special friendships which have developed over time and are very close and unique. The great abundance of love does not take away from the precious treasure of the individual contact, and each one is loved in a special way.

* * *

(A teenager speaking:) Nobody is exclusive here in Heaven. No one shuts you out. Everyone loves everyone, and it's pure pleasure to include others in the love and friendship you share with those special to you. Yes, each of us here has somebody or somebodies who are special to us--and of course the Lord is the most special one of all to us--but that doesn't mean that anyone feels left out.

It's really wonderful that you can walk up to any group of people and feel included right away. The cool thing is that because we can read minds up

here to a certain extent, and also communicate very fast telepathically, there's never the problem of feeling lost and like you don't know what everyone's talking about, just because you came late into a conversation.

We do a lot of fun things together too. One of the joys of Heaven is finding and making new friends all the time. Everyone is a friend here; some are friends we just haven't met yet!

* * *

I finally went home to Heaven on June 4th, 1954, and left my family and my wife of many years behind. Who should I meet among all the souls in the vast kingdom of Heaven but the same woman I'd caught a glimpse of from the world beyond while I was sick. She wasn't an hallucination after all. Here I was, face to face with that familiar face I'd been seeing in visions on earth while I was sick.

We talked about my wife, who I knew would be missing me, and about my kids, my friends, my life on earth and the many experiences of my 75 years. That made it easier to leave my loved ones behind until we're reunited up here.

I met her friends and her friends' friends, and I began to see that Heaven is full of friends. Everybody seems to be friends. I thought I'd be very lonely without my wife and family, but this neighborly love and friendship is so beautiful and pure that it comforted me. It's natural; everywhere I looked I saw kind and loving people, and everyone I met were friends.

On earth I would have never put my arm around my neighbor's wife, but here we can hold hands and it's just normal. Men and women who have never met before can sit together, walk together, touch each other, and it's all very normal and natural. It seems so logical to have this neighborly love for one another, and although I don't think I would have felt this way on earth, coming to Heaven gave me a new look at love.

* * *

(Jesus:) Close friendships on earth continue to be close friendships in Heaven. For friends are eternal gifts that I give, and the friendship only becomes sweeter in the afterlife. You will be able to be together forever in My eternal kingdom of love.

* * *

My best friend, Julie, died of a sickness when she was still just a young woman. Oh, it was a loss to have her go. She was the person who I had been the closest to in my life. All throughout our school days, from the time we were freckle-faced little girls, through our awkward teenage years, through our college and dating years, and then through our first years of marriage and childbearing, we were never far apart.

When she went, and so quickly, a piece of my life was sure missing. I went on. Life was good to me. I had a loving husband and beautiful children, and I had and made other friends as well. But Julie was still never far from my thoughts, and I often thought of what she would do or say in a certain situation. I would have conversations with her in my mind, and I'd still tell her the things that I didn't tell anyone else. Sometimes I thought I could hear her laughing when I'd be telling my other friends some funny story about my little ones.

Not long ago it was my time to come up here, and, besides meeting Jesus and seeing what kind of residence He'd prepared for me, the thing I looked forward to most was seeing Julie again. I didn't have long to wait, for there she was right when I walked through the gates, heading up my welcome party. There were others there, too--friends, relatives, and acquaintances I'd had throughout my life--and to be all together again made me feel right at home.

Julie walked me to the mansion that Jesus had prepared for me and for my family, who she assured me would be here in good time, and that it wouldn't seem like too long. I knew it wouldn't, because she and I would have so much talking to do, it could take an eternity! There was so much about our lives to catch up on. She could fill me in on the latest in Heaven and all that she'd been up to, and I had stories of my own to tell. Why wasn't I too surprised, though, when she told me that she already knew some about what I'd done and gone through? She'd actually been there listening to me many of those times I talked to her in my mind. She'd come back to help me and comfort me from time to time. She was a friend to me in life, in death, and now in the world beyond she's closer to my heart than ever.

* * *

(Jesus:) The kingdom of Heaven is the kingdom of love, where love

reigns supreme, for We are love--the Father, the Spirit and Me. All that We do and all that is done in the heavenly realm is done in love. Love reigns supreme.

There are boundaries on earth, but here there is freedom. On earth, you are bound by the confines of sin and the nature of man--selfishness, pride, hurt feelings, distrust, unloving actions. But here you are free from these things, and thus they do not influence you and they do not get in the way of love. They do not hinder the loving of another, for here all is done in love and none is hurt by love.

You must also understand that we live in eternity, so that in the giving and receiving of love, there is nothing lost. You can be with one and you can be with another and there is no time lost, for time is forever; there is no feeling of loss, because there is no loss. Even though you may not understand, rest assured that here in My kingdom, all is love, all is done in love, all is received in love, and there is no harm nor hurt, for there is only love!

CHAPTER 27

Sex in Heaven?

Whether or not there is sexual activity in Heaven is undeniably a controversial question. For some, the thought of eternity without sex would be unbearable. For others, it is an assumed fact that there will be no sex in the afterlife. Well, let's hear what the people who are *there* have to say about ... sex in Heaven!

(Jesus:) Do you not enjoy wonderful, fun, and loving fellowship in love and passion and sex even now with your loved ones there on earth? Why would this stop over here? My heavenly paradise is an extension of the lives you now have there on earth. Are there not references throughout My Word, referring to the loving sexual relationships between a man and a woman? Have I not given an illustration to help you to see the intimacy that those of you who believe in Me can have with Me by calling you My Bride and Me your Husband?

To say there is no sex in Heaven is to deny that I, the King of Heaven and Earth, created sex. And yet I did, for when I created life, I also created a marvelous means to procreate life--sex! Just as you shall find every other aspect of My creation in Heaven in its most perfect form, so shall you find sex in its most perfect form.

* * *

You don't have to worry about "unsafe sex" in Heaven, because there are no diseases or hurts or earthly problems here!

* * *

There is a certain mystical, magical side to sex here in Heaven. Every pore and fiber of your being comes to life, experiencing not only the physical sensations of arousal and lovemaking, but the spiritual ecstasies also. Those cannot be felt on earth, for they are unique to Heaven. It's something about sex in Heaven that cannot be described in earthly terms, for there are no words in earth's languages to describe it.

* * *

The sexual feelings and orgasms I experienced on earth were very much the same as those I've had in Heaven, but the difference could be described as a low wattage night light compared to a high-intensity spotlight. Everything truly is bigger and better up here!

* * *

In Heaven, having sex is like eating and sleeping; you don't *have* to do any of these things, but you can if you want to.

* * *

You won't have any sexual troubles here! There aren't any inhibitions here! It's a relearning process--relearning that there isn't anything wrong with feeling those sexy feelings. You're going to be able to enjoy loving sex to the full without fear or condemnation.

You won't have any trouble here with impotence or frigidity; those things don't exist here! This is a world of love and loving sex--good and godly, wonderful, beautiful, thrilling, ecstatic, gorgeous sex!

* * *

The women are so beautiful here, lovely and loving! The men are outstanding too! We've got real love up here, true concern and care, and it even includes sex! Great times for the men and the women too! It's wonderful--even better than your dreams!

* * *

In Heaven, sex is looked upon without fear or guilt. It's looked upon as a loving means of communication between a man and a woman.

* * *

In Heaven, sex is talked about just like any other form of recreation, like

cooking or sports or entertainment, and there's no shame or embarrassment.

* * *

(Jesus:) Here in Heaven, when you have sex, it is as if you become totally one with the person. Your thoughts, your emotions, your feelings all blend in a rapturous explosion of the Spirit. Lovemaking here is never boring or tiring. It's always alive, wild, free, passionate, and filled with desire.

* * *

Here our spirits are able to merge with another spirit, so that our two heartbeats can become as one. Even now, some of you experience this merging of the spirits on earth, this feeling of becoming one with another. Here, whenever you want it, you can merge totally with the one you love. You can become one, not just in the flesh, but in the Spirit. You can feel as if your partner's whole being is inside of you, and as if you are completely inside of them.

* * *

Sex is not for pure pleasure alone. Although you do have tremendous orgasms here, and sex is always a positive, inspiring, and uniting experience, it also serves a purpose, in that conception, pregnancy, and births result from it, if you so desire.

* * *

Sex in Heaven is only good, there is no negativity attached to it. We don't have rapes, abortions, sodomy, sado-masochism, or any kind of other perversion that the Devil has flooded the world with. Nor do we have AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases.

* * *

(Jesus:) Did you know that Heaven is the sexiest of all places? In Heaven, all your wildest desires are fulfilled and granted. Why? Because everybody is

so loving and concerned about each other, and everyone is able to love without walls between people, without inhibitions.

For here in My kingdom *all* is love, and because *all* are loving, all things are pure. “To the pure, all things are pure” (Titus 1:15).

CHAPTER 28

Marriages Made in Heaven

In the messages you've already read there have been numerous references to husbands and wives being together in the afterlife. How our marriage relationships will continue on in Heaven is one of many aspects of the heavenly life which remains a mystery to us. In the Bible, when asked about marriage in Heaven, Jesus said that those in Heaven "neither marry, nor are given in marriage" (Matthew 22:30). From what we know, things are somewhat different than we see them now on earth.

Amazingly enough, although marriage might not continue on in exactly the same way as we know it here on earth, we do know that the very precious relationships of love and friendship continue on into the next life--which many of those who told their stories chose to refer to as marriage--possibly because it's the word they thought we would understand the best in describing those kinds of relationships. It's not clear exactly how things work in this aspect of life in Heaven, but it does sound beautiful and very, very happy!

#

(Jesus:) Marriage is a sacred union which I have used to describe My relationship with you, the Church, My Bride. It is caring, warm, and tender. It is not a formality but a relationship. It is a manifestation of love, a commitment to care for one another. Even so is marriage in Heaven.

When you arrive here, you will be overjoyed to see your dreams come true. Maybe you always dreamt of a peaceful, blissful marriage, but for one reason or another you have not found it on earth. Here, in My home which I have prepared for you, be encouraged to know that your relationships with those you love will flourish--or, if you have not yet found a companion for life, you will find one here.

You will be thrilled to see your marriage come to life--and the more love you give, not only to those you were with on earth, but to others around you, the happier you will be, and the stronger and more secure the bonds of love will be. In Heaven there is no jealousy, there is no resentment or hurt. There is no division or bitterness. None of the hindrances to good communication

exists here.

I promise you, dear ones, that marriage in Heaven is beyond your wildest dreams. It is loving and secure, and yet everyone in Heaven learns to reach out to others and include them in their circle of love as well. But this does not lessen the love that they feel for their lifelong companion--to the contrary, it enhances it and causes it to grow. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain!

* * *

I somehow knew from the time I was young that I'd probably never get married. My main goal was to get ahead in life, to be a success, to prove that a woman could go just as far and do just as much as any man. I did it, but it was a lot of work, and it consumed me and my time.

There were a few men I loved in my life, but I never was able to give these relationships the priority they needed to flourish and work, and so I lost them one by one. By the time I got around to realizing the state I'd gotten myself into and wanted to change, well, it seemed like men weren't around for me anymore. I wasn't as hot as I used to be, and everyone kind of had a mindset about me by then, that I was a tough-as-steel workaholic, and I guess I was. I was softening inside, but how were they going to know that?

Well, I'm out of all that now. Life here in Heaven moves at a pretty leisurely pace compared to mine down there, and I was very clearly told when I came up here that love and people are considered most important. I'd already started to feel in my later days on earth that I wanted a lifestyle like that, and was happy for it.

It wasn't long before I met my darling, the love of my life, the one I want to be with forever. And this time I didn't lose him; I didn't blow it and muff it and screw things up like I always had before. We love each other so much; we're definite soul mates, liking and enjoying so many of the same things, and yet being different enough to make life interesting and exciting. I love it! This is life to the full! This is what I really always wanted--true, eternal love!

* * *

(Jesus:) There are many things in Heaven that are incomprehensible to the natural man. Heaven is a place of love and a place of freedom, where the inhabitants are free to share their love one with another, according to how

much they choose to. Marriage in Heaven is not exactly as you have it on earth, but it is still a strong bond, a special relationship, only it is freer and more complete. All are one in Me, and in that sense all are married.

Do husbands and wives who were united as one on earth continue on as married couples in Heaven? Yes, if they choose to, they can remain together, functioning as a team, as a marriage, but they are not bound together as they are on earth, for Heaven is a place of freedom. Those who were married before and choose not to remain married in Heaven can do so, and do so without rancor or bitterness, because in Heaven everything is known. The thoughts and intents of the heart are known. The feelings and emotions of one can be completely understood by another. So if two who were together on earth choose not to be together in Heaven, the reasons why are clearly understood by both, and it is accepted.

Those who were married who choose to remain together as a unit, as a team, can do so, but they are not solely bound one to another; they have the freedom to reach out and love others. For Heaven is a place of love, a place of My freedom. It is a place where all can live and love in harmony together, whether married or unmarried.

But do not fear at the thought of reaching out to love others also--for this is only by choice, and it brings great happiness to all--not only to the partner who shares love with another. It is a beautiful and wonderful concept which can only be truly understood once you are here. But it is nothing to fear--for it is beautiful and brings with it no problems or sadness--only happiness, and a multiplying of the love that you share with your husband or wife.

* * *

My husband Martin and I enjoy many of the same pleasures that meant so much to us on earth--those evening walks in the garden, picnics by the lake, and yes, dancing in the moonlight. Our union and love for each other grows stronger in Heaven, but in a very special way, because now we not only enjoy these special times together, but in our marriage we're learning to open our hearts and lives to others and include them in our circle of love. It's wonderful to broaden our love in this way, and we find our love ties with each other are not only strengthened, but our love is multiplied many times over. Our love is growing and widening and broadening as we draw a circle to bring others in.

* * *

Beth and I started off so in love when we were young, and we were happy together for years. But as time went on and as the kids grew up and moved away from home, we drifted from each other. We had had some good times in our day, and we never did fight or argue much or disagree terribly, though our lives did become pretty empty and boring. I believe we were meant to get together, for we helped each other mature in our years of youth and we raised some wonderful children, but after that I think we just stuck together because it was the accepted thing to do.

As is the course of nature, we grew old and eventually passed away, me first and her a couple of years later. Once Beth arrived in Heaven, we sat down and talked together about what we wanted to do. Beth had a few days alone when she first arrived, a visit with the Lord and with her mother and all her relatives, and then I went to see her. I understood by then how things work up here, the freedom and love that permeates the atmosphere and affects every relationship.

We had a good long talk, and we both quickly acknowledged that we really hadn't wanted to be together for a long time, but couldn't be honest about it until now. We amicably parted ways, and she continued getting acquainted with Heaven and catching up on old times with her parents and sisters, while I continued on with the friends and work that I had already gotten involved with over the years while waiting for her.

We still visit each other sometimes and we're friends enough, but we've both found new loves in our lives now. We're both much happier and better people. We've done what we both wanted to do before, but we were too bound, too afraid--too afraid we'd hurt each other or make enemies of each other, and too afraid of what our families and friends and all the people we knew would think. Here they don't think badly of us, but they're happy for us, because they understand. God blessed us for raising our children and doing our best to live in love, even after they were grown and gone, though those latter years were not our idea of a dream marriage. But here in heaven, we're not bound to continue with that, and are free to lovingly go our separate ways.

There are others here that had much worse marriages than ours who have also had a new start. My new love, Marina, had a husband who used to get drunk and hit and beat her. She loved him and hoped he'd change, so she

stayed with him for years and years. But their union wasn't meant to be. He was an ungodly man and he didn't make it here to Heaven. He went the other direction, still with a heart full of hate and bitterness that he wouldn't let go of. It's a sad story. But that hasn't held my Marina back from going ahead with her life. I'm happy that she and the Lord allowed me to give her the love she hadn't had on earth, and provide her with someone who truly cares for her and will always be happy to love and comfort her and keep her company.

* * *

No one is alone or lonely. When there are several of us all together, we're all so close, such dear friends, so understanding of one another, that it's almost as if we were all married. It's hard to explain, and I know it's hard for you to even imagine that kind of closeness.--I couldn't have before I came here. But I'll tell you, it's really beautiful.

My husband Mark and I lived a long and happy life together, and that happy and loving life continues up here. We love each other as much as ever, and even more, and we love working and living together. But if we're apart for a little while, if one or the other of us goes off on a trip or assignment somewhere, or stays at someone else's place for a few days for whatever reason, we're okay about that too, because we always have lots of other friends and loved ones around to keep us company. We're not worried about the other "wandering" or "straying" or going off and liking somebody else more than us, because we know our love is deep and strong and won't be ruined. Therefore we feel free to enjoy the company of others, "married" or single, and we all feel comfortable with each other.

* * *

Emma, I never dreamed the love between Dan and I could reach these heights. On earth I knew things were growing stale between us. You know, sis, Dan and I loved each other very much, but we just didn't know how to pull out of the slump we had fallen into. We'd taken each other for granted and been faced with each other's faults for years, and it had taken its toll on us.

I know it's been hard on you to lose us both in that accident. But God, in His mercy, took us together, and up here we have had a fresh new start in our marriage. The surroundings, the people, the atmosphere, everything is

conducive to making it work.

Now we're more in love than ever! Now we have Jesus in the center of our union, and as we grow closer to Him, this draws us closer to each other. Then we're able to reach out and include others in this wonderful love too. Something that's helped us a great deal as a couple has been opening our lives and hearts to others. Doing this has strengthened our own love. It's wonderful!

Here in Heaven we're all one big happy family, and this makes us both so happy! It's really transformed our marriage!

* * *

(A husband speaking to his wife:) You're my sweetheart, my love, and I'll always love you. I'm so happy for you, that you've found someone to continue loving you and taking care of you now that I've gone to Heaven. I understand that, of course, you'd feel a little uneasy about falling in love and marrying again, but I want you to know that to see you happy together makes me all the happier. To see you continuing to love brings me great joy. The more that you love each other and manifest it, the more joy it brings me.

* * *

(Jesus:) After you have come here to this heavenly place and have grown more accustomed to the ways of Heaven, you will learn even more about My love and the strong cords of love that can keep you close and connected to others. I ordained marriage to be a sample of the strong and binding love which two can share, and here in Heaven it is given to many to share that love--whoever chooses to. It is a beautiful and wonderful thing.

I offer that love to whoever chooses to take it, for I know that in giving to others love is multiplied; and even as when a man and woman join their love together it becomes more powerful, so it is in Heaven when it is shared with others. Thus there can be many close friendships, many people with whom you feel connected and close to and comfortable with--many people that you share your life with and enjoy being with. This does not take away from the beauty and sanctity of marriage, but rather enhances it!

CHAPTER 29

Heaven's Little People

Since there is love and sex in Heaven, are there mothers and fathers, and are children conceived? How are such children born and raised in Heaven, and how similar or different is it to earth? And what about children who aren't born in Heaven, but who live on earth and die before their parents? What do they do in Heaven and who cares for them?

#

My husband and I loved each other very much, but he had to be away often, and I longed for children to keep me company. One year passed, then two. We went to a doctor to find out if anything was wrong. To my despair, I was told I was unable to have children.

Soon after I arrived in Heaven I visited a heavenly nursery. Lovely men and women were teaching and playing with so many adorable babies and children. I stayed a long while just watching them. The familiar pangs of wishing I could have children returned. I had, however, resigned myself to my plight many years before.

It was not long, however, before I realized how much I had to learn about Heaven. Children? But of course! Whoever wishes to can have children, I was told. There is no such thing as being infertile or barren, or having scarred fallopian tubes. I was ecstatic!

Before long I was carrying my own God-given, precious treasure inside of me. Pregnant or not, we don't need to eat to sustain our heavenly bodies, but I wanted to have the experience I had missed before, and so treated my body just as I would have had I been pregnant on earth. I threw myself into learning about nutrition, health, and exercise during pregnancy, to the amusement of my husband. I talked to the child in my womb all day long, and often went back to the nursery, where children would gather round to feel the baby kicking, and I would explain the wonder of a new life being created inside me to my captive audience.

The child was born naturally, as all babies in Heaven are, with a wise and gentle midwife in attendance. The pains of childbirth experienced on earth

are removed in Heaven, but it's still work to deliver a baby. I still relive that incomparable moment when the baby was placed to my breast, the umbilical cord still pulsing. Here in Heaven the umbilical cord remains as a symbolism of the unity and attachment between the mother and the child. Its purpose is more than a mere mechanical function. It provides nutrition and sustenance for body and soul, and that wonderful binding of mother to child--linking body to body and spirit to spirit. I could only weep tears of joy and thank God over and over for this miracle of life where no life had been possible.

I have had many children since, and can attest that they are the greatest source of joy in God's creation, and the greatest blessing.

* * *

Heaven is full of children, wonderful children, happy, lively, loving, and kind, and they grow up in the most positive environment imaginable, Heaven itself. Those of you who have had no children on earth, or who because of some physical difficulty are not able to have as many children as you would like, will be able to bear babies in Heaven and raise them to your heart's content.

* * *

When a child is born up here, everyone around is a help and support. It's a major event and we're all happy about it. It's so sweet, not only to anticipate the new life being born, but also to help teach and train the new mommies and daddies.

* * *

Besides children who are born in Heaven, there are a multitude of children who have come here after passing on from earth. These children, who sometimes arrive before their parents, are well cared for by relatives or friends of the parents who have passed over, or by those who love children and whose privileged job it is to raise and nurture them. The children continue to grow and learn; they are happy and fulfilled. They have friends, go to school, and learn all about the loving ways of Heaven.

* * *

Up here the care of the children is a very honored and privileged ministry. It's a very special reward when people are blessed with the opportunity to regularly teach and train and minister to the children. To be able to shape and mold these young, pure lives and have a part in setting them on the course they will follow and prepare them for their destiny they will later fulfill is very rewarding and fulfilling in itself. Teaching and training children well also receives great commendation from the Lord, for they are so valuable in God's eyes.

* * *

While I was on earth, my greatest desire was to have children. I wanted to be a mother; I wanted to raise a family. As it turned out, after a few years of marriage when I had borne no children, my husband and I discovered that I was physically unable to do so.

This was devastating news for me, although later I saw how the Lord turned it for good in my life. He had a special plan for my life, although it was not the one I had wanted. He wanted me to care for others' children--the ones who were neglected, who had no one to love them, who had no place to call home. He'd given me a mother's heart for a reason--not so I could contentedly raise a small family, but so I could be a mother to many children who would not have had one otherwise.

I took in and provided shelter and education for many orphaned and homeless children. This wonderful occupation fulfilled the desire of my heart in many ways, but there was always still a longing to have children of my own. There were some things I felt I just couldn't experience through my part-time care of these children. I would have been with them full time, except that there were just too many of them. I had to spread out the time I gave to the individuals in order to care for the whole school.

After coming to Heaven, the Lord lovingly explained to me that this longing and feeling of emptiness not only kept Him close to my heart as well as keeping me gentle in spirit, but it also helped me to look forward to Heaven. Although I didn't know then that someday the Lord would grant my request to have children, I did know that in Heaven all tears are wiped away eternally, and I waited for that day with great anticipation.

I was overwhelmed with joy when I arrived and discovered that the desires of my heart would be granted, and I now have several beautiful

wonderful children. Yes, they were conceived and born in Heaven! They are created by the Lord as eternal souls, and they chose to be born here, with me as their mother. It's so very wonderful to watch them grow! We are able to communicate so well with our thoughts. Even before they learn to speak words audibly, we can understand each other perfectly.

* * *

I was a mother on earth and I'm a mother in Heaven, and to me it's still the most wonderful experience in life; there's nothing like bearing children and watching them grow. I love to teach them of the love of our wonderful Jesus, and train them in the ways of the Lord.

Bearing children here is a fun combination of what you would think of as natural on earth, as well as a bit of supernatural mixed in--since we are, after all, in Heaven, the land of the supernatural! There's still some work involved, and it's not all left up to a snap of the fingers.--That would take the fun out of it.

But there are some extra fun things that you can do. For example, you can look into a heavenly communicator and see your baby in your womb, and you can talk to him and he can understand you. Babies don't know everything all at once, of course, just like you don't, but they learn fast and are eager to communicate with you. Different children have different likes, dislikes, and personalities just like on earth, so those things haven't changed.

Giving birth is still a big event, one which you prepare for. Here there's no pain, but delivery is still good hard work. It's beautiful, though, and so rewarding. The children are always born right on time and perfectly healthy. It's wonderful!

* * *

Life in Heaven is so much like life on earth; there is so much going on! But you realize when you get to Heaven what things are truly of value, and one of the most important things is teaching children--giving your life for the children, supporting them, loving them, being their friend, listening to them, playing with them, and laughing together.

When I saw this and realized how important children are, I asked the Lord if I could be one of their teachers. Though I'm still learning, He has blessed me with the opportunity to teach those who are younger, to care for

them, to read with them, to sing with them and play with them, to be their friend and their big brother.

* * *

While I was still on earth I had an abortion. I felt guilty, but tried to brush the feelings away, thinking that the little life I had pushed away was not really a living soul yet. When I came here, I was so ashamed, and very, very sorry. I saw all the things I missed out on by not taking up the challenge of motherhood on earth--the many lessons and depth of maturity that one grows into with the responsibility of parenthood, not to mention the profound joy that being a mother brings. The moment I met my child up here, there was no doubt in my mind that I had traded what could have been a life of love, joy, and true fulfillment, for emptiness and selfish living.

I had a time of training and learning about babies and children, and was reunited and reconciled with my own aborted daughter, who has since grown into a lovely young lady up here. The Lord saw that I was truly repentant, and so He blessed me with a very special ministry.--I'm now a foster mother! There are many little babies who are shunned from earth--both through abortion and being unwanted, or their mothers not caring for their bodies, which doesn't allow the children to develop properly, and they come home to Heaven early. I help to care for these babies, and they reach full maturity here, in a loving and caring atmosphere. I weep as I tell you this, but they are tears of joy and thankfulness that I am able to care for these little ones. I have been given another chance to love.

* * *

(To the parents of a child who passed on to Heaven:) Your son is being cared for lovingly and tenderly, until such a time as you are able to join him. He has a beautiful room with a lot of other little kids who have come home early. That way they can all grow up together, like a big nursery. They are very happy together. There are many loving foster parents who stay with the children, and there are many other visitors and friends who drop by to spend time with the children as well. So they never lack for loving, dotting attention. The foster parents or caregivers are people who knew the child or knew their parents, or like me, they are parents themselves who had to leave children behind on earth.

* * *

(A child speaking:) Heaven isn't just for adults.--It's a kids' paradise too! Jesus loves little kids, and He's created all sorts of fun parks for us up here. We all have friends, and no one feels ugly or left out or lonely. We get to ride all sorts of fun animals. There is no danger up here, either, so our parents don't have to worry about us getting hurt. We can fly and dance and swim and play just as much as we want!

* * *

(A child speaking:) We have a school up here and we have classes, and we have all kinds of excursions. It's so much fun! We're continuing to learn about Jesus and we're learning more about Heaven. We're learning a lot about love, and we're learning a lot about our new home. Some of the kids know a lot more than I do, but they don't make me feel bad or dumb, because they know that I just got here. So of course, they don't expect me to know everything. They're always telling me all kinds of neat things, and they've promised to take me to lots of neat places!

* * *

(A child speaking:) Sometimes we have classes in one of the buildings or museums or exhibition halls, and other times we go on excursions and actually go to the places we want to learn about. Also, there are always plenty of shows and fairs and neat exhibits on all kinds of subjects--anything you want--science, math, social studies, different people and customs, plants and animals, music, handicrafts, or far-out things like outer space and the operations of the universe, and lots and lots more! We have every subject that you've ever thought of to learn about!

Sometimes I like to fly up to the library and curl up with an interesting book. I check it out and go sit under a tree and read for a while. I super enjoy doing research work that way, but I also like to learn by doing and experiencing. We have lots of variety in our learning! There are scads of ways we can learn, and the neat thing for us kids is we can choose whatever we have an interest in! We pick what and how and go right to it!

There are nice people here and they're all willing to teach us anything

we want. We can learn from famous people and ask them questions about how they made their discoveries, or we can learn far-out facts from the angels and different heavenly people. Everybody up here likes to teach you something, and it's fun because they're not too busy and they don't get impatient with you. I like to ask lots of questions, and they always stop and answer me. It's really cool!

* * *

(A child speaking:) Sometimes Jesus comes to visit us. When He comes, as soon as He sees us He runs and lifts us up in His arms and gives us lots of kisses and pats our head and swings us around! We laugh with Him and have so much fun! He loves us, and He always remembers my name and all my friends' names too! He knows all my best things to do and my best stories and best foods and best colors and best everything! He always remembers it. Jesus is my best friend!

* * *

(Jesus:) I love to walk about My palatial heavenly city to enjoy the sights and sounds of all My beautiful creations. I love to see the children, pure and perfect, who run up to Me to greet Me. They bring Me flowers; they blow Me kisses. They say, "Oh look, look! It's Jesus! Can't I go see Him just for a second? Maybe He'll tell us a story!"

So do you think I would let these dear little children down? They want to hear stories, stories, stories, and more stories. I am the great storyteller. I tell them stories in simple words they can understand.

CHAPTER 30

Wonders, Wonders, and More Wonders

So far you have read a variety of fascinating descriptions about various aspects of Heaven and its operations and occupants. Earlier descriptions include details about people's lives in Heaven--their appearance and mode of travel, forms of entertainment, means of communicating with others, and so on. If you're curious about what kind of plants, animals, buildings, colors, weather, and so forth Heaven has, or if you wonder about Heaven's infrastructure and how God runs it, you'll enjoy these accounts.

#

(A child speaking:) Here in Heaven all the animals talk! I have lots of fun animal friends, so cute and cuddly--even the lions and the big brown bears, because they're not dangerous here! The monkeys tell us super funny jokes and make us laugh and laugh! I like to play with the animals.

Before I came here, I lost my puppy and I was very sad. But when I came to Heaven I found him again, because he was here waiting for me, and he was just the same as before! I was so happy! You don't have to worry about your pets if they have to go away for a while, 'cause they went to Heaven, and when you come here you can find them again!

* * *

(A child speaking:) We ride animals here and go really fast. We can ride on dogs, camels, lions, tigers, bears, even giraffes! They're all friendly, and they all let us ride them. They can talk too.

* * *

(To a child whose pet died:) Your doggie is up here in Heaven, and she's having a great time! You should see her run and jump and fetch sticks. Even the Lord has thrown sticks for her a couple of times, because He likes dogs too. Don't worry, you'll see her! She'll be here and she'll play with you when you come. She'll be waiting for you.

* * *

I was thrilled to see that there are flowers everywhere, beautiful gardens, beautiful waterfalls and lakes. It's so pretty--the most beautiful place I've ever seen! The light is golden and fresh and sparkling. Everywhere I look the view is splendid. It's more beautiful than I ever imagined!

* * *

There's every imaginable plant and flower here. Not only that, but you can design and make them, too, which is just great for your heavenly mansion, because you can decorate it just as you like. The perfumes and scents are terrific too. It's truly a feast for the eyes and ears and all your senses.

* * *

(A child speaking:) I like skipping, and here there are really pretty places to skip. I can even go barefoot and I never hurt my feet on anything sharp. There are beautiful flowers and green grass and pretty trees everywhere, but it's especially fun to play in our magic garden. There are fun things there, and lots of times my friends are there too.

In the magic garden it's really amazing, because the flowers sing and are always smiling. They always makes me smile and laugh too! The trees tell you secrets in your ear and the birds are always chirping. I like to play in the water in the magic river. It's cool, but not too cold. There are beautiful butterflies and ducks, and even the animals like to play games. They don't run away, because they're not scared of us. We're nice to them, and they like to play with us. We can walk on the pretty lily pads to cross the river if we don't want to go into the water, and there is a special big tree that I like to sit in when I talk with my friends.

* * *

There is a beautiful park in the city, and a river flows through it. There are trees of every description, flora and fauna of the most beautiful exotic species. There's animal and bird life and, of course, everywhere you find the

happy and peaceful inhabitants of Heaven, walking, boating, relaxing, chatting with each other, enjoying the wonders of God's heavenly creations.

* * *

(A child speaking:) My friends and I hold hands, and we dance and run and play and roll in the grass. We chase the butterflies and skip and play with the birds and talk to the animals.

* * *

Do you know that we still have snow up here in Heaven? Only it's not like the snow you have down there. It's not cold and wet, but it still feels soft and powdery. You can roll it into balls for snow games, and slide down hills of it on sleds. It shines and sparkles; it's magical.

* * *

You'll be awestruck, as I was, to see that here there are colors for everything, colors that you don't have there on earth. Love has its colors. The love of the Lord is everywhere, sort of golden. Emotions have colors. They're all gorgeous, beautiful colors. Some of these things are a little hard to explain, but you'll see when you get here.

* * *

(Jesus:) Heaven is full of color--beautiful, rich, brilliant, radiant, luminous heavenly shades--all reflecting My light. Each tone shines in its own brilliance, according to the intensity and frequency and wavelength of light on which it's positioned. Every shade glows and shines and illuminates My power in perfect order and harmony to accomplish the purpose that I send it forth to do. My heavenly hues are but one vehicle whereby My great power and energy is distributed! My heavenly light and magnificent heavenly color bring light and life; they bring a touch of love, a touch of faith, a touch of hope, a touch of cheer, and a touch of healing to those who want to receive those things.

Heaven is full of color--rich, deep, warm, glowing, lucent shades and tones, many of which are not known to human sight. Heaven is full of color

power to set the mood, to set the tone, to invigorate you, move you, thrill you, fill you, excite you, ignite you, woo you, soothe you, warm you, hug you, love you--and this is only the beginning. My heavenly coloronic power kindles great passion and ardent love and ecstasy beyond your wildest aspirations!

The sensations of My color power are like none other! It's alive, pulsating, vibrant, energizing, enlightening. It's restful, relaxing, calming, soft, and tranquil. You can breathe it in and it will give you vitality. You can bathe in it, swim in it, walk in it, run in it, skip in it, jump in it, lie down in it, rest in it, and enjoy it forever. It never gets dull; it never dims; it never runs out. It will bring you sweet relief and joy and happiness and heavenly bliss!

The colors of Heaven reflect My energy and light in various degrees and shades, yet all radiate My beauty and My power. In My heavenly kingdom there is no night--for all is light and bright and alive and aglow and scintillating in the purest and richest of heavenly hue.

* * *

If you think the computers of man are something, just wait til you get here! You haven't seen anything yet! You'll be amazed and you'll have great fun!

* * *

Man thinks he's so smart with his satellite communication and simultaneous transmission of sound and image. Well that's pretty good, and it certainly facilitates global communication. But wait until you see the technology up here. It's incredible!

* * *

You know how the Internet is all the rage now on earth? Well, you computer buffs don't have to worry that you'll be leaving computers behind when you enter Heaven--well, actually, you are--you're leaving the junk on earth for the *real* thing. How about computers with unlimited capacity and memory, that operate at the speed of light and never crash? Pretty cool, huh?

We have what you might call an Internet in Heaven. Most mansions in

Heaven have some kind of computer which you can use to link up with the centerboard, or communications control. We use telepathy a lot to communicate; it's pretty neat because someone can be miles away and you can hold a conversation just through your mind. But even though we can transmit our thoughts directly in this way, that's not the *only* way you can communicate. We have a sort of e-mail system as well. It's all amazingly efficient and organized. Sometimes we'll even get notified of assignments through our computers. Everything's efficient. It's really awesome.

If you've ever had an overload of e-mail on earth, you're probably wondering how we handle receiving all these bulletins, since there are thousands a "day," depending on who you are and what your job is. Well one nice thing, needless to say, is that our mental capacities are greatly increased in Heaven. Since we're in our heavenly bodies, we're not subject to the pain, fatigue, sickness, and hardships of earth life; thus we can perform a task tirelessly.

We don't need hours and hours to read our e-mail, because our increased capacity means we can program our computer to whiz through all our e-mail, one after another, in a matter of minutes, earth-time speaking. In other words, everything is put on a kind of fast-forward speed that lets us speed read through everything. It's not the speed reading you sometimes do on earth, where you just get the gist of the message because you're going so fast; we read every detail, just at a much faster rate. There are times we want to view and enjoy something in "real time," if it's particularly interesting to us, for example when there's special news about our home country or loved ones on earth (if we lived on earth, that is) or personal messages from friends in Heaven, or even from the Lord Himself!--He's not limited by personal audiences either! But for the most part and for the daily business details we must tune into, the speedy way is adequate.

Don't get the mistaken idea that we do everything in a "rush, rush" way. I'm just explaining to you one tiny aspect of Heaven. While we all interact lovingly together, this doesn't mean there's any less efficiency. We can move fast when we need to, and we all go at a good, efficient pace. But we never experience the mad, anxious rush that people on earth are so prone to when they get under pressure or are late.

The computers up here are amazing! They can take a lot and do just about anything you program them to do. And I've just mentioned a little about the uses of our *personal* computers. That's not to mention the many mainframe computers that run in God's control center, or the wonderful

computers that run so many of the leisure centers around Space City.--They offer major “actual reality” experiences and any of thousands of pleasurable challenges, games, and experiences.

So hold on to your hats! Life is beautiful. There’s creation everywhere, love and peace fill the air, but don’t despair, ‘cause there are computers *everywhere!* Ha! I’ll give you a guided tour of every computer in Space City if you like--though it might take a thousand years!

* * *

In Heaven the Lord creates scenarios for you to step into and gain experience from, so that you can learn without actually changing something which really exists. It's a simulation--only it's not an illusion; it's real--but it's created especially for you and your enjoyment and experience.

* * *

I want to give you a glimpse of what you can best relate to as the virtual reality pavilion--well, at least one aspect of it.

Ever wish you were a bird, and that you could fly over the ocean, or high above the trees? Ever wish you could run like a cheetah, or experience what it'd be like to be as tall as a giraffe? Or maybe you wished you could try being a butterfly, flitting around in a beautiful, flower-filled world, with the air gently bearing you up as you flutter your delicate wings.

Well, in Heaven there is a “virtual reality” section, where you can choose to be any creature in the whole world. You step into the habitat of that creature and in the blink of an eye, you are that creature! You have your own consciousness--of course, else how could you enjoy it?--But you think and move and breathe and instinctively act just like the animal you "virtually" are on this set. You see the world through its eyes. You see other animals and your surroundings from the perspective of whatever creature you "are." You can also decide, before your virtual experience, if you want to experience some of the dangers the animal faces in its day-to-day life on earth. That'd be quite a ride! All for fun, of course, and the experience can stop whenever you want it to.

These virtual experiences are awesome. It's a bit like spending your life in the city and then climbing a mountain--you see the world in a totally new way! You can be a dolphin in the sea. The neat thing is that you can move just

like a dolphin.--You know, how they swim so gracefully and quickly, and have so much fun. You can play with other dolphins. Or you could experience what it's like to have 200 tons of your weight gliding through the water, if you choose to be a blue whale. You could be a monkey, clambering through the trees with fantastic agility. You could be an ant, and explore the world from that perspective, going right down into an ant colony.--The opportunities are limitless!

I've visited this particular section quite a bit.--It's such a mind expander! It renews my wonder at the marvels of God's creation, how He perfected everything to work in harmony and beautiful synchronization. It's funny, you think you know everything there is to know about the earth till you decide to see it from a new perspective, and you find out again that the discoveries are endless. Have you ever wondered how animals perceive the voice of a human, or what "language" animals speak to each other in? You can find these things out through personal experience in this pavilion. It's nice, because in Heaven we have a wide variety of pets. For example, I've chosen to experience the life of each of the pets I own--from my zebra to my peacock to my leopard and so on, and each experience helped me to understand my pets even better.

* * *

(An architect speaking:) Since I've been up here, I've learned a lot about different building designs. They have all sorts of buildings. More than being merely ornamental architecture, most are practical designs. There are spheres. There are great domes. There are hexagon and polygon-shaped buildings, and there are some architectural shapes you wouldn't even imagine. There are structures far greater in size than anything humanly possible on earth. There are buildings large enough to fit all of New York city inside one of them! You might wonder why we would even need such fantastic buildings, and I think you'd be surprised to see all the activity in Heaven, how hard everyone works, and the amazing machinery they run up here.

I sure was happy when I was able to see all the different things that God has been building. Let me tell you, I felt right at home. This whole place is full of real nifty inventions and designs. Some of them are just for our viewing pleasure. Some of them defy all the laws of science and everything that we spend our time learning down there. But most of them are just real practical things that make life a lot easier for everybody. Plus you have to

accommodate a few different things, like people flying through the air instead of walking. Sort of makes pavements and things like that unnecessary.

* * *

We can embed whatever we want into our floors or walls. We can embed fresh roses or any kind of flower or vine into our crystal walls or floors. With the special techniques that the Lord has given us, they'll stay alive and fresh and fragrant forever.

We make crystal floors that cover precious jewels. As you look down you see water and jewels that change and move all the time. Some mansions have enormous aquariums, either as walls or in the center. If a mansion is two stories high, you can see all of the coral and the beautiful fish through the glass when you're downstairs, and when you're upstairs you can sit beside the water, just like a beautiful, natural pool. You can even dive in if you want to.

Then we embed strands of gold into ornate wood and make all kinds of fun things. It's just limitless what you can do up here. The Lord created Heaven, but there are so many fun things that we can create. It takes a bit of learning to get the techniques down, but then you can experiment and have a blast designing new things.

* * *

(From a renowned scientist:) When I first arrived in Heaven it was very interesting. No noise, sort of different. Then this man took me by the arm and said, "Come on, Doctor. I want to show you what this is!" I didn't say much at first. I thought, *Well, this fellow seems to know where he's going, so let's see where we go!* And we went to the countryside. There are trees as well as lots of green, bright grass and bright flowers and blue skies and white clouds and apple trees! It was very pretty. We walked and he started to explain to me that this was the next life and things were different here.

Then I saw it! It was a huge pyramid--very, very big, and shining, sparkling! As I came closer to it, I saw how big it was.--It was enormous! I entered the pyramid, and inside it was brilliant. There were many things there--brilliant colors, huge crystal forms, and geometric buildings. Edifices is a better word for them, because it didn't seem like they would be used for anything other than a demonstration of some sort, or a decoration. It didn't

seem like people would live in many of these things. They were just huge, big, gigantic, brilliantly colored, scintillating, geometrically varied edifices.

So I finally said, “Well, what is this?” The man who was still holding my arm and taking me around was an older man, and he had a white cane. He looked pretty lively for an older man. He said, “This is the Control Center. This is where it all happens. This is the unifying force. This is how God does it.” Well, for a scientist this was extremely intriguing, because this was what I wanted to find out all my life, how God does it! There it was in front of me, and still I had no idea what it all meant! If this is how God did it, I was still as puzzled as before! (*Chuckles.*) Now I could see it, but I still didn't understand it!

* * *

When I arrived here I learned that God has an amazing system--awesome controls and systems which He uses to control the earth. He has amazing spiritual controls that guide everything--the earth, the sun and the moon, planets, the solar system, the stars and galaxy, everything--the entire universe! His Word is an integral part of His amazing spiritual controls. It's like the power source that helps keep things going, the power source that keeps His controls functioning. Amazing power!

* * *

(*Jesus:*) Heaven is not full of only white people. To the contrary! I created mankind with a rich variety of color and appearance and physical makeup, and each one is beautiful and perfect to Me. There is no color or culture that is superior to another either, for in Heaven, the beauty of each culture is appreciated fully and given due recognition. The entertainment in Heaven is multicultural, the architecture is multicultural, the foods are multicultural, and the music is multicultural--and more than that, because it's also supernatural and heavenly. The landscapes are so lovely and varied, to suit any taste.

I love each one as one, and I do not play favorites regarding a certain skin color or race. You should see My personal staff! Every nationality you've ever heard of is represented, and some you haven't heard of! They interact with love and respect also, reflecting My love and respect for each one.

Just for the record, the angels are not simply Caucasian-looking either,

as many of you imagine through the artists' concepts through the ages. They have many different appearances, some you couldn't even imagine, yet each one is lovely and unique.

* * *

Everything here is clean and smells so nice! There are beautiful fragrances everywhere that make you feel like being loved and giving love. They try to copy those fragrances down there on earth. They copy them from the flowers and other beautiful things the Lord created, and those fragrances are wonderful! They can stimulate you! They can make you feel even more beautiful, even more handsome, even sexier. They can make you feel light and breezy. They can make you feel fresh and clean--the beautiful fragrances of earth. But up here, the fragrances are beyond compare!

* * *

Every mansion up here is magical. They aren't made out of stone, bricks, wood, stucco, or pre-fab, or any such building material I have ever known on earth, but it's as if each heavenly abode is alive! They're not just inanimate structures, but each mansion is full of life and brilliant color. Each one emanates comfort, warmth, and beauty.

* * *

(Jesus:) Fairyland is like a big theme park, a wonderland where My children can go play with the fairies and see them and interact with them. There are all sorts of magical things there that the children can enjoy. It's better than any Disneyland on earth.

My fairies flutter here and there, always thinking of new things to surprise the children. I spend a lot of time there too, because I love children and spend a lot of time with them.

I know what children like and enjoy, and this is one of the things that I created for them to enjoy. It's not just entertainment either; the fairies teach them a lot too. They educate the kids in a fun way. They learn about My creation, the flowers and plants and trees. They learn about colors and much more.

The fairies are also My encouragers, who bring little messages of hope

and encouragement--My little angels created specially for My children. All of Heaven is magical--water that sings, flowers that talk--but in Fairyland, things are even *more* magical.

CHAPTER 31

Mysteries Bound

Because in our life on earth we are confined within the parameters of the four dimensions--length, breadth, depth, and time--there are many things about Heaven which are impossible for us to completely understand. Heaven is an actual physical place, and yet is in the realm of the spirit, and as such there are many mysteries which we cannot comprehend with our minds now. Yet little bits and pieces that we gather start to fall into place like a giant intriguing puzzle. The more we learn, the more apparent it becomes that there is infinitely more to find out.

#

Some of these things are better left as a mystery. After all, if you knew everything about Heaven before you got here, then it wouldn't be so much fun when you arrived. Half of the fun of getting to Heaven is going to be learning all the things you didn't know, and understanding all the things that you couldn't figure out on earth--things which you didn't know how they operated or what they were like. That's one of the thrills of Heaven and one of the things that makes it worth looking forward to!

* * *

(Jesus:) When you come here, all will not be revealed at once, for there is much too much for any one person to take in. It takes time; it takes learning and adjusting. A mystery of My Spirit is that much is given according to your faith, your desire to see, and your acceptance of that which you do see. When you come here, all will not see the same things, and all will not experience the same things, for according to each person's desires and hunger and faith it will be given unto them.

Look at it as if you were looking into a beautiful, scintillating, crystal diamond, which has been polished and cut with a million different facets, each one reflecting and refracting a different light. When you look within it, you see a beautiful view, but the view changes with each turn of the diamond. As you look through the different angles and cuts, the picture varies and

changes, and you see different sides. So it is with My spirit world.

* * *

(Jesus:) There is so much that I have created that it will take you an eternity to experience and discover it all. You will never grow bored, and you will never run out of new experiences, new learning and new discoveries. I have created it for you, and it is here waiting to be discovered.

* * *

(Jesus:) In Heaven and in the spirit world, time, as you comprehend it, does not exist.

* * *

Boundaries of time and space do not limit you in the spirit world as they do on earth. Therefore it's possible to have one experience in the same instant you are having another experience, and both will seem just as real to you, because they are.

* * *

(Jesus:) There are many mysteries within My kingdom--mysteries which the mind of man cannot comprehend, for they are too deep, too broad, too high. I give you the keys to some of the mysteries, but not to all of the mysteries.

CHAPTER 32

Our Heavenly Home

Through the messages given by those who have passed on to the other side, we have received much insight into life after death. They have spoken of the joys, the excitement, the peace, the love, and the happiness that they experience there. They have also told us of the changes they've gone through--changes of attitude, outlook, and priorities. It looks like a place where almost anyone could be content and feel at home.

#

Heaven is a place where you can get as much as you want of whatever you like. There's pleasure without end, excitement and thrills that you never dreamed of! In Heaven you'll never be lonely. You won't have to worry about your weight, or losing your job, or having enough money to make ends meet. You'll be loved and accepted and you won't have to try to be somebody you're not. There's music, sex, babies, pets. You'll keep learning, doing new things, and you'll even have a profession and responsibility and make decisions. You'll be able to forgive and be forgiven, and you'll be able to forget about your past failures and you won't have to worry about the future.

Heaven is like a gigantic golden city where everyone lives in love and harmony and there's no killing or danger or prejudice or unemployment, and everybody has the love that they need. Nobody has too much or too little. Heaven is like a fantastic amusement park full of sights and sounds and thrills that you've never even imagined. Heaven is like a sprawling, well-manicured university campus where the secrets and mysteries of life and the whole universe are at your fingertips and you can continue learning and exploring and asking questions.

* * *

You're going to look very much like you do now, only better. You're going to be with your loved ones and those that you care about so much. You're going to have work to do and you're going to have plenty of

pleasurable activities. You won't have any debts or bills to pay. There won't be any doctor's visits. There are no hospitals because no one gets sick, hurt, or injured. There's no air pollution, and plenty of food and water if you want it. You can have sex and bear children and enjoy the pleasures of a supernatural, everlasting, indestructible spiritual body.

* * *

Heaven is a real place! Heaven is not just a state of mind. Heaven is not some place where you sit in perpetual meditation or float around on clouds playing harps. It's not so very different from what you see there on earth. There are trees, gardens, grass and streams, rivers, plants, and even animals of all descriptions. There are children and teenagers, young folks and old folks. Heaven has got it all. Anything good that you see on earth exists in Heaven, but only much, much better. In Heaven you have no more evil, no more crime, no more hatred, no more wars, only love and joy and peace and happiness. And the wonderful thing about it is that it's forever.--We'll never have to experience those bad things again!

* * *

We're always having a good time, no matter what we're doing. People are funny, enjoyable, sexy, and all the things you like in a person's personality. We don't walk around being all pious and uppity. We fly, talk, laugh, make love, kiss, and really enjoy life. We go swimming in the lakes or in the river of life. We go waterskiing and diving (without all the gear, mind you). We picnic on the grass in the parks. We ride our horses through the skies.

There's so much we do that's fun and alive. Nothing we do is boring. When we do our work it's fun. When we sing we're having fun. When we play we're also having fun. Everything is enjoyable.

* * *

Heaven is the land of magic, a land of wonders and magical light! It's a magical land where the most amazing things are possible. There are magical lights and magic rivers, magic parks, and magical music and sights and sounds. You've never seen anything like it! It's an amazing place of awesome wonders,

the land of light and life. We have lots of excitement and challenge here, lots of action, and tons of fun. There's never a dull or boring moment--everything is thrilling, moving, and full of life and happiness. Most of all, there's lots of love--plenty for everyone!

* * *

God's kingdom is a kingdom of love; it's a kingdom of many children, of many spirits, of many hearts, of many different natures, of many different kinds of people, of many different kinds of spirits. Many different kinds can enter and have entered. It's a wonderful place of children, flowers, love, lakes, and beauty. It's such a wonderful place. A place of mountains, hills, valleys, streams, and deserts; yes, there's the beauty of the desert. It's a place of many different types of natures and types of spirits, many different beauties. For He has invited all into His kingdom. But only those who humble themselves can enter.

* * *

Everything and everyone here is so valued and appreciated and cherished and loved so deeply by the Creator.

* * *

I look forward to the day, not far away, when we'll all be together in this terrific place--the place of no more tears, no more sorrows, no more accidents, no more misunderstandings, no more hurt and pain, no more sickness, no more misery, no more doubt, no more fear.

* * *

Heaven is fun! It's not dull, boring, and deadbeat, but fun and alive, exhilarating, and full of pleasures--just like life on earth could be if people would only live to love one another.

Jesus is no stick-in-the-mud. He's not waiting with a great big club to clobber you over the head. He's not waiting to make life dull, boring, or difficult. He doesn't even have a big long list of "thou shalt nots!" It's not necessary. Once folks come here and see and experience the true values in

life, that's all they want.

* * *

Heaven is a beautiful and wonderful place where all your dreams come true. Heaven is your forever home where you will live and be happy, surrounded by God's love. Heaven is where we go when our earthly life is over and we have accomplished God's plan for us on earth. If you have accepted God's love, and Jesus, His Son, into your life, then Heaven will be your happy home.

Heaven is filled with friends, beautiful gardens, magnificent buildings, and lovable animals. There is only peace and joy and happiness in Heaven, and no pain or sorrow. God's love is everywhere in Heaven; it surrounds you and everyone and everything. Your wonderful heavenly home has no need of the sun or candles or electric lights, because God has provided a beautiful heavenly light that shines at all times in all places. Heaven is truly a wonderful place to be.

* * *

In Heaven there's no darkness, for all is open and visible, because there's nothing to hide. There's no evil, there's no bad, there's nothing to cover up or to be ashamed of, for all is open and transparent under the loving presence of the light of God.

* * *

Although everything up here is beautiful, serene, peaceful, and calm on one hand, Heaven is also alive, vibrant, glowing, moving, living, energizing, pulsating, invigorating, bouncing, action-packed, thrilling, high-spirited, robust, dynamic, full of drive, powerful, full of unending passion, full of emotion, wild, and free!

* * *

Everything is so perfect. Everything runs right, everything smells nice. The food tastes good, too! Everything is beautiful! And the light is so nice. It's bright but it doesn't ever hurt your eyes.

* * *

Jesus' healing touch and heavenly elixir of light, love and compassion surround us. It's light, warm, and loving. There are no physical ailments in Heaven, but there are ailments of the spirit. Each soul that enters Heaven's gates must go through a process of cleansing and renewal and healing.

* * *

Here in Heaven there are real values--lasting, true values of real love, the things that money can't buy. There's such simplicity here, in that sense. There's no striving for worldly goals and goods, because everyone has what they need, and everyone reaches for Heaven's goals.

* * *

There are no strangers up here. Everyone's so friendly. Even when you see people for the first time you think of them as long-time friends. People you've been apart from, you'll be able to be with forever. It's such a terrific place.

* * *

Heaven is a place you can call home, because the minute you get here you feel at home, like it's where you belong and you've finally arrived at your destination. There's everything to make you feel homey--all your favorite surroundings, flowers, furniture, all your favorite people and friends that you have already made on earth who have passed on are here too.

Jesus reads your mind and knows your heart's desires and gives them all to you. Maybe you didn't even know they were there or exactly what you like, but the Lord knows and He anticipates what you want and what you would like. He prepares it for you and has others prepare all these things for you. What a surprise! Talk about birthday presents and surprises and gifts, Heaven's got it. The best present, of course, is our wonderful Savior, being united in every way with Him.

* * *

Heaven is the reality of true love. God made us, didn't He? He made us the way we are, and the way we are is to like to have a lot of fun, right? We have a lot of fun here! There's a lot of dancing, a lot of music, a lot of singing, a lot of composing, a lot of parties, a lot of freedom of the spirit just loving others. There's total enjoyment, because there's total love.

* * *

Heaven is the ultimate fairytale storyland! People try to imagine the perfect place, a fantasy-like world, and *this* is where it's at!

* * *

For those who think Heaven would be a boring and uninteresting place, have I got news for you! For those of you who seek adventure, there's more adventure than you could ever dream of. There are new worlds to discover, worlds which you've never seen, which exist in dimensions outside of the mind and the knowledge of man.

The Heavenly City--how boundless it is! To enter into it is entering into infinity. The Heavenly City has no beginning and no end. Once you are inside it, it's limitless! How can this be so? Because the Heavenly City is both physical and spiritual in its make-up, so while the outer dimensions are measured, the inner infrastructure is not limited by space. It's one of those mysteries of Heaven that you're going to have to experience to understand, but imagine going into a house that looks perfectly normal on the exterior, yet once you're inside this house, every door leads into a room many times larger than physically possible, considering the size of that house. This is a bit what it's like in Heaven. There are so many wonders and mysteries. It's a city you'll never tire of, believe me.

CHAPTER 33

The Key to the Kingdom

You have read about what, by the admission of the heavenly messengers, amounts to a fraction of the wonders of Heaven. Now you may be asking, “How exactly do I get there? I've done things in my life that I know weren't right. Is there still hope for me to make it to Heaven? Is there some way I can be guaranteed entry? Is there a key that opens the gates of Heaven? If so, what is it?” Let's hear what those who have passed through those very gates have to say.

#

To some, life in the desert would seem unappealing--but as a young Bedouin boy I loved the nomadic lifestyle into which I was born. To me, the vast desert lands which we roamed were not desolate--but rather a haven of strange beauty. It was during those years I tended my father's herds that I first became acquainted with God. Though my life was relatively simple back then, I would spend many hours alone, pondering and questioning the world around me until that frightful night during the desert storm that I first met Jesus.

The desert is the land of extremes--with its vast areas sparse in vegetation, drastic temperature changes from blazing sun to cold windy nights--the stillness that goes on for endless hours, contrasted by the rage that runs wild when the winds fiercely blow--such extremities caused me to question, what was the strange power controlled the wind and the sun, the moon and the stars? Was this God? There's a certain beauty in the desert, but it was one unforgettable night when the winds blew and blinding sands separated me and my older brother that I cried out to this unseen power to save me.

I was only 12 at the time when a blinding desert storm came upon us unaware in the dark of night. As the winds picked up, my brother, Assim, went to check the herds, hoping get back in time to take cover together, but the winds kicked up so quickly and blew with such force it was not possible. There I was alone, huddled down trying to take cover as the drifts of sands piled around me, and all I could do was cry out to God to save me.

All during my childhood, I had said many prayers that had been taught to me by tradition, yet this time my prayer was different. This time I did not repeat vain repetitions, but I asked God to save me. I asked Him make Himself known to me. I asked Him to spare my life and I asked Him to teach me His truth and His ways. And in that very moment He came to me. Right there in the middle of the raging desert storm, a figure of a Man stood before me. Though the winds blew at great speed all around me--I felt peace and calm inside, as the Man told me I had nothing to fear. His face was kind and His words were soft and soothing. He told me He was the son of God, and that He would keep me and protect me if I would trust in Him.

That moment I met Jesus. The hours passed, the winds died down and Assim came running to find me, amazed that I had survived the storm as if some invisible force had surrounded me, covering me, protecting me from harm's way.

From that time on my life was different as I continue talking to my new found friend, Jesus, more. I felt His presence with me and I asked Him to teach me His ways. I felt Him speaking to me in little ways throughout the day as He guided me to make wise choices and decisions in my life. The years passed and as the oil industry developed--it was the early '70s--and the nomadic life of the Bedouin shifted more and more from the desert to cities, so did I.

It was then, just a few short months before my death, that I came across a book called the Bible that had been left, as if almost intentionally in the taxi in which I was riding. Amazing as it seems, I knew immediately in my heart this turn of events was a wonderful miracle, just as wonderful as that night when God covered me with His protection in the desert storm. I knew that finding that Bible on the backseat of the car was engineered by God Himself. I took that book, and as I read the Words of Jesus, I learned more about His truth and this prepared me for my graduation day when I passed on from life on earth and He brought me here to Heaven where I continue to learn about His love and His ways.

* * *

(From a housewife:) I was happily married to the perfect man. Carl and I were so in love. He was ambitious, energetic, handsome, sharp, and a very successful and integral part of his father's firm. We lived comfortably in suburban America and the '50s were memorable years. Our two adorable

children, Michael and Sharisse, were our pride and joy. I enjoyed being a wife and mother, and our economic standing in the community allowed me to lead an active social life as well. I had the best of both worlds, I thought. Between managing a home, social commitments, the country club, and keeping up with the kids--there was school, PTA, Scouts, the Little League for Michael; dance class and piano for Sharisse--there wasn't much time left for God in my life.

My parents weren't religious folks, and neither were Carl's. I never thought much about God, and never dreamed our little bubble would pop as it did that frightful day when the phone rang and I was informed there had been an accident. What had begun as a weekend camping trip for the Cub Scouts had been interrupted when the station wagon carrying Michael and 5 classmates was hit by a semi head on. Michael was not one of the lucky ones.

The deep despair a parent feels when your child lies near death in intensive care is beyond words. I know now that accidents, tragedy, and troubles make us stronger if we'll look to God and let Him carry us through--but I didn't know that then. I never would have thought it was possible to cry so many tears, but it was out of that deep, dark experience I found my Savior. The days turned into weeks and the weeks months and Michael continued on in a coma. We had exhausted every medical means possible to help Michael. The best specialists were brought in.--There was nothing lacking in his medical care. It was on that horrific day when the medical team that had labored over Michael, studying his case, analyzing test results, conferring with another, etc., announced to Carl and me that there was nothing medically possible that could be done to help Michael, that I made a wonderful discovery.

That afternoon as I sat at Michael's side, desperate for my child's life, I finally cried out to God with all that was in me. I asked Him if He was real to make Himself known to me and to save my child. It was just three days later, as I sat in that same chair, staring intently at my son, when all of a sudden he blinked. Michael came out of his coma and I knew God was real. Our lives changed then. Carl bought a Bible and we began to read the stories of Jesus, how He went around healing the sick.

It was in the days that followed, as Michael grew stronger, that he began to tell us of a wonderful place he had dreamt about while he was asleep. We knew then he was talking about Heaven.

* * *

I was in jail. I can't even remember how many times I'd been there before, but this time was the worst because I was on death row. I had killed somebody. That was life on the street; it was kill or be killed. Deep in my heart I did feel remorse, but outwardly I didn't show it, not one little bit. I acted so proud of the terrible things I had done.

That's when things started to change. Deep inside me they started to change. It took a long time before anything showed on the surface, but deep down inside came the question, "What's going to happen to me? What's going to happen when I die? When will death come?" The fear started to grow. It started to torment me and torture me.

For some of us, things have to get pretty bad before we're willing to admit that we need help. That's the way it was with me.

Things were bad in jail. Really bad. One day, sitting alone in my cell, I don't know if it was a thought or just something I felt in my heart, but I finally came to the end of myself and there was a feeble little cry in my heart to God, that if He was real, would He please help me.

Then something strange happened. I almost felt like somebody else was in my cell. I felt a presence, I felt something there. I felt an overwhelming peace and warmth, and I just knew that God was real. I knew He existed. At that moment in my life, I knew He was real.

I still can't explain it. It's not like I saw an angel or I saw Jesus, but there was a presence there that I couldn't see, but that I felt, and that changed my life.

The next day I got a special escort and they allowed me to go to the prison library. I felt drawn to find a book about God. I found a little tract, you know, one of those little pamphlets that people usually throw away. I found this one and it spoke to me. It asked me about life. It was called, "What is your life?" I read it and it spoke deeply to my heart. There had been no purpose or rhyme or reason in my life, but at that moment, I found out that God sent His Son, Jesus, to give His life for me so that I could have life.

That's how I found eternal life. That's how I got saved, reading that little pamphlet. I prayed a little prayer at the end and I asked Jesus to come into my life and to give me a new life.

Then things started changing even more. Inside me, they got better, but when the other prisoners heard that I'd gotten religious, I had an even tougher time. But it was okay with me, because from that moment on I started to read the Bible and other books, and I found out what would

happen to me when I died.

I found out about Heaven! When I read how beautiful it would be, how there would be no more pain, how there would be no more sorrow, the tears would be wiped away, when I read about the warmth of the love to come, about Jesus who would be there, about the people that would be there, the love they would have, the new friends I could make, the new life I could have when I went through the door of death, the fear left me.

* * *

I lived a life that to many would seem unthinkable. I grew up in the Philippines, and my difficult childhood forced me into a life of prostitution; I thought it was the only way I could survive, the only way I could pay the bills, the only way I could make some money and put a little bit of food on the table.

I began this profession first as a way to make easy money, but it shortly took a toll on my body. I turned to drugs and alcohol to find peace when my nerves were frazzled, as well as to find courage to keep up my image when I really didn't like the path of life that I had chosen. I wanted to get out, but I felt trapped, and I could see no other way.

One night while I was high on drugs, when I tripped out, I found myself floating on a wide, wide ocean. It was just me, no one else, on this calm, open sea. I felt at peace, my heart was so relaxed, that I didn't want my "trip" to end. Then I saw someone swimming towards me. He was the most handsome man I have ever seen in my life. I didn't fear Him at all, which was very strange for me because I lived in fear, as did many of my friends. I had been hurt many times by the men in my life, but this man was different. I felt a certain peace about Him, a certain aura of love. He came up to where I was and we started swimming together. We talked and swam for the longest time, and that's all I remember, till I was back to the reality of the "real" world.

That trip was something different than what normally happened to me. I'd normally just spin out of control and I would hallucinate like crazy. I knew there was something different about this "illusion" that I experienced, and somehow I felt that it was more than a dreamy moment or a mere coincidence. I kept thinking about the guy I'd met on my trip. I kept thinking about the peace and total serenity that I felt, and the words that kept running through my head were: "I am love. I am love. I am love."

That night I said what I would consider a prayer, though it wasn't formal.

I just kind of talked as if I knew someone was listening. I said that I wanted that love and I wanted that peace. I wanted my life to be calm like that ocean I was floating on, not raging and tumultuous like the life that I was presently living. That night I accepted love--and I was later to find out that that love was Jesus--and my life was never the same again. He helped me to pull out of my shady life and gave me that peace and love that I wanted so much.

I only lived for a few years after that, but those were the best years of my life on earth.--They were the years that I knew love, the years that I knew Jesus.

* * *

I resisted and hated the name of Jesus, but I had a friend who was a faithful Christian, and over the years his love and simplicity changed my life. He didn't preach at me, he didn't pressure me, but he also didn't compromise his convictions and he wasn't afraid to talk to me about Jesus. He wasn't afraid to give the glory to Jesus in my presence. He wasn't afraid to tell me that he had prayed and that Jesus had answered his prayers, or to tell me that Jesus had brought joy and love into his life and given him peace of mind. He wasn't afraid to tell me about the plan of salvation and Heaven, and that Jesus was the Messiah, that He had come just as the Word of God had promised, and He had died for us and risen again that we might be saved and free, born again, His creatures of love!

It was the faithfulness and simple love and testimony of this one who was a dear friend of mine that got through to me. I didn't want Jesus. I didn't love Jesus. I didn't believe in Jesus. I hated Jesus. But I couldn't deny the love that I found in this man's eyes, and I couldn't deny the peace that I felt when he spoke to me, and I couldn't deny his testimonies of answered prayer. Day after day, week after week, year after year, he spoke to me of Jesus and his simple faith. He didn't push me. He just let me see who Jesus was.

Then gradually, without me even realizing it, I began to like Jesus. In fact, I began to want Jesus. I began to love what He stood for and I began to believe. So a desire was sparked in my heart to try Jesus, even though it went against my grain and everything I had been taught. It was completely unexpected.

I resisted it at first. Eventually I couldn't resist the pull that I felt on my heart and mind. I couldn't get my friend's words out of my mind! I couldn't get the face of my dear friend and his smile and tenderness and the light of

his eyes out of my mind. They constantly spoke to me!

At times when I was down and disheartened and weak and lonely, I would think of his words. I would think of his love and it would bring me peace of mind. It would bring me freedom from the depression, loneliness, and weakness that I felt, and it would give me hope for the future. A calmness would come over me and a comfort when I felt that all was well because Jesus answered prayer.

So finally, through the faithful testimony of my friend, I humbled myself and I received Jesus into my heart. Just as the Bible had promised, I became a new creature, born again! I was not as I was before, I was completely changed! My mind, my heart, my thoughts, and feelings were all born again. I was a new creature in His hands. That acceptance of Jesus was what ensured my entrance into Heaven. I was overwhelmed with joy!

* * *

Does the thought of the truth being this Man called Jesus turn your stomach, because to you that sounds lukewarm, drab, dull, or even boring? It sounded the same to me when I was on earth. I wanted to live my life to the full. I wanted adventure. I wanted to experience all the joys and pleasures of living and I was convinced that I would never find that in church building! If you can relate to what I'm saying, I've come to give you some information that might help you. Jesus is a spirit. He is the Spirit of Love. He's not that temple or that building on the street made by the hands of man. He's a power. He's an energy. He's not a doctrine. He's real. He's vibrant; He's alive! He's a moving force. He's a changer. He's excitement. He's everywhere.

Many people automatically associate Jesus with "church," and if they don't care for established religion, they automatically shut God out as well. This is what happened to me, and as a result, I ended up living most my entire life lacking in the things I really wanted--all because I never gave Jesus a chance until my dying day. It doesn't have to be that way, because Jesus loved you long before the church was ever in existence. While some people prefer to worship God in a church, by no means is that necessary.

All you have to do to know the truth is call on the name of Jesus. Jesus loves you, and will hear your faintest cry as you call out to Him--no matter where you are, what religion you are, or whether you've ever been to a church or temple or not. So don't let established religion turn you off to the greatest gift that was ever given to man--the love and mercy of God, in Jesus!

* * *

(From a Chinese man:) When I was young, many times I sat at the feet of missionaries, teachers who told me the story of love. They told me the story of the God of love, who sent His Son to die for all mankind--all the peoples of the earth, regardless of the color of their skin, regardless of their traditions, regardless of the shape of their eyes or their former religions.--All of that mattered not, because this God of love had given His Son to bring life to all.

I heard this story and I wanted to believe it, but I was a restless youth, impatient for change. I was rebellious and strong in my own mind, and so I wanted proof, I wanted some kind of sign about this great God who lived in the spirit world, whose name was Love. I wanted some kind of a sign about this one called Jesus, this religion of these white people who were kind and beautiful, whose eyes were like gems, and whose faces were soft and tender, and whose hands were always reaching out to those in need, who labored day and night, giving of themselves for my people. But even seeing them and their life of sacrifice was not enough for me; I needed a sign about this one they called the Savior. They sang of Him and they prayed to Him; they lifted up their hands to Him, and they spoke of Him continually.

I was burdened with many cares, many worries, many fears. I did not have the peace of mind or heart that these people had. I knew that they were kind and good, but I did not know why. I knew that they had peace and that they were not afraid of death, but I did not know why. I sought for a sign, for a miracle, something to show me that it was the truth.

And then, many years later, when I least expected it, when I was burdened and tired, desperate and lost, I found my sign, I saw the miracle that I was looking for. In a dream I trudged down a dark, dark path and I kept falling and getting up again, and falling and getting up again. I struggled and I couldn't see my way. It was dark and I didn't have the strength to carry my load. I didn't know where I was going and I didn't know how I would make it to my destination. I was so tired and so weak and so lost; and I kept falling and getting up, each time more tired, each time feeling more hopeless.

Then in my dream I remembered the story of the missionaries and I called out to this one named Jesus. At that moment, a hand reached down and lifted me up. I looked into the face of this one, and He had the same eyes of jewels as the missionary people had. I felt the same love, the same kindness and the same peace that they had shown--and I knew that this was

the one that they had spoken of. I knew that this was the Savior, and I knew then that He loved me and that He wanted to reach out His hand to me and lead me down the path. He wanted to enlighten my way and help me to make it to the journey's end. I knew that He was there for me, to help me and guide me and love me.

I never forgot this beautiful, beautiful face of the Savior. I never forgot this outstretched arm, for it was then that I received Him as my own, and I knew that the story of the missionaries was the truth, for He had given me the sign that I had sought and I had seen the miracle that I needed. And so I became one of His own.

* * *

(From a teenager:) I just wanted to have fun. I was young, energetic, thrilled with life and its discoveries. When I was a little boy my parents took me to church and Sunday school, but I really didn't like it that much; it was boring for me. I wanted excitement. I wanted change. I wanted to learn new things. I liked the outdoors, hiking, swimming, fishing, canoeing. I just wanted to be free, not to be bound. When I was a small kid, I thought that religion and Jesus meant boredom, sitting down in classes and reading for hours. I just didn't go for it at all.

Then when I was about 15, I had this real cool camping instructor. We grew pretty close, because I looked up to him and I wanted to learn all I could. In my eyes he was the best, a total professional. He had a real easygoing personality too. I could talk to him and he didn't put me down in the least. He'd treat me like his equal and really valued my thoughts and opinions, much more than other grownups I knew. He was about the only grownup I ever enjoyed spending time with, simply because he made me feel appreciated, and he helped me to have fun and enjoy life, doing the things that I was crazy about doing.

He was a Christian, but he never tried to preach at me. He'd say things about Jesus every once in a while, and he certainly didn't hide his faith, but he wasn't pressuring or forceful with me in the least. He believed that it was my decision, and I respected him for the room he gave me to move and think. As a result of that, I became more interested in him and the religion that he had. He was the coolest guy around, and I thought that if he could have Jesus and still have fun and still enjoy life, and still do all of the things that make life exciting, then maybe I could try what he had.

It took me a bit of thinking, but I thought a lot when I was fishing and hiking--out in the stillness of nature. I finally decided to try and see what Jesus was like. My friend showed me how to ask Him into my heart, and I did. My life didn't change drastically overnight; in fact, it was more or less the same. I just felt like I had a good friend that I could talk to whenever I wanted, whenever I was lonely, whenever I needed help. Jesus didn't make life boring for me, and He didn't expect me to go and sit in church for hours. He was just a friend to me, and as the years rolled on we grew even closer. I never regretted having made Him a part of my life.

* * *

(From a business executive:) From board meeting to board meeting, airport to airport, hotel to hotel, the executive life left me little time for soul searching and deep, meaningful relationships.

In the beginning I enjoyed the world of commerce and five-star living--cocktail lounges, lush golf courses, penthouse suites, jet-setting from continent to continent, good food, good wine, the works. I was living like a king, so I thought.

As the weeks turned to months and months to years, life on the road three weeks out of every month took its toll, and pretty soon all those hotel suites started looking the same.--The attraction began to fade, and those luxurious suites became the source of many lonely nights. Life on the go was catching up to me. This is not to mention that my marriage was suffering, along with my two teenage daughters, who I hardly knew.

In my case, it wasn't the workload itself that was the cause of our problems.--There were ways around that and solutions to be found to better organizing my schedule and my travels. But at that point in time I failed to work it out, opting to hide under the guise of a busy schedule.

Here I could land the toughest of business deals, but when it came to good communication with my family, I was sadly lacking. I loved them dearly, yet I hid behind my work. I lived in a vicious cycle and didn't know how to break out of it.

When my 16-year-old daughter began to have problems in school, I was determined something had to change and it needed to start with me. Out of all the hotel rooms I had lived in during my many years of traveling, I had never once picked up the customary Bible that is usually found in the bedside table, yet on my next trip I did. Recalling an old friend of mine who carried a

Bible in his back pocket, I thought, *What the heck, might as well see what this is all about. After all, he was an okay guy, and he swore by this book.* As I began to read, my eyes fell on one passage that seemed to leap off the page and hit me right between the eyes, it read: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

“Everlasting life”--those words rang in my ears. I never went to sleep that night, but continued reading through the Gospel of John, and when I was finished, I closed my eyes and said a prayer. I asked Jesus to change my life, to give me His everlasting life and to help me be a better husband and father. I asked Him to help me repair my marriage and be the dad my girls needed. I met Jesus that night--and from then on it was all uphill. I took that Bible along with me and I read it in my spare time. Pretty soon my wife and girls started reading it too. Jesus had answered my prayer. Not only did He give me everlasting life, but He showed me how to communicate and love those who were dearest to me.

* * *

Fashion, glamour, glitter and lights--I loved it! I thrived on being in front of a camera. I loved the attention and I loved the money! Being a French girl, raised on the other side of the tracks, as we called it, I lived in the illusion that fame and fortune would make me happy.

Finally I got my big break in the modeling world, one thing led to another, and all my dreams became a reality. It was almost too good to be true.--I was a cover girl! Make-up, clothes, clothes, and more clothes from all the top designers around the world. I changed my hairstyle almost as often as I changed my shoes. I had rich boyfriends and invitations galore to all the top social functions and my name in lights.--I didn't lack for attention! What else could a girl possibly want?

I wanted love--real love. I wanted relief from that empty feeling I felt deep down inside. Here I was surrounded by a constant entourage of people--my list of supposed friends was endless--and yet I felt so all alone and empty inside. Something was missing and I didn't know what it was. One night as I lay in bed all alone, I let out all my pent-up emotions and broke down and cried for hours on end. I questioned if anyone really cared about me--the real me, the person deep inside.

Only a few short weeks later on the flight from New York to Paris, my

question was answered. The young woman who sat next to me on the plane was simple, but it was her smile that caught my attention. It was warm, genuine, and exuded an inner peace. She wore very little make-up, yet her eyes seemed to have a special spark. There was something very unique about her and I wondered what it was. It didn't take much to strike up a conversation, and before long I learned her secret. It was there on that plane I learned that there was something more to life; and, there was someone who cared about me, the real me, and who wanted to give me real love.

It was on that plane, that my newfound friend, Patsy, told me about the love of Jesus. For five hours I listened intently as she shared with me about the love of God. She told me how He loved me, as a person, how He cared for me and was concerned for me and wanted to make me happy and fill all my emptiness with His love. It was there on that plane, 30 minutes before landing, that Patsy held my hand and led me in a prayer to receive Jesus into my heart, as my personal friend and Savior, and I was never the same. He changed my life and gave me a real purpose in life.

* * *

(From an Indian man:) When I was young, I once met a man “who wore the sunshine in his smile.” At least, this is how my sisters and I described it back then. He was different than all the other men who would come to do business with our father.

One night after my parents had been entertaining guests, this man stopped for a few minutes of conversation with us children. He impressed me greatly. He visited our home several times after that evening.

Finally one day as he was visiting, as he often did, he stopped to say hello to my sisters and me, and I asked him, “How do you get the sunshine in your smile?”

He replied, “Oh, you want to know my secret, do you? Well, come over here and let me tell you a story.”

He proceeded to tell me the story of Jesus, that He was God's Son, who had come and died for us so that we could go to Heaven. He told us that God sent Jesus to earth so that we could have His love in our hearts and so that one day we could go to Heaven. He said that Jesus was God's Son and He came to teach us about the Father, and that He loved all men the same, regardless of what country they were born in or to what family. This dear man told us he had the sunshine in his smile because Jesus had filled his

heart with love and happiness.

It wasn't until many years later that I came to know and experience the truth of what he had told me that day. I was in my early twenties when fighting and civil strife prevailed in my country. Rioting in the streets, worsening social conditions, and division among Hindus and Muslims brought much pain and suffering. Tradition ran strong in my country, and beliefs ran deep. Confused and surrounded by so many voices saying this was the way to go, I questioned, which was the right way to follow?

I was young and idealistic and longed to understand why all men could not live together in peace. It was then in those difficult years that I remembered the words of my friend. He told me that Jesus came down to teach us about God the Father. And so I decided to do what he had said. I asked Jesus to show me the way to God and to fill my heart with happiness and love. I asked Jesus into my heart and asked Him to teach me the truth.

The more I learned about Jesus, the more I came to know what my friend had told me as a child was real. Jesus is the way to God and He loves all men the same. It doesn't matter where you're from or what family you are born into.--Jesus loves you. He can put the sunshine in your smile too!

* * *

(Jesus:) I reach out My hand to you now, inviting you to come, to answer My call. I'm calling out to you, because I love you and I long to give My infinite love to you. I long to satisfy your every longing. I will never hurt you. I will never let you down. I'm here just for you, if you'll only reach out, take My hand and receive Me. I love you and I long to show you. Will you give Me a chance? I long to give you My love! I want to satisfy the deepest yearning in your heart. My love for you is overflowing. It's neverending. It has creative power! It's the power of love and it can do anything! My love can forgive; it will satisfy your heart and bring peace to your mind. My love can survive any difficulty, difference, weakness, or failure. It can surmount any obstacle and right any wrong.

My love is forever, and I promise never to leave your side. My love is true; it's sincere. My love can bear any burden you have, endure any storm, heal any heartache. It can take every sorrow and replace it with joy--take any hatred, no matter how deeply entrenched, and replace it with love. It can heal your broken body and calm your troubled mind. It can give you joy in place of sorrow, hope when you're in despair. My love will never fail you. My

love is power and light and life--and it's here, it's now, and I'm waiting for you.

My love is all encompassing. Please, won't you reach out and take it now? It's yours for the asking. Just say, "Yes, Jesus, I'm tired and I'm weary and I need help. I need answers. I don't completely understand why You love me, but I want Your love. Enlighten me. Give me love and peace of mind. Please give me Your power of love. Teach me all about real love and show me how to love others. Help me down this road of life. I need Your love and I want Your power."

It's that simple. If you'll only take this first step, I'll give you My eternal love here and now, as well as the promise of Heaven when you leave this life. I'll give you the true riches of life--love and peace of mind, body and spirit! I'll give you peace that passes all understanding, and comfort, joy, and life. I'll give you love and peace that no one will ever be able to take away from you.

My love is perfect. My love is always. It's greater than any love you will ever find on earth--for it's the fulfillment of all earthly love, and it goes beyond all earthly love. It never fails, never dies, will never let you down, never abandon you. Friends and acquaintances and others can fail you, the whole world can fail, but My love will never fail. I'll always be with you, through any difficulty, any hard time or test in life, and on into the world to come.

I have prepared a beautiful home in Heaven where you can live for eternity. I'll give you peace and happiness, and be your guide through life, because I love you. Please, won't you receive My love?

Heaven is a gift of My love for all those who want to receive it. There is no class consciousness, no racial preference, no status you must achieve, no payment you must make. You might not feel worthy, but you don't have to be worthy in yourself. You are worthy because I love you. There are no qualifications, no conditions, no expectations in the love that I have given for you. I have already given it, and all you have to do is reach out and take it. Just tell Me that you want it. That's all you have to do. I have done all the rest. Do you believe Me?

You have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Just say to Me right now: "Yes, I want it! I want to live in Heaven forever. I accept Your love and the gift of eternal life." Or say it in your own words. Words don't matter to Me.--All I care about is your heart. I love you, and I want to give you happiness forever! Won't you take it? It's free!

Yours forever,

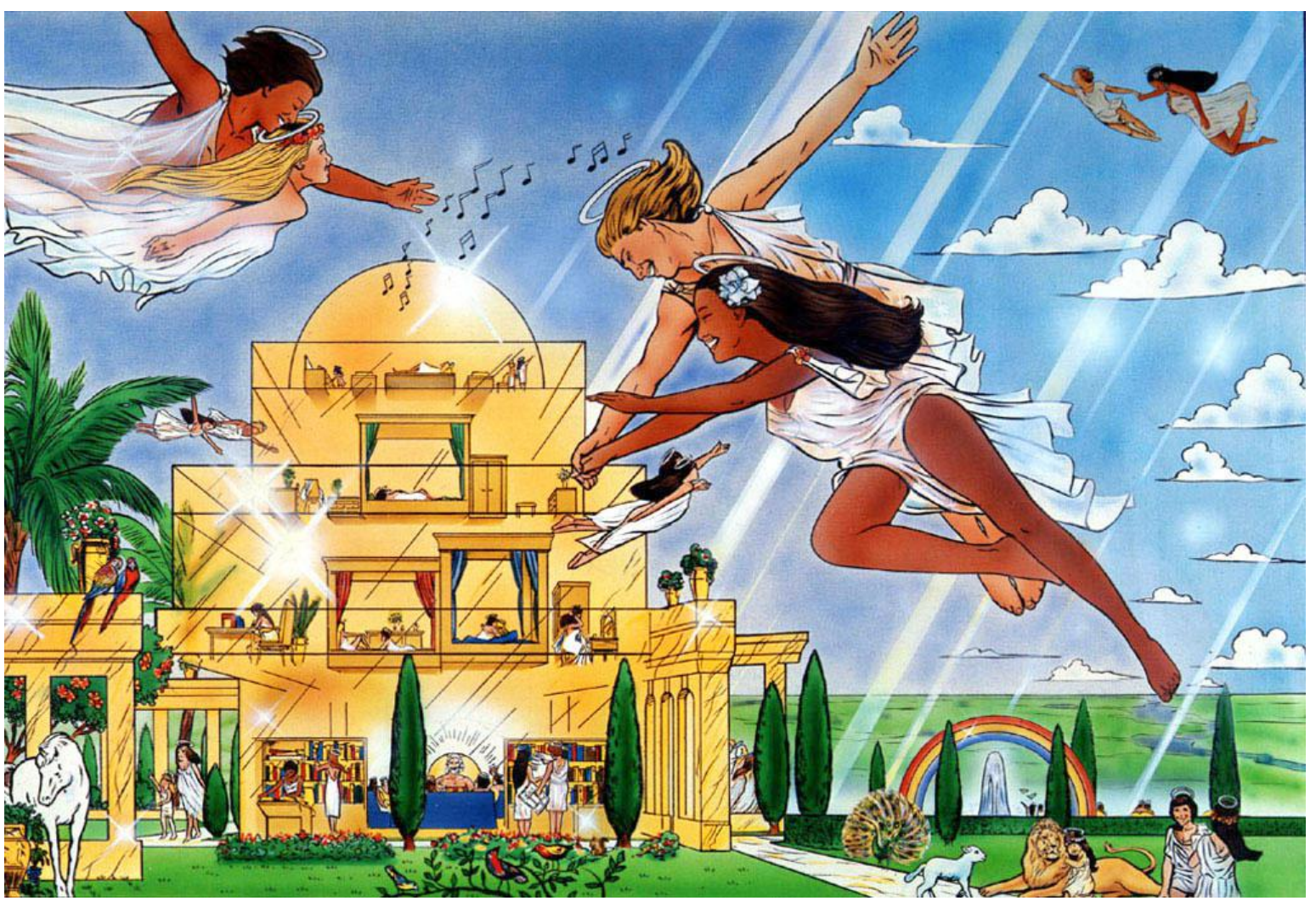
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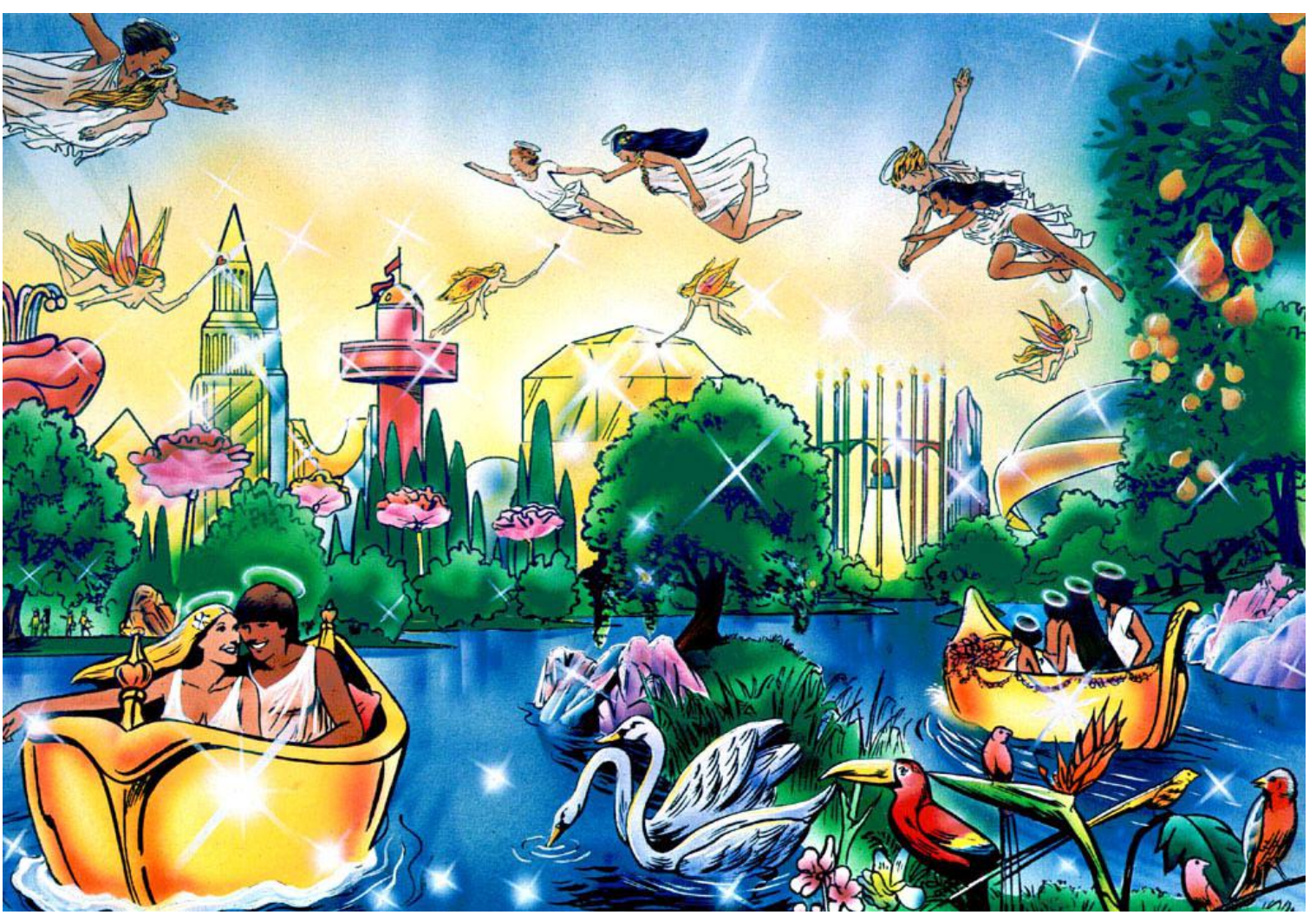
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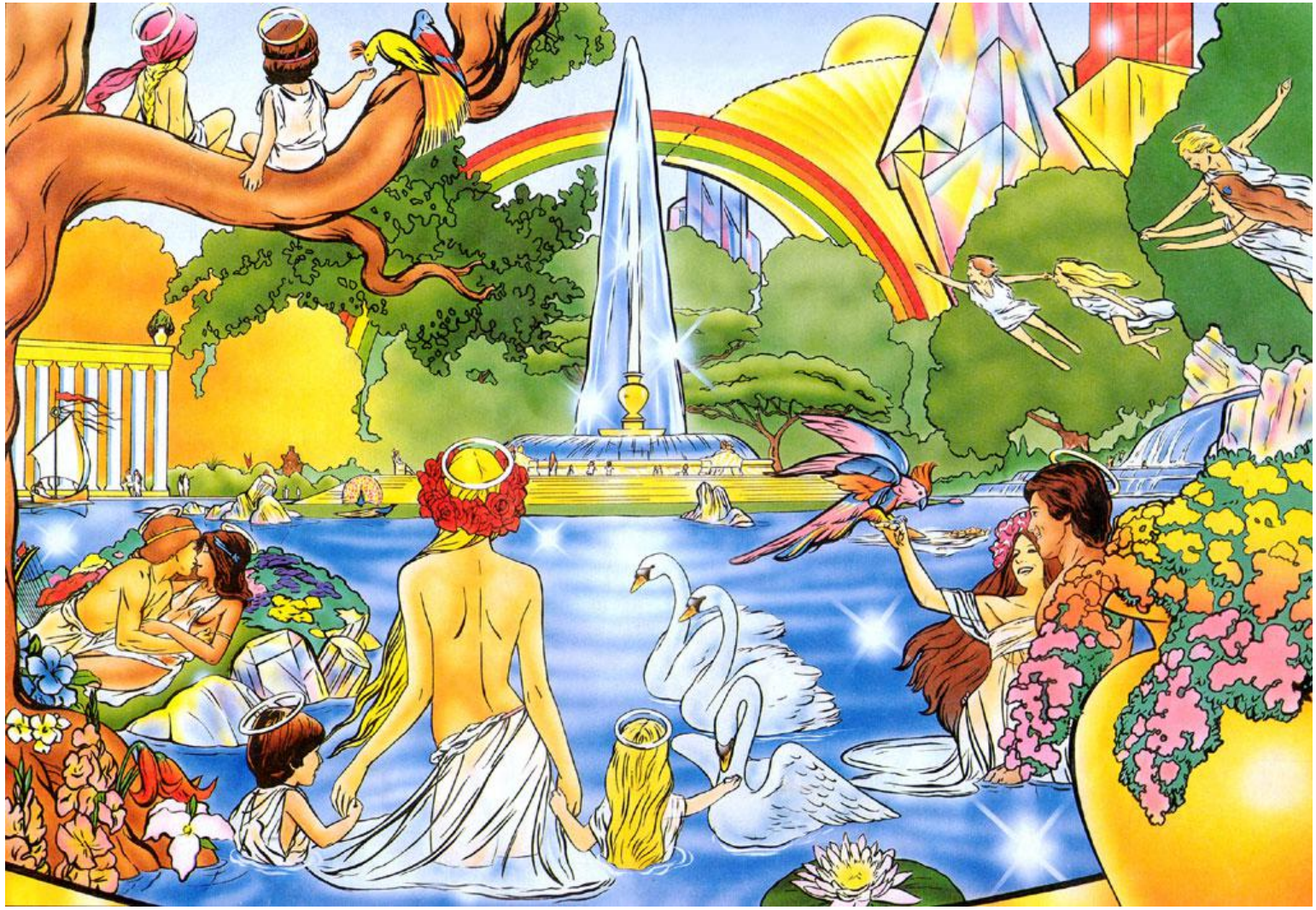














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