

Barriers To Heaven

Rev 21:27; Rev 21:8

Revelation 21:27 - and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 21:8 - "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Introduction:

- A. It was a beautiful Saturday morning and the family was looking forward to the day. As they left the driveway and started down the road, they encountered a truck sitting in the middle of the road. Because of the width of the road, they had to turn around and find a different route.
- B. We are all familiar with barriers while driving. When we approach one of these things, we are usually not happy because it means we must go around and out of our way.
- C. We also find other barriers in life. Many of these have to do with one's ability (or lack thereof) to do certain things. It would be nice if we could say that these barriers do not hinder us from doing what we want but that is not the case.
- D. There are also numerous barriers that prevent people from going to heaven (Rev 21:27; Rev 21:8). Let's look at some things that will keep people out of heaven.

I. Pride - Prov 6:17

Proverbs 6:17 - Haughty eyes, a lying tongue...

- A. Some people just will not swallow their pride
 - 1. Why is it such a difficult thing to do? - Psa 10:4

Psalms 10:4 - The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek Him. All his thoughts are, "There is no God."

- a. Pride is the opposite of what God requires
- b. It is opposed to God
 - 1) God desires we be humble and submissive
 - 2) Willing to yield and give

2. Prov 16:18

Proverbs 16:18 - Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling.

- a. Pride was the problem of the people of Edom - Obadiah 1:3-4

Obadiah 3-4 - "The arrogance of your heart has deceived you, You who live in the clefts of the rock, In the loftiness of your dwelling place, Who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to earth?' 'Though you build high like the eagle, Though you set your nest among the stars, From there I will bring you down,' declares the LORD.

- b. Prov 11:2

Proverbs 11:2 - When pride comes, then comes dishonor...

- B. Some are going to ride their pride all the way to hell and then their destiny will be sealed forever - Isa 2:12; Matt 23:12

Isaiah 2:12 - For the LORD of hosts will have a day of reckoning Against everyone who is proud and lofty And against everyone who is lifted up, That he may be abased.

Matthew 23:12 - "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

II. *Loving The Praise Of Men More Than The Praise Of God* - Jn 12:42-43

John 12:42-43 - Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.

- A. Everyone has, to some degree or another, an ego problem
 - 1. We all like to receive praise
 - 2. Tempted to please those who inflate their ego - Jude 16

Jude 16 - These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.

- B. Loving the praise of men keeps elders, preachers, and teachers from saying what they ought to say and laying it on the line like it ought to be - Gal 1:10

Galatians 1:10 - For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

- 1. Must not regard for the feelings or favor of men when it comes to speaking the TRUTH
- 2. Have a job to fulfill
 - a. Only way it can be done is to speak forthrightly
 - b. As the Lord speaks
- C. Perhaps we need to praise more than we do sometimes in some areas, but it never becomes the means to an end

III. *Worldliness* - 1 Jn 2:15-16

1 John 2:15-16 - Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

- A. Vast difference in loving the souls of men in the world and being in love with the world - Jude 21-23

Jude 21-23 - keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. And have mercy on some, who are doubting; 23 save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.

- 1. Have to live here in this world - Jn 17:15-16

John 17:15-16 - "I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

- 2. Cannot become a hermit
- 3. Neither should we become a part of this world
 - a. Must recognize this world only temporary - 2 Pet 3:10

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

- b. We are pilgrims in this world heading for our eternal home - Heb 11:13; 2 Pet 2:11

Hebrews 11:13 - All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

2 Peter 2:11 - whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord.

- B. Often worldliness gets into Christians and they end up losing their soul - 2 Tim 4:10

2 Timothy 4:10 - for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

1. Like the ship that becomes filled with water will sink, so also will we when we become worldly
2. Worldliness affects many more of us than we would like to admit

C. There is a REAL PROBLEM of worldliness in our lives when:

1. We miss services for ball games, vacation, and company ---- something we want to do
2. We go to parties and drink socially in order to get along or move ahead - Jn 12:42-43

John 12:42-43 - Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.

3. We re-arrange our priorities and the church no longer comes first - Matt 6:33

Matthew 6:33 - "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

4. The church becomes simply a crutch to soothe our conscience - Matt 15:8

Matthew 15:8 - "THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.

IV. Lack Of Respect For Bible Authority - Jn 8:31-32

John 8:31-32 - So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

- A. When a person has little regard what the Bible says, they are in real trouble - Judges 2:10; 21:25

Judges 2:10 - All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel.

Judges 21:25 - In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

1. The times in which we live seek to repress and put down God's word and Bible study
2. "Don't be a stickler, ease up, be broad-minded, get-a-long with people" is what we are told to do

- B. Knowledge and obedience to the Word of God is the only thing that will save - Jas 1:21; Rom 1:16

James 1:21 - Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

Romans 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

- C. The only way to heaven is God's way - Prov 14:12

Proverbs 14:12 - There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

- D. We must study to know and live that way - Hosea 4:6; 2 Tim 2:15

Hosea 4:6 - My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

2 Timothy 2:15 - Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

Conclusion:

- A. There are many barriers to heaven. We have only touched on a very few. But none of them are such that they cannot be overcome if we will humble ourselves and obey God.
- B. What a tragedy for people to go through life never attempting to overcome the barriers to heaven.