



But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. -

Matthew 15:9

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Is There a Carrot in Front of Your Nose?

Are you aware that the church is dangling a carrot in front of your nose? I recognized there was a carrot in front of my nose some time ago but at the time I wasn't sure what to make of it. Eventually I figured out what the problem was and also what the the reality is.

The carrot the church is using is a picture of heaven that promises you all kinds of wonderful things. You'll have a mansion beyond your wildest dreams. The financial economy of that city is so overwhelming that even the streets are paved with gold. But it isn't just any gold, this is the purest gold you can get. This gold is so pure it is transparent.

Also the gates are made of pearls. Can you imagine a pearl so big that it's used as a city gate? You will never be sick again. Death doesn't exist in that place so you will live forever. The temperature is always just perfect so you'll never be too hot or too cold again. Some people think that we will have wings that will allow us to fly and some think that we'll be able to swim underwater with the fish, having no need for oxygen while immersed in the deep blue depths. We're also promised that we will be allowed to visit other planets. Can you imagine yourself spending the rest of eternity exploring the universe that has no end? And since there is no end there will always be new things to see and experience.

There also won't be any taxes to pay.

Don't you want to be in a place like that? Hmmm?

And that's the carrot. The churches paint a picture of heaven so wonderful that we would be insane to not want it.

But that's a problem for me. I have been assured by the professionals that I am definitely sane, and yet this is not what I'm wanting. For a long time I was uncomfortable with those promises of abundance in everything that is wonderful and a complete absence of anything that is a negative. Eventually I was able to figure out why this promise of opulence bothered me.

There are two problems with this carrot. Cut the string and let the carrot drop, I'm going to tell you why you need to forget about heaven. The first thing is that they have left Jesus out of the picture. The second problem is that they are teaching you to seek to serve yourself. When you desire heaven because of all the wonderful things it has to offer you then your focus is on yourself. You are being selfish.

Samuel's dad divorced me when Samuel was 6 years old. During my years of single parenting I had to function as both mom and dad for an unruly, hyperactive boy with attention deficit disorder. Thankfully he had a teacher who was able to deal with Samuel's fidgetiness without the need for Samuel to take Ritalin. God must have put that teacher in our lives. He was a single male near my age and he not only took an interest in Samuel, he and I also became friends. Samuel was able to benefit from the experience of having a teacher that didn't feel the need for him to be sedated and this teacher also served as a male role model.

This man was active and liked to do a lot of hiking. He also liked to explore and discover what was in the world that we were living in. When Samuel was hospitalized his teacher showed up for a visit. I took the opportunity to go home and get a shower and change of clothes. While I was gone he and Samuel took off to explore the inside of the hospital without telling the nurses.

That teacher/friend instilled in Samuel and me a zest for discovering things we hadn't seen before. We spent many hours exploring the state searching for new and exciting things to see. My love was to explore the things of nature and there was plenty of that near where we were living. The idea of being able to explore other planets is appealing. But somehow it just isn't important. It's not my focus. I don't need it.

What I need and want is to be with Jesus and his/our Father. And since I'm a Trinitarian then I also want to be with the Holy Spirit. I know that they are with me now, but I want to be able to see them face-to-face, to listen to them speaking to me, and to do that exploring with Jesus by my side.

There are people who believe that Jesus is no longer omnipresent so that's a dream I should forget. But I'm not someone who believes that theology. The Bible gives us information that indicates Jesus once again has the power of omnipresence, plus, common sense tells me that he has it. They argue that he is human so he cannot have omnipresence. I argue that he is God and God can be an omnipresent human if he chooses.

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. – Matthew 28:18

Did Jesus lie to his disciples when he told them that all power had been given to him? I think not. Jesus is many things but he is not a liar. We can trust him no matter what. The Bible says that liars won't be in heaven and Jesus is in heaven so he can't be a liar. And if he said he has all power then we should believe him and stop placing human limitations on him. Yes, he has a human body, but he is fully God and can do whatever he wants. And what Jesus wants is to be with us.

Use a little bit of imagination here and place yourself in heaven. Jesus is not only your best friend, he is also your spouse. Since he is your spouse then that means you are his bride. Oh, but you were a naughty bride. You were filled with all kinds of detestable thoughts, desires, deeds, etc... but Jesus loved you so much that he did what had to be done to rescue you. He cleaned you up. Then when you were finally adorned with your wedding raiment (a perfected character) he came to get you and took you to be where he is. He wanted to be with you.

And now you are married to the King of all creation. Who on this planet would have thought that little old peon you would achieve that kind of ranking? Unbelievable, huh? But it happened. You are happily, no, you are ecstatically married to the King of all creation. And you are deeply in love with your spouse. It is your greatest desire to be with him. And he returns your feelings and desires to be with you.

But wait, there is a problem here. You aren't the only person who loves him and wants to be with him. Nor are you the only person that is his bride. There is a multitude of people who are in the same situation as you. They are all married to the King and they all want to be with him. What kind of marriage do you have if you only get to see your Beloved a few minutes every several millennia?

It wouldn't be a happy relationship. In fact, it wouldn't be a marriage. Married people spend time together. So, there has to be a misunderstanding when we are taught that Jesus is no longer omnipresent.

If our goal of heaven is based upon the wealth and luxury that is waiting for us is wrong, what is the point? Is it wrong to desire heaven? No. Heaven is where we need to be. We were originally created to function in a heavenly atmosphere so it's OK to desire it as long as our goal isn't selfish.

For me that desire has become a longing to be with Jesus and his/our Father. But it's more than that. I also want to be worthy of the love that will be heaped upon me by unfallen beings who have only known love. They have witnessed the results of selfishness but they have never experienced it. I also want to be able to love them in the same way that they love me.

To me, that's what's important. When Jesus was here he didn't have a place to lay his head. He was homeless, dependent upon the generosity of others. If that was good enough for him then I'll take that also when I get to heaven. I'm not sure I want that here but it won't be so bad when I'm rescued from this planet. As long as I can be with Jesus and be able to love others and experience true love then that will be heaven for me.

Can I prove this by the Bible? No. But [for me](#) this is the reality whether or not I have a text to support it. My guess is that someone could think of one to back this up. So let me challenge you to dig into your Bibles and find some support for this.

And with that I'll bid you good night. Have a wonderful weekend and may God bless you with an abundance of his love.

Much love,

Hannah

P.S. Before posting this I thought of a couple texts for reference.

Revelation 19:7

Matthew 25 – The parable of the 10 virgins