

The One Thing Most People Miss in Describing Heaven

I suppose we all have an image in our heads of what heaven looks like—and for a lot of us that has been fed by the movies.



I started to make a list of the different movies that feature heaven—or some form of the afterlife—but the list began to get longer than a drive across Tennessee. The list runs to the very dark—you can watch any Tim Burton movie for that—to the whimsical such as *Down to Earth* (2001) (which is a remake of *Heaven Can Wait* (1978)... which is a remake of *Here Comes Mr. Jordan* (1941).

Other movies don't just use heaven as a backdrop for a story, but it is a central part of the story. Take for example, *What Dreams May Come* (1998). The plot is complicated, but Chris, the main character played by Robin Williams, dies and discovers heaven is what he makes it to be; his imagination is in control. His wife committed suicide and went to hell, but Chris chose to go there and stay with her rather than be apart. They end up "rescuing" each other, go to heaven together, , then end up choosing reincarnation. (I told you it was complicated.)

All these movies give me a general impression of heaven:

- Heaven is either weird or bureaucratic.
- HEAVEN IS BORING.

These movies are flat wrong about heaven.

So why can't anyone give us an accurate—and inviting—image of heaven?

1. The obvious reason is that none of us has seen heaven in all its splendor—except for the apostle John.
2. I'm sure what John saw was hard for him to put into words. Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, he captured what he saw in Revelation 21–22, but he only scratched the surface. The wow factor had to be off the scale, and how do you put that into words?

The one thing that makes heaven heaven is missed by all the films. In fact, most Christians overlook it. We're often too busy talking about streets of gold, reuniting with loved ones (or our dog from childhood), or the absence of long lines, committee meetings, and asparagus. Sure, all these things will bring us great joy, but they still pale in comparison to the biggest source of joy.

Jesus will be there.

I have experienced the love of Jesus. I know the joy of living in Him. But I also know all my experiences in this life are no match for when I am with Him face-to-face. For eternity.

- Why will there be no tears in heaven? Jesus will be there.
- Why will there be no death in heaven? Jesus will be there.
- Why will there be no pain in heaven? Jesus will be there.
- Why will there be great joy in heaven? Jesus will be there.

Jesus is the One who makes heaven heaven. That's compelling enough for me.