

No More Night

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[0 : 0 0] Well, it's good as I've said, it's not good, it's bad. We've lost some people in the Sunday school over the last number of weeks and months, but we are pleased to welcome two new families into the Coordination of McMillan, who are with us today, and Kate and Sophie and Jessica and Douglas, and also the Muir's who aren't here with us today, but who are going to be worshipping with us, that's Tom's brother David and his wife Sue and their children, Kai and Mary.

So we're glad to have them and any other visitors and other new folk in the Coordination, we're very glad to have you with us. I'm just going to say one or two little things to the children before we have a reading from the Bible, because some of the children have been away, some aren't here, you're kind of in a spread around the church, I think I'll probably leave you there just now, may have you down in a little while.

But we've been talking about heaven over the last number of weeks, we've called this a heavenly August, and we've been looking at, we're going to look at seven different things that the Bible says about heaven and that seven no mores, and today's no more is that there's no more night in heaven, okay?

The Bible doesn't go into great detail about what heaven's going to be like, but it does tell us one or two little things, and we do know that it's going to be very, very different to what life is like for us just now.

Now I've got a couple of slides just to try and illustrate that, I hope they might come up at this point. Now I said a few weeks ago, maybe, I think it was two Sundays ago, I talked about heaven and I said that we believe that heaven and the new heavens and the new earth were going to happen, because Jesus tells us in the Bible, and because Jesus is trustworthy, and I used an illustration, I said that we've got a great holiday house in Alipu, and I explained how wonderful it was, and I said that you believed that this was true because you trusted, why I had to say it, and because I'd been there, okay?

[2 : 1 1] Well, we believe what Jesus has to say, because He's been there as well. Now, what is this? Well, this is a photograph of a church in Alipu, in that same place.

Well, it's called Loch Broome Church, okay, or Alipu Church. It doesn't look like much like a church, does it? Well, it is. It is a church, and recently, Loch Broome Church was gutted, completely gutted. They took all the seats out of it, and they ripped out bits of the wall, and they raised the floor, and they did all kinds of different things to it, and that's a picture of it, kind of halfway through its work. So it looks completely different to what it looked before, and then it looks completely different, maybe if I switch it on now, it looks completely different now.

Can you see how different, and how beautiful, and how fresh, and how just new the whole place looks? It's been completely transformed from that old, kind of wrecked building that was empty.

[3 : 1 6] You couldn't even sit in it. So this beautiful, modern, useful worship area, which they have a hall, and they can separate it out, and they've got seats, and everything else, and it really is lovely.

So there's been a complete transformation. And that's a little bit like what we're talking about with heaven. There's going to be a complete change. Everything's going to be made new, and the heavens and the earth, which we have just now, are going to be completely renewed, and they're going to look brilliant.

It's a little bit like a caterpillar, which looks like that, I think, most of the time, but then changes into a butterfly.

And it's the same kind of beast, but it changes completely, and it becomes very beautiful. And so we have the truth in the Bible as well, that life is going to be very, very different in the new heavens

and the new earth.

Things are going to be completely different, absolutely, and completely different. And we've been looking at some of the ways that it's going to be really, really different. Can anyone tell me today, we've looked so far at four of the no-mores?

[4 : 33] Can anyone to add? Some of the children might know, but quite a lot of them have been away on holiday. So I'm just going to ask anyone to shout out. Can anyone remember some of the four no-mores that we have looked at so far?

Okay? Now you need to put your hands up. No, just shouting. Okay, I'm a riot, because you'll all shout out at once. Not. So anyone knows? I'm a volunteer, any of the no-mores we've looked at so far?

Ian? No more crying. No more crying out. We've looked at that one. What else have we looked at? Doreen. No more see. That was the first one we looked at.

Only got another two to go. Pressures on. Do you listen when you come to church? Do you remember? Is what we do worthwhile? Yeah, yeah.

It was, yeah. No more mourning. I'll give you that. Yeah. Okay, get the terminology right, Helen. But roughly, yeah, roughly right.

[5 : 31] No more mourning. Well done. There's one more. That's no more see. No more mourning. No more crying out. There's one we looked at last Sunday. Not that Ross.

Well done, Ross. I didn't tell him. He doesn't know. We didn't feel him. That's a brownie point. She'll get more pudding when we get home today, because you remember that. That's great.

So, we're going to read a little bit more. And today we're looking at no more night. And then we've got another two after that. But I want us to read from the Bible where we find these things about heaven.

And I'm going to speak a little bit more to the young folk. And I've asked Audra, she'll come up and read the passage. Audra teaches in the senior class here. And she's going to read a passage from Revelation, chapter 21, from verse 22 through to chapter 22 and to verse 6.

It's on page 125 of the Pew Bible. All right, Revelation 21, 22. I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

[6 : 33] The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Then the angels showed me the river of the water of life as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him. They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

There will be no more night. They will not need the light of the lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God Almighty will give them light, and they will reign forever and ever. The angels said to me, these words are trustworthy and true.

[7 : 45] The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show His servants the things that must soon take place. Thanks for the draw. If you see there twice in that reading, it speaks about the fact that there will be no more night.

It says it in chapter 26, verse 25, on that day the gates will not be shut. There will be no more night there. Then again it says it later on in chapter 22, verse 5.

There will be no more night. They will not need the light of the lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light, and they will reign forever and ever. So that's what we're looking at. I need a volunteer just for a minute, probably a very small one, kind of roughly Robbie Douglas Ross's kind of height, maybe someone like that, or Caitlyn even, because I need them to go into this box for me.

Okay? Does anyone want to do that? Come on, don't be shy. I'm going to take the microphone, because you're going to get to hold the microphone as well.

[8 : 52] So who's going to do that? Douglas, do you want to come and do it? No. First son, does it want to come up? Robbie? Come on Robbie. Yeah, you're a brave boy. I tell you what, will Ross come up and hold your hand?

That'll make it even worse, maybe, will it? Right, Ross, come on. You and Ross and Robbie can come up. Come on, you both come up. Come on, Ross, come on, you come up as well.

Because it can't be a big person, because it's not that big a box. And try though we might, I don't think we would get Ivan into the box. So it's got to be a wee person.

No one's going to do it. Come on, Ross. I know you should never work with children and animals, they say. But there must be someone who's, come on, Caitlyn, you look like you're brave enough. Come on, you come in. I'm not, I promise you, I promise you I'm not going to do anything horrible. I'm just going to ask you a few questions when you're inside the box. Come on, Ross, you come in.

[9 : 50] That's good. You'll get even more brownie points now. If all else fails, use your own children. It's poor show. Right, I think, are you going to be able to fit in there?

Well, this microphone, okay, so you can take that with you, okay? And I'm going to ask you a couple of questions when you're in there, and you can answer me, okay?

And you go. And you go right down. You've got to go right down at an angle. See your heads in it as well, because I'm going to close it.

Okay? There. That's good enough. That's good enough. It's all right, you'll be able to breathe. Right. There we are. Now, there's Ross, and he's in this box.

And I've done this because the box, when it's closed, is very dark. Isn't it, Ross? Yeah. Is that microphone working? It's probably maybe not picking up.

[10 : 49] What can you see in the box, Ross? Use the microphone. Oh, you are. Okay. Maybe it's not switched on.

Oh, it's switched on. Okay. Okay. Well, at least. So, what's inside the box?

All you can see is darkness. So there's not much to see, is there? And can you see me? Do you know what Robbie's doing?

You don't? Why is that? Because you're inside the box. Okay. And it's kind of dark, isn't it?

Is it scary? A tiny bit. A tiny bit, yeah. It would be very scary if you couldn't get out, wouldn't it? And does it make you appreciate the fact that you've got sun and light and things like that?

[11 : 52] It does. I'm glad. Okay. Well, I'm not keeping there any longer. Okay. But I just wanted to see Robbie. That was his badge, you can come out now.

Is that a good Caitlyn? Jing, you would want to do it now, Caitlyn? No. No. It's good to laugh at it from a... You wouldn't want to be involved. Okay.

Thanks, Ross. You can sit down. But really, I just wanted to remind us how scary it can be. I couldn't think of any... I maybe could have thought of something bigger to put them in that would still have been dark.

I could have put them in the cupboard under there, but I think they might have banged their head.

So, it was just to try and get across how scary it is to be in the dark. And maybe sometimes we don't think about that at all.

And we've got lots of things that help us to enjoy the light. Hopefully, if it will come up, there's the butterfly.

[12 : 50] We've got the sun. And the sun's very important and it helps us to see so that we're not in darkness. And then at night time, even we've got the moon, and sometimes we can see more of the moon than other times.

But it means that the world isn't in complete darkness. If you're driving in the car at night, you've got to use the car lights. And the lights help us to see so that we're not in the dark. Or even if you're walking along the street, you've got a street light.

That looks like the one at the bottom of Victoria Street, just beside the church there. But I don't think it is. So we've got lots of different things that remind us of our need for the light.

And we have lights so that we're not in darkness, which is a great thing. So you all like the light, I'm sure.

Do you like the light, Robbie? Can anyone tell me why they think the light is so important? Why is it so important to have light? And it doesn't need just to be the kids to answer that.

[13 : 46] Because the big children here can answer as well. Why is it so important that we have light? It's a very simple answer. So you can see.

Scott couldn't, Ross couldn't see anything in that box. Very dark. And if you've ever been in complete darkness, which in the city we very often aren't in, it can be very scary. So we need it to see. Why else is light important? Yeah, you know you can see where you're going. It keeps you from stumbling. What's so good about the daytime as opposed to the nighttime? What is it you like about the day and not the night? Is there anything you like about... Robbie, what do you like better about the day rather than the night? What? Playing. Exactly. It's very difficult to play in the middle of the night, apart from being tired and having to be in bed. You can play and you can go out into the street and you can play in the links and play football and all kinds of things during the day. [14 : 52] So it's great that we have the daytime. The daytime is very important. And we need the light. And the light is very important to us.

Now what Jesus is saying here is that none of these things we've looked at, moon, sun, none of these things will be in heaven.

We've said how important it is to have light. No sun, no moon, no other lights like that, no street lights. So will heaven not be a place of terrible darkness like that?

No, because the Bible says actually that it is God who will be the light in heaven. Not the sun, not the moon, but God Himself will be the light that will light up the whole of the new heavens and the new earth.

He's always going to be there. And He's always going to be at the center of heaven, the throne of the universe as we've looked at before. And He is the source of all light.

[15 : 56] He made the sun and He made the moon and He made the stars and He made our ability to have all these lights here. Some of them don't work. But He's the one that's the source of all these things.

And He will be at the very center of heaven. And He, we're told, will be the light. Is there any story in the Gospels in Matthew, Mark, Luke or John that might remind you of that?

Is there any story that might remind you that God is very bright, is very shiny? Can anyone tell me, again, maybe quite a difficult question for the children?

But we're a family together, so it's not just the children that can answer the question. Is there any story, and it's in Matthew, Mark and Luke, it's in three of the Gospel stories, that would give us a little hint about how bright and beautiful God is?

Does anyone know? Transfiguration. Yeah, you get the job. Okay, the Transfiguration. That's when, remember, Jesus goes up a hill with His disciples on a mountain, and at one time there, He just shines really, really brightly.

[17 : 02] It's as if His glory can't be hidden. And it's amazing. And it's just a glimpse of who God is and what God will do.

And it reminds us that God is light. And in fact, Jesus says to Himself, He says, I am the light of the world. It means He's come to get rid of darkness, and He's come to guide us, and He's come to teach us about the truth, which is light.

And He's come to get rid of bad things, which is darkness. And you know Jesus, who's the light of the world. What happened? Does anyone know what happened for three hours when He was on the cross?

Yeah, the whole world, certainly the world around Him, was plunged into the world. Into darkness. Because on the cross, He was taking the darkness of our sin, and He was being punished for that. On our behalf, the light of the world was exposed to that darkness. So what does it mean about heaven then, if can I encourage the children and the grown-ups to think about heaven just for a minute?

[18 : 11] Well, it just means that heaven, if there's a place that has no more darkness, no more night, it will be a beautiful place, a bright place.

Place where there isn't any bad things, or where there isn't any judgment, or nothing to be afraid of. Remember Ross said he was a little bit afraid. Now imagine if I taped up the box, and I'd said, let's all go.

And he was left in here, and I know it's a bit cruel. But can you imagine how afraid then he would be if he did shout, there's no one there.

He didn't know what had happened. He was completely in the dark, and he couldn't get out. That would be horrible. I know if you're in the dark, it can be a horrible, horrible experience.

And Jesus is saying, heaven will never be like that, it will be full of light. In fact, it says there in Revelation 21, that the gates will never be shut. And that's just a kind of picture that says, it's like when last thing, maybe when you go before you go to bed at night, your mums and dads will maybe lock the door.

[19 : 20] Why do people lock the door at night time? Caitlyn, do you know why they lock the door at night? No. You didn't know that, did you? Well, just before your dad and mum go to bed, they lock the door.

Do you know why you lock the door at night? Keep it safe, because people might come in. And steal things when you're sleeping. So you keep it safe, keep the house safe. And Jesus says in the same picture about no more night, he says the gates will never be shut, because it will be a safe place, heaven, and we trust in Jesus.

And it will be a place also where we understand things and see things clearly, because we're told there in Revelation 22 that we will see Jesus and we will see Him face to face.

He will see His face and His name will be in their foreheads. And that will be great, won't it? That place, because sometimes just now it's difficult to be a believer, difficult to trust.

[20 : 20] Maybe none of your pals in school trust and believe in Jesus. And you can't see Him. You can only see people that are His followers. It's really difficult sometimes to believe.

There's lots of bad and difficult things that happen that we can't understand. But then we're told we'll understand, we'll see if your mum and dad ever said, oh, I see now, I understand.

I see clearly. We say that, you know, we shed light on things. That means that we can see and understand what's happening. And heaven will be like, we'll be able to see and understand and know.

Maybe some of the difficult things that happen to us here. Maybe a lot of our questions will be answered and we'll know. And we will be guided into all truth and it will be great.

We will learn so much and it will be a brilliant place to be. So heaven is going to be a place with no more darkness, no more night and all that that means.

[21 : 18] How do we get there? How can we be assured that we're going to get to heaven? Jesus says, I am the way, the truth and the life.

No man comes into heaven or no man comes to the Father except through me. So He wants us to enter into the kingdom of heaven now by trusting in Him and by inviting Him into our heart and by believing in Jesus.

And then we will be safe and protected from sin and death and all these bad things that are part of this world. And also we'll know the truth.

We'll be able to understand who we are and why we've been made. And it's a great, great thing. So the kids who are here today, can you remember that?

That's what we're trying to teach you about in Sunday School. We're trying to teach you about Jesus and the gospel message. We're trying to live the Christian life together and we hope we'll do lots of things together that will help you to understand more about Jesus and will help you to love Jesus and love His family of which we're a part and that we'll get to know each other really well over this term together.

[22 : 40] So we thank God that He tells us about the future and tells us how we can get to the future in heaven as we trust in Him.

So let's pray and thank Jesus for that and ask for His help. Lord God, we pray that we would be able to understand your teaching.

We know in the bit of the Bible we read that the angel says, these words are trustworthy and true. And although we know that many people would snigger and laugh at the thought of the Bible being true, that by faith we have accepted that and because Jesus has changed our lives dramatically, we know that He is true.

And we know that because He came from heaven in a spiritual world and has returned to heaven after His resurrection, that He knows most about heaven than anyone and is well able to describe it to us.

And so we pray that we would learn about heaven from Jesus and know that when we die we don't just die and that's it all finished. But when we trust in Jesus we go to be with Him and we look forward to a new heavens and a new earth.

[24 : 01] And we also know that if we ignore and reject Jesus, the Bible speaks about a place of darkness away from all the warmth and protection and love and joy and celebration and knowledge and peace of heaven.

And Lord that is very serious. So remind us of these things and remind us that our sins will keep us from heaven unless Jesus himself is our Savior who dies on the cross to take the cost of our sins. So bless our children today, we thank you for them, thank you for Ross being willing to come up here. And we pray for all the children today and remember those who aren't with us for various reasons today.

And we pray for the Sunday School and for their teachers and for all of us as a congregation. We thank you too for our friends and visitors with us today and for the joy and the encouragement that their company with us brings.

And we ask that they would be blessed in their fellowship among us. For Jesus' sake, amen.