

**A Walk**

through the

**Market**

Flaming Sword Series

Volume 1

A Novel By

**Wade J. Carey**



## Heaven & Hell

As if hearing a subtle beckoning from an irresistible siren's song, Mick and Wyatt turned right on Western Avenue, heading back towards the north end of the market. The instinctive allure to return to the main body of the shopping bazaar was both invisible and enchanting. However, after passing by Cutters once again, they temporarily abandoned the market's invitation, detouring into Victor Steinbrueck Park to pay homage to that very unique and eclectic downtown space.

As usual, the park contained numerous people of various shapes, sizes, and economic standing. Directly in front of them was a paved pentagonal area, where several small clusters of people were chilling out. One bohemian-looking young man with a scraggly beard was playing a folksy sounding song on his acoustic guitar. Another group was sitting in a circle reading something together—*probably poetry*, Wyatt thought. Within view was a large grassy area where several people relaxed on blankets, enjoying Seattle's beautiful downtown atmosphere. Mick and Wyatt began to move in that direction.

As they continued along the grassy area, the angel and his student spotted people tossing Frisbees, playing with their dogs, and otherwise enjoying the day. They walked mostly in silence until Mick asked, "How does that spot over there, look?"

He pointed to a vacant bench facing the waterfront.

"Looks good to me," Wyatt said.

They went over and sat down. Wyatt sat sideways and unhooked his backpack, placing it on the seat between them. They both proceeded to sit back and soak in their newfound repose.

A slight breeze gave the park an almost idyllic feel. The softly pleasant sounds of activity nearby accentuated the beautiful view of the

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bay. After sitting quietly for a few minutes and taking in the relaxing atmosphere, Mick broke their comfortable silence.

“So Wyatt, tell me about that song you and your music buddies were working on. What was it called—*Who Will You See*—right?”

Wyatt had played the bass guitar on-and-off for several years since he got out of high school. He used to sit in with some local rock bands in the late eighties.

“It sure is, Mick. But I’m not a song writer. Me and some buds actually dinked and dunked around with that and several other tunes for a while. Unfortunately, it seems to me that time often robs people of the many things we dream about doing—like writing and playing music in my case.”

“That’s pretty interesting. Please elaborate.”

“You know this equation for humans: Life happens, and it seems like you just can’t get around to doing everything you want to do. The end result often equals disappointment.”

“Okay my friend, I understand—I really do. Listen, down here on Earth, most people don’t get to completely follow their innermost dreams. However, no Christian should ever feel robbed because of it.”

“Why is that?”

“Because in Heaven, it’s a completely different story.”

“So, tell me. What’s it really like up there?”

“It’s absolutely incredible—especially compared to this place.”

Mick opened his hands as if to say, “Everything you see.”

He continued, “However, contrary to what many people say, it’s really not beyond your imagination—at least not completely.”

“For real?”

“Absolutely. The Bible indicates that the desire for eternal life is built into the hearts of all people. The problem for many folks is that their tribulations sometimes get in the way. All too often, this creates a discontented heart. As a result, people sometimes develop some hugely misplaced hostility towards their Creator.”

“I won’t even ask you how you knew about it, but why did you bring up that song we used to work on?”

“Because, the idea behind the song is your desire to have a conversation with the LORD, coupled with His prospective question to you, ‘*when you walk into Heaven, who will you see?*’ Right?”

“It sure is, yes.”

“Well, have you considered that my showing up today might be more than just to hang out, shoot the breeze, and drink coffee?”

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“Actually, I haven’t had a chance to think about it too much.”

“Wyatt, after Jesus Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross, doesn’t it seem like that poignant event answered everything essential for mankind? You know, taking away the punishment of your sins.”

“Now that you mention it, when you get down to it, it does seem that way. So tell me ... has Jesus showed up on Earth to talk to anyone since his ascension?”

“No, not in the in-person sense. His death and resurrection was more than sufficient until He returns to reclaim His world. However, doesn’t it make sense that God would send messengers like me to Earth, instead?”

“Yeah, I suppose so—”

“Think about it,” Mick interrupted. “God’s great and complete grace was made perfect by Christ’s sacrifice on the cross at Calvary—period. The most important Old Testament prophecies pointed to that fateful day. But, let’s not forget the fact that God historically used intermediaries like the prophets to speak with His people. Later on, Jesus was born. Christ’s appearance on Earth—as explained in the Gospels—completed all the messianic prophecies. After that, Jesus Christ became your intermediary. Remember, no one comes to the Father but through Him.”

“Okay, I’m with you on all of that. What’s your point?”

“Your song idea is a good one, and it contains an important and appropriate message from God. It’s something He would possibly say to you—or anyone else for that matter—who asked Him the question, *who will be in Heaven when I get there?*”

“Yeah, we wanted to write a song that looked at eternity more from the heavenly side than the human side. We figured that all too often, people only think about Heaven from their own selfish perspective; they rarely think of things from God’s point of view.”

“That’s true,” Mick agreed. “They only see the world as if it revolved around themselves, right?”

“Right. That song essentially looks at it from God’s perspective—a loving Father who only wants for us to do our jobs by being ambassadors of His Gospel.”

“So, the moral of the song is—?”

“If you want someone in Heaven with you for eternity, you need to wake up and show them the way to Paradise by introducing Christ to them; that is, if He’s not already a part of their life. That’s what the basic message is.”

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“That’s an awesome concept, dude. You and your buddies keep at it, and just maybe God will do something with that idea.”

“Perhaps so. Anyway, what’s the topic of our next lesson?”

Mick gently sighed, his gaze focusing on the beautiful waters of Elliott Bay and the Olympic Mountains in the distance. A gentle wisp of wind blew through his hair as he said, “This next lesson will center on the glory of Heaven and the agony of Hell. We’ll spend most of this chat on Heaven, because we’ll be delving more into Hell during your second and third missions.”

“There you go again. You haven’t even explained what my first mission is.”

“Listen, my friend. Once you’ve joined the King’s army, you’re in for good. So just relax. We’ve got you covered.”

Wyatt nodded. “Actually, I’m just busting your chops, Mick. I’m good here—no worries.”

“Good deal. Anyways, I want for us to look at a couple of passages of Scripture that’ll open your mind to God’s greatness. The enemy has done an excellent job of dulling the senses of both Christians and non-believers out there, and we absolutely must reverse that trend.”

“Actually, this sounds pretty interesting,” Wyatt said, pulling out his Bible. “What shall we start with?”

“*Psalm 150:6.*”

“Okay ... *Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD ...* Hey, that’s in a great Christian song.”

“It sure is. Also, please look up *Romans 8:19-21.*”

“Okay, there’s a little more to that one ...

*“The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.”*

Mick nodded. “Nicely done.”

“You know, I absolutely love that passage of Scripture.”

“Yep, *Romans 8* is da bomb.”

“Very cute Mr. Angel,” Wyatt said dryly. “So, what’s up with these two passages?”

“Once again, Satan’s deceitful ways.”

“What do you mean by that?”

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“Let’s see if I can tee this one up for you. First off, let me make an overall statement that some Christians have taken on a potentially unscriptural—and likely inaccurate—position on animals in Heaven. I really think it needs correcting.”

Wyatt quickly nodded. “I’m with you, but what else do you want to discuss? We touched on this subject earlier today.”

“Simply this—it seems that one of Satan’s favorite tricks is to sucker people into believing that Heaven is boring and that their passed away pets couldn’t possibly be there. When you stop and think about it, that’s a really brilliant tactical maneuver.”

“How so?”

“Because if people aren’t looking forward to the reality of God’s promise of Heaven, they’ll spend more time on their earthly desires. In other words, sin. In that flawed way of thinking, people tend to think that they’d better party it up while they can. Of course, if people would simply RYB on a regular basis, they’d begin to understand just how wonderful Heaven really is.”

“I’m with you on this, Mick—big time. Like we touched on earlier this morning, when Scout died last year, I was really frustrated with some fellow Christians who shared with me the flawed-but-prevalent opinion that my little buddy ceased to exist when he died. They actually said that he was gone forever, because allegedly, animals don’t have ‘souls’. Although the meaning or use of the words *soul* and *spirit* is an often debated position, the truth is, I believe that’s totally irrelevant as it relates to animals in Heaven.”

“I see,” Mick said. “Go on.”

“I’m very familiar with the passages just cited and I think they illustrate a couple of critically important things concerning this subject.”

Mick chuckled. “Of course. That’s why I had you read them.”

“I see. The passage in *Psalms 150* clearly says, ‘*everything that has breath praise the LORD*’. To me, that covers a whole lot of God’s creation.”

“It sure does. The last time I checked, animals do have breath. Please continue.”

“The passage in *Romans 8* is quite powerful because I feel like it indicates that all of creation was subjected to God’s curse on mankind. It continues by saying the creation eagerly awaits for the sons of God to be revealed. Of course, the LORD’S animals are an integral part of His creation.”

“I see where you’re headed with this. Although there’s some disagreement over this subject, I think you’re right on track, dude-ster.”

“Cool. After I studied the many Scriptures regarding the LORD and *His* relationship with *His* creation, including *His* animals, I found that God is obviously very fond of His majestic handiwork. Furthermore, it seems like mankind is ultimately heading back towards an Eden-like existence with no more pain, suffering, or death.”

“I like it. Keep on chugging, big daddy.”

“Well ... and I know that some Christians won’t necessarily buy into this ... but I feel like God’s creation is heading for some kind of enormous restoration and/or redemption. You see, unlike mankind, the creation is without sin. That passage in *Romans 8* states that it was subjected to frustration and God’s curse against its will.”

“Seriously, using Scripture to back up your point is the right thing to do. What else do you have to say?”

“Also, mankind’s arrogance about being a so-called ‘higher creation’ than animals comes into play, here. Many people—even the most devout Christians—don’t read their Bibles often enough. Yes, mankind *is* God’s crowning achievement in creation. However, that title also carries with it a lot more responsibility—I mean a *lot* more.”

“So why is the animal kingdom bound by mankind’s sin, and why do animals die?” Mick challenged.

“Well, here it is. Animals didn’t originally sin; their world was corrupted by mankind’s sin. As stewards of Eden, Adam and Eve clearly made a humongous mistake of disobedience. This severely and negatively affected God’s entire perfect world and everything in it.”

“I agree,” Mick said. “Go on.”

“Truthfully, people who are worried about their beloved pets getting into Heaven would be best advised to look in the mirror.”

“What exactly do you mean by that?”

“In my opinion, I believe the creation will be redeemed or restored, but not all of mankind will be with Jesus in Heaven ... and ultimately, on the new Earth.”

“Hmmm,” the angel mumbled. “This is really getting interesting.”

“According to *Romans 8:21*, the creation will be redeemed. Since *Romans 8:22* says *all* of creation groans and *Romans 8:23* says only the *redeemed* groan, it seems reasonable that all of creation will be redeemed and/or restored in some way.”

“That’s a pretty reasonable interpretation,” the angel said.

“Okay Mick, tell me what you know.”

“DP, dude—sorry.”

Unfazed, Wyatt continued. “Anyway, it stands to reason that when someone has a pet die, they should be much more concerned about getting their own tail-end into Heaven by surrendering their life to Jesus Christ. That’s what I meant when I said that people should look in the mirror.”

“Don’t stop now, dude.”

“Essentially, I believe that our pets are already there! That’s the ironic thing about the whole animals or pets in Heaven issue, because it’s really not an issue at all. I think it’s more about mankind’s arrogance, and in my opinion, biblical ignorance.”

Mick grinned. “So, you understand that your position isn’t specifically addressed in the Bible—right?”

“That’s correct. The Bible is actually silent on whether our pets are in Heaven. However, I think the LORD expects us to examine His character and to perhaps give Him a little more credit for being a loving, compassionate, and giving Father.”

“I can’t argue with that,” Mick agreed.

“I also believe that my opinion is consistent with biblical teaching.”

Mick nodded in agreement. “Outstanding Wyatt—nice work. Much of your reasoning is biblically sound. It’s absolutely true that people have a higher calling, and therefore, a higher responsibility as heirs of God’s kingdom with Jesus Christ.”

Wyatt nodded. “That’s my whole point in a nutshell.”

“Actually, it absolutely astounds me that any Christian would think their little buddies wouldn’t be waiting for them in Heaven. That goes directly against the whole idea of a loving God and Father who described His entire creation as very good.”

“Gosh, we sure have talked a lot about pets in Heaven today.”

“That’s because this topic is perhaps the most under ministered-to area in all of Christianity,” Mick said. “And a lot of people would really like to know what the Bible says or indicates about this subject. However, it seems to be hard for an ‘average Joe’ to find a consistent opinion from among the theological experts.”

“How true. I know that from my own investigation.”

“You know,” Mick continued, “convincing people that God really doesn’t care enough about your feelings that He would neglect to restore your pets is really symptomatic of the campaign by the evil ones to convince people that God is uncaring, not very powerful, and aloof. I’m afraid that Satan has laid his filthy fingerprints all over this subject with his treachery, deceit, and lies.”

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“I sure can’t argue with that,” Wyatt said. “I used to wonder why the Bible didn’t speak directly of this. But then I remembered two really important things.”

“Oh—?”

“The first thing is the passage in *Romans 1:20*, which we’ve discussed a few times already today regarding God’s invisible qualities being apparent. The other is the notion that the Bible is a *survival manual*—it tells us what we need to know—not everything there is to know.”

“Right. The King of kings expects you to love Him enough to examine His holy character. The pets-not-in-Heaven thing is actually an evil trick designed to drive people away from the LORD.”

“You know,” Wyatt began, “I’ve actually heard Christians say they don’t want to go to a place like Heaven where their pets allegedly won’t be there when they die. That’s a pretty sad statement, but all they really have to do is open their Bibles. They’ll find some wonderful encouragement there.”

Mick nodded. “You’re absolutely right, my friend.”

“I’m really surprised that so many people of faith neglect to do the one thing that’ll give them answers to what they seek. God’s Holy Word is awesome, but it can’t be read without willing participants. I’m sure the evil ones really love it when Christians don’t read their Bibles.”

“Yep. Satan, Damon, and all of their evil buddies are very pleased when folks don’t read God’s Holy Word. Regarding animals in Heaven, once again, that’s them doing their evil thing with their lies. They’ll actually do anything they can to separate God’s children from their maker and His incredible hope. That’s what those ‘wolves’ do, you know.”

Wyatt shook his head. “You just can’t get away from the story of the Three Little Pigs, can you?”

“I suppose not,” Mick agreed, grinning.

“Anyway, please tell me something ... if you can.”

“Sure thing.”

“In pondering God’s character and greatness, I’ve been wondering about a couple of things. However, I’m not sure if they fall under Divine Privilege or not.”

“Well if they do, I’ll certainly let you know ... so out with it.”

“Can animals speak in Heaven?”

“Actually, the whole animals module in your orientation program in Heaven is one of the more interesting things you’ll learn about.”

“That’s cool, but—”

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“Let me ask you an important question,” Mick said. “Do you think what you just asked is beyond God’s greatness to accomplish?”

“Of course not. Although I do feel like many people tend to sell God short.”

“Narrow minded Christians might think your question is silly, but I don’t. The one and only true God—the One who created all things—can accomplish so much more than He’s often given credit for.”

“How true.”

“Like I’ve mentioned before, you’ll often hear people say Heaven is beyond human imagination. However, that shouldn’t stop you from trying. If you’ll simply RYB, you’ll discover that God is immense and can do all things. Ultimately, if it can bring praise to Him, animals speaking in Heaven is certainly a possibility. That’s all I can say on that theory. DP kicks in here.”

Wyatt nodded his understanding.

“So what’s your other question?” the angel asked.

“Okay, when God’s Word indicates that ‘the creation’ will be redeemed, is it possible that may cover every living thing that’s ever existed—except those people who reject Christ’s sacrifice and forgiveness of their sins?”

“Now you’re thinking correctly about God’s character. As usual, I’ll give you the answer first. None of the angels or saints in Heaven knows either the day or the magnitude of God’s final redemption. However, I can definitely tell you that there are indeed animals in Heaven. In fact, there are biblical passages to back that up.”

Wyatt nodded. “Indeed there are.”

“All God has ever wanted is for His children to obey and worship Him. In examining the loving part of His character, I expect the LORD strongly desires for His people and His creation to be awestruck by His greatness and glory. Essentially, God wants all people to love Him as their Father.”

“So, what about my second theory?”

Mick shrugged. “Essentially, I’m saying I don’t know. However, think about what *the* creation, or *all* of creation being redeemed means. Have you ever considered the incredible ramifications of that?”

“Actually, I have.”

“Okay then, let me ask you a few more questions.”

“Be my guest.”

“Is the entire, gigantic physical universe part of God’s original creation?”

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“*Genesis 1* clearly states that it is.”

“Is it reasonable to think that the physical, redeemed universe will be similarly big?”

“Absolutely.”

“Is it also within the realm of possibility that God may desire to have umpteen gazillion animals—as well as a whole lot of His redeemed children—to enjoy His new universe; the *redeemed* universe?”

“Of course it is.”

“Now, then. Do you realize that scientific estimates in the past have indicated the number of stars in the universe is over seventy-sextillion?”

“How many did you say?”

“*Seventy-sextillion!* That’s a seven, followed by twenty-two zeros.”

Wyatt whistled. “Wow. You know, that doesn’t even take into consideration the number of planets circling those stars. I suppose you can say with confidence, God’s redemption possibilities are absolutely staggering.”

“They sure are—at least to the human mind. So sit back, my man, and eagerly await the revelation of God’s majesty when His plan of redemption takes place. Again, I don’t know His ultimate plan or when it’ll occur. But considering the infinite power of the LORD, it’s certainly possible that much or all of creation will be redeemed.”

“So it’s plausible that God will want to reclaim everything He made in creation that Satan has tried to take away from Him, except those individuals who have the ability to reject Christ’s sacrifice.”

The angel nodded. “That’s it.”

“I trust the LORD, Mick, I really do. It’ll be very cool to watch this whole thing unfold.”

“Dude-ster, I’m actually glad to see your mind expanding towards God’s greatness. I’d strongly encourage you to continue doing that. I really don’t think the LORD appreciates being stuffed into a narrow minded little box, you know.”

“I’m not planning on being the dummy who does that.”

“I have one important caveat here, Wyatt. The Bible is God-breathed and without error. So anything or anyone who contradicts His Holy Word is absolutely false. While you can certainly speculate on the things which are not specifically mentioned in the Bible—like animals in Heaven—you must be very careful when it comes to anyone who directly contradicts God’s Holy Word.”

“Of course, Mick. I understand, completely.”

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“And one more thing. Anyone foolish enough to put their pets ahead of God will do so at their own peril. Loving your pets as an important part of your life is tantamount to the enjoyment of God’s wonderful bounty. Putting your pets ahead of God—or any other false idols for that matter—is spiritually risky business, indeed. I strongly recommend against it. You should always worship the Creator, not the creation.”

“I agree and I understand,” Wyatt said.

“Anyways, you kind of stole my thunder in the first part of our lesson on Heaven and Hell, but I’m actually glad you did.”

“How did I steal your thunder?”

“It’s just another part of the important message you need to know.”

“Which important message?”

“The important message is that Heaven is incredible and can absolutely be imagined—at least partially—if you’ll simply examine the character of Jesus Christ and His Holy Word.”

“Oh, I get it now. That’s actually the best part of my personal walk with the LORD; anticipation of Heaven that is.”

They both sat for a minute, looking out on the busy Seattle waterfront. Several smaller boats were now slowly gliding out on Elliott Bay, adding a tranquil layer to the backdrop of their discussion. The pleasure boats were soon joined by another Washington State ferry, which had just pulled away from the dock, beginning its journey across Puget Sound. Mick was apparently deep in thought, so Wyatt decided to not bother him.

After about a minute or so, the angel spoke up again. “Okay dude, let’s talk about Hell for a minute.”

“Hmmm. You seem to be a little bothered over this subject.”

“I’m not really bothered—I’m perplexed.”

“Why is that?”

“If the people who reject Jesus Christ only knew what awaits them, they’d surely be singing another tune. Hell is an unbelievably awful place.”

“So I hear.”

“And the worst thing about Hell is that the people who go there are forever separated from their Creator, who truly loves them and wants them to repent of their sins.”

“Yeah, well those arrogant atheists will ultimately get what they asked for—eternal separation from the LORD.”

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“That’s not something anyone should ever be happy about,” Mick warned. “And I’m afraid it’s not just the atheists who’ll be disappointed.”

“Who else then?”

“How about all those folks who try to water down Christ’s sacrifice by claiming that all people get into Heaven? If that was true, then why proclaim the Gospel?”

“Good point.”

“I’m afraid many people will be shocked when they discover that it’s only a portion of people who actually make it to Heaven.”

“I’m sure they will. I also believe that rejecting Jesus Christ stems from someone’s desire to play God.”

Mick raised an eyebrow with curiosity. “That’s interesting. Please, explain what you mean by that.”

“Sure thing. Let’s start off with asking this question: Why do people try so hard to explain the unexplainable?”

Mick chuckled. “Now *you’re* getting cryptic, my friend. I’m afraid you’re gonna have to bring-it a little better than that.”

“Okay, fine. It’s really quite simple. Essentially, people should just let God handle God’s business. Instead of trying to reconcile how a loving God can let anyone go to Hell, they should be more concerned about spreading the good news about Jesus Christ, and that He offers eternal life in Heaven.”

“That’s true,” Mick agreed.

“Yes, there are several definitive answers for why everyone doesn’t make it to Heaven. However, it’s really not any person’s job to reconcile the universe—except Jesus Christ.”

“They’re not getting the big picture about God, are they?”

“I agree, Mick. But oddly, I can also understand their concern.”

“How’s that?”

“I think it stems from people concentrating on only one aspect of God’s personality. That is, His great love and grace. People who don’t really know God, only—”

“Correct,” Mick interrupted. “Their error is that our holy God is also a God of judgment.”

“Yes. Deep down, people tend to want to avoid having to answer for their own sins.”

“Christ’s death on the Cross wiped all of that away and atoned for sins. However, people are still required to accept His sacrifice and become a follower of Jesus. If you ask me—that really isn’t asking too much. Instead of trying to interrogate the LORD about why He does

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things the way He does, people would be well-advised to just concentrate on using their gifts and talents to help others. In other words, let God be God; let Him handle the big things.”

“I agree, Mick. I’ve often heard the question, *what about the tribesman in Botswana who has never had the opportunity to know Jesus?*”

“Again, let God be God, and let Him handle the big things.”

Wyatt nodded. “I definitely see what you’re saying—quit trying to answer all of God’s mysteries and stay on track with trying to help others towards Christ. There’s only one God, and it isn’t any of us.”

“That’s correct. People should not always look upwards, trying to completely figure out all of the mysterious ways of the LORD and His universe. God is incredibly holy, so no one will ever figure them all out, anyway.”

“True.”

“But rather, they should consider looking at the people around them who may need their help.”

“Are you saying that people who pose these types of questions are actually trying to—?”

“Yes. Insisting that someone must know all of God’s mysteries is essentially trying to play God—just like we discussed.”

“That’s interesting,” Wyatt said.

“Listen, there’s nothing wrong with discussing difficult questions for humans to understand. It’s when someone goes too far by putting God on trial—that’s when it goes wrong.”

“I’m with you on this.”

“Each person’s mission is simple—spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and show others towards the Cross.”

“Mick, you keep saying that, over-and-over.”

“That’s because it’s critically important, *over- and-over.*”

“I gotcha—so what about Hell?”

“Hell is actually pretty simple—it’s the place where God doesn’t live. Being in Hell is largely about eternal separation from the LORD. Only a fool would want that.”

“I agree. But where is Hell—or at least, what people often refer to as Hell?”

“DP, dude. The Bible doesn’t say. I can tell you that a bunch of unsaved people and a boatload of dirtbag demons are headed there.”

“Isn’t the final resting place for Satan and company in the eternal lake of fire?”

“It is,” Mick said. “Please read *Matthew 25:41.*”

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Wyatt quickly flipped to the passage ... “*Then he will say to those on his left, Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*”

“Now, let’s compare that verse with *Philippians 3:20-21.*”

“Alright ... *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body* ... I especially like that last part.”

“It basically all boils down to this, Wyatt. Which would you rather have—Heaven or Hell? The lake of fire with demons, or the glorious and perfect body with Christ?”

“That’s obviously a rhetorical question. I’ll take Christ.”

“Of course you will. But isn’t it shocking how many people don’t?”

Wyatt nodded, sadly. “Yeah, it sure is.”

“Well, I don’t have much left on Heaven and Hell for now. I’m also about ready for my mac and cheese.”

Wyatt shook his head. “I never imagined that an angel could enjoy comfort food so much.”

Mick grinned. “Okay, then. I only have a couple of quick things left on the agenda for this little chat.”

“Like what?”

“Next, let’s talk about glimpses.”

“No problem. What’s on your mind?”

“While humans are still here on Earth, you get glimpses of eternity. If you’re heading towards Heaven, you get a glimpse of Hell; if you’re heading towards Hell, you get a glimpse of Heaven.”

“That actually sounds like a future song, Mick.”

“Maybe it should be. Anyways, while you’re here on Earth, it’s up to each of you to evaluate the evidence which can lead you to take the direction you want to take when you die. It’s each person’s own decision. I do hope more people choose Heaven over Hell—that’ll just add to the great celebrations we have up there.”

“That sounds good to me.”

“Hey, do you mind if we get up and start walking, again?” Mick asked. “We’ve been sitting for a while.”

Wyatt nodded as they both stood up and stretched their legs. The angel continued, “Dude, will you also look up *Proverbs 12:10* for me once again, before we go?”

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“Sure thing.” After a moment, he said ... “*A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel* ... Do you have another point to make on this passage?”

“Nope, I sure don’t. But don’t you think it’s high-time to call Miss Charlene to see how Baby is doing?”

Wyatt was stunned. “Wow, I forgot. I feel like a real knucklehead.”

“I concur,” Mick chuckled.

“I’ve been so engrossed in our discussions that I forgot to check in on Miss Charlene and Baby.”

Wyatt pulled out his phone and called Charlene’s cell phone. As he waited for her to answer, Wyatt ruminated over the immense lack of masculinity in his dog’s name....

Charlene greeted him, “Well hello dear! How’re you doing up there in the market?”

Her voice was as comforting and engaging as ever.

“Great, Miss Charlene. How’s the little stinker doing?”

“Oh, she’s fine. I’ve taken her for another walk, and now she’s napping again.”

“If you ask me, that sure sounds like a great life.”

“Are you and Mr. Mick having a good chat today?”

Charlene’s question surprised Wyatt. He felt like he was perhaps the last person in the world to know he was going to experience a visit from an angel that day.

“Actually, we’re getting to know each other quite well. I’m learning a lot from him. Mick sure isn’t pretty, but he does know his Bible well.”

Charlene chuckled. “Good, dear.”

“Miss Charlene, how long did you know—?”

“Oh hush up sweetheart. We’ll get all caught up after dinner when you two get home, tonight.”

Wyatt shook his head, realizing that pressing her would be fruitless.

“Okay,” he said. “So I guess you know our dinner on your terrace is being postponed?”

“I’ve known for some time now that you wouldn’t be home until after dinner with Mr. Mick. But don’t fret over me. I have plenty here, and so does Baby.”

“But—”

“Now you two just finish up your business. This is important.”

Wyatt sighed. “Okay, then. I suppose I’ll see you a little bit later.”

“Everything is okay at home, sweetheart. Don’t you worry about a thing. Bye-bye, now.”

## Wade J. Carey

Charlene hung up.

Wyatt was quiet for a few moments. He then said, “Alright Mick, I suppose it’s time to go get you some serious comfort food.”

“I thought you’d never ask. Please lead on.”

Everything was now falling into place for Wyatt. Although their ultimate destination and purpose continued to be a mystery, he knew his discussions with Mick were most certainly significant. Because of this, he remained unconcerned about what was next. Wyatt knew that when God sends an invitation to follow Him into a mighty work, then the wisest thing to do was to simply follow His lead.

Human instinct will often tell you it’s too difficult to follow an uncomfortable or unplanned path. However, after a little practice, one can realize that it’s actually harder to carry out your own will instead of what you instinctively know is the LORD’S plan for you.

Once again, Mick and Wyatt headed back over the grassy area of the park towards Western Avenue. They were returning to the hustle and bustle of the ancient market; a place that now contained a brand new history for Wyatt Hunter. Although he already loved Pike Place Market more than anywhere else in the world, this day’s developments would only serve to strengthen its special place in his heart.