



# TRIP OF A LIFETIME

A new venture promises to take tourists to new heights. God's offer is better.

If you're trying to find a gift for the person who has everything, consider an offer from the deserts of New Mexico. About 35 miles south of the town of Truth or Consequences is a developing site known as Spaceport America. The venture, known as Virgin Galactic, is the brainchild of billionaire Richard Branson. The fleet of spacecraft under construction will hopefully be ready to take tourists to the edge of outer space by the year 2011. After climbing to an altitude of 70 miles above earth, passengers will enjoy five minutes of weightlessness and sightseeing, and then spend the next 30 minutes gliding back to earth.

Six passengers can board each flight. Before you get too excited, however, you should know the price of this "trip of a lifetime": \$200,000, according to the December 14, 2009 issue of Time Magazine. 300 have already signed up for the voyage.

As exciting as that trip sounds, I know of a better offer. Virgin Galactic has not yet launched a mission into space, but the one born of a virgin has. He invites all who are interested to join Him. Hear what He had to say:

"Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me. In my father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:1-3, NKJV).

Paul also had information about this future voyage:

"For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17).

The Virgin Galactic trip lasts only for a day. After climbing high into the stratosphere, one is forced to return to this corruptible world. Not so with the Lord's flight. Once we are lifted up into the air, there will be no return. Our destination will be the Father's house for an eternity of bliss.

We've not yet mentioned the price of making this voyage with Jesus. Relax: you can afford it. Some of the last words of the Bible stress that point: "And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17).

Reservations can be made today. Get in the line that started on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:37-39) and claim your seat!

--Tim Hall; submitted by Larry Miles

**(NOTE:** Are you ready to take the flight that the Lord offers? The beginning of a new year should serve as a reminder that it is the Lord's desire to eventually "make all things new" (Revelation 21:5). He begins with making those who follow Him new. Paul wrote, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). When one in faith and repentance accepts the Lord Jesus, who was crucified for our sins, buried and raised to glory, being baptized into Christ, that one is raised with Christ to "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3-4). The destination of those who enter this new life will be that spoken of by the apostle Peter: "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13). Get ready. The day for launching may be nearer than you think. -Ron)

(The following poem has been around a long time, but it's one that is timeless. It's one of my favorites.)

## A NEW LEAF

He came to my desk with quivering lip— The lesson was done.

"Dear teacher, I want a new leaf," he said, "I've spoiled this one."

I took the old leaf, stained and blotted, And I gave him a new one all unspotted.

And into his sad eyes I smiled, "Do better, now, my child."

I went to the throne with a quivering soul— The year was done.

“Dear Father, hast thou a new leaf for me? I’ve spoiled this one.”

He took the old leaf, stained and blotted, And gave me a new one, all unspotted.

And into my sad heart He smiled, “Do better, now, my child.”

--Author unknown

**“THE AVERAGE** man’s life consists of twenty years of having his mother ask him where he’s going, forty years of having his wife ask the same question, and at the end, mourners also wondering where he’s going.”

--*Trib-Bits, Decatur Tribune, 12-9-'09*