



## **Week of November 20 – From Here to Eternity<sup>1</sup>**

### **Overview:**

*What happens after you die? Is hell real? What does heaven look like? Does it even matter? The nature of heaven, hell, and everything in between have been the subject of intense debate within the church for millennia. In this series, we will discuss what the Bible says, how culture has led us so far from the truth, and how a correct understanding of eternity can give us not only hope for the future, but purpose for our lives in the here and now.*

### **Group Objectives:**

***Relationships and Life Transformation are the primary purpose of community groups***

- Reflect on this past Sunday's message and other devotional reading.
- Pray together and provide encouragement for other group members.
- Consider what we know to be true about life after death and how that affects how we live our lives now.

### **DNA statement(s) tie-in:**

- *We are empowered by the Holy Spirit*—The Holy Spirit within us enables us to live life beyond belief—a life filled with joy, purpose, and power. We live in a supernatural reality that includes yet transcends the physical universe.

### **Conversation Starters:**

- If you could have any specific food in heaven, what you would request?

### **Listening to God**

- Where did you see God at work last week? How were you able to join him?

### **Learning from God's Word: Bible Study Discussion**

*Eternal life in Christ is both a concrete certainty and a nebulous mystery. We can say with confidence that those who have trusted in Jesus will spend eternity with him. However, when it comes to the mechanics of how and when it all occurs, the Bible leaves room for interpretation. It is good to look at scripture and determine what we know to be true, what we think is true, and where we have little understanding. Speculation can be helpful as long as we remember to hold it loosely while we cling to the truth as our anchor.*

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<sup>1</sup> This study guide was written by Rachel Vaughn and edited by Dawn Gentry.

- **Read Hebrews 9:24-28, 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, 1 Corinthians 15:12-26**
  - According to these passages, what do we **know** about life after death.
  - What questions do they not answer? What new questions do they raise?
- **Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-16, 2 Corinthians 12:1-4, Luke 23:39-43**
  - How do these passages change or add to your understanding of the afterlife?
  - Where do these passages overlap? Is there anywhere they seem to conflict with each other?
- **Read John 14:1-4, John 16:33, Philippians 3:20-21, 1 John 5:10-12**
  - What do these passages affirm as truth?
  - Describe the hope we have in Jesus? How does that shape how we think about death?
  - How should our hope in Christ change how we live?

### **Leaning into Obedience:**

*Studying scripture can be hard. There are times the pieces do not seem to fit, or you cannot find a clear answer.*

- When you face a difficult or confusing scripture, what tools and resources do you turn to for help? Why is it worth exploring, even when you are unsure of the answers?
- How can we keep a clear distinction between what we know and what we believe to be true? Why does that matter?
- Why is it important to learn about eternity and life after death? How does your understanding of eternity affect your everyday life?
- How do you sense God calling you to respond to these passages?
  - Is there an example to follow? A command to obey?
- How can the group encourage you this week as you respond?

### **Prayer Prompts:**

- Invite members of the group to share personal prayer requests.
- Allow time for silent reflection on the following question:  
*How can the certainty of my future with Christ give me freedom in my life now?*
- *Option:* Read 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 over your group as a benediction:
  - *May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts, and strengthen you in every good deed and word. (NIV)*