

STUDY GUIDE

THE AFTERLIFE 4.19.15

[Instructions for LifeGroup leaders]

As you prepare to take your LifeGroup through this study, remember that this guide is provided in the hopes that you will customize it based on the insights you have of your group. You can dig deeper by studying in advance for additional references, study helps and applications or you can trim it down and focus on one section that you feel your group needs to discuss and grow in. It's your study "guide". Modify as much as you want and have fun with it!

[setup]

Do you have any stories related to seeing God work in the lives of those you are praying for or sharing the Gospel with who do not know the Lord?

Start this time by taking out a piece of paper (or if in a LifeGroup, a large post it note, whiteboard, or mutual piece of paper with one person writing for the group) and take five minutes to write down as many descriptions of heaven that you can come up with.

[digging deeper]

As we continue in our series on the afterlife, the topic of the heaven was addressed last weekend. The hope for some type of "heaven" is fairly universal with the exception of theology influenced by atheism. God is not silent on heaven in His Word nor is He exhaustive in its description.

How would you answer the question, "What makes heaven, heaven?"

The following quote from Pastor Tim Keller was mentioned Sunday. What are your thoughts on it? How is it different than most people would typically describe heaven?

"When the Bible speaks of the new heaven and the new earth, it is not speaking of an alternative to this world; it is speaking of the healing and restoration of this world."

Read the following verses (divide them between smaller groups if in a LifeGroup) and capture how each one helps us better understand or view heaven:

Is. 65:17 _____

Matt. 5:12 _____

Matt. 25:46 _____

Luke 23:43 _____

John 3:13-16 _____

John 14:1-6 _____

1Cor. 2:9 _____

1 Cor. 15:50 _____

2Cor. 5:1 _____

Rom. 8:21 _____

- Gal. 4:26 _____
- Col. 1:5 _____
- Heb. 11:10,16 _____
- Heb. 13:14 _____
- 2 Peter 3:13 _____
- Rev. 2:7 _____
- Rev. 4:2 _____
- Rev. 21 _____

After spending the time learning from these verses, revisit your list of descriptions that you started this time with. Circle the descriptions that have biblical support. Feel free to also add new descriptions that came from this time of study.

How does your understanding of and hope for heaven help you:

- A- endure difficulties here on earth?
- B- Make a difference here on earth (not being so heavenly minded that you are no earthly good)?
- C- Pray for and share the good news of Christ with the people regularly in your life?

[live it out]

From the list of verses above, pick one to memorize as a verse of encouragement and motivation for the next week. Write it out here: _____

Who is one person that you can share what you learned about heaven with this week?

Read from or listen to one additional resource related to heaven from the list below:

[book recommendations]

Heaven - by Randy Alcorn

Heaven is a Place on Earth - by Michael Wittmer

Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology - Chapter 57

[links]

Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology Podcast (#114)

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/wayne-grudems-systematic-theology/id322844869?mt=2>

Randy Alcorn's website - <http://www.epm.org/>

<http://www.gotquestions.org/heaven-like.html> (see bottom of their page for links on multiple related topics)