

# STUDY GUIDE

## THE AFTERLIFE 4.26.15

*[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]

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 hell that you can come up with.

What objections to the very idea of hell have you heard of do you have? What makes this such a difficult doctrine?

*(Note: One CVCer wrote, "It's cool with me if Satan gets tortured forever and ever, but it's very unsettling that a malnourished 3rd world child dies from disease and has to go to hell because he never knew Jesus." Another wrote, "A few months ago I read an article about a young woman in north Carolina (I believe) who had flame accelerant poured down her nose and throat and was set on fire and found walking down the highway burning alive. When I read it I thought the person who did that is the sickest, most evil being on the planet. And seconds later I realized that is what I have been taught that God does but forever and ever. It chills me to the core. I am certain that my capacity for compassion is not greater than God 's. So, I'm struggling with this idea.")*

### [digging deeper]

Read Luke 13:22-30. According to Jesus, who will make it through the narrow door and who won't? How does someone know whether he/she is inside or outside the kingdom? How would a person get "in"? (See Luke 12:31-32.) What does this passage indicate about the belief that people who die outside of a relationship with Christ will get a second chance? How does this passage describe the final state of those who don't know Christ?

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

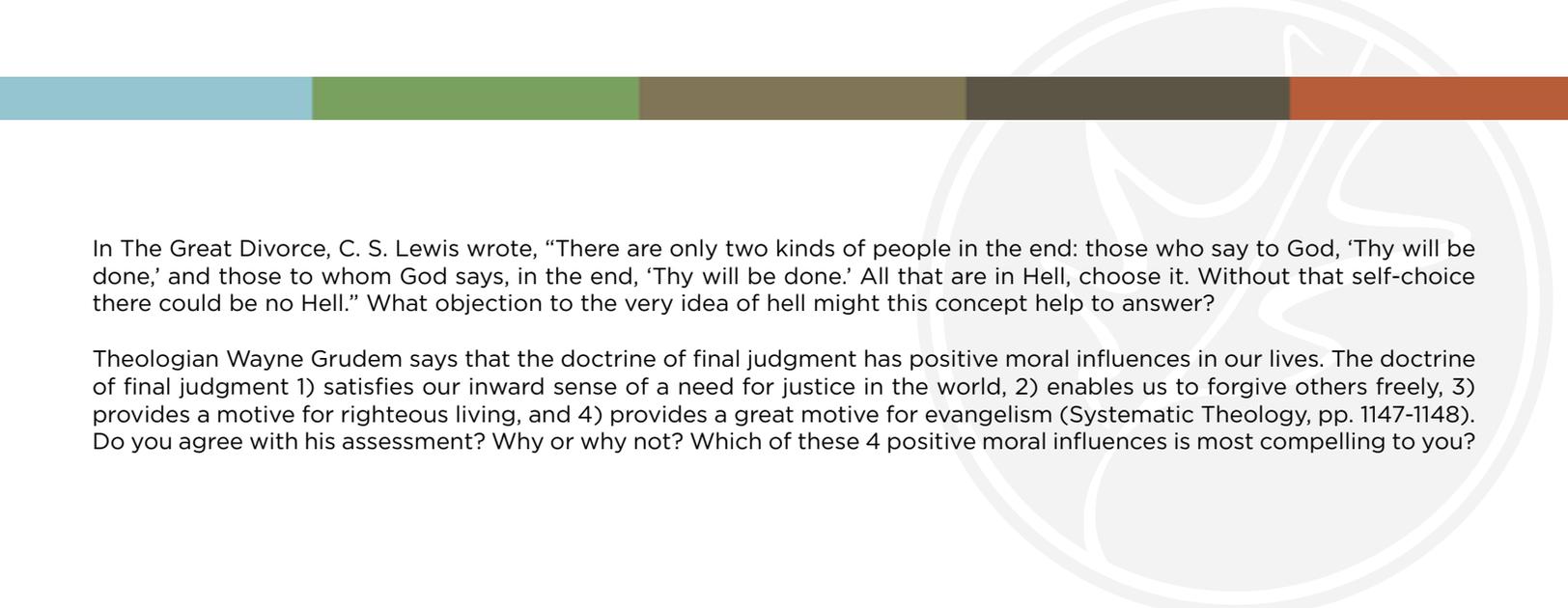
Read the following 15 passages of scripture (divide them between smaller groups if in a LifeGroup) and briefly capture how each one helps us better understand or view the final destiny of those who are not in Christ:

Matthew 7:21-23  
Mark 9:43-48  
Romans 9:22-23  
Philippians 3:18-19  
Revelation 14:9-11

Matthew 25:29-30  
Luke 12:4-5  
Galatians 1:8-9  
II Thessalonians 1:7b-9  
Revelation 20:11-15

Matthew 25:41-46  
John 3:17, 36  
I Corinthians 16:22  
Hebrews 10:26-27  
Revelation 21:8

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. Add new descriptions that came from this time of study.



In *The Great Divorce*, C. S. Lewis wrote, “There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says, in the end, ‘Thy will be done.’ All that are in Hell, choose it. Without that self-choice there could be no Hell.” What objection to the very idea of hell might this concept help to answer?

Theologian Wayne Grudem says that the doctrine of final judgment has positive moral influences in our lives. The doctrine of final judgment 1) satisfies our inward sense of a need for justice in the world, 2) enables us to forgive others freely, 3) provides a motive for righteous living, and 4) provides a great motive for evangelism (*Systematic Theology*, pp. 1147-1148). Do you agree with his assessment? Why or why not? Which of these 4 positive moral influences is most compelling to you?

## **[live it out]**

As you think about the reality of hell, what are your “so whats,” your “take-aways,” your practical applications?

NYC Pastor Tim Keller has said, “Unless we come to grips with this ‘terrible’ doctrine, we will never even begin to understand the depths of what Jesus did for us on the cross... The Savior waded through hell itself rather than lose us...” Read Revelation 5:9-14 and then discuss how the doctrine of hell shows how much Jesus loves us.

How have the messages on *The Afterlife* impacted your attitude and perspective regarding CVC’s emphasis, NewLife 10|24?

What breakthroughs have you experienced praying for your 10? Have you turned in the 10 names of people you most want to have New Life so they can be posted in CVC’s prayer room? Would you turn them in? (Note: We have about 6,500 of the 10,000 we are asking CVCers to be praying for. Every name represents a soul.)

How has God been opening doors for you to have NewLife (3 circle) conversations? Would you go online to [www.cvconline.org](http://www.cvconline.org) to our NewLife 10|24 page to post your conversation to encourage Pastor Chad and our church family?

## **[further study]**

Books:

*Erasing Hell*, by Francis Chan

*The Reason for God* (chapter 5, *How Can a Loving God Send People to Hell?*), by Tim Keller

*The Great Divorce*, by C.S. Lewis

Web:

Hell: Eternal Sovereign Justice, by Randy Alcorn

<http://www.epm.org/resources/2011/Mar/15/hell-eternal-sovereign-justice/>

Five Myths about Hell, by Joe Thorn

<http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/2010/08/16/five-myths-about-hell/>

A Review of Francis Chan’s book, *Erasing Hell*

<http://www.epm.org/blog/2011/Jun/22/francis-chans-erasing-hell>

Q and A: Francis Chan on Rob Bell and Hell

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2011/julyweb-only/francis-chan-hell.html>