



NEW
HOPE
WINDWARD

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU DIE

**1. WHAT PASTOR DON PIPER SAW
WHEN HE WENT TO HEAVEN**

ICEBREAKER

If this is a new group or there are new people, please take a moment to **introduce yourselves**.



To start off your small group, briefly share your response to the following questions:

**Think back to the best day of your life. What made it so great?
How did you spend it? Who did you spend it with?**

Share with your group.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Let's get a big picture of what we'll be learning today...

Is heaven real? How do you know? Every one of us will die and find out some day. But a few people have actually seen it and lived to tell about it. That's what happened to Pastor Don Piper. His story is not only incredible, it's inspirational. After facing a tragic accident where he died and was brought back to life, Pastor Don reminds us that we have to be ready for what happens next. Our death rate on earth is 100%. That's the reality. Instead of dwelling on how great his experience was, though, he wants to make sure others are ready to see it too!



TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Tip: BE COMFORTABLE WITH SILENCE. Uncomfortable silences are bound to happen. It's okay! A long pause during a group discussion can be powerful. A *pause* gives space for quieter people to break into the conversation; silence allows people to figure out exactly what they would like to say.

Tip: IN PERSON GATHERING. Per State current requirements, please observe the following if your group decides to meet in person: No more than 5-10 people at this time. This may change based on what Tier we are currently at in the State of Hawaii; wear a mask; and maintain 6 feet social distance.

ONLINE Tip: ZOOM &/OR IN PERSON. If you're meeting together on Zoom, familiarize yourself with the Zoom features on your electronic device. It is helpful for everyone to know where the mute button is located. Ask the attendees to self-mute to avoid environmental noise when someone else is talking & sharing. Doing this will help with the flow of your SG discussion time. If your group decides to meet in person, please practice safe social distancing by following the guidelines of being 6 feet apart and wearing a mask.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1.) Don Piper was ready. He had no idea that he was going to die that day. He was on his way to church, not out doing something dangerous. But still, that day was the day he died.

Why did he end up in heaven, even if only for 90 minutes? The simple answer is, he was ready. Take a look at what Jesus Himself said:

"You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected."
Matthew 24:44 (NLT)

What are some ways you can make sure that you are ready to meet Jesus when you die?

2.) When Don Piper passed away, his body didn't go anywhere. So that means he didn't really visit heaven, right? Well, no actually. The Bible explains this very clearly when it says...

"To be away from the body is to be home with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8 (ESV)

Don's spirit, what makes him uniquely him, left his body and was transported to the presence of the Lord. We see this happen all over the Bible. From Lazarus in Luke 16:22 to the thief on the cross Luke 23:43.

So, heaven is a place of unimaginable bliss and serenity. We will have glorified bodies that never wear out. We will see incredible sights, like golden streets and angels.

Heaven has cities and buildings, plants and water just like here. In fact, the Bible tells us about the "new earth" that we will all live in for eternity. It will be much like earth, just perfect. We will have responsibilities there. And we will have rewards depending on our faithfulness here on earth. As Pastor Don describes it from his book, *90 Minutes in Heaven*, "...just as in the first days of Eden, we would have fulfilling, joy-filled work to do--only without the hardships and obstacles that accompany it in our fallen world."

But it's also where we experience the presence of God. It's where we worship the One who is the reason for our very existence.

Then as I looked, I saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this." And instantly I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven and someone sitting on it. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty – the One who always was, who is, and who is still to come."

Revelation 4:1-2, 8 (NLT)

Heaven is all about worshiping God fully and freely. Have you ever experienced a slice of heaven on earth? What's a worship experience you had that impacted your life greatly?

3.) So what happens one minute after you die? The Bible tells us a lot about this moment, actually. Look at the following verse:

Everyone must die once, and after that be judged by God.

Hebrews 9:27 (GNT)

Right after you die comes a time of judgment. But what are we being judged for? Our works on earth, yes. Whether or not we did the right thing. But that doesn't decide if we get into heaven or not. Take a look:

I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books... And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:12, 15 (NLT)

If your name is written in the Book of Life, you get to spend eternity in heaven. But how do you know? Simple. If you've made a decision to follow Him, then He has written your name down.

Have you made a decision to follow Jesus? If so, one or two of you can share your experience with the group.

4.) Revelation chapter 21 tells us what heaven will be like. And it's amazing! On your own, you can dig into a bit more. Here are a few of the highlights:

I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among His people! He will live with them, and they will be His people. God Himself will be with them.

Revelation 21:2-3 (NLT)

First of all, it will be where we see and speak to hear and live with God Himself. Imagine that! The very presence of the One who created everything.

He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.

Revelation 21:4 (NLT)

No more crying. No more pain! No more worry or anxiety or depression. No more working 40 hours a week with little to show for it. Won't that be awesome?

The wall was made of jasper, and the city was pure gold, as clear as glass. The wall of the city was built on foundation stones inlaid with twelve precious stones. The twelve gates were made of pearls—each gate from a single pearl! And the main street was pure gold, as clear as glass.

Revelation 21:18-19, 21 (NLT)

Heaven is hard to even imagine, and maybe even harder to explain. The Bible gives us a few snapshots, but it's nothing compared to being there in person. What is something you hope to see in heaven?

5.) We will all have a “last” in this life. The last meal we have with someone we love. The last sunset we see. The last breath we take. What is on the other side of that last?

Jesus Himself had a “last” with His disciples. The last supper He ate with them was a time when He shared some final instructions. Take a look at some very important things He tells them:

“When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with Me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going.” “No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

John 14:3-5 (NLT)

Have you ever felt that way, not sure what God expected of you or how to even find out? How did you deal with those questions?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

You never know. This week may be your last. But even if it isn't, that means God has a plan for you on this earth.

- **Dedicate each day to find out what that is**
- **Let others know the way to get to heaven**
- **Pray with expectation for a miracle**



CLOSE IN PRAYER

Take a few minutes to close your time together with prayer and to pray for each other's prayer requests. Below is a sample prayer to read if you choose to. You can also choose to write down each other's prayer requests to remember throughout the week.



Sample Prayer:

"God, thank You so much for preparing a place for us in heaven. This world is not our home, we are just passing through. And until we make it to the other side, help us to live in a way that others know the way. Life on earth is full of tests and trials. Your word says that You cause everything to work together for the good of those who love You. With that promise, help us turn our "mess" into a message that is going to bless somebody. Graciously remind us to turn our "disappointments," into Your divine appointments and every "test" we face in life here on earth turns into a testimony so that others are drawn closer to You. In Jesus' wonderful name we pray, amen."

Group Prayer Requests:

Name

Request

DURING THE WEEK

Find Time To Read God's Word



The Power of Feeding on God's Word Daily

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

Matthew 4:4 (NIV)

As we read God's word, we begin to see how God responds to things. Doing daily devotions re-patterns the way we think and transforms the spirit of the mind. Then, when we face similar situations as Jesus did, we begin to respond in the same way.

Doing devotions is an excellent way to record, process, and share what God is speaking to you. It's also a useful tool to use at a later time to reflect on and review some of the "gems" that you have received. Without writing these down, you may forget God's promises and some very important life lessons! While doing devotions is a very personal time with the Lord, you may want to share some of your daily devotions with your family, friends, co-workers, or small group. Through discussion, you may be able to look deeper into what God is speaking to you, gain new insights, and even encourage others.

Sample Devotion

SCRIPTURE

"If you do not carry your own cross and follow Me, you cannot be My disciple."
(Luke 14:27)

OBSERVATION

Self-sacrifice is a prerequisite for discipleship. Self-centeredness has no place in the life of a Jesus follower.

APPLICATION

It can be hard to focus less on self and more on Jesus, but when we do we are living out the very commands of Jesus.

PRAYER

God, help me to live a selfless life by always focusing on what You want instead of what makes me happy, comfortable, and content. In Jesus' name, Amen.

SCRIPTURE...

Everyone must die once, and after that be judged by God.

Hebrews 9:27 (GNT)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

"Choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD."

Joshua 24:15 (NLT)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

Since we have been united with Him in His death, we will also be raised to life as He was.
Romans 6:5 (NLT)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

"Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in Me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."
John 14:12 (NIV)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

"If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in His eyes, and give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your Healer."
Exodus 15:26 (ESV)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...
