



NEW
HOPE
WINDWARD

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU DIE

3. THE REWARDS OF 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 question:

**If you could choose the way you die, would you?
How would you want to go?**

Share with your group.

WHAT TO EXPECT



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

It's kind of morbid to think about death. But as followers of Jesus, we don't have to think about death in vain or be fearful of death. We know there is a sure reward at the other end of our life. Not only do we have full, eternal life with God, but there are other things we can look forward to as well! The truth is we don't really die. We will live eternally somewhere. Our earthly bodies will die. But our spirit will live forever. Our hope and purpose for this week's discussion time is to gain a deeper understanding of how important it is to secure our eternal destination before we leave our earthly home.

TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Tip: BE REAL, AUTHENTIC, & TRANSPARENT ABOUT

WEAKNESSES & STRUGGLES. Some people in your group who may be new to faith or new to small group often think there's a *right* way to answer discussion questions—or at least a few *wrong* things to say. So, they show up and listen in, but don't feel permission to say what's really on their minds. Set examples by sharing honest vulnerable answers. Sharing with a level of vulnerability sets the tone and gives permission for everyone—regardless of spiritual maturity—to respond authentically.

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.) The moment after we die, we'll either be in the wonderful presence of God with peace that's beyond our own understanding or in the presence of eternal pain, torment and complete isolation absence of peace. Wherever we end up in our eternal afterlife will be irrevocable and final.

If you've already made the decision to follow Jesus, by putting all your trust in Him, then there is nothing to worry about. But if you're not following Him, then you can make that decision today. Right now, in fact!

Once you've made that decision, you have nothing but a great future in front of you! But what does that really look like when it comes to heaven? Let's look at what happens after we die, step-by-step.

The first thing that happens is, **our physical body dies**:

Everyone has to die once, then face the consequences. Christ's death was also a one-time event, but it was a sacrifice that took care of sins forever. And so, when He next appears, the outcome for those eager to greet Him is, precisely, salvation.

Hebrews 9:27-28 (MSG)

Every single person who has ever lived has died. That's an incredible record, if you think about it. Death rate on earth has a 100% record.

Death is never easy to talk about. It's always sad when a loved one dies. How have you managed your grief for a loved one who died? How do you manage your fear of death today?

2.) The next thing that happens is **our souls are separated from our physical bodies**:

"I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in Me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in Me and believes in Me will never ever die."

John 11:25-26 (NLT)

You don't really die. Your body dies, but the "YOU" (your soul) that makes up who you are lives on after.

When we reach heaven, we will have brand new “resurrected” bodies. Nothing will keep us from experiencing God fully. However, here on earth, we still grow old, get aches and pains, and even suffer from the effects of sin. Just think how great it will be once we are in heaven! We’ll live forever and never die. There will be no tears, no pains, no lost friends or loved ones either.

In heaven, we will experience God fully with no restrictions. For now, our spiritual experiences are like living heaven on earth. What is an important spiritual experience you’ve had in your life?

3.) Finally, we will all face judgment:

*It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.
Hebrews 9:27 (NKJV)*

Each person must die, and each person must face the judgment of God. God has no favorites. We will be judged or rewarded. That’s what we can expect.

There are two types of judgment. One is called **“The Great White Throne of Judgement”** (*Revelation 20:11-15*). This is only for non-believers. When your name is in the Book of Life, it will not be erased. You are His child. If your name is not written in that book and you have not believed in Jesus Christ and accepted Him as your Lord and Savior, you can not enter heaven.

The other judgment is the **“Judgment Seat of Christ”** (*2 Corinthians 5:10*), where each believer is judged by what they did on earth. We will have different levels of reward for our different service here on earth. This is a defining moment where Jesus rewards every believer for finishing the race! That is why what we do now and how we live our life here on earth matters eternally.

"And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to Me!' "

Matthew 25:40 (NLT)

There are various rewards in heaven along with people getting certain levels of rewards. Jesus said we "store up treasures in Heaven" based on what we give to God's work here on earth.

What type of rewards do you think you will receive in Heaven? What can you do specifically to receive more rewards in Heaven?

4.) While we think about the rewards waiting for us in heaven, what do we do on earth? Paul had the same question. Remember, he got a glimpse of heaven that was too great to even explain. How did he respond?

So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please Him.

2 Corinthians 5:6, 9 (NLT)

What you believe about eternity affects how you live right now! If your goal is to get by and hope you skate into heaven, then your life will reflect that. But if you are looking forward to spending eternity with God, then your life will be lived for His glory.

What do you think it means to "please Him?" Give some examples.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Life on earth is hard, and death can be scary. But knowing that your eternity is secure will make it all worth it.

- **Make sure you know where you will spend eternity.**
- **Live to please Jesus and store up more rewards for yourself in Heaven.**



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:

Jesus, we look forward to spending eternity with You. Each day has its own struggles and joys, but there is nothing that can compare to what heaven will be like. Help us live in that complete anticipation of the day we step into heaven and see You! Lord, the longer we live in this world the longer our roots get deeply rooted in this world. Help us to remember to not get too comfortable with the world. Move us towards the things that matter. Help us to not get distracted by the world. We ask for Your Holy Spirit to recalculate and recenter our hearts back to what is eternal. From this day forward, help us to live for what matters most. In Jesus' name we pray, amen!



Group Prayer Requests:

Name

Request

SCRIPTURE...

"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' "
Matthew 25:23 (ESV)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

"Look, I am coming soon, bringing My reward with Me to repay all people according to their deeds."
Revelation 22:12 (NLT)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

For the Son of Man is going to come in His Father's glory with His angels, and then He will reward each person according to what they have done.

Matthew 16:27 (NIV)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28 (NIV)

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...

SCRIPTURE...

Little children will play near snake holes. They will stick their hands into dens of poisonous snakes and never be hurt. Nothing harmful will take place on the Lord's holy mountain. Just as water fills the sea, the land will be filled with people who know and honor the Lord. *Isaiah 11:8-9 (CEV)*

OBSERVATION...

APPLICATION...

PRAYER...
