

# BEYOND

*What the Bible says about about life after death*

## — Questions About Heaven — Small Group Plan

### OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

#### 1. What about those who say they have been to heaven - visions or near-death experiences?

— John 3:13 —

No one has ever gone into heaven  
except the one who came from heaven — the Son of Man.

- *How do you explain the near-death experience stories you hear people tell today?*

#### 2. Will everyone, eventually, end up in Heaven — universalism?

— Hebrews 9:27-28 —

<sup>27</sup> Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,  
<sup>28</sup> so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin,  
but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

— Matthew 7:13-14 —

<sup>13</sup> Enter through the narrow gate.

For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

<sup>14</sup> But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

- *Why is universalism becoming a common viewpoint today?*
- *What conclusion does both Jesus and the Hebrew writer reach?*

#### 3. Will there be different rewards given out in Heaven?

— Revelation 22.12 —

Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me,  
and I will give to each person according to what they have done.

- *Heaven is thought of in terms of reward, rest & relationship. How do you see it? Explain.*

#### 4. Will there be sin in heaven?

— Revelation 21:4, 27 —

<sup>4</sup> He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away ... <sup>27</sup> Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

- *What will it be like to live in a place that is not infected with sin and failure?*
- *Why is it difficult for us to imagine such an existence?*

## 5. Will we have relationships in heaven and recognize people we knew in this life?

— Matthew 17:1-4 —

<sup>1</sup>After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. <sup>2</sup>There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. <sup>3</sup>Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. <sup>4</sup>Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters — one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

- How were Peter, James and John able to recognize Moses and Elijah?
- If God created relationships because “It is not good for the man to be alone” (Gen 2:18) would heaven diminish or expand relationships? Explain.

### LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

#### **WILL ALL PEOPLE ENTER HEAVEN?**

**Matthew 7:13-14**

<sup>13</sup> “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. <sup>14</sup> But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

- Why is the road to life “narrow”?
- How does “broad” accurately describe the way to destruction?
- When Jesus says a few will “find” the way to life, what does this say about the character of those searching?

#### **WILL ALL RELIGIOUS PEOPLE ENTER HEAVEN?**

**Matthew 7:15-20**

<sup>15</sup> “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. <sup>16</sup> By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup> Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

- Where does bad religion draw its power?
- Jesus says, “false prophets” wear “sheep’s clothing.” What disguises does bad religion wear today?
- Contrast the “fruit” of bad and good religion?

#### **WILL ALL CHRISTIAN PEOPLE ENTER HEAVEN**

**Matthew 7:21**

<sup>21</sup> Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

- Why do some call Jesus “Lord” without a life of submission and obedience?
- What will grow in the life of the person who continues to be in God’s presence while at the same time resisting his power?

## **WILL ALL ACTIVE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE ENTER HEAVEN**

### **Matthew 7:22-23**

<sup>22</sup> Many will say to me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?” <sup>23</sup> Then I will tell them plainly, “**I never knew you.** Away from me, you evildoers!”

- What is missing when someone is actively involved in Christian ministry without really knowing Jesus?
- If Jesus is not in the picture — “I never knew you” — what is motivating ministry?

### **USE IT / APPLY IT ...**

- What did you have to leave behind in order to travel God’s narrow way?
- Why do people today dislike the idea that there is only one gate or road to life?
- Why does God put relationship — “I never knew you” — even above words and deeds?
- What does it mean to really know Jesus?
- Close with a time of quiet, personal prayer.