

Small Group Curriculum

Week of 11/27/12

1. Read Philippians 1:21. How is Paul's attitude toward death different from common attitudes about death today?
2. Read Romans 5:12 and Genesis 3:2-3 What does God say is the force behind all death?
3. Read Luke 23:43. How does this passage contradict the doctrine of believers waiting in Purgatory until their sins are cleansed?
4. Read John 5:28-29 and Hebrews 9:27. What happens to every person after they are bodily resurrected? In light of these verses, what would you say to someone who wonders about the possibility of reincarnation?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 and 1 Thess4:17. What happens to believers as they are resurrected?
6. Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. On what criteria are followers of Christ judged? What does it mean that some of our accomplishments survive the "fire" and follow us into Heaven?
7. Pastor Derek noted that Jesus often described Hell as being a place of darkness (i.e. Matthew 8:12). Pastor Derek speculated that there is no community or relationships in Hell; that those in Hell are deprived of relationships forever. Albert Camus, on the other hand, famously quipped "Hell is people." Which perspective do you think is closer to the truth? Why?
8. Pastor Derek described Heaven as a place of a) relational connectedness; b) intellectual growth; c) productivity and decision making. Which of these things are the most attractive to you? Why?
9. Pastor Derek said the Bible offers three metaphors to describe the rewards of Heaven. First, there's "the crown" (i.e. James 2:8, and James 1:12), which Pastor Derek described as a metaphor of God's approval of us. How do you feel when a loved one expresses their approval for who you are? When have you felt God's approval?
10. Sharing God's throne was a second reward (Revelation 3:21). Pastor Derek said this was metaphor for God sharing his authority with us and allowing us to reign with him. How does God share his authority with us now? How do you think that will change on the opposite side of Heaven?
11. The third metaphor is "home." Have a volunteer read John 14:3. Where on earth do you feel most at home? What does it mean to be at home with God?
12. The final reward Derek mentioned is "wedding." Read Revelation 21:2. What does it mean to describe the relationship between God and his people as a marriage?

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