

Growth Track Two

201: Biblical Foundations for Life

Session 6: What Happens After I Die?

Hope of Heaven

Overview: At the end of this session, students will have a glimpse into what heaven will be like. They will understand the judgment the Bible says is coming and how this information should affect our daily lives.

Four Frequently Asked Questions about Heaven

1. Where is heaven?

- a. Heaven is referred to as up.

Psalms 123:1 NIV I lift up my eyes to you, to you whose throne is in heaven.

- b. Heaven is referred to as home.

- Heaven is God's dwelling place.

Revelation 21:3 NLT I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, the home of God is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them."

- Heaven is a God-designed city.

Hebrews 11:16 NLT But they were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a heavenly city for them.

2. Who will be in heaven?

Hebrews 12:22-23 NIV *But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect...*

a. God

b. Angels

c. The church

Romans 10:9 NIV *That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord" and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*

d. Old Testament believers

Hebrews 11:1-4 NIV *Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.*

3. How will I be judged as a believer?

a. The Great White Throne Judgment

- At this judgment those who do not believe in Christ will hear their final judgment and sentencing.
- Those who put their faith in Christ will NOT face this judgment.

b. The Judgement Seat of Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 NIV *By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.*

- Service to God will be rewarded.
- Some works will be burned up in the fire.
- This is not a judgment to determine eternal destiny.
- God keeps record even when no one else sees.

1 Corinthians 4:5 NIV *Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.*

4. What will heaven be like?

a. No sin.

Jude 1:24 NLT *And now, all glory to God, who is able to keep you from stumbling, and who will bring you into his glorious presence innocent of sin and with great joy.*

b. Immortal bodies.

1 Corinthians 15:53 TLB *For our earthly bodies, the ones we have now that can die, must be transformed into heavenly bodies that cannot perish but will live forever.*

c. All needs met.

Revelation 7:16 NIV *Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat.*

Revelation 21:4 NIV *He will wipe every tear from our eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.*

d. Sharing in Christ's glory.

Romans 8:17 NIV *Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in His glory.*

e. Intimate fellowship with other saints.

1 Corinthians 13:12 NIV *Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.*

- f. Responsibility without stress or failure.

Matthew 25:23 NIV *His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"*

How Does the Afterlife Affect my Life Today?

- a. It affects how I share my faith.

John 14:6 NIV *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

Romans 1:18-20 TM *But God's angry displeasure erupts as acts of human mistrust and wrongdoing and lying accumulate, as people try to put a shroud over truth. But the basic reality of God is plain enough. Open your eyes and there it is! By taking a long and thoughtful look at what God has created, people have always been able to see what their eyes as such can't see: eternal power, for instance, and the mystery of his divine being. So nobody has a good excuse.*

- b. It affects how I use my finances.

Matthew 6:19-21 NIV *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

c. It affects how I use my gifts.

Matthew 25:34-40 NLT *Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me." Then these righteous ones will reply, "Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?" 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!"*

d. It affects how I endure suffering.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NCV *So we do not give up. Our physical body is becoming older and weaker, but our spirit inside us is made new every day. We have small troubles for a while now, but they are helping us gain an eternal glory that is much greater than the troubles. We set our eyes not on what we see but on what we cannot see. What we see will last only a short time, but what we cannot see will last forever.*

Discussion:

1. How has your view of heaven been affected by what you've heard today?
2. How will these realities affect the way you share your faith, use your gifts, manage your finances and/or endure suffering?