

BIG IDEA

What we believe is a never-ending story that acknowledges the reality of heaven and hell. God desires that every person will follow King Jesus and experience life in his Kingdom community forever. That is why we believe the most important thing we can do in this life is to help people find their way back to God.

SCRIPTURE

Revelation 21:1-5, Revelation 7:9, Matthew 5:22, 5:30, 25:41

ICEBREAKER AND OPENING THOUGHT

After the icebreaker, get the group to discuss how heaven and hell may be commonly depicted in entertainment and other venues. How can these depictions shape our thoughts and feelings? Draw the contrast between what we know from scripture and what might be images planted by different cultural influences.

BIBLE STUDY

Take the verses in Revelation line by line to help the group understand what the scripture is teaching us about heaven and the return of Jesus. This remaking of heaven and earth, the “new heaven and new earth,” is about our closeness in relationship to God – how his love, peace, and connection to us will be fully restored and completely present throughout. In contrast to this, discuss how hell is the refusal of a relationship with Jesus. Hell is a choice made when individuals refuse to acknowledge Jesus as their savior. Discuss how this is different from the cultural assumptions that hell is a punishment that God exacts on people for things they may have done.

LIFE APPLICATION

Discuss group members’ experiences and thoughts about heaven and hell. Use the opportunity to dig deeper, examine individuals’ preconceptions, and help the group gain a more meaningful understanding. Help the group consider how they can help others find their way back to God in answering questions about heaven and hell. When Jesus taught us to pray, “Your Kingdom come; your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven,” he not only gave us a prayer to pray but a job description. Our goal is to bring into the present, as much as we are able, the future Kingdom of God. All of our Kingdom work will be impartial and incomplete, but if we are working to manifest the coming Kingdom of God in our present, lived reality, we will be partnering with God in his work in the world.

CHALLENGE

As Christ-followers, we want to spend eternity in heaven because it will be in a close relationship with Jesus. Over the next week, meditate and pray for what more “heaven on earth” can look like in your faith journey. How can more of his Kingdom be present in your life? Share with the group next week how or if this changed anything in your daily life.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND RESOURCES

1. Where do you see God at work in your life right now?
2. What next steps do you feel called to take in your faith journey?
3. Have you considered getting baptized?
4. Whom have you been able to B.L.E.S.S.?