



STUDY GUIDE

September 18, 2022

Message Series:
Message Title:
Teaching Pastor:

Give and Take
Heaven
Brian Hughes

Warm-up/Icebreaker: (10-15 min)

Where did you grow up, how many siblings and what was your biggest childhood challenge?

Pray:

Dear God, We give You honor and glory for all you have created. With words You created all of heaven and earth. How awesome, perfect, and wonderful are all of Your ways. As we study, we pray that Your Holy Spirit guides us to seek understanding that in Your presence there is fullness of joy, which is a touch of heaven here on earth. In time Lord, You have more in store for us than we could possibly imagine. We trust you and pray all of this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Get Started: (15 min.)

- What comes to mind when you think of heaven? What do you think it will be like?
- Does the thought of heaven— and what waits for you there—help you to weather the storms of life? What storms has the future hope of heaven helped you weather in your life?

“Jesus’ very ministry was about bringing heaven from there and then to here and now. Matthew 4:17 says that because of Jesus, ‘the Kingdom of Heaven has come near’. Jesus said that when you’ve seen Him, you’ve seen God. When you know Him, you know God. God is no longer just there, he’s also here. Jesus is the bridge between heaven and earth. You can experience the Kingdom of Heaven in this life AND you can experience eternal Heaven in the life to come. All because of - and through - Jesus.” - Pastor Brian Hughes

Watch and Discuss Video: (running time 9 min./20 discussion)

Read John 14:1-6.

- When Jesus talks about going away to prepare a place, what does He add to His promise about His return and how that will impact His followers (v. 3)?

“Heaven is the perpetual presence of God. Heaven is where I will dwell for all eternity in the never-ending presence of God. And we haven’t talked much about hell. We could, but that would take another conversation. Here’s the bottom line though: If heaven is eternity with God, hell is eternity without him. And I don’t know why anyone would want that.” - Pastor Brian Hughes

- What would an existence without God look like for you?
- If you were to die tonight - and you found yourself standing in the presence of the Creator, our Holy God - and he asked you “Why should I let you into my heaven?” What would your answer be?

Reflect and Commit: (15 min.)

“People were saying that the return of Jesus, his gathering of his people and his ultimate judgment was a promise he made that he didn’t fulfill. Peter is saying, “hold on. It’s still going to happen, but God wants to give everyone enough time to choose a different path - so that no one is lost.’ Because God doesn’t want ANYONE to be lost. Lost to what? To spending eternity in the presence of God. Which IS heaven. You ARE going to live beyond this life. It will either happen IN the presence of God or NOT in the presence of God, and YOU are the deciding factor.” -Pastor Brian Hughes

Read Philippians 3:20 and Psalm 14:2.

- Do you think it's important to tell others about what you have now learned about Heaven and tell them how to know they can be with God forever? If not, how should they find out?

Read 1 John 3:2 & 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

- What does Jesus reveal about his intention for his followers in these verses? What do all Christians look forward to at the end of time?

Gather prayer requests and pray. (5 min.)

The Bible does not give us much detail beyond everlasting love, joy, peace, and satisfaction being with Jesus. C.S. Lewis, the author of the Chronicles of Narnia, paints a magnificent image at the end of the series in the Last Battle where he writes about the children now in heaven:

“... for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before!”

Pray:

Dear Lord, You are the Way, the truth and the life. We don't have to wonder where we are going. Our path is clear and that brings us comfort. We thank You because of who we are in Christ Jesus, equipped with everything we need here on earth until Your return. You said that we would have trials while we are here, but that we can take heart because You have overcome the world for us and there is wonderful joy ahead. And Lord, we know when it's time to go home, You have prepared a place just for us. We pray this in the power of Jesus' name. Amen.