

## Recap

### Week 1 - You Only Live Once

- Because we only have one life to live and it is brief, we ought to live it fully for God.
- Jelly Bean.

### Week 2 - You Only Die Once

- It's appointed unto men once to die...
- We need to prepare for death because "As a tree falls, so shall it lie."
- We need to make sure we **live** right so we can **die** right.
- Only two days on my calendar: today and that day.

## You Only Live Forever

We talk about the brevity of life and the certainty of death all in an effort to get us focused on what comes beyond this life: **eternity**.

*"If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this."*

C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity.

It's important that we focus our minds on the reality of eternity from time to time. It helps us to live right.

In the opening verses of the Bible, we learn a powerful principle.

### Genesis 1:27

**27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

We were created in His image; we were created to be like Him.

God has many different attributes, but one thing, in particular, I learn about God through His Word is that He is eternal.

### 1 Timothy 1:17

**17** Now unto the King **eternal**, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory **for ever and ever**. Amen.

- As Paul begins to talk about God, he speaks of His eternal nature.

### **Psalm 90:2**

**2** Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even **from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.**

God is eternal and we are made in His image.

One of the ways we reflect His nature is we are **ALSO** eternal beings.

### **Ecclesiastes 3:11a**

**11** He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put **eternity** in their hearts,

In every single one of us there is this sense of eternity.

You are an eternal being!

I know it doesn't always seem that way. As we watch loved ones pass away and we are no longer able to interact with them, it seems as though life is all there is and death is the end, but **know** that you are going to live for eternity!

We are made up of three parts.

- Body - flesh, bone, blood, muscle, etc. It is everything that is physical about you. Your body is subject to pain, disease, death and decay. Your body is temporal. We are physical beings, but we are also MORE than just a body.
- Soul - Mind. It's what makes you you. Your quirks, personality, likes and dislikes, will, preferences, etc. Your soul, unlike your body, is eternal.
- Spirit - The part of us that connects us to God.
  - When Adam and Eve sinned in Eden, that spiritual connection to God was severed. It is as if their spiritual man went dormant within them. Unfortunately for us, we are their descendants and we too are in this same spiritual state.
  - The good news is we can get reconnected to God spiritually by obeying scripture. If we will repent of our sins and be baptized in Jesus name, that prepares our vessel to be filled with God's Spirit, and when we receive God's Spirit within us, that spiritual connection with God is remade.

You are 3 parts: Body, Soul, Spirit. Your body is temporal and your soul and spirit are eternal.

The sad reality is that so many people live to please their flesh. (Drugs. Alcohol. Sex.) The motto of our culture is, "If it feels good do it." People spend all of their energy living for their body; the part of themselves that will die. But what they fail to realize is that

there is a very real eternal part inside them that they are neglecting. They have a soul that will spend eternity somewhere, and they have a spiritual man that is currently lying dormant.

You are more than just a body with urges and desires. You are a soul! If you only live to please your flesh, that's pointless because your body will die. But your soul will live on for all eternity. You need to make sure you take care of your soul and pay attention to your spiritual man because they will live on!

## **Dot & Line Analogy**

Life is like a dot, eternity is like a line. Most people focus all their energy on the solitary dot instead of the never-ending line.

Eternity is the longest part of our existence.

Eternity is a hard concept to grasp.

Imagine a giant steel ball the size of the planet Jupiter (Diameter = 142 984 km). If you were to combine all the other planets in our solar system into one planet and put it next to Jupiter, Jupiter would still be 2.5 times bigger. Now, imagine a bird flying the length of our solar system just to brush its wing upon the giant steel ball once every time he flew by. By the time the steel ball is worn down to the size of a marble, eternity has just begun.

Eternity is too long to fathom, yet we all will exist in one of two places throughout it.

Lots of people like to neglect this reality. Many turn a blind eye to it, but nonetheless we will all spend eternity in one of two places: either in Heaven with Jesus, or in a lake of fire in a place called Hell.

## **Hell**

Some people shy away from this subject. It's a little uncomfortable. But Jesus talked more about Hell than He did about Heaven! Once in a while we need to be reminded that Hell is real.

It is not something that some preacher thought up to use as a fear tactic to trick people into living for God. It's not some cerebral thing or a metaphor. Hell is a real place and real people will go there someday if they don't accept Jesus.

Some people ask, "Why would a loving God send people to Hell?" They are asking the wrong question. The fact is that we send ourselves there by not accepting Jesus and obeying His Word. The better question is, "Why would I not want to accept Jesus and His forgiveness to escape Hell?"

What does the Bible say about Hell?

### **Matthew 13:42**

**42** And shall cast them into a **furnace of fire**: there shall be **wailing** and **gnashing of teeth**.

### **Matthew 25:41**

**41** Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into **everlasting fire**, prepared for the devil and his angels.

### **Mark 9:47-48**

**47** And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

**48** Where their worm dieth not, and the **fire is not quenched**.

### **Revelation 20:15**

**15** And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the **lake of fire**.

### **Revelation 21:8**

**8** But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in **the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone**: which is the second death.

Hell is described as a lake of everlasting fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. The company isn't all that great; the devil and all demons will be present there.

2 Peter 2:4 describes Hell as a pit of darkness; totally devoid of light. It is pitch black in hell; there's nothing to distract people from their suffering, sorrow, and fear.

Complete isolation and torment for all eternity.

These are all very sobering details about Hell, but I think the worst thing about Hell is that you are eternally separated from the presence of God.

### **Matthew 7:23**

**23** And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: **depart from me**, ye that work iniquity.

And that will be the last time that they are ever in the presence of God.

### **Luke 16:19-31**

**19** There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

**20** And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

**21** And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

**22** And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

**23** And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

**24** And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

**25** But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

**26** And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

Hell is very real, and it awaits all who don't receive Jesus' forgiveness.

You want to make very sure that you are right with God so you can avoid this eternal fate.

### **Heaven**

We can't talk about Hell and not talk about Heaven. As bad as Hell is bad, that's how good Heaven is good!

### **1 Corinthians 2:9**

**9** But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

There is something awaiting every person who lives their life in love with Jesus.

### **John 14:2**

**2** In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

**3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; **that where I am, there ye may be also.**

The main reason that Hell is so bad is the same reason that Heaven is so good: JESUS WILL BE THERE!

It's nearly impossible to comprehend the splendor of Heaven, so let's start by talking about what is NOT there.

### **Revelation 21:4**

**4** And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

If you find this life difficult and painful at times, you need to get yourself ready to go to Heaven.

There's no more sorrow, pain, sickness, death, loss, disease, heartache, discomfort, AND NO MORE SIN.

We will get a new body!

### **1 Corinthians 15:52-53**

**52** In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

**53** For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Heaven is a place of continuous worship in the presence of God.

### **Revelation 5:11-13**

**11** And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

**12** Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

**13** And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Heaven is a place of worship. Every time we start to worship, we get a little taste of what Heaven is going to be like.

Perhaps the best passage in the Bible that describes Heaven is Revelation 21:

### **Revelation 21**

**10** And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

**18** And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

**19a** And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones.

**21** And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

**22** And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

**23** And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

**25** And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

**27** And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Heaven is a beautiful, holy city. It has streets of gold, gates of pearl, and walls of jasper. We shall forever be in the presence of Jesus, worshipping Him. There will be no more

night there, no more sorrow, pain or sadness. God will give us a brand new body that will never get old and never get sick. We will have our own mansion and we shall rule and reign with Jesus over all things forever.

The truth of the matter tonight is that "You Only Live Forever". We don't have a choice about that, but we do get to choose where we spend our eternity. I want to choose Heaven!