

Asking for a friend.

A NEW SERIES ASKING REAL QUESTIONS

Week #2: What does the Bible say about heaven, hell, and eternity?

The paradox of final judgment:

- If there is no _____, there is no hope for _____.
- If there is _____, there is no hope for _____.

...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:23 (NIV)

What does the Bible say about heaven, hell, and eternity?

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. 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 foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Matthew 25:31-46 (ESV)

1. Hell: A ____ place of ____ where one experiences ____ from God.

*Matthew 13:42; 13:40-43,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:1-13, 30; Mark 9:42-48;
Luke 12:5; 13:28; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10, Revelation 14:9-11*

- Hell is the consequence of _____.

Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:12-15 (NIV)

- Hell results from _____ agreement with _____ decision.

2. Heaven: A _____ and _____ place where one experiences eternal communion with God.

*Matthew 6:19-21; 18:10; 2 Corinthians 5:1-2; Philippians 3:20-21; Romans 10:6;
1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:16; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-5; 22:1-5*

- Heaven is the consequence of _____.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV)

- Heaven results from _____ agreement with _____ decision.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."

John 3:16-17 (NIV)

3. Eternity: A state of existence without _____ or _____, beyond the confines of _____ and _____.

*Mark 10:29-30; John 3:36; 6:27; 10:28-30; 17:3; Romans 6:22-23;
2 Corinthians 4:17-18; 5:1; Galatians 6:8; 1 Timothy 1:16; 6:12;
1 John 2:17; 5:11; 5:13; 5:20; Revelation 21:3-4*

- Our eternity hinges on _____.

“I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

John 10:28 (NIV)

- Eternity _____.

“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.”

John 5:24 (NIV)

Discussion questions:

- Do you struggle with the concept of final judgment? If so, what about the idea is hard for you to reconcile?
- Prior to today, what has been your understanding of heaven? Has your perspective changed or deepened in any way?
- How might the concept of eternity beginning now change the way you live today?

Recommended resources:

[*Surprised by Hope*](#), N.T. Wright

[*Heaven*](#), by Randy Alcorn

[*The Great Divorce*](#), by C.S. Lewis

(ESV) English Standard Version (NIV) New International Version

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- If there is final judgment, there is no hope for me.

...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

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Matthew 25:31-46 (ESV)

1. Hell: A real place of misery where one experiences eternal separation from God.

Matthew 13:42; 13:40-43,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:1-13, 30; Mark 9:42-48; Luke 12:5; 13:28; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10, Revelation 14:9-11

- Hell is the consequence of God's justice.

Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:12-15 (NIV)

- Hell results from God's agreement with our decision.

2. Heaven: A real and physical place where one experiences eternal communion with God.

Matthew 6:19-21; 18:10; 2 Corinthians 5:1-2; Philippians 3:20-21; Romans 10:6; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:16; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-5; 22:1-5

- Heaven is the consequence of God's grace.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV)

- Heaven results from our agreement with God's decision.

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3. Eternity: A state of existence without beginning or end, beyond the confines of time and space.

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- Our eternity hinges on our relationship with Jesus.

"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand."

John 10:28 (NIV)

- Eternity begins now.

“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.”

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