



B Group Study Guide

Week of March 17, 2013

“Who is Jesus” Series

Message – “Jesus is About Afterlife”

Heaven & Hell

**Primary Scripture: Mark 9: 42-50
 Mark 12: 18-27**

Additional Scripture & Reading

Psalm 94
1 Timothy 2: 4
Romans 1: 18
Matthew 25: 41
John 3: 36
1 Thessalonians 5: 9

Here are some general ideas, themes, and questions for this study to use at your discretion -

The focus of this message & Scripture is the Afterlife – or heaven and hell. However, there is more of a focus on hell. Why? Jesus actually spoke more about hell than he did heaven.

But first, what is your idea of heaven? How would you define it? One thought would be: heaven is a place of eternal joy and worship where God is fully known and adored.

As Matthew 12: 18-27 tells us, we will know one another in heaven, yet our ultimate focus will be on God.

Again, Jesus talks more about hell than heaven. He does so in Mark 9: 42-50.

There are competing doctrines from people all over the world about the afterlife. Here are some:

There is no afterlife – as in, when you die, you “evaporate.”

Reincarnation – you come back as something or someone else.

Universalism – everyone basically goes to heaven.

Annihilation – believers in Christ go to heaven. Others who don’t are destroyed so they don’t have to undergo eternal punishment.



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Often, it's important to remember – our own questions about faith, afterlife, eternity, judgment, etc. come from our own way of seeing the world, and not what it says in Scripture.

The big question is: how can a loving God be angry and send people to hell?

Read these Scripture passages about the different aspects of God:

1 Timothy 2: 4

Psalm 94

Romans 1: 18

Are love and anger mutually exclusive?

It is important to know – hell was not created for humans, it was created for the devil and his angels – Matthew 25: 41.

Many think of hell as eternal fire, yet that is often used as a metaphor. Instead it's something far worse.

Tim Keller says: "Fire disintegrates, thus hell is the eternal disintegration of the soul."

C.S. Lewis says: "There is something un-checked in all of us, our own pride and self-focus. If we don't nip it in the bud, it will continue to grow. It can grow and grow where all we think of is ourselves.

Ultimately, as this happens, we lose our own humanity.

Lewis also said: "hell is the greatest monument to human freedom."

Hell is also about justice. That ultimately, God will right all wrongs.

Those who do and perpetrate evil, will receive their just due.

The doctrine of hell can actually help us as believers counsel others who experience injustice in their lives. That God will enact justice.

Again, read Psalm 94.

Hell is eternal. Why? God loves people.

What does that mean?

Jonathan Edwards said – "to frighten a person out of a house on fire is the most loving thing one can do."

Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, in 155 AD, as he was to be burned at the stake, was offered to disavow Jesus Christ, and he would live. He said: "the fire you threaten burns but an hour and is quenched after a little.



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You do not know the fire of the coming judgment, so why do you delay?
Come, do what you will!"

God doesn't want us to experience His anger, His wrath, or hell – whether on earth as a prideful, self-absorbed person, or fully for eternity.

See: John 3: 36 & 1 Thessalonians 5: 9

So we have Jesus, who stood in our place, the sinless Son of God who was crucified. We don't have to work off our sin – He has done it!

Do you truly know this? Do you truly know Jesus has saved us from hell. If we don't rejoice and celebrate this – at Easter and always – we many not fully know it.