

## Beating Death...Just Be There!

Matthew 6:19-21

### WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT DEATH

- We were designed for **life**, not **death**.  
Genesis 3:17-24, Romans 5:12, Romans 6:23
- **Suffering** and **pain** are a reality of a fallen world.  
Matthew 6:19-21, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 9:27, John 11:32-36
- The tighter we **hold on to life**, the harder it will be to **let go**.  
Matthew 6:19-21, Colossians 3:1, 1 John 2:15-17, Luke 12:13-26, Matthew 16:26
- The believer sees death as **graduation**, not the **end**.  
James 4:13-17, Psalm 39:5, 1 Peter 1:23-25, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

### HEAVEN?

John 14:1-6, Luke 19:17-19, Matthew 5:12, 25:21-23, Genesis 1:28, 2 Timothy 2:12, Luke 22:28-30, 1 Corinthians 6:2-3, Revelation 22:5, Matthew 13:43, Romans 8:16-17, Isaiah 9:7, Daniel 7:15-28, Revelation 2:26, 3:21, 5:9-10, 7:13-15, 20:4-6 ("Heaven" by Randy Alcorn)

- The reward for faithful service is not eternal **rest**, but more **service**.

### JUST BE THERE!

John 14:1-6, 1 John 5:12, Romans 10:9-13

Two questions we all have to ask:

- ▶ Can I **trust** God with my **life**?
- ▶ What step of faith do I **bet** my **eternity** on?

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 1, 2009

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**QUICK REVIEW:** Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching *Beating Death...Just Be There*, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

## MY STORY

1. The miraculous survival of the 155 people aboard the US Airways flight that crashed into the Hudson River last month undoubtedly caused many of the survivors to do some serious re-evaluating of their priorities in life. What kinds of things do you think those survivors reflected on as a result of their near-death experience?

2. We all hope people will say nice things about us when we die. Can you think of a couple statements you hope would be shared by people at your memorial service?

3. When you think about death, which of the following best reflects your attitude or experience with it (check as many as apply to you):

- I think often about death because \_\_\_\_\_
- I hardly think of death at all
- When I think of dying it scares me
- Death is something I've had to deal with a lot in my life
- I find it hard to know what to say to someone who is grieving
- I avoid the topic as much as possible
- I've never experienced grief because no one close to me has died
- I've had a hard time getting over the death of someone close to me
- I've learned a lot through my own grieving
- I take great comfort in the truths of the Bible about life after death
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. Grief is a normal response to the death of a loved one. But the Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 that Christian grief should look very different from worldly grief. After reading the passage, answer the following questions:

### 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. [14] We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. [15] According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord,

will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. [16] For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. [17] After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. [NIV]

What makes Christian grief different?

What truths from the passage give you hope about life after death?

Can you think of some things people could say to someone who is grieving that most likely wouldn't be helpful or comforting to them? How about things that would be helpful or comforting to share?

2. The biblical reality that life is short and we all eventually die is meant to encourage us to regularly reflect on how we live. How do you see this reality reflected in the following verses?

#### **Psalm 90:10-12**

The length of our days is seventy years--  
or eighty, if we have the strength;  
yet their span is but trouble and sorrow,  
for they quickly pass, and we fly away.

[11] Who knows the power of your anger?

For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.

[12] Teach us to number our days aright,  
that we may gain a heart of wisdom. [NIV]

#### **James 4:13-17**

Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." [14] Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. [15] Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." [16] As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil. [17] Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins. [NIV]

#### **2 Corinthians 5:9-10**

So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. [10] For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. [NIV]

### **1 Corinthians 15:58**

Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

[NIV]

Which of the perspectives or actions in these verses is most helpful to you in living out the reality that life is short?

3. Chris talked this weekend about us storing up treasures in heaven, not on earth. In Luke 12:13-21 is the story of a man who did just the opposite. Can you think of one or two decisions this man could have made that would have demonstrated a desire to store up treasures in heaven?

### **Luke 12:13-21**

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

[14] Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" [15] Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

[16] And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop.

[17] He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

[18] "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. [19] And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." '

[20] "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

[21] "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God." [NIV]

What could someone find motivating or challenging about storing up treasures in heaven?

### **TAKING IT HOME**

1. As you look at your own life, is there anything that distracts you from living in the reality that life is short and we all eventually die?

2. Looking back at the answers you put on My Story Question #2, is there anything you need to change or start doing that could potentially increase the odds that people will share those things about you?