

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER DEATH?

IN THIS LESSON YOU WILL STUDY

- *After Death—What?*
- *What Are Heaven And Hell Like?*
- *How Important Is Your Choice?*
- *How Can You Go to Heaven?*

PART 1

AFTER DEATH—WHAT?

The Initial, Temporary Condition

What happens when you die? Your spirit leaves your physical body. Your body will remain here, since it was made to be in this world. However, you will always be fully conscious.

If you have accepted Jesus Christ, you will go to be with Him at once. But if you have refused God's offer of eternal life, you will go away from Him to the place which is called Hades or Hell. Hell was prepared for Satan and all those who follow him.

Luke 16:22, 23. The poor man died and was carried by the angels . . . to the feast in heaven. The rich man died . . . and in Hades . . . was in great pain.

The bodies we now have are not suited to heaven. They are temporary "houses" that are given to us for our life on earth. When we die, we leave them behind. God has prepared a new kind of body or home for us, one that will fit into His new creation.

2 Corinthians 5:1. For we know that when this tent we live in—our body here on earth—is torn down, God will have a house in heaven for us to live in, a home he himself made, which will last forever.

The Resurrection

Jesus is coming back again, possibly very soon, for those who belong to Him. At that time, those who have accepted him will be changed. We will

be given new bodies like His. Like a lily from its bulb, your soul will rise with a new body.

John 11:25. Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies."

1 Corinthians 15:42, 43. When the body is buried, it is mortal; when raised, it will be immortal. When buried, it is ugly and weak; when raised, it will be beautiful and strong.

Philippians 3:20, 21. We eagerly wait for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come from heaven. He will change our weak mortal bodies and make them like his own glorious body.

Memorize This

1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. The Lord himself will come down from heaven. Those who have died believing in Christ will rise to life first; then we who are living at that time will all be gathered up along with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord.

The Judgment Seat of Christ

As children of God we will be judged according to what we have done on earth and why we did it. Rewards will be given for faithful service. God will assign us certain responsibilities and privileges in His eternal Kingdom.

2 Corinthians 5:9, 10. More than anything else, however, we want to please him.... For all of us must appear before Christ, to be judged by him. Each one will receive what he deserves, according to everything he has done, good or bad, in his bodily life.



The Millennium

After this first judgment, Jesus will come back to earth with His followers. The devil will be imprisoned for a thousand years.

Jesus will set up His kingdom and rule over all the earth for a thousand wonderful years of peace and prosperity. This period of time is called the Millennium. Even the wild animals will live at peace with one another and with man.

Revelation 20:4. They lived and ruled as kings with Christ for a thousand years.

Isaiah 11:6. Wolves and sheep will live together in peace, and leopards will lie down with young goats . . . and little children will take care of them.



Isaiah 35:1, 5-6, 9-10. The desert will rejoice, and flowers will bloom in the wastelands. The blind will be able to see, and the deaf will hear. The lame will leap and dance, . . . Those whom the Lord has rescued . . . will be happy forever, forever free from sorrow and grief.



The Resurrection and Judgment of the Unsaved

After the Millennium and a final conflict between Christ and Satan, the devil will be thrown into the lake of fire. Then the dead who did not accept God's plan of salvation will come to life again and be judged. All those who insisted on following Satan instead of God will have to go to the place of punishment prepared for the devil.

Revelation 20:11, 12, 15. I saw a great white throne and the one who sits on it. . . I saw the dead, great and small alike, standing before the throne. Books were opened, . . . The dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. Whoever did not have his name written in the book of the living was thrown into the lake of fire.



The Eternal State

The righteous (those who are right with God and who are His children) will enjoy forever all that God has prepared for them. Those who have refused His salvation will be separated forever from God.

Matthew 25:46. These, then, will be sent off to eternal punishment; the righteous will go to eternal life.

For You to Do

Choose the right word.

- After death the spirit is
(conscious, unconscious).
- Those who have not accepted God's plan of salvation go to
(heaven, hell).
- After death, those who have accepted Christ will live on in
(heaven, hell).

PART 2

WHAT ARE HEAVEN AND HELL LIKE?

One of two places will be your eternal home: heaven or hell. The word hell refers both to Hades and to the lake of fire.

HELL	HEAVEN
<p>Separation From God</p> <p>Matthew 25:41. Away from me, you who are under God's curse!</p>	<p>At Home With God</p> <p>John 14:2. There are many rooms in my Father's house, and I am going to prepare a place for you.</p> <p>Revelation 21:3. Now God's home is with mankind! He will live with them, and they shall be his people.</p>

Everything good comes from God. With Him are light, life, beauty, and joy. Separated from Him, there are darkness, suffering, sorrow, and death.

HELL <i>Suffering</i>	HEAVEN <i>Perfect Happiness Forever</i>
<p>Luke 16:23, 24. In Hades, where he was in great pain, . . . he called out, “. . . I am in great pain in this fire!”</p> <p>Matthew 25:30. Throw him outside in the darkness; there he will cry and gnash his teeth.</p> <p>Revelation 20:10. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.</p>	<p>Revelation 21:10, 11, 16, 18. The Holy City . . . shining with the glory of God . . . was fifteen hundred miles long and was as wide and as high as it was long. . . . The city itself was made of pure gold.</p> <p>Revelation 22:5. There shall be no more night, . . . The Lord God will be their light, and they will rule as kings forever and ever.</p> <p>Revelation 21:3, 4. God himself . . . will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death, no more grief or crying or pain.</p>

Let’s think about what kind of neighbors we will have when we choose our home for eternity.

HELL	HEAVEN
<p>Matthew 25:41. Away to the eternal fire which has been prepared for the Devil and his angels!</p> <p>Revelation 21:8. But cowards, traitors, perverts, murderers, the immoral, those who practice magic, those who worship idols, and all liars—the place for them is the lake burning with fire and sulfur.</p>	<p>John 14:1, 3. Jesus told them, . . . “I will come back and take you to myself, so that you will be where I am.”</p> <p>Hebrews 12:22, 23. You have come to... the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, with its thousands of angels. You have come to the joyful gathering of God’s first-born sons You have come to God...and to the spirits of good people made perfect.</p>

For You to Do

- Beside the Bible verses in Part 2, write NO by every line that tells of something that you don’t want in your eternal home or that you don’t want to experience. Write YES by whatever you want.

PART 3
HOW IMPORTANT IS YOUR CHOICE?

Don’t blame God for sending anyone to hell. He wants to save everybody, but each person must choose between heaven and hell.

Deuteronomy 30:19, 20. I am now giving you the choice between life and death, . . . Choose life. Love the Lord your God, obey him and be faithful to him.

Whether you choose heaven or hell, others will follow you there. Think of your family and friends. Where do you want to lead them?

For You to Do

- Thank God for sending Jesus to save you. Pray for any of your family or friends who are on their way to hell. Ask God to help you warn them and lead them to the Savior.

PART 4
HOW CAN YOU GO TO HEAVEN?

If you want to lead others to heaven, first be certain that you, yourself, have taken these steps. Then help your friends to take them.

Get off the Wrong Road

We have all been traveling the road of SIN away from God and toward hell. We turn away from our



sin, determined to obey God and go His way. We ask His forgiveness for our disobedience. This is repentance, the first step toward heaven.

We must acknowledge the wrong we have done to others and do what we can to straighten it out. We must forgive our enemies, ask forgiveness of those we have wronged, and return what we have stolen. As we confess all our sins to God, He will forgive us and help us in whatever we have to do.

Memorize This

1 John 1:9. But if we confess our sins to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right: he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing.

2 Peter 3:9. He is patient with you, because he does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants all to turn away from their sins.



Recognize the Right Road

God has given you a road map, the Bible. It says that Jesus Christ is the Way. Follow it.

Memorize This

John 14:6; 6:37. Jesus answered him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one goes to the Father except by me. I will never turn away anyone who comes to me."

Choose the Right Road

This means to accept Jesus Christ the Son of God as your personal Savior and Lord of your life. Believe that He accepts you too, and trust in Him.

Memorize This

Acts 16:31. "Believe in the Lord Jesus," they said, "and you will be saved."

John 20:31. These have been written in order that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through your faith in him you may have life.



Follow the Right Road to the End

Follow Jesus the rest of your life. He will guide and help you as you read the Bible and pray.

1 Peter 2:25. You were like sheep that had lost their way, but now you have been brought back to follow the Shepherd and Keeper of your souls.

For You to Do

In this part of the lesson, going to heaven has been described as taking a journey.

- Have you personally taken the steps that will lead to heaven?

If not, will you now?

- Find a friend or member of your family and explain the steps of the journey to him or her.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR COMPLETION OF LESSON 5.

Now answer the questions for Lesson 5 in the Lesson Review Questions at the end of this booklet. After you complete and send in the questions for all six lessons, we will send you a beautiful certificate.

May God richly bless you!