

## Open discussion about last week's home study work.

- What resonated with you?
- What challenged you?

## READ a Bible verse or story

### **Luke 23:32-33, 39-43(NLT)**

<sup>32</sup>Two others, both criminals, were led out to be executed with him. <sup>33</sup>When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left... <sup>39</sup>One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, "So you're the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you're at it!" <sup>40</sup>But the other criminal protested, "Don't you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die?" <sup>41</sup>We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn't done anything wrong." <sup>42</sup>Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom." <sup>43</sup>And Jesus replied, "I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise."

## TALK about the Bible reading(s)...

- What do you think about these criminals?
- What significance is it that Jesus was crucified with common criminals?

## Growing in faith and understanding...

### ❖ **Read Luke 16:16-17, 19-31 aloud:**

- What is the significance of what Abraham is telling the rich man?
- How does this resonate or not with your understanding of the forgiveness of God?

### ❖ Now Read **1 Corinthians 15:21-23** aloud:

<sup>20</sup>But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

<sup>21</sup>So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man. <sup>22</sup>Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life. <sup>23</sup>But there

is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back. (NLT)

- What in this passage indicates that believers will be resurrected? Is there an immediate path to Heaven?
- Where do these resurrected believers go?

### ❖ Read Romans 10:8-10

- According to this passage What is Paul saying about our faith?
- What does this tell us about spending eternity with God?

### ❖ Read 2 Peter 3:11-14 aloud...

<sup>11</sup>Since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this, what holy and godly lives you should live, <sup>12</sup>looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along. On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames. <sup>13</sup>But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness. <sup>14</sup>And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight.

- What does this passage say about how we should live our lives?

### ❖ Read Matthew 6:20-21 aloud

<sup>20</sup>Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

- What treasures do you think Jesus is speaking about?

## Recap final discussion about this session...

- ❖ How has this session challenged or deepened your understanding of Heaven?

**Prayer** Lift up in prayer the challenges that folks shared during the recap, struggles shared during the Hi and Low section and for continued revelation for each person during this week's home study!

**Individual Home Study** these passages are for your continued reflection until the next session. Use a journal to keep your answers to the passage prompts.

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-15 (NIV)**

*<sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For 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. <sup>15</sup> According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.*

- What do you think about the concept of an intermediate Heaven? A place that we would exist before the Lord returns to bring all believers to Heaven with God.

**2 Corinthians 5:1-10** – Consider what this passage is saying about our loved ones who have passed. What does this mean for you when you die?

**Luke 15:7** – Who was rejoicing when you came into your belief?

**Revelation 21:3-5** – How will God create a new Earth

Additional scriptures to read should time permit:

**Genesis 1,2 & 3 Then Revelation 20 & 21**

- How do you find these similar and different?

Share / Read / Talk / Grow / Check-In / Pray / Study



# HEAVEN<sub>2</sub>

## Week **Two** Study Guide

Series Inspired by Writings From:

“Heaven” by Randy Alcorn

“Surprised by Hope” by N.T. Wright

“Preparing for Heaven” by Gary Black Jr.

**SHALOM**  
LUTHERAN church

LOVE GOD ♥ LOVE OTHERS ♥ SERVE *the* WORLD