

I asked you last week to read Genesis chapters 1-3 Let's take a few minutes to reflect on your readings.

- What resonated with you?
- What challenged you?

READ a Bible verse or story

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18(NLT)

¹³ And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died. ¹⁵ We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. ¹⁷ Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ So encourage each other with these words.

TALK about the Bible reading(s)...

- Where can you see resurrection and restoration happening?
- How does this “pattern” of the New Earth being born affect your image of the New Earth? Or does it?

Growing in faith and understanding...

- ❖ In Isaiah we have read: *¹⁷ “See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.”*
 - Any reflection?
- ❖ Now Read Revelation 21:3-5

³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (NIV)

- ❖ Would someone care to reflect on what this passage stirs in you?

❖ Read 2 Peter 3:13 aloud...

¹³ But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God’s righteousness.

- What does this verse tell us about how extensive the restoration will be?
- What do you feel will be restored? And what will the “new” be or look like?
- How will the changes affect our lives?

❖ Read Genesis 3:14-19 and reflect on how creation was cursed.

- What things changed on earth because of Adam and Eve’s sin in the garden?
- What would our lives be like when they are restored to God’s intended existence?

❖ Read Romans 1:20

²⁰ For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

- How do you see God’s invisible qualities in the world?
- After discussing these qualities are you more hopeful or more concerned for the world?

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.

The restoration of God's intended Earth.

- ❖ **Luke 24:13-35, 39** – How would God restore your body on the New Earth?
- ❖ **Isaiah 11:9-10** – When you envision God's glory on Earth what does this glory look like?
- ❖ **Revelation 22:3** – What about the curse being lifted lifts your spirit the most?
- ❖ **1 Corinthians 15:40-55** – If your body becomes imperishable what would you most be excited about for the future?

Additional scripture(s) to read should time permit:

Read Romans 8:19-23

- What do you see in creation that reflects it groaning for something better?
- What in your life is groaning for something better?

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



Week Three 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