

Time and Eternity

Senior Youth Bible Study

- **Time Is a Measurement**
 - God is a god of order (1 Corinthians 14:4)
 - Genesis 1:1 – "in the beginning"
 - time has a beginning
 - Genesis 1:5 "And the evening and the morning were the first day."
 - time is measured in increments called "day"
 - John 6:40 "I will raise him up at the last day."
 - time will come to an end
 - Psalm 90:12 "teach us to number our days" – time is limited; our days will end
 - between the 1st day and the last day is a segment called "time"
 - as human creatures, we think and measure things in time
 - What time is it?
 - What time will it start?
 - What time will it be over?
 - what was BEFORE time?
 - what will be AFTER time?
 - Psalm 90:1 "Before the . . . world, even from everlasting [past] to everlasting [future]."
 - "everlasting," eternity (defined: "indefinite, unending, continuous existence")
 - Eternity Past
 - Eternity Future
- **Eternity Past**
 - Micah 5:2 (prophecy of Jesus) "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting"
 - Jesus was in Eternity Past
 - "Everlasting" was before TIME
 - John 17:5 "before the world was"
 - John 17:24 "before the foundation of the world"
 - 2 Timothy 1:9 "before the world began"
 - Titus 1:2 "before the world began"
 - Before God made a man, He had a plan
 - The Redemption Plan was in God's mind in Eternity Past (Ephesians 1:4)
- **While Time Is Standing**
 - time is divided into 2 segments:
 - Old Testament
 - New Testament
 - during time, man is a 3-fold being
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:23 "spirit and soul and body"
 - 3 consciousnesses
 - body = a world-consciousness
 - Ecclesiastes 12:7 "dust return to the earth" – no longer need a world-

- consciousness after we die (leave this world)
 - God "inhabiteth eternity" (Isaiah 57:15)
 - spirit = God-consciousness
 - Ecclesiastes 12:7 "spirit shall return unto God" – no longer need a God-consciousness in eternity; the spirit is how God relates (communicates) with us in this time world
 - soul = self-consciousness (the real you)
 - we **HAVE** a body; we **POSSESS** a spirit; we **ARE** a soul
- **death** (during time)
 - Ecclesiastes 11:3 "if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be"
 - **only 2 positions**
 - south or north; right or wrong
 - cannot change after death – "there it shall be"
 - false doctrine – "we can change our destination AFTER death"
 - Luke, Chapter 16, gives insight into temporary dwelling places (because time is still standing)
 - saved soul goes to "Abraham's bosom" (Jewish term for Paradise)
 - Luke 23:45 "Jesus said to the thief "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
 - unsaved soul goes to hell (hades)
 - Luke 16:23 "in hell he ..."
 - false doctrine – "Purgatory is a place of punishment to atone for sins not covered by Jesus' death on the Cross; once sufficiently punished, the soul can enter Paradise"
 - Immediately following death, we are taken to either Paradise or hell (based on our spiritual state at death)
 - Jesus said "To day" – Jesus was going to Paradise as soon as He died
 - not the same as Heaven (God's dwelling place; Matthew 6:9)
 - John 20:17 "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father"
 - right after Jesus resurrected; Jesus had not yet returned to Heaven
- **When Time Ends**
 - Judgment does not take place until time ends
 - Revelation 14:13 "their works do FOLLOW them"
 - our works (good and evil) follow us after our deaths
 - our influence continue (increasing our reward or punishment)
 - parental influence (1 Kings 22:52; 2 Chronicles 22:3; 17:3; Jeremiah 9:14; Amos 2:4; Matthew 14:8; 2 Timothy 1:5)
 - the Judgment has **nothing to do** with our eternal destiny
 - that is determined when we die – "as the tree falleth"
 - the Judgment determines our DEGREE OF RETRIBUTION (punishment) or reward
 - this cannot take place **until the end** of time
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up

together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

- **1) Christ will "descend from heaven with a shout"**
 - false doctrine – "there will be a secret rapture, stealing away"
 - "shout" – not secret
 - false doctrine – "only the saints will be raised (rapture)"
 - Acts 24:15 says there will be "A resurrection" (only one)
 - "of the just and unjust" (everyone – saved & unsaved)
 - John 5:28 "ALL that are in the graves shall hear his voice"
- **2) Resurrection**
 - 1st Resurrection – man has a choice (salvation)
 - 2nd Resurrection – "All" (no choice)
 - John 5:28-29 "the hour is coming [2nd coming] all that are in the graves ... shall come forth they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 1 Corinthians 15:51 "We shall not all sleep, but be changed"
 - death is referred to as "sleep" because it is temporary
 - "changed" – 1 Corinthians 15:53 "corruptible [physical, earthly body, mortal] shall be raised incorruptible [timeless, will never age – immortality]"
 - like planting, our body will not come out like it went in
 - Ecclesiastes 12:7 "body returns to dust" (dissolves)
 - we will be given a new body
 - "put off this tabernacle" (2 Peter 1:14)
 - "earthen vessel" (2 Corinthians 4:7) – our body for this earth
 - old body = "flesh and blood" (1 Corinthians 15:50)
 - new body = "flesh and bone" (Luke 24:39)
 - the corruption is in the blood
 - when Jesus was resurrected, He had a spiritual body
 - what was Jesus' body like?
 - **identifying factors:** the scars of the Crucifixion
 - **recognizable:** "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord" (John 20:20)
 - **He could pass through walls:** "when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst" (John 20:19)
 - **He could be touched:** (John 20:27 – Thomas)
 - **He could eat:**
 - John 21:13 "Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise"
 - Luke 24:43 "And he took it, and did eat before them"
 - **our body will be fashioned the same way:** Philippians 3:21 "our vile [corruptible] body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body"
 - "glorious body" = adapted and created for dwelling in eternity (commentary)

- Just as our earthly bodies are perfectly suited to life on earth, our resurrected bodies will be suited for life in eternity.
- the lost will be "tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:24)
 - sinners must have a body that can withstand this
- also – the rich man in hell had his mental and physical qualities
 - "dip his finger"
 - "remember" (memory)
 - "tongue"
- "dead" will rise first before "we which are alive"
 - on this day, everyone from Adam through the ages will be awakened
- "together with them"
 - Jude 14 "Lord cometh with ten thousands [myriads] of his saints"
 - 1 Thessalonians 3:13 "at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints"
 - God will empty out Paradise and Hades, bringing the souls to be reunited with their bodies
 - Revelation 20:13 "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them"
 - done "in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Corinthians 15:52)
- 3) **Meet Him in the Air**
 - false doctrine – "Christ will come back to earth and set up His kingdom"
 - Christ will never set His foot on this earth again
 - 2 Peter 3:10 "the day of the Lord [2nd coming] . . . the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also . . . burned up"
 - there will be no earth for Christ to come back to
- 4) **The Judgment**
 - Hebrews 9:27 "after this [death] is the judgment"
 - this is **AFTER** time ends
 - this is **AFTER** the resurrection
 - only one: the Final Judgment (there is preliminary judgment)
 - 2 Corinthians 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."
 - ALL must appear (saved and unsaved)
 - "judgment seat of Christ" – Christ will no longer be a Lamb but a Judge
 - "things done in his body" – the body is the instrument of the soul
 - body will be reunited with the soul
 - reward or retribution (punishment)
 - Ecclesiastes 12:14 "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."
 - Ecclesiastes 11:9 "for all these things [works] God will bring thee into judgment"
 - Matthew 16:27 "For the Son of man shall come in . . . and then he shall reward every man according to his works."
 - Matthew 25:31 "hungry, thirsty, in prison, naked" – works
 - nothing said about being saved or unsaved

- Matthew 25:41 – failure to do good works
- Romans 2:5-6 "righteous judgment ... Who will render to every man according to his deeds"
 - The Judgment does **NOT** determine our final destination
 - already determined
 - degrees of punishment or reward
 - The Judgment will be different for every individual (degrees)
 - Matthew 23:14 "greater damnation"
 - Luke 12:47 "beaten with **MANY**" or "beaten with **FEW**"
 - Hebrews 10:28 "sorer punishment"
 - 1 Corinthians 9:6 "sow sparingly ... reap sparingly"
 - Matthew 6:20 "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven"
 - amount of treasures depends on how much we lay up
 - compare w/investments
 - compare rewards of the thief on the cross with the Apostle Paul's
 - John 19:11 "he that delivered me unto thee hath the **GREATER** sin" (not all sins are the same)
 - this is speaking of the Sanhedrin who delivered Jesus to Pilate
 - John 9:41 "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin"
 - responsibility determined by your understanding
 - Matthew 11:24 "more tolerable ... for Sodom than for thee"
 - Capernaum had **GREATER** light than Sodom
 - Not every age has had the same light
 - Old Testament considered the "lesser light" (Genesis 1:16)
 - **The Books**
 - dead will be judged by the "books [plural]" (Revelation 20:12)
 - not merely the 66 books of the Bible – books of the ages (at least 4)
 - too often we judge O.T. people w/N.T. light
 - **1) Age of the Moral Law** (patriarchs; no written law)
 - governed by the conscience
 - **2) Age of the Mosaic Law** (laws were written down, more accountability)
 - **3) Age of the Law & the Prophets** (greater enlightenment)
 - **4) Age of the Law of Christ**
 - a just God can only judge a man on what was available in his day
 - consider Noah (drunkenness), Abraham (lying), David (murder)
 - **5) Eternity Future**
 - Ecclesiastes 12:5 "man goeth to his long home"
 - **Hell** (Gehenna) – final dispatch of the lost
 - necessity – Heaven in a holy place (has never been defiled by sin)
 - Isaiah 57:15 "I [God] dwell in the high and holy place"
 - false doctrine – "the devil was an angel in Heaven who sinned"
 - God cannot and will not fellowship (be in the presence of) sin
 - He had to turn His back on His Son on the Cross (Matthew 27:46)
 - when Adam sinned, he had to leave the garden
 - A just God **MUST deal in** justice and judgment

- Justice **demand**s that choices have consequences
 - false doctrine – "a loving God would never send anyone to hell"
 - God merely dispatches man to his **CHOSEN** destination
- "everlasting punishment" (Matthew 25:46) – permanent, no escape
- **Hell will be:**
 - 1) everlasting separation from God's presence (no light, no love)
 - 2) everlasting destruction (irrevocable ruin) – mind and memory of what could have been (rich man "remember in your lifetime")
 - 3) everlasting fire – excruciating torment ("where the worm [man] dieth not"; Mark 9:44)
 - rich man – "I am tormented in this flame"
 - Jude 7 "suffering [present tense, still suffering] ... eternal fire"
 - 4) eternal degrees of punishment
 - "knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Corinthians 5:11)
- **Heaven** – final destiny of the saved
 - no Scriptures give a physical description of Heaven
 - descriptions are either symbolic or misunderstood
 - our human minds cannot understand what Heaven will be
 - Isaiah 55:8-9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."
 - John 16:12 " I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."
 - **misconceptions** (false doctrines) – many carry-overs from the dark & cloudy day
 - **John 14:2-3** "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."
 - many songs about a mansion in Heaven
 - "mansions" = dwelling place (The Emphatic Greek Diaglott)
 - "make our abode with him" (other translations)
 - "Father's house" (not Heaven)
 - The Emphatic Greek Diaglott = "house of the Father"
 - Ephesians 1:3 = "Father" is "God"
 - 1 Timothy 3:15 = "house of God" is the "church of the living God"
 - "Father's house" = the Church of God
 - "In the Church of God are many dwelling places"
 - man's heart is a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit to live
 - "I go to prepare a place for you" – Jesus was going to Calvary
 - "prepare a place" – no one could get into Father's house until Jesus purchased it with His blood (Acts 20:28)
 - "come again" – on the Day of Pentecost, God came in the form of the Holy Spirit

- enabled man to become a dwelling place (a "mansion")
 - Note: how could a house contain many mansions?
- Heaven does **NOT HAVE** streets of gold, pearly gates, Peter at the gate, people playing harps or wearing white robes and a literal crown
 - all symbolic aspects of the church and our experience of salvation
- Heaven is **NOT** Beulah land, Canaan land, or the Promised Land
- must **DISMISS thoughts** of a literal description of Heaven
- **What Will We Have in Heaven?**
 - **1) God** – we will be where God is
 - "ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17)
 - **2) Jesus** – we will be with Jesus
 - when Stephen looked into Heaven, he saw "Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55)
 - **3) The Glory of God**
 - Stephen saw "the glory of God" (Acts 7:55)
 - Romans 8:18 "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
 - 2 Corinthians 4:17 "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"
 - "glory" – a state of blessedness, brought into the likeness of Christ
 - the glory of God is beyond description
 - **4) Reward**
 - Matthew 5:12 "great is your reward in heaven"
 - The Parable of the Talents (what you do with what you have been given)
 - 1 Corinthians 3:8 "every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour"
 - rewards will be proportional – fair and just are not equal
 - **5) Worship**
 - Nehemiah 9:6 "the host of heaven worshipping thee"
 - note: if someone is not interested in worshiping God here, if someone lacks interest in the worship services here, how are they going to enjoy Heaven?
- **Our mortal minds cannot comprehend Heaven**
 - consider how much we can appreciate the beauties of earth, the joys of relationships, the blessedness of a Spirit-filled service
 - these are blessings our human body can appreciate
 - how much greater will Heaven be?
 - "how beautiful Heaven must be"