



GO DEEPER

SESSION 9: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DIE?



Aim

To explore what the Bible teaches about eternity for believers.



Starter

Option 1: Icebreaker Questions

If you were on a desert island, what one thing would you bring with you?
What does paradise mean to you?

Option 2: Taboo

Divide the group into two teams A and B. Each team takes it in turns to play. Choose a person who will be given the Taboo card. The rest of the team have one minute to guess what word is on the card. The person describing the word is not allowed to use any of the words, or part of the words, on the card. They are taboo.

- Team A **PARADISE** (words to help – heaven, bliss, ecstasy, delight, joy)
- Team B **ETERNITY** (words to help – forever, never-ending, always, infinity, heaven)
- Team A **DEATH** (words to help – demise, decease, birth, fatality, end)
- Team B **HOPE** (words to help – expectation, optimistic, belief, anticipation, confidence)



Video

Watch the video **What Happens When We Die** (Running time 4:35)



Questions

Encourage pupils to write any questions on sticky notes as they occur to them.

Answer questions of understanding about the video straight away unless these will be answered later in the session. If there is not time for a question, confirm you will answer it another time. Consider using the 'car park' so pupils know you will not forget.



Exploring the Bible

Read Romans 8:18-25, 28-30 (As this passage is complex the group will be aided by using a more dynamic translation like the New Living Translation. Different Bible translations can be found at biblegateway.com.)

Discuss

These verses compare what life is like now with life in eternity. **Which phrases talk about eternity?**

1. *God will reveal who His children really are (v.19)*
2. *Creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay (v.21)*
3. *God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us (v.23)*
4. *God chose (his people) to become like his Son (v.29)*
5. *God's Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters (v.29)*
6. *God's people are given right standing and God's glory (v.30)*

From verses 18, 19 and 21, how much can we know about life beyond death and the future glory that God has prepared for his children?

The future glory is not totally revealed to us yet, but when it comes it will be all that God has promised to us will be revealed.

Verse 21 says that creation will be brought into the freedom and glory of the children Of God. **Freedom from what?**

1. *Freedom from sin. Now we enjoy the privileges of being God's adopted children (8:15-16) but we haven't yet come into our full inheritance (8:23). In glory we will not be able to sin!*
2. *Freedom from our decaying bodies. We will be given new resurrected and glorified bodies, just like Jesus had and still has a new and resurrected body when he rose from the dead.*

Verse 21 gives suggestions of where we will be when we die. **What does Paul tell us?** *Creation will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay – the full renewal of creation to its original perfection and purpose. The natural world – the material, physical world – will be freed from the curse. With new, glorified bodies we will live on a new earth and enjoy God's creation as it was before sin entered this world.*



Reflection

Read the passage again, making a list of all the reasons that believers can have future hope. Allow time for prayer where group members can ask God to make hope come alive again for those, including themselves, who feel at the present time that hope is lost.



Further resources

What Difference Does Jesus Make? A nine-minute video from bethinking.org

What Hope Does Christianity Offer the World? A short article from bethinking.org