

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

The Bema Seat, Part 2
Pastor Miles McPherson
February 18, 2007



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Your small group is invited to *Imagineering* - *Imagineering* is about dreaming and building. Come find out what we're doing this year in small groups and how you can be a part of it. Details: Friday, March 9, 7:30-9:30 PM, in the Rock Sanctuary. Childcare is available. Sign up online at www.therocksandiego.org/eventcalendar/2658 or contact Andy at andy@therocksandiego.org or 858.268.1366 x2012.

Women of the Rock: Tea Party - Sign up to be a table hostess for the annual women's tea to be held from 2-4 PM on Saturday, April 28. For more information on hosting a table, contact Tiffany Walton at fanciwal@hotmail.com or 619.379.6105.

The Arts Ministry and Childcare Worldwide present the **Ugandan Orphans Choir**, performing cultural songs and tribal dances. Join us on February 23 at 1969 Sunset Cliffs Blvd., 8 PM. No cost. For more information, contact Michael at 619.280.4235.

For all other Rock events, please go <http://www.therocksandiego.org/eventcalendar/>.

MEMORY VERSE

So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. Romans 14:12

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS - THE BLING

Mark Twain once sarcastically asserted that in heaven, for at least twelve hours everyday day we will all sing one hymn over and over again. I don't know about you, personally, I don't think that's paradise. Non-Christians and Christians alike wonder what exists after physical death. Is this life all there is to reality, or is this present existence merely a shadow of the *real* life to come?

Oswald Sanders said: "God has not told us all we'd like to know, but He has told us all we need to know about heaven." First of all, the Bible tells us that heaven is a spiritual realm in which Triune-God and his glory will be experienced. As believers we will be directly in the presence of God.

Secondly, we know that our transition to heaven will result in a change in our spiritual nature. Paul spoke in of "the hope of righteousness" for which we wait (Galatians 5:5). Lastly, there will be physical changes that somehow resemble God's glory and perfection. Finally< His creation will be like Him

Getting Started

1. Have you ever heard of the phrase “So heavenly minded that you’re no earthly good?” Do you think that phrase could be true? What are some examples of this?
2. How did some of the heroes of the faith live with the tension of life on this earth versus the heavenly Kingdom? How should our future hope affect our daily lives?

Digging Deeper

3. To get a biblical view of what heaven’s like, ask a few people in your group to read Isaiah 6:1-8, Ezekiel 1, and Revelation 4-5. What do some of these descriptions have in common? How did those who saw these visions react to their revelation? What words did these men use to describe heaven’s splendor? (See 2 Corinthians 12:4)
4. The Bible also informs us that in heaven our spiritual nature will be changed. After reading Romans 7:23-24, 2 Corinthians 3:18 and 1 John 3:2, what are some of the ways that our spiritual nature will be changed?
5. Read Corinthians 13:12. How do you think that our comprehension of God will affect our relationships in heaven? How do you think God’s revelation of Himself will affect your understanding of your physical life on earth (joys, trials and suffering, failures’ victories etc.)?
6. What physical changes do you think our bodies undergo upon entering heaven? Look at Philippians 3: 20 and 1 Corinthians 15:35-38. What emotional changes do you think are in store for us? Look at Isaiah 65:17 and Revelation 21:5.
7. As we learned last week, in heaven there are rewards for those who live faithfully according to the good works that God values. Read Matthew 25:21-23 and Luke 19:17-19. What do these rewards seem to suggest about our activity in heaven?

Bringing it Home: What Difference Does Heaven Make?

Before we finish let's think of some ways that our "future hope" could affect our "present reality." Ask someone to read 2 Corinthians 4:17.

8. How could our future hope in heaven help us with handling our present disappointments and struggles in life?

9. Would you be willing to share with the group some of your pressing struggles? Can you see how these afflictions are actually playing a role in preparing you for heaven? How so?

10. How can the hope of heaven redefine our perspective of true success in this life?

11. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13. How can the hope of heaven redefine our perspective on death?