

THE JOURNEY

Basic Discipleship

07
REVEALED

STEP SEVEN

REDEMPTION



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

We are so glad you're here! As you step into this journey of discipleship, know that you are entering a path designed to deepen your relationship with God and build a firm biblical foundation. This material is meant to guide you, no matter where you are on your faith journey. The tools and lessons you'll find here are adaptable to many settings—whether you're meeting one-on-one, gathering with a small group, or sharing in a larger community. It can be simplified to nurture the hearts of youth and children or enriched to challenge and inspire mature believers to grow even further.

Discipleship is a journey, not a race.

Our prayer is that this journey will help you engage with Scripture, build meaningful relationships, and discover how God is working in and through your life. Let's take this next step together with faith and intentionality as we grow closer to Him. Trust the process of growth and transformation that occurs over time as you walk with God.



07 REDEMPTION

I. HELL

YES, IT'S REAL

Directly following the final judgment, every person enters their eternal destiny. Those who are saved go to heaven (see below), while those who are lost are cast into what Scripture refers to as hell.

Although hell (sometimes referred to as Gehenna or “the lake of fire”) is a difficult and uncomfortable subject, it is clearly taught in Scripture as a real place. Scripture describes hell as the “second death”, which includes eternal separation from God after the final judgment.

Many attempt to deny or rationalize away the existence of hell, yet anyone who recognizes the Bible’s authority should accept this sobering truth. In fact, many of Jesus’ parables specifically address God’s eternal judgment upon sin and unbelief.



MATTHEW 25:46 | *“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”*

2 THESSALONIANS 1:9 | *“They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might.”*

*Additional
Scripture
References*

MATTHEW 13:41-42

MARK 9:43-48

REVELATION 14:9-11

REVELATION 20:14-15

REVELATION 21:1-8

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What are all the kinds of death the Bible talks about?
2. Why do you think Jesus spoke so frequently about judgment and hell in His teachings?

BIBLICAL DESCRIPTIONS

In New Testament times, Gehenna (translated “hell”) referred to a valley just south of Jerusalem. Previously, this valley was used for idol worship and child sacrifice, acts that brought God’s curse upon it. By Jesus’ day, Gehenna had become Jerusalem’s public garbage dump, filled with the city’s filth, dead animals, and refuse. The area was infested with maggots, the stench was dreadful, and continuous fires burned the waste.

This grim location provided the New Testament’s most vivid imagery for hell. Additional descriptions include a lake of fire, darkness, and separation from God. Similarly, Old Testament depictions emphasize fire and burning sulfur.

While Bible-affirming scholars agree that hell is an actual place, they sometimes differ on whether certain descriptions are literal or figurative. However, even if some descriptions are figurative, they do not lessen the reality or severity of hell. Regardless, Scripture makes clear hell is described by suffering, described as a place of “weeping and gnashing of teeth”, banishment from heaven and all of its goodness, and permanent exclusion from God’s presence.

MARK 9:43 | “...hell, where the fire never goes out.

MARK 9:48 | “...where ‘the worms that eat them do not die, and the fire is not quenched.’”

*Additional
Scripture
References*

ISAIAH 66:24

MATTHEW 25:30

JEREMIAH 7:30-33

2 THESSALONIANS 1:9

MATTHEW 13:42, 50

REVELATION 22:14-15

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What does the biblical description of hell as eternal separation from God reveal about the nature and seriousness of sin?
2. Which of hell’s biblical descriptions stands out most to you—and why?

HOW LONG?

The Bible repeatedly, and in various ways, emphasizes that hell’s duration is eternal. The Greek word *aionios*, used to describe God and eternal life, is also used to describe hell’s eternal nature. Scripture portrays hell as a place of “shame and everlasting contempt”, its fire as “eternal” and “unquenchable”, and its darkness as lasting “forever.”

Some advocate other interpretations, often driven by discomfort with the idea of eternal punishment. However, these arguments rely on isolated verses and alternate definitions, rather than the full biblical witness. It’s helpful to keep in mind that the Bible does not contradict itself and is the best interpreter of itself. Taken as a whole, Scripture overwhelmingly affirms the eternal nature of hell.

MATTHEW 25:46 | “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

REVELATION 14:11 | “And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.”

*Additional
Scripture
References*

DANIEL 12:2

2 THESSALONIANS 1:9

MATTHEW 18:8

HEBREWS 6:2

MATTHEW 25:41

JUDE 7, 13

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What problems arise when we attempt to interpret Scripture based on personal preferences rather than the full biblical witness?
2. How does understanding the permanence of eternal judgment affect your gratitude for your salvation in Christ?

DOES HELL VIOLATE GOD'S LOVE?

A common question is whether the reality of hell contradicts God's love. The answer has to do with both His nature and ours.

God is not only loving; He is also holy and just. Because God is love, He offers salvation to all and gave His Son to make the way. His desire is for everyone to come to repentance. But He has also given us the ability to choose. We have a free-will nature, and because of that, God holds us morally responsible for our decisions—including whether we receive or reject His grace. When people freely choose sin and then reject His grace, His justice cannot overlook it. As one scholar said, "there is an element of infinity in every sin because every sin is committed against the infinite God."

Hell is not the result of arbitrary judgment. It is the consequence of a person's free decision to turn from God's mercy. God makes the truth clear and leaves the choice to us. In His love, God is patient and ready to forgive. But in His justice, He must deal with unrepentant sin. Hell is the result of that righteous judgment.

It's important to keep in mind that God created Hell for the devil and his demons—that was the original intent. What God desires is for every person to be in Heaven, and no human in Hell. He's creating Heaven for all who respond to the Gospel, and His desire is that everyone would do that.

2 PETER 3:9 | *"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*

HEBREWS 10:30-31 | *"For we know him who said, 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' and again, 'The Lord will judge his people.' It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."*

*Additional
Scripture
References*

MATTHEW 23:37

MATTHEW 25:41

ROMANS 11:22

HEBREWS 12:29

JAMES 4:12

1 JOHN 4:8

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Why is it important to understand God's nature as well as human responsibility when it comes to eternal judgment?
2. Do you struggle with God's justice or patience more—and why? How can Scripture guide your understanding?

GOSPEL URGENCY

Jesus' promised return—and the brevity of life—gives eternal weight to every opportunity to share the gospel. None of us knows if Jesus will return today or if our lives will end suddenly. We only have time while we are physically alive to respond.

Scripture is clear: there is no second chance after Jesus returns or after death. The door is shut. We are either inside the kingdom or outside, ready or unprepared. Eternal consequences are real. That's why the Great Commission matters. It is our calling, fueled by love and shaped by the knowledge that time is limited. To delay gospel witness is to gamble with eternity—for ourselves or others. The time is now.

At the same time, we remember that while we are called to proclaim the gospel, each person must choose for themselves. We sow the seeds in love and truth, but they themselves are accountable to Jesus for their response. In the meantime, we are thankful for God's patience. Every day that Jesus waits is another opportunity for someone to hear, believe, and be saved.

MATTHEW 25:10-12 | *"...And the door was shut. Later the others also came. 'Lord, Lord,' they said, 'open the door for us!' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I don't know you.'"*

2 CORINTHIANS 6:2 | *"...Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."*

*Additional
Scripture
References*

MATTHEW 28:19-20

LUKE 17:26-30

ROMANS 10:14

HEBREWS 9:27-28

2 PETER 3:8-9

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. How do you balance a sense of urgency in sharing the Gospel against maintaining a strong relationship with the person who needs the Lord?
2. Is there someone in your life who needs to hear the gospel while there is still time?

II. THE NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

COSMIC CLEANSING

Scripture teaches that, after Christ's return and during the final judgment, God will purify the entire physical universe with fire. This is described as a complete and dramatic transformation, where even the elements will be destroyed. Nothing will remain untouched.

The apostle Paul writes that creation itself has been longing for this moment, "groaning as in the pains of childbirth" as it waits to be "liberated from its bondage to decay." This purifying act will redeem the physical creation, reverse the effects of sin on the physical world, and prepare the way for an entirely new creation.

ROMANS 8:21 | *"...the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God."*

2 PETER 3:10 | *"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare."*

*Additional
Scripture
References*

ISAIAH 65:17-25

ISAIAH 66:22

ROMANS 8:19-22

REVELATION 21:1

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Why is it important that God fully redeem the physical creation?
2. Are there areas of your life that need to be "cleansed" or surrendered to prepare for life with God in the new creation?

NEW HEAVENS AND EARTH

The Bible uses the word heaven in a variety of ways—it can mean the sky, the spiritual realm, the place where God dwells, God Himself, or paradise (the temporary home of believers before the resurrection). But none of these are the final destination. Scripture promises something greater: a new heaven and a new earth, the eternal home of the redeemed.

Out of the purifying fire that cleanses the entire physical universe, God will bring forth a new creation. It will be a fully physical place, perfectly suited to our glorified, resurrected bodies. The skies above—the heavens—will also be made new, and the entire physical environment of the universe will be fully restored, cleansed from all corruption and decay.

In this renewed universe, time continues (experienced moment by moment as we know it now) but it will never end. In many ways, this reality will reflect and restore the conditions of Eden: a sinless, unbroken relationship with God in a perfect world. This redemption is the culmination of the Bible’s overarching narrative: paradise lost, paradise restored.

REVELATION 21:1-2 | *“Then I saw ‘a new heaven and a new earth,’ for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.”*

ISAIAH 65:17 | *“See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.”*

*Additional
Scripture
References*

MATTHEW 5:5

ROMANS 4:13

2 PETER 3:13

REVELATION 21

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. In what ways does the restoration of the conditions of Eden reflect God’s character and purposes?
2. How does it encourage you to trust Him with the brokenness you see now?

RESURRECTION BODIES

While our souls are redeemed at conversion and perfected at death, our human bodies still return to dust. When Jesus returns, that unfinished story will be complete: every believer will receive a brand-new, glorified body, modeled after the risen Lord Himself.

These new bodies will be truly physical—perfect homes for our fully redeemed souls—yet made of an imperishable substance perfectly suited for the coming world. They will be without flaw: no disease, disability, pain, aging, or death. This redemptive arc brings us back to something very similar to Adam and Eve in the Garden before the fall. Every scar of sin will be gone, every weakness traded for strength.

At the same time, Scripture suggests we will keep our overall human form and recognizability. After His resurrection, Jesus was known by His friends, and Stephen instantly recognized Him in glory. Likewise, it seems we will know and be known. As part of this full redemption, Jesus will give each of us a new name—a unique marker of our eternal identity in Him.

Finally, it is also reasonable and consistent to believe that innocent children taken too soon will stand whole and radiant, reflecting the full maturity and strength they would have known had they lived.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:52-53 | *“For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”*

PHILIPPIANS 3:21 | *“Who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.”*

Additional Scripture References

ACTS 7:55-56

ROMANS 8:23

1 CORINTHIANS 13:12

1 CORINTHIANS 15:35-44

2 CORINTHIANS 5:1-4

1 JOHN 3:2

REVELATION 2:17

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. List and discuss what the Bible says our glorified bodies will be like, and what these qualities might mean for us.
2. How does the promise of a new, glorified body affect the way you view your current struggles—whether physical, emotional, or mental?

III. THE NEW EARTH

WHAT WILL BE THERE

The New Earth will radiate with the glory of God, so much so that Scripture frequently describes our eternal home simply as “glory.” We will enjoy a renewed earth complete with soil, water, and lush plant life. A spectacular capital city, the New Jerusalem, will have immense dimensions (about 1,500 miles each in length, width, and height). Within this perfect home, our redeemed souls will dwell in glorified, physical bodies.

The new earth is appropriately called heaven, because God will dwell there. It will overflow with abundant life and stunning beauty. It will contain springs of living water, a river of life, and the tree of life. All of these symbolize nourishment, abundance, and eternal well-being. Incredible physical pleasures await us: sights, sounds, tastes, and textures beyond imagination. We will experience deep emotional fulfillment and intellectual richness.

Heaven will also offer vibrant tasks, adventures, and activities, fulfilling (likely among other things) God’s original purpose for humanity to steward and rule creation rightly. Additionally, we will delight in a unity and diversity unlike anything we’ve experienced before. We will live among a vast community of believers from every era and background, experiencing an amazing, unending, and perfect community with them.

REVELATION 21:3 | *“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.’”*

REVELATION 22:1-2 | *“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month.”*

Additional Scripture References

GENESIS 1:28

ISAIAH 35:1-10

ISAIAH 65:17-22

1 CORINTHIANS 2:9

REVELATION 5:10

REVELATION 7:9-10

REVELATION 16-17

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. According to Scripture, what specific things will we find in heaven? Do any of these surprise you?
2. Which description of heaven stands out most to you, and why?

WHAT WON'T BE THERE

Heaven will be entirely free from sin and its tragic effects. There will be no darkness—God’s glorious presence will continually shine, providing light throughout the New Jerusalem by day and by night. Pain, fear, sorrow, crying, and death will vanish forever. Natural dangers and violence as we know them will disappear, beautifully depicted in Scripture as wolves grazing peacefully alongside lambs and lions eating straw like oxen.

In heaven, there will be no hunger or thirst. While eating and drinking will be possible, everyone will always have enough. There will be no scorching heat or physical hardship. Tears will cease, suggesting that God may lovingly remove memories that cause sadness. Yet meaningful memories—particularly of Jesus and relationships with fellow believers—will remain, purified from pain. Marital and sexual relationships will not be necessary; instead, we will experience deeply satisfying relationships with God and fellow believers.

REVELATION 21:4 | *“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.”*

ISAIAH 11:6 | *“The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them..”*

*Additional
Scripture
References*

ISAIAH 65:17

MATTHEW 22:30

LUKE 20:36

ROMANS 8:20-21

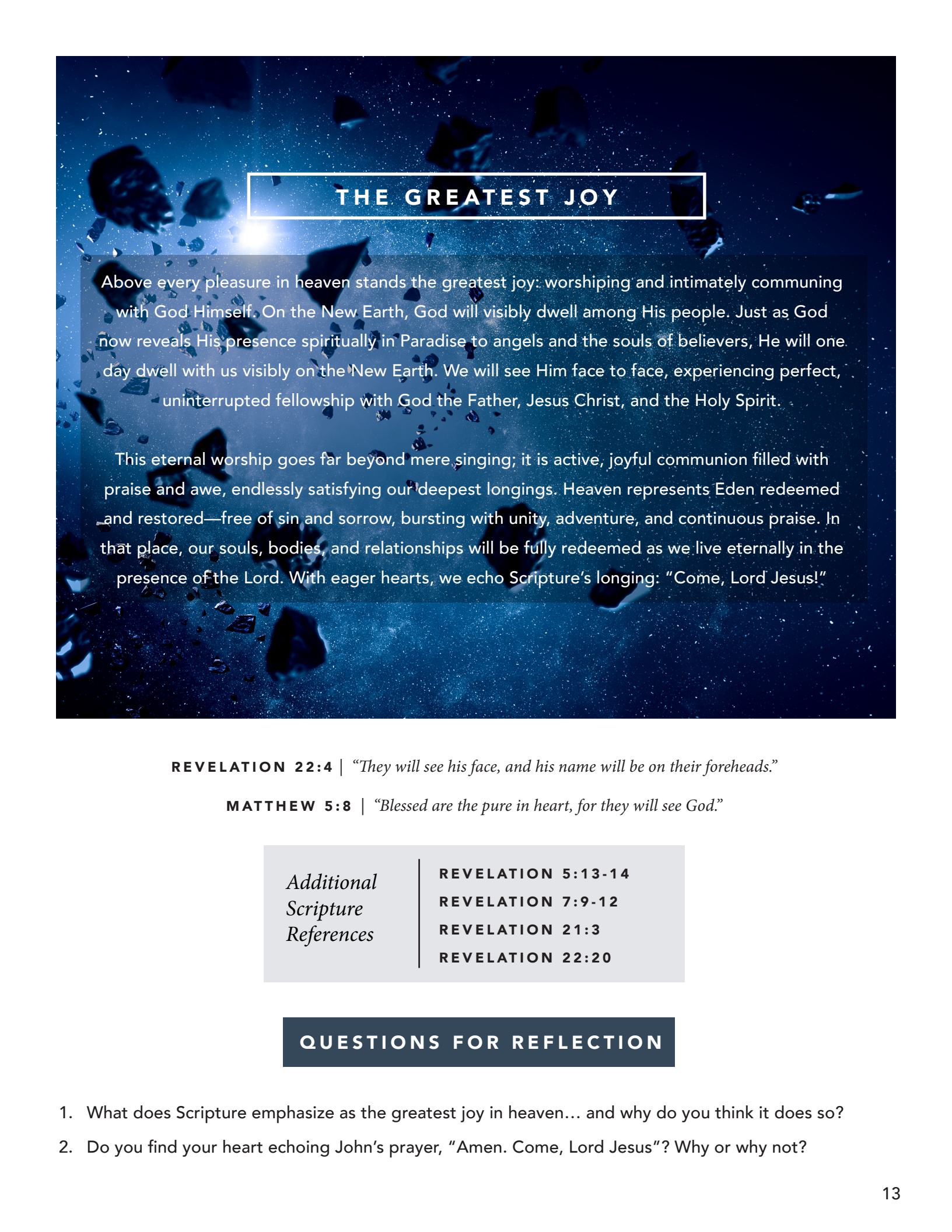
REVELATION 2:7

REVELATION 21:23-27

REVELATION 22:2-5,14

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. List the things the Bible says will be absent in heaven. Do any of these surprise you?
2. Why do you think Scripture emphasizes what will not exist in heaven?



THE GREATEST JOY

Above every pleasure in heaven stands the greatest joy: worshiping and intimately communing with God Himself. On the New Earth, God will visibly dwell among His people. Just as God now reveals His presence spiritually in Paradise to angels and the souls of believers, He will one day dwell with us visibly on the New Earth. We will see Him face to face, experiencing perfect, uninterrupted fellowship with God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

This eternal worship goes far beyond mere singing; it is active, joyful communion filled with praise and awe, endlessly satisfying our deepest longings. Heaven represents Eden redeemed and restored—free of sin and sorrow, bursting with unity, adventure, and continuous praise. In that place, our souls, bodies, and relationships will be fully redeemed as we live eternally in the presence of the Lord. With eager hearts, we echo Scripture's longing: "Come, Lord Jesus!"

REVELATION 22:4 | *"They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads."*

MATTHEW 5:8 | *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."*

*Additional
Scripture
References*

REVELATION 5:13-14

REVELATION 7:9-12

REVELATION 21:3

REVELATION 22:20

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What does Scripture emphasize as the greatest joy in heaven... and why do you think it does so?
2. Do you find your heart echoing John's prayer, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus"? Why or why not?

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