

# HEAVEN

It's Not What You Think

**CHIP**INGRAM

## HEAVEN: IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK

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# HEAVEN

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## SESSION 1

# WHY HEAVEN MATTERS

## PART ONE



## Take It In (Watch the video)

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### Why Study Heaven?

1. Our misconceptions are crippling us:

- Common misconceptions.
- Predictable results.

2. We're commanded to do so

**Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.**

COLOSSIANS 3:1-4 (NASB)

3. A faulty view of Heaven destines us to a wasted life on earth.

**Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.**

JOHN 14:1-3 (NASB)

### I. A Theology of Heaven

- Definition – Three uses of the word.
- The Promise of Heaven:
  - It's a real, tangible place (John 14)
  - The Father is there (Matthew 6:9)

- Jesus is at His right hand (Hebrews 9:24)
  - Believing loved ones are there (Hebrews 12:23)
  - Our names are recorded there (Luke 10:20)
  - We have an inheritance there (1 Peter 1:4)
  - Our citizenship is there (Philippians 3:20)
  - Specific, eternal rewards are given (Matthew 6:19-21)
  - It's the best of earth...better (Revelation 22)
  - Sin, death, and sorrow are absent (Revelation 22)
  - Adventure, work, discovery, and rulership await us (Revelation 22)
- Heaven in historical context:
    1. Past – Eden (Genesis 1-2)
    2. Present – Intermediate Heaven (Genesis 3-Revelation 20)
    3. Future – New Heaven and New Earth (Revelation 22)

## Talk It Over

1. When you walked into this study today, what was your image of Heaven?

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2. How did this first session shift your understanding of Heaven?

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3. In the early centuries of the church, Heaven was a common topic of conversation, sermons, and songs. Why do you think that in the modern church Heaven is rarely talked about?

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4. Chip said, “a faulty view of Heaven destines us to a wasted life on earth.” How would a faulty view of Heaven diminish our life on earth?

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## Live It Out – B.I.O.

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Bio is a word that is synonymous with “life.” Found in those three simple letters — B.I.O. — is the key to helping you become the person God wants you to be.

### **B = COME “BEFORE GOD” DAILY**

Meet with Him personally through prayer and His word to enjoy His presence, receive His direction, and follow His will.

### **I = DO LIFE “IN COMMUNITY” WEEKLY**

Structure your week to personally connect in safe relationships that provide love, support, transparency, challenge, and accountability.

### **O = BE “ON MISSION” 24/7**

Cultivate a mindset to live out Jesus’ love for others through acts of sacrifice as well as service at home, work, play, and church.

## Come Before God

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5. In Romans 12:1-2 (NIV), Paul says:

**Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.**



Chip said Satan is the Father of lies who keeps us focused on a world system that he's behind. In what ways does the modern world system distract us from thinking about Heaven?

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### Do Life In Community

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6. What are some practical ways that we could help one another to be more "Heavenly minded"?

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### Be On Mission

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7. How would a clear view of Heaven help us be "On Mission" for God?

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### Accelerate (20 minutes that turn concepts into convictions)

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**Inspiration** comes from hearing God's Word. **Motivation** grows by discussing God's Word. **Transformation** occurs when you study it for yourself.

If you want to "accelerate" your growth, here is an assignment you can do at home each week. Our convictions become even stronger when we dig into Scripture and discover truth for ourselves. To help you get the most out of this exercise, consider partnering up with someone in your group who will also commit to doing the assignment this week. Then, after you have each completed the assignment, agree to spend 10 minutes by phone sharing what you learned and what you are applying.

## Come Before God

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1. Read the following passage carefully and slowly.

**Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.**

**COLOSSIANS 3:1-4 (NIV)**

2. Twice in this passage, Paul commands us to set our hearts and minds on things above. Why do you think he ties this command to Christ being raised and Christ being seated at the right hand of God?

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3. In verse 3, Paul states that our “life is now hidden in Christ.” Do a search in your Bible of the phrase “in Christ.” Then, look up some of those verses in the New Testament and discover your identity “in Christ.”

4. In Matthew 6:19-21 (NIV) Jesus said:

**Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

From this passage, what is the downside of storing up treasures on earth?  
For you personally, what would need to change for you to store up more treasures in Heaven?

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### Do Life In Community

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5. Have a conversation with your spouse or a friend about setting your heart on things above. Discuss what it would look like for you to “set your heart on things above, not on earthly things.”

### Be On Mission

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6. How would setting your heart “on things above” change how you view your neighbor, co-worker, and unbelieving friends? Spend a few moments right now praying for an unbelieving friend. Ask God to give you an opportunity to share the gospel with them.



