



Nowhere does the Bible speak of going to heaven, but from start to finish the Bible tells the story of heaven coming. It is God's grand redemption plan from ages past, and it changes how we deal with the present when we know that Home is Coming!

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 Rick began by pointing out that you will not find the phrase *"Go to heaven"* one time in the Bible (Note: the title of this series is "Home Is Coming" not "Going Home"). Is that surprising to you? Follow up: What were you taught about heaven growing up and where did those images and ideas come from?

2 Read Revelation 21:1-4. Is the idea of heaven and earth rejoining at the end of the Biblical story a new concept for you? How does that differ from popular conceptions of the end of the world?

3 WHAT IS THE NEW EARTH? Rick reminded us that *"the Bible does not start in Genesis 3; it starts in Genesis 1."* Why is that important to remember and what are some of the implications of this? Follow up: *The Bible predicts the ultimate restoration movement.* **Read Acts 3:21 and Matthew 19:28.** What stands out to you from these verses? In what ways do they point to restoration and not destruction? Note: also look at **Isaiah 65:17-19** and **2 Peter 3:13.**

4 WHERE IS THE NEW EARTH? *God's original plan was not a failed experiment. The next coming of Jesus will bring with it the complete redemption of everything under the curse, including creation.* **Read Romans 8:20-22, 2 Peter 3:5-7, and Revelation 21:5.** What picture do these verses paint in regards to how God will restore His masterpiece? How does the idea of purification rather than

annihilation encourage you and how does this differ from the idea of "escape"?

5 HOW IS IT LIKE/UNLIKE THE OLD EARTH?

Rick pointed out that *"the preeminent difference in the new earth will be the removal of the curse. We will finally see what God means when He describes something as 'good.'"* How does that make you feel? Why is that such a strong longing for us? Follow up: Rick went on to say, *"The new earth will engage, delight, and astound all our senses."* When you think of some of the examples he shared (work, play, learn, relationships, food, animals, etc.) which ones are you most looking forward to experiencing in all of their goodness?

6 WHEN WILL THE NEW EARTH APPEAR?

When Jesus returns he will bring to all creation what resurrection brought to him. **Read 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.** Why is it significant to see that we will accompany our victorious King back to the new earth instead of leaving with him? How does this differ from how some teach this passage?

7 WHY DOES THE NEW EARTH MATTER?

Rick pointed out that the new earth **renews my hope for what will be, informs and shapes who I want to be, and compels me to pursue what ought to be.** How can our understanding of the new earth impact the way we act, live, and treat the world today?

