

Good Question Series

Everyone wonders about heaven, hell, and the afterlife. What happens when this life ends? Over the next few weeks we will examine some often-asked questions as well as dismantle some wild ideas that are not biblically sound.

Q1: Don't all roads lead to heaven?

This idea is very attractive. It makes everyone comfortable. We live in a culture that loves choices. We like options. And because we have become accustomed to choices in virtually every other area of life, the idea that there could be only one way to God sounds narrow-minded. Maybe even arrogant. But consider this...

1. **Sometimes there really is only one solution.** While we love choices, there are situations where choices aren't particularly helpful. It is the nature of the problem that determines what constitutes an adequate solution. Our problem is sin (Romans 3:23 and 6:23).
2. **The question is not, "Why is there only one way?"** Considering our sin, why did God provide a way at all? We rebelled against Him. We broke and continue to break His law. We choose our way instead of His way. God doesn't owe us.
3. **Jesus didn't claim to KNOW the way. He claimed to BE the way (John 14:1-6).** Jesus never pretended that every road ends at the same destination. In fact, He explicitly said they don't. Don't miss this! The WAY is exclusive. There is only one way – through Christ. But... The INVITATION is universally inclusive.

Q2: Do we experience "soul sleep" when we die?

There are many different beliefs about what happens when we die. Some believe our existence simply ends. Others believe our souls become unconscious and remain that way until the resurrection. We do not have to speculate. If we want to know what happens after death, revelation outranks imagination.

1. **We do not get to make up heaven (Revelation 1:18).** Jesus died, rose again, and holds the keys to heaven. He has authority over death. Our understanding comes from His authority.
2. **"Sleep" is a figure of speech for physical, bodily death (John 11:11).** The disciples misunderstood Jesus when He described Lazarus as sleeping, so Jesus clarified His meaning in v.14: "Lazarus is dead." The language of sleep describes physical death; it does not mean the soul becomes unconscious.
3. **We do not sleep unconsciously until the resurrection (Philippians 1:23-24).** Paul said that he desires "to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far..." Paul expected to leave his body and consciously be with Christ. Jesus makes this even clearer in Luke 23:43 when He tells the thief on the cross, "today you will be with me in paradise." There is no waiting in Jesus' promise. The thief would be with Christ that very day. The Bigger Question: Who will I be with after I die? Paul didn't simply want to depart; he wanted to be with Christ. Jesus didn't simply tell the thief that he would continue to exist; He promised, "You will be with me."

For the Road: The fact that God made a way for us to go to *His* heaven is the big surprise. Death is not the end; it isn't even a pause. We leave this body, we go to be with Christ, and He raises our body to reunite with our soul—forever.

Family Night – Read John 14:1-14

- **Elementary School** – Ask, "What did Jesus promise the disciples in vv.3-4? According to Jesus, how do we get to go to heaven (v.6.)? How did Jesus make it possible for us to go to heaven?"
- **Middle/ High School** – Ask, "Does Christ's claim in v.6 trouble you? Why? What is Jesus saying in v.10? How is the promise of Jesus (v.6) universally inclusive?"

Prayer: "Father, we are excited about going to heaven someday. Help us follow Jesus more closely. Amen."

Velocity (Middle and High School Students)

Velocity: This Wednesday, September 16 at 6:30.

Gravity: Gravity today in both services.

Today's Songs

The Lion and the LambBig Daddy Weave
Hymn of Heaven.....Phil Wickham
Move.....Jesus Culture

Grandparents Day

Join us in KidsJAM **Today** for Cookies, Milk and Bingo.
All grandparents are welcome. We will see you between the services, 10:35-10:55.

Small Group Leadership Training

Training is on Saturday, September 19. Check out the QR Code in the Lobby or contact Tyler.

Order a T-Shirt

So many of you liked the T-shirt worn by the staff last Baptism Sunday that we have made them available for you to order online. Go to gracestatesboro.com and click on the "Events" page.

New Series

"Heaven, Hell and the Afterlife" is a new series that starts today.