



Week 1 – Heaven or Hell

“Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example. For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. They are headed for destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and they think only about this life here on earth. But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for Him to return as our Savior. He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like His own, using the same power with which He will bring everything under His control.” – Phil. 3:17-21 (NLT)

A. Foundations

1. God created you.

“So God created human beings in His own image. In the image of God He created them; male and female He created them.” – Gen. 1:27 (NLT)

2. God gave mankind free will.

“The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. But the Lord God warned Him, ‘You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden—except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die.’” – Gen. 2:15-17 (NLT)

3. After being tempted, mankind chose sin.

“The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.” – Gen. 3:6-7 (NLT)

4. Sin brought shame and eternal separation.

“Then the man—Adam—named his wife Eve, because she would be the mother of all who live. And the LORD God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife. Then the LORD God said, ‘Look, the human beings have become like Us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will live forever!’ So the LORD God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and He sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made. After sending them out, the LORD God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And He placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.” – Gen. 3:22-24 (NLT)

5. God made a way back to Himself.

“You get what is coming to you when you sin. It is death! But God’s free gift is life that lasts forever. It is given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ.” – Rom. 6:23 (NLT)

6. You have a choice: Heaven OR hell.

B. Heaven is real...

1. ...and you can rest assured.

“Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in Me. There is more than enough room in My Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with Me where I am.” – John 14:1-3 (NLT)

2. ...and it is reserved for those who are in Christ.

“‘And you know the way to where I am going.’ ‘No, we don’t know, Lord,’ Thomas said. ‘We have no idea where You are going, so how can we know the way?’ Jesus told Him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through Me.’” – John 14:4-6 (NLT)

C. Hell is real...

1. ...so we should not erase it.

“Just as the weeds are sorted out and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the world. The Son of Man will send His angels, and they will remove from His Kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. And the angels will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” – Matt. 13:40-42

“It’s incredibly arrogant to pick and choose which incomprehensible truths we embrace. No one wants to ditch God’s plan of redemption, even though it doesn’t make sense to us. Neither should we erase God’s revealed plan of punishment because it doesn’t sit well with us. As soon as we do this, we are putting God’s actions in submission to our own reasoning, which is a ridiculous thing for the clay to do.” – Francis Chan, *Erasing Hell: What God Said About Eternity, and the Things We’ve Made Up*

2. ...and it is reserved for those who deny Christ.

“Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.” – John 14:4-6 (NLT)

D. The stakes are high! It’s time we go all in!

1. Everybody has a choice in this life, and there are people choosing hell every day.

“For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. They are headed for destruction.” – Phil. 3:18-19a

For the believer...

2. Do you care about the people going to hell?
3. Do you care enough to invite them to know Jesus?
4. What’s keeping you from going all in? Lack of concern, fear of rejection, sin, church frustrations, lack of commitment, etc.?
5. If you had the sole knowledge that an unbeliever was going to die tomorrow, what would you say to them today?

For the unbeliever...

6. Knowing what you know now, which do you choose? Heaven or hell?
7. If you’re not ready to choose today, what’s keeping you from making that choice?

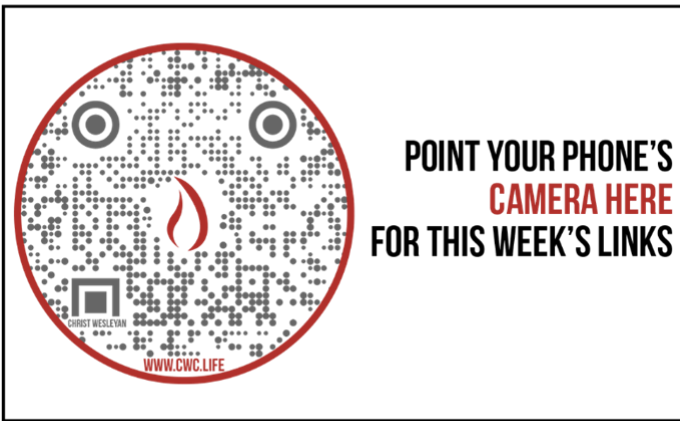
For us all...

8. The Church (globally) is facing big decisions. Get ready!
9. We need each other. Keep gathering, growing, giving, and going.

NEXT WEEK (August 8):

All In

The State of the Church



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