Part 1: Is Eternity Real?

Small Group Lesson

Big Idea: Most people believe in life after death - it's just a question of what that eternal life will be like. God has "placed eternity in the heart of man" (Eccl. 3:11). We all have an innate knowledge that there must be more to life than this earth. Scripture clearly teaches that God created us for his presence, and this is what we're truly longing for. We were MADE for HEAVEN! In this season of evangelism at Bethany, sharing the eternal hope of heaven is a great way to share the Gospel. While there are many things we don't yet know about eternity, we know the most important things.

Key Scripture: "It's not his will that anyone is destroyed, but that everyone repents." - 2 Peter 3:9

1. We all have an appointment with eternity.

"Each person is destined to die once, and after that, the judgment" (Heb 9:27). Death is part of the common human experience. It is inevitable. It doesn't distinguish between background, upbringing, or socioeconomic status. Each one of us is on a clock that's winding down, and cannot be altered.

Discussion Question: If you could see how much time was left on your clock, how would it change your priorities?

2. Hell is a real place.

Scripture makes several explicit references to hell; there is no way around the fact that it exists. In Matthew 25:41, Jesus mentions that hell "has been prepared for the devil and his angels". It was not a place God ever intended to send us. It is a place devoid of God's presence. However, God has given us an alternate path in Jesus Christ, and the ability to choose him.

Discussion Question: Why did God even allow hell as an option?

3. Heaven is a real place.

While hell was never prepared for us, Jesus promises that he is "preparing a place" for us to be with him (John 14:1). This is the place of completion, the place that we were always designed to be - in his PRESENCE. Some things we know about Heaven:

- The place where God resides (Rev. 21)
- A place where there is no sun because of God's glory (Rev. 21)

- A place where there is no pain or tears (Rev 21)
- A place where the river of life flows (Rev 21)
- In God's presence is the fullness of joy (Psalm 16)
- A place where we receive perfected bodies (2 Cor. 5)

Discussion Question: What are you most excited about for heaven? How can we live with the heavenly perspective on this earth?

4. God desires that we all go to heaven with him.

God saw that we could not escape our sins on our own, and that we were doomed to eternity apart from him. So HE MADE A WAY for us to be saved. He sent his Son to pay the price for our sins on the cross, and now all that's left is to put our faith in him. The thief on the cross next to Jesus became the first person ever saved.

Discussion Question: Share your testimony - describe the moment when you first received Jesus. How can you use the points in this lesson to help lead someone to Jesus this week?

Conclusion

As we step into October, we are encouraging everyone to believe God for souls in this month of harvest.

Pray for salvation for those in your group today that wish to make a decision for Christ, and pray for boldness for each person in your group to speak out and share the gospel with those around them.