

## Care Group Study Questions

**May 12/13, 2007 Message: On the Outside Looking In – Heaven and Hell**  
**Would a Loving God really send anyone to Hell?**  
**John 5:16-30**

### **History (Making It Personal)**

1. What conversations have you had with people about their understanding of hell? Do most people you know actually believe in a literal hell? How would they define it?
2. If the people you talk with do not believe in hell – what do they believe about the afterlife?
3. What do you think of the idea that “we make our own heaven or hell” that “we create hell for ourselves” that life is what you make it to be? How much truth is there in that statement – and what is missing?
4. Why do you think many Christians today are uncomfortable talking with people about the reality of hell? How have you felt when the conversation has come up?

### **Digging Deeper (Looking to the Bible)**

5. Re-read John 5:21-29 and John 3:13-19. Talk about the reality of the world being condemned long before Jesus came. How does this perspective change your picture of Jesus? How might it change a non-believer's perspective?
6. Read Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-11; Romans 5:12 & 18-19; and I John 5:19. Talk about the choice God gave us – and the freedom we have to respond or to reject Him. How does our response affect our destiny? How much is God “punishing” us and how much is it simply that He gives us what we want?
7. Consider C.S. Lewis' argument that: “The choice of ways is before you. Neither is closed. Any man may choose eternal death. Those who choose it will have it.” (The Great Divorce) As you think about this quote – remember texts like Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Joshua 24:14-15 and I John 5:1-5.
8. How do you understand passages about God's love for all – and yet His ultimate judgment of sinful people? Think of passages like 2 Peter 2:4-9 and 3:3-12. John 3:16-18 How should we live in light of these texts?
9. Finally, read Paul's passion for his own people – the Jews in Romans 9:1-3. Talk about the level of passion we should actually have if we really believed and understood what was at stake in the lives of people around us? Why do you think we are not more concerned about those who have rejected Christ? Why are we not more concerned about those who have never heard?

### **Taking It Home (Application)**

This is a difficult subject – and one that we don't often discuss....but take some time to pray about the implications of this teaching. If we are really living in a condemned world, and if Jesus is really offering us life – then why would this be bad news to anyone!

How should we be living on “this side of the fence” so that people would be drawn by what they see in our lives?

Are we bringing heaven to earth in the way we live? Or have we relegated “heaven” to simply that which happens after we die?

Pray for our valley and our region – but pray also for people who are living in self-imposed “hells” all around us everyday....marriages that hurt, addictions that bind, habits that destroy. Pray for God's healing balm.