

We Believe in Eternal Destiny
(EFCA article #10 of 10)*Response and Eternal Destiny*

We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.

1. We believe the dead in Christ will rise first

*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 - Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, **and the dead in Christ will rise first**. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.*

2. For the unbeliever - We believe in an eternal hell

- a. The Definition: Hell is a place of eternal conscious punishment for the wicked.
- b. The Reality: *Luke 16:19-31*
- c. The duration: *Matt 25:46 - Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.*
- d. The Occupants: *Matt 7:21-23 - Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? 'Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'*

3. For the believer - We believe in an eternal heaven

- a. The Definition: Hell is a place of eternal conscious punishment for the wicked.
- b. The Reality: *John 14:1-4 - Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God[a]; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.*
- c. The Duration: *Matt 25:46 - Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.*
- d. The Occupants: *John 14:6 - I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

ONE THING

Eternity is for real. Do you know Jesus?

At Home Study Guide

For the week of December 5, 2021

We Believe. We – Bethel Evangelical Free Church and all those who call this local body of believers our church home. We Believe – we have confidence that these essential truths are what we hold onto in common. Over this 10-week series we will cover ten essential truths of our faith. We pray you will grow deeper in knowing what you believe and why you believe it.

1. What does it mean to believe the gospel?
2. Think about the difference between knowing a fact, agreeing that it is true, and trusting it. Why is it important that we do more than know and agree about who he is? Why do we need to trust Jesus for salvation? (John 1:12)
3. How does the fact of God's final judgment affect your thinking and actions?
4. How can you be a more intentional witness for Jesus to others, in light of his second coming?

Be sure to pick up a copy of our 2021 Advent Devotional, *Behold the Lamb of God*, in the foyer or sign up to receive the devotional by email at bethelfc.com/Christmas.

ONE THING

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