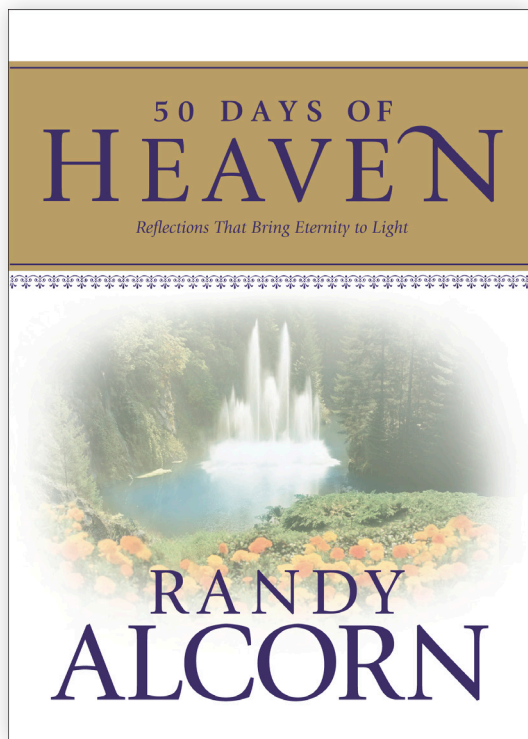


50 Days of
HEAVEN



*Study
Guide*

a 50-day study
to accompany your
reading of the book



eternal perspective ministries
with author Randy Alcorn

Special thanks to Sally Meredith for sharing the initial version of this study with our ministry.

Introduction

Before reading the book's introduction, read Revelation 21 and 22 at least twice (you may find using several translations helpful), and then answer the following questions:

1. What are you looking forward to learning in this study of Heaven?

2. Read Psalm 39:4-5. Why is this important as we consider the life after this one?

3. Read 2 Corinthians 5:6-8. According to Paul, what does absent from the body mean?

4. Read John 8:44. How does Jesus describe Satan? Why would the world and Satan lie to us concerning Heaven?

5. Read Genesis 3:4-5. What were Satan's lies? What was he trying to accomplish?

Day 1

If We Can Just See the Shore

1. What does Randy say is the only proper foundation for optimism?

2. According to today's reading, what three things will "grasping what the Bible teaches about Heaven" do for us?

Shift our

Radically alter our

Give us

3. Read Philippians 3:13-14. What gave Paul the strength and perspective to "press on toward the goal"?

Day 2

Heavenly Minded and of Earthly Good

1. Read Psalm 39:4-5. How should keeping this in mind affect how we live our daily lives?

2. What does Psalm 90:12 tell us to do?

3. According to Colossians 3:1-2, what should our daily focus be?

4. In Revelation 13:6, what three things does Satan slander?

Day 3

Seeing God's Face

1. Who is God, according to 1 Timothy 6:16? Why does the truth of that verse make Revelation 22:4 so astonishing?

2. Read Matthew 1:23. What does "God with us" [Immanuel] mean at Jesus' first coming? How does it differ at His second coming [see Revelation 19:11-13]?

3. Who does Matthew 5:8 say will see God?

Day 4

God: Our Primary Pleasure

1. Read Job 19:25-27. What do you find remarkable about this passage? What do you learn about God from it?

2. What does Hebrews 13:8 tell us about Jesus?

3. According to Romans 1:20, what is one important way everyone can learn about God? What qualities does that way reveal about Him?

4. What does Psalm 19:1 tell us?

5. How does the psalmist's description of his perception of God in Psalm 73:25 compare with yours? Is there anything you'd like to ask God to change within you after pondering this?

Day 5

Enjoying God in Secondary Pleasures

1. How would you answer Randy's question at the beginning of today's reading: "Do you think God is pleased when we enjoy a good meal, a football game, laughter with friends, a cozy fire, or a good book?"

2. Read Romans 8:32. What does God give us?

3. Read 1 Timothy 6:17. Who should be the object of our hope? What shouldn't be?

Day 6

Knowing for Sure That We're Going to Heaven

1. How many of us will die? How many of us deserve Heaven?

2. Read the following verses. What do they each say about who is “saved” and who isn’t, and why?

Matthew 7:13-14

Romans 3:23

Isaiah 59:2

Habakkuk 1:13

3. If Heaven is not our “default” destination, what is? Why?

4. What do the following verses tell us about God’s promises and character?

Exodus 32:32-33

Psalm 69:28

Revelation 3:5

Revelation 20:11-15

5. What is the unifying message of the following verses?

2 Peter 3:9

1 Timothy 2:4

Revelation 3:20

Day 7

Heaven on Earth

1. Describe life on the New Earth according to these verses:

Revelation 21:1-3

Isaiah 25:6

Matthew 8:11

Luke 22:18, 29, 30

Revelation 19:9

2. Where is God residing at this moment?

3. In Revelation 21:1-3, how will God's dwelling place change?

4. What is the significance of the New Jerusalem coming down to the New Earth? (See Revelation 21:3.)

Day 8

Where God's People Go When They Die

1. In today's reading, Randy writes, "The writers of Scripture present Heaven in many ways..." What ways does he list?
2. Is the Scriptural truth that our final destination is the New Earth (and not the present Heaven, where believers go now where they die) a new concept to you? Why or why not?
3. Randy shares that in the present Heaven, everyone is happy, but they are also looking forward to something. What is it?

Day 9

The Present Heaven: A Physical Place?

1. According to Ecclesiastes 12:7, what happens to our body at death?

2. What do these verses say about our life on this present earth?

Job 7:16

Psalm 39:5

Psalm 102:11

Psalm 103:15

3. According to Philippians 1:23, how should we view life and death?

4. Read Acts 7:55-56. What did Stephen see?

Day 10

Paradise: The Present Heaven

1. Jesus told the thief on the cross, “Today you will be with me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43) Where is Paradise? Is it the same as Heaven? (See also Luke 16:19-31.)

2. In Genesis 2, we learn about the Tree of Life. Look up these verses and explain where the Tree of Life is now, and where it will be one day.

Revelation 2:7

Revelation 22:2

3. Why would God station cherubim at the gate of Eden? (See Genesis 3:24.)

Day 11

Seeing Earth from Heaven

1. Read Luke 15:7 and Revelation 18:20. What do these verses tell us about Heaven's inhabitants?

2. According to Revelation 19:11-14 and what Randy shares in today's reading, what role will the residents of the present Heaven be given at the second coming of Christ?

3. Hebrews 12:1 talks about two things: running and witnesses. From what Randy shared in this reading, what does "running" refer back to, and who are the witnesses?

4. What is Heaven's happiness based on now?

Day 12

Heaven's Inhabitants: Remembering and Praying?

1. According to these verses, what will we remember about our current lives?

Malachi 3:16

Matthew 12:36

Luke 16:25

2 Corinthians 5:10

2. What do these scriptures say about eternal rewards and should we strive for them now?

Matthew 6:19-21

Luke 12:33; 19:17

1 Corinthians 3:12-15

1 Timothy 6:19

Revelation 2:26

Revelation 14:13

3. According to these verses, who prays in Heaven?

Romans 8:34

Revelation 5:8

Revelation 6:10

Day 13

God's Plan to Redeem the Earth

1. What do we learn about the New Earth from these verses?

Isaiah 65:17

Isaiah 66:22

Romans 8:19-23

Ephesians 1:10

2 Peter 3:13

Revelation 21:1

2. Finish this sentence from Randy in today's reading: "God's redemptive plan culminates..."

3. List all the "re" words Randy shares.

4. According to Psalm 24:1 who does the world (and everything in it) belong to?

5. If God is not going to permanently destroy Earth, what will He destroy?

1 John 3:8

Hebrews 2:14-15

Day 14

The New Earth: A Real Earth?

1. Finish the Martyn Lloyd-Jones quote at the beginning of today's reading: "...men and women are meant to..."

2. What does Jesus tell us about Heaven in John 14:2-3?

3. In Genesis 3:17, we see that our world was damaged by sin. How will God restore it, according to Revelation 21-22?

Day 15

The Coming “Renewal of All Things”

1. Read Acts 3:21. Where is Jesus now, and what will be restored?
2. According to Luke 2:38, who will bring redemption?
3. What will happen at the renewal of all things according to Jesus in Matthew 19:28?
4. How does Jesus’ prayer “your will be done on earth...” that He taught the disciples (found in Matthew 6 and Luke 11) relate to this restoration and renewal? (See Randy’s prayer at the end of today’s reading for some ideas.)

Day 16

A Vision of the New Earth

1. According to what Randy writes in today's reading, are these passages about the Millennium or the New Earth, or both? (Remember, many prophecies have double meanings.)

Isaiah 11:6-10

Isaiah 60:11-22

2. Where and when will we see the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises?

3. What does Psalm 46:1 tell us about God?

Day 17

God's Glory on God's Earth

1. Complete this sentence from Randy in today's reading: "God has tied His glory to..."

2. What do we learn about God's glory on the New Earth from these passages?

Psalm 85:9

Ezekiel 43:2

Psalm 102:15-16

Isaiah 66:19-20

3. What does God tell us about His glory?

Psalm 19:1

Isaiah 42:8

Isaiah 48:9-11

Hebrews 1:3

John 1:14

Day 18

The Curse Reversed

1. In Genesis 3:17-22, what things did God curse? What was their curse?

2. Read Ephesians 1:10. How will Heaven and Earth become one?

3. How will the Curse be reversed according to Revelation 21:1-5 and Romans 8:2, 19-21?

4. Finish this sentence from today's reading: "Christ's redemption extends to all that is under the Curse—..."

Day 19

Our Old Bodies Made New

1. Read 1 Corinthians 15. In verse 53, when we are raised again, what happens to our bodies?
2. Finish the R.A. Torrey quote at the beginning of today's reading: "We will not be disembodied spirits in the world to come, but redeemed..."
3. According to Ecclesiastes 3:11, what has God done?
4. What hyphenated word does the Westminster Larger Catechism use to describe our bodies which were laid in the grave, and then will be "raised up by the power of Christ"?

Day 20

Christ's Resurrection Body: The Model for Ours

1. In Luke 24:13-39, why didn't the disciples recognize Jesus? (See verse 16.)

2. Read Luke 24:36-39. How is Jesus described in this passage? What did He do?

3. How will our bodies be transformed according to:

Philippians 3:20-21

1 Thessalonians 4:14

4. Why is it important that we understand that the "spiritual bodies" described in 1 Corinthians 15 are still real bodies?

5. How are the righteous described in Matthew 13:43?

6. Think about your resurrection body “upgrade.” What do you hope you’ll be able to do?

Day 21

As Mankind Goes, So Goes Creation

1. Read Romans 8:19-23. Why is creation groaning?
2. List some ways you see the creation around you groaning, longing for redemption.
3. Read Colossians 1:16-20. We're told that "all things were created" by Jesus. From verse 16, list the specifics which "all things" includes.
4. Why is redemption good news for us and for plants and animals and the rest of the universe?

Day 22

What the “New” in “New Earth” Means

1. Read Revelation 21:1-2. Why is it important for us to understand that “new” doesn’t mean that Earth will be a non-earth, but the present earth made much better?

2. Read Isaiah 65:17-25. What are some of the characteristics of the New Earth described in this passage?

3. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, what is described as “new”?

4. How does Randy describe “new” at the end of today’s reading? “...a restored and...”

Day 23

Homesick for Heaven

1. What is it about going home that is so wonderful?

2. Finish this C.S. Lewis quote shared in today's reading: "If I find in myself a desire..."

3. In light of the coming New Earth, why should we be careful about telling people, "This world is not your home"? How might we modify that statement to better reflect biblical truth?

Day 24

The Joy of Living with God Forever

1. Where will God dwell according to Ezekiel 37:27 and Revelation 21:3?

2. Randy lists two things we'll at last be freed from in Heaven. What are they?

3. Finish this sentence from today's reading: "Going to Heaven without God..."

4. What was Paul's dilemma in Philippians 1:21-23?

5. At the end of today's reading, what things does Randy list as activities we may someday get to enjoy doing with God on the New Earth? Which one most excites you?

Day 25

Promised Land, Promised Earth: The New Earth vs. the Millennium

1. According to Revelation 5:9, who will dwell with God forever?
2. Read Revelation 5:10 and describe our role on the New Earth.
3. According to Proverbs 2:21-22; 10:30, what are the differences between the righteous and the wicked?
4. What two terms does Hebrews 11:13-16 use to describe our heavenly home?
5. Even if we disagree about details related to the Millennium, what does Randy say we should be in absolute agreement about related to our future with God?

Day 26

The Kingdom of Kingdoms

1. Finish this sentence from today's reading: "Jesus Christ is the second..."

2. Describe Christ's coming Kingdom from the following passages:

Daniel 2:44

Zechariah 9:9-10

Zechariah 14:9

3. What do the following verses tell us about our job on the New Earth?

1 Corinthians 6:2-3

Luke 19:17

2 Timothy 2:12

4. According to the end of today's reading, what is our future leadership position dependent upon?

Day 27

A Government We'll Love to Be a Part of

1. What could be our response if someone says, "I don't want to rule. That's not my idea of Heaven"? (Hint: whose idea is it for us to rule?)
2. Based on what you read today, will there be a hierarchy on the New Earth? If so, what does Randy say will be absent?
3. What does Luke 14:11 tell us about the kind of character God values in His children?
4. Finish this sentence from today's reading: "Ruling will likely involve..."

Day 28

Where Bellmen and Cleaning Ladies Will Rule

1. What are crowns a symbol of?

2. Randy writes that “Service is a reward, not a punishment.” Based on what you read today, why is that true, according to Scripture?

3. Read 2 Timothy 4:8 and answer truthfully: Are YOU longing for His appearing? Why or why not?

4. According to Matthew 5:3-10, who will God reward in His kingdom?

Day 29

The New Earth: A Greater Eden

1. Was it a new idea for you to realize that the eternal Heaven will be the New Earth, and therefore, be earthly? Why or why not?

2. According to Isaiah 51:3, what will the New Earth be like?

3. Why would C. S. Lewis call this Earth the “Shadowlands”? (See Hebrews 8:5.)

4. Answer the question at the end of today’s reading: What are some of the good things from this world and from your own life that God might carry over to the New Earth?

Day 30

Animals on the New Earth?

1. Read Isaiah 65:25 and list the animals mentioned. What will be different about them?
2. According to what Randy writes, why is this passage likely referring to the New Earth, and not just the Millennium?
3. What does “nephesh” mean according to today’s reading, and who is it used to describe in Scripture?
4. How are people and animals similar? How are they vitally different?
5. What animals are you most looking forward to seeing on the New Earth?

Day 31

Animals We Love Might Live Again

1. In Romans 8:21-23, who is doing the “groaning”? Why might this include animals?

2. In today’s reading, Randy lists three things God could do regarding animals on the New Earth. Write them below.

3. How has God reminded you of His goodness through animals?

Day 32

The New Jerusalem

1. Describe the New Jerusalem according to Revelation 21:11-19.

2. What is in the center of the New Jerusalem? (See Revelation 22:1-2.) What will be on either side of it?

3. What will be different about the New Jerusalem as opposed to the old Jerusalem, or for that matter any of our cities on this present Earth? What won't be there?

Day 33

Being Ourselves in Heaven

1. Read Job 19: 26-27. What future biblical event is this a beautiful prophecy of?
2. What did the resurrected Jesus tell His disciples to do in Luke 24:39?
3. Why is it important to know that “I and not another” will be in Heaven? How would you answer someone who is worried they won’t be themselves in eternity?
4. Who do Heaven’s inhabitants rejoice over? (See Luke 15:4-10.)
5. If you know Jesus as Savior, your name is recorded in the Lamb’s... (See Revelation 20:15, 21:27.)

Day 34

Eating and Drinking on the New Earth

1. According to John 21:4-14, what did Jesus do in His resurrected body?
2. What does Philippians 3:20-21 tell us about our future resurrected bodies?
3. What does 1 Corinthians 10:31 tell us to do? Will we cease to do this in Heaven? Why or why not?
4. Who will prepare a meal for us, according to Isaiah 25:6? How do you think that meal will taste?

Day 35

Knowing and Learning

1. Why will we NOT know everything on the New Earth?

2. According to what Randy shared in today's reading, what does it mean "to know fully"? (See 1 Corinthians 13:12.)

3. Do the angels know everything? (See 1 Peter 1:12.)

4. What will Christ "reveal" in the ages to come? (See Ephesians 2:6-7.)

5. List people in Scripture or famous people from history you want to meet and have them tell you “the rest of the story” of their lives.

6. Think of those who you’ve personally known, and who have gone before you to Heaven. Who would you most love to reunite with and hear more about their stories?

Day 36

Resting and Working

1. What did the Curse bring us in regard to work on this present Earth? (See Genesis 2:15 and 3:17-19.)

2. Who is at work, according to John 5:17?

3. What does God tell us about work in Colossians 3:23? In what ways will this command be easier to obey on the New Earth?

4. List some vocations that will not continue on the New Earth. What might people currently employed in those vocations find to do instead?

Day 37

Remembering and Recognizing

1. According to what Randy shares in today's reading, our happiness in Heaven won't be dependent on ignorance, but will be enhanced by what?

2. What will not be remembered, according to Jeremiah 31:34?

3. Have you ever worried you won't recognize friends or loved ones in Heaven, or talked to someone who struggles with this concern? How does 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 provide comfort?

Day 38

Marriage and Family

1. Will our family members still be our family members on the New Earth? Why or why not?
2. What are we told we will gain in Mark 10:29-30? How can this encourage those who've experienced broken and painful relationships on this present Earth?
3. Look at what Matthew 22:30 says about marriage. Why will our spouses still be important to us even though there's no human marriage in Heaven?
4. What does earthly marriage point to, according to Ephesians 5:31-32?
5. Finish this quote from today's reading: "Earthly marriage is a..."

Day 39

Friendships in Heaven: Old and New

1. What does Acts 17:26 say about the sovereignty of God in your life?

2. In Luke 16:9, what did Jesus tell His disciples to do with wealth? Have you ever considered that you may meet those in Heaven whose lives were impacted by your giving?

3. Randy writes, "...it's also possible that you haven't yet met the closest friends you'll ever have." Why is this exciting to contemplate?

Day 40

Lost Opportunities Regained

1. Finish the Jim Elliot quote shared at the beginning of today's reading: "He is no fool..."
2. Describe some of the losses you've experienced in your own life. What encouragement does 2 Corinthians 4:17 give us?
3. According to Romans 8:18, what will one day be revealed in us?

Day 41

Races and Nations

1. What promise did God make to Abraham in Genesis 22:18?
2. How do we see the fulfillment of this ancient promise in Revelation 5:9-10; Revelation 21:24-26?
3. Read Ephesians 2:14-16. How should this reality impact how we treat people of other races and nations now?
4. What does Randy say peace on the New Earth be rooted in?

Day 42

The Development of Culture

1. What things does Randy list at the beginning of today's reading as being part of society or culture? Can you think of more examples?
2. What command did God give to Noah, just as He gave to Adam? (See Genesis 1:28; 9:1.)
3. Did God give up on His original idea of humanity ruling the earth to His glory? Why or why not?
4. Look back at your answers to question 1. What aspect of a glorified culture do you most look forward to experiencing?

Day 43

Laughter

1. Read Hebrews 1:9. What are we told that Jesus has been anointed with?
2. Have you ever considered that God is happy? That Jesus laughed with the disciples when He was on Earth? Why or why not?
3. Jesus promised laughter and joy to those who experience difficulty on this Earth. Read Luke 6:20-23 and list out who He makes these promises to.
4. Why would Satan deceive us into thinking Heaven will be boring, and we will never have fun there?

Day 44

No More Boredom

1. What does Psalm 16:11 tell us we will experience in God's presence?
2. According to today's reading, what is Hell a place of? In contrast, what is Heaven a place of?
3. What heresy does the belief that Heaven will be boring reveal?
4. What will we be doing on the New Earth? (See Revelation 7:15; 22:3.) How will this be exciting?

Day 45

Dreams Fulfilled

1. According to Matthew 5:3-5 what promises are made to those who persevere on this Earth?
2. Why does an eternal perspective help us understand that people who've experienced suffering or died young haven't missed out on the best life has to offer? (Hint: when and where will we experience our "best life"?)
3. What have you always wanted to do but somehow can't seem to do it here? Have you ever imagined yourself doing just that in eternity?

Day 46

New Opportunities on the New Earth

1. Why is it so tempting to hold on to youth with a “white-knuckled” grip? How does remembering God’s promises for eternity change our perspective on aging?

2. Read Luke 18:15-17. What does Jesus say we have to become like in order to enter the Kingdom of God?

3. Why does God value childlike faith?

4. Finish the sentence in today’s reading: “For the Christian, death is...”

Day 47

Plus Ultra: More Beyond

1. Think about Randy's question: "Five minutes after I die, what will I wish I would have done in this life while I still had the chance?" How would you answer?

2. Randy writes, "If dying and going to be with Christ is really 'better by far,' as Paul tells us in Philippians 1:23, why are so many Christians today afraid to die?" Have you struggled with the fear of death? Why or why not?

3. What does it mean to "store up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:20)?

4. What are some ways you can invest in the eternal right here and now? (Hint: it likely involves serving God faithfully in the areas where He's already placed you.)

Day 48

No Rivalry Between Christ and Heaven

1. What does Hebrews 11:16 say about God's people? Would you say this is true of you? Why or why not?

2. How would you answer someone who says, "I just want to be with Jesus—I don't care if Heaven's a shack"?

3. Read Colossians 3:2. Brainstorm some practical ways to put its command into practice. (For example, having conversations about Heaven with friends and loved ones.)

Day 49

Reepicheep and Emily

1. What analogy did Emily Kimball's mother use to explain dying to her daughter?
2. What do you think Calvin Miller meant when he wrote, "Our graves are merely doorways cut in sod"? Where do those doorways open if we know Jesus?
3. Jesus wants you to be sure of your eternal destination. How does Romans 10:9 say we must be saved?

Day 50

It Doesn't Get any Better Than This...or Does It?

1. Read Hebrews 12:28. According to this verse, what will thinking about Heaven lead us to be? What will lead it us to do?

2. Do you struggle with feeling like you've passed your physical peak in life? How does understanding our peak doesn't come in this life radically affect our view of deteriorating health?

3. Who is the person you're made for? What is the place you're made for?

Recommended Further Reading

Heaven by Randy Alcorn

The Case for Heaven by Lee Strobel

Heaven: Your Real Home by Joni Eareckson Tada

Surprised by Hope by N. T. Wright

Study Review

After completing this study, read Revelation 21:1-5. According to verse 4, what won't be on the New Earth? How can this encourage you when life is tough?

Before this study, what did you think about Heaven?

How has your view of Heaven/New Earth been changed by this study?

Read Matthew 25:23. How can you make hearing those words your goal?

Read 2 Peter 1:11. Can you envision Christ and His people welcoming you, and what that will be like?



eternal perspective ministries

with author Randy Alcorn

Eternal Perspective Ministries (EPM) is a Bible-believing, Christ-centered nonprofit organization, founded and directed by author Randy Alcorn, with two goals:

- to teach the principles of God's Word, emphasizing an eternal viewpoint;
- to reach the needy in Christ's name, calling attention to the needs of the unreached, unfed, unsupported, unborn, unreconciled, and untrained.

EPM is the recipient of the author royalties from Randy Alcorn's books, and 100% are given away for ministry purposes: 90% to other worthy Christian organizations and 10% to EPM to help offset the costs related to the writing/researching/editing of the books, as well as to help facilitate the giving away of our books to people all over the world. We love the fact that God uses Randy's books to change people's lives in two ways: through the reading of his words and through the giving away of his royalties.

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Twice a year, EPM produces *Eternal Perspectives*, a full-color magazine. EPM also sends a periodic email newsletter with the latest news about Randy's books, projects, and speaking events, as well as special promotions from EPM. You can subscribe at epm.org/subscribe.

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So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.
For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

2 Corinthians 4:18