

Message Discussion Guide

THE URGENCY OF ETERNITY

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. David Platt

July 27, 2008

Romans 6:23

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God’s Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

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Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Encourage learners to think about everything they did in the past two days. Ask the following questions:

What percentage of your days did you spend completing “urgent” tasks?
What percentage of your days did you spend completing “important” tasks?
What percentage of your days did you spend on things that will last in eternity?
How can we begin to spend more time on eternal things?

Explain that today we’ll discuss the urgency of eternity and how it can be affected by our obedience.

Option 2

Encourage learners to think about what would be said in their obituary. (*You may also provide paper and pen to allow each person to actually write their own obituary.*) Instruct them to include ways that they would want to be remembered in their obituary. Ask the following questions:

What would you like to be said about you in your obituary?
How much of your life do you feel would be considered time wasted, if you died today?
Would you like the impact that your life made to continue on after your death?
How?
How can we not waste the rest of our lives?

Explain that today we will discuss the role that we can play in affecting the world for eternity.

Review the Message . . .

THREAD #5: THE URGENCY OF ETERNITY

Our eternal destiny is dependent on our response to Jesus.

- Will you turn from Jesus?
 - We live without Christ now.
 - We will die without Christ forever.
- Or will you turn to Jesus?
 - We die with Christ now.
 - We will live with Christ forever.

Discussion Questions

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- Enlist four volunteers to read Romans 5:9-11, Romans 6:8-13, Romans 7:8-12, and Romans 8:1-2. What two images are being contrasted in these passages by Paul? (*life and death*)?
- Read Romans 6:23. What causes us to experience death? What causes us to experience life?
- Based on these passages that we've read in Romans, what are the implications of death? Life? What are the eternal implications?
- Invite a volunteer to read Galatians 2:20. How can our death bring life?
- Are we all certainly condemned to death? Who will experience eternal life or death?
- How can we have life? How can we have eternal life? When will we experience this life from Christ?
- Do we have a choice?

Application . . .

- Why is the Gospel so important?
- What is heaven? What is hell? What is it about these places that make them a place of joy and torment, respectively?
- Explain that the Gospel's effect in our lives ultimately hinges on our response to Christ. What expectations do we often hold for others to show that they've made this decision (*examples may include answers such as signing a card, talking to the pastor, joining a church, baptism*)?
- How can we appear to turn to Jesus without actually surrendering to Him?
- If heaven and hell are real, what does that mean about people who die?
- If people are dying every day and could die everyday, what does our silence towards the gospel indicate about our heart for their eternal destiny?

SEWING GOSPEL THREADS . . .

God is the just and gracious Creator of all things.

**We are each created by God, but we are all corrupted by sin.
Jesus alone is able to remove our sin and reconcile us to God.**

We are reconciled to God only through faith in Jesus.

Our eternal destiny is dependent on our response to Jesus.

- **Minimize your conversations about temporal things.**
- **Maximize your conversations about eternal things.**
- **Talking about responding to the Gospel . . .**
 - **Be clear.**
 - **Trust the power of the Gospel.**
 - **Be Christ-centered.**
 - **Point people to an encounter with Jesus.**
 - **Be confident.**

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- Trust the work of the Spirit.
- Be careful.
 - Remember the goal is NOT decisions; the goal is disciples.

Discussion Questions

- Enlist a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 4:4-6. How are the minds of unbelievers opened to hear the Gospel? What role do we play in sharing the gospel and opening the eyes of those who do not follow Christ?
- Read Romans 1:16. What does this verse indicate about the Gospel? What is the danger in changing or trying to make the Gospel look “attractive” to particular groups of people? Is it ever necessary to use cultural knowledge when presenting the Gospel?

Application . . .

- Knowing that there is a 100% death rate in the world, do our actions exhibit an urgency to share the Gospel with everyone we can?
- What percentage of our conversation is held hostage by temporal matters?
- How can we turn these conversations into discussions about eternal things?
- How do we present the Gospel in a way that often encourages a person to accept truths or a religion? How do we eliminate a relationship with Christ when we present the Gospel in this way? What is the danger when this happens?
- What is our role in a person’s life after he/she has chosen to commit his/her life to Christ?
- **Talking about hell . . .**
 - **Speak about God’s judgment with humble fear.**
 - **Speak about God’s wrath with honest compassion.**
- **Talking about heaven . . .**
 - **Take advantage of every opportunity to talk about the hope of being with God.**
 - **Take advantage of every opportunity to talk about the fact that dying is gain.**

Application . . .

- Do we sometimes talk about hell as if it were a proper punishment for heathens or if it were a place we want everyone to avoid? How can we talk about it as a consequence that we all deserve?
- How can our apparent lack of compassion affect the way that a person perceives our motivation for sharing the Gospel? How can it affect the way that a person perceives God?

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- Do we often talk about salvation more as a way to avoid hell or the way to live eternally with God?
- How do we convey our hope in God to those around us everyday?
- How can we use challenging circumstances as opportunities to talk about our eternal hope?

BROOK HILLS AND THE URGENCY OF ETERNITY . . .

- **Do we realize people's condition?**
- **Do we possess the heart of Christ?**
- **Do we want our lives to count?**

Discussion Questions

- Invite a volunteer to read Romans 9:1-5, 10:1-4. Why is Paul lamenting in these passages?
- What does Paul's grief over these lost people indicate about his sentiments toward them? What does it indicate about the reality of their eternal destiny?

Application . . .

- Do we believe what the Bible teaches about heaven, hell, and the condition of humanity? How do our actions correspond with our beliefs?
- If we believe that the Bible is true in regard to the Gospel, how should that change our lifestyles, speech, use of money, our free time?
- Share that having the heart of Christ changes our lives. Are we truly ready for the Gospel to change our lives so that we can be obedient to change others?
- How will we want our lives to be remembered after we die? What really matters in life?
- Sewing Gospel threads into our everyday conversations is a simple way to affect the immediate world around us. What responsibility do we have in impacting the world with the Gospel?