

# FINDING HOPE



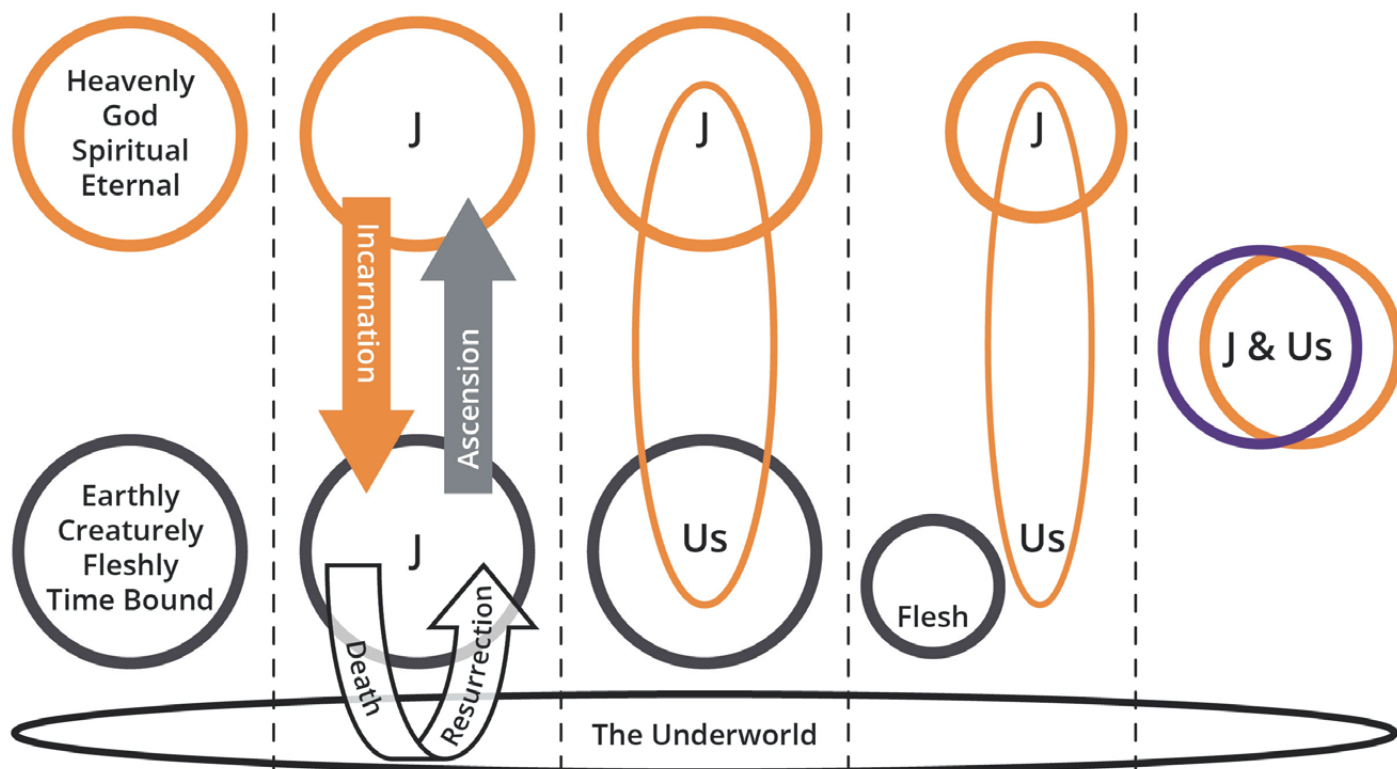
Though in very nature God, he emptied himself of glory, living and dying as a man. Yet God exalted him to the highest place. Next, Jesus will return in glory and the dwelling place of God will be with His people. When we find Jesus we find hope. Finding Hope is a doctrinal series on the return of Jesus, and finding the reality of Christian hope.

This 4 week series and studies will explore the doctrine of the return of Jesus and the renewal of heaven and earth, giving us a frame work to understand what the bible says about His return. Listen to the sermons that accompany these studies online at [figtree.church/sermons](http://figtree.church/sermons).

# STUDY ONE

## Mapping the Messiah

### The Messiah Map



#### Complete the following sentence:

In a perfect world there'd be...

What is your favourite holy day (e.g. Christmas), why is it special to you?

Is there a holy day you really don't get?

*'Come Lord Jesus, Come!'*

How do you feel about this prayer?

#### Take a few a moment to look over the 'Messiah Map' above.

#### Read Colossians 1:15-23.

1. Does this passage along with the map, expand your vision of the work of Jesus? If so, how? Are there things you would like to discuss about this?

Now consider the map part by part

#### Read Exodus 19:16-22

2. Look at the first section on the left of the map. How do you understand the separation of Creator and creation?

Read Isaiah 6:1-5 and recall Colossians 1:19. You may also like to read Matthew 1:22-23.

3. Discuss what is so significant about the incarnation. Why does it have this name?

#### Read Psalm 16:8-10 and Matthew 12:39-42

4. Why is His death and resurrection vital for the claims Jesus has made about himself? Why is this essential for Him?

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## STUDY ONE CONTINUED

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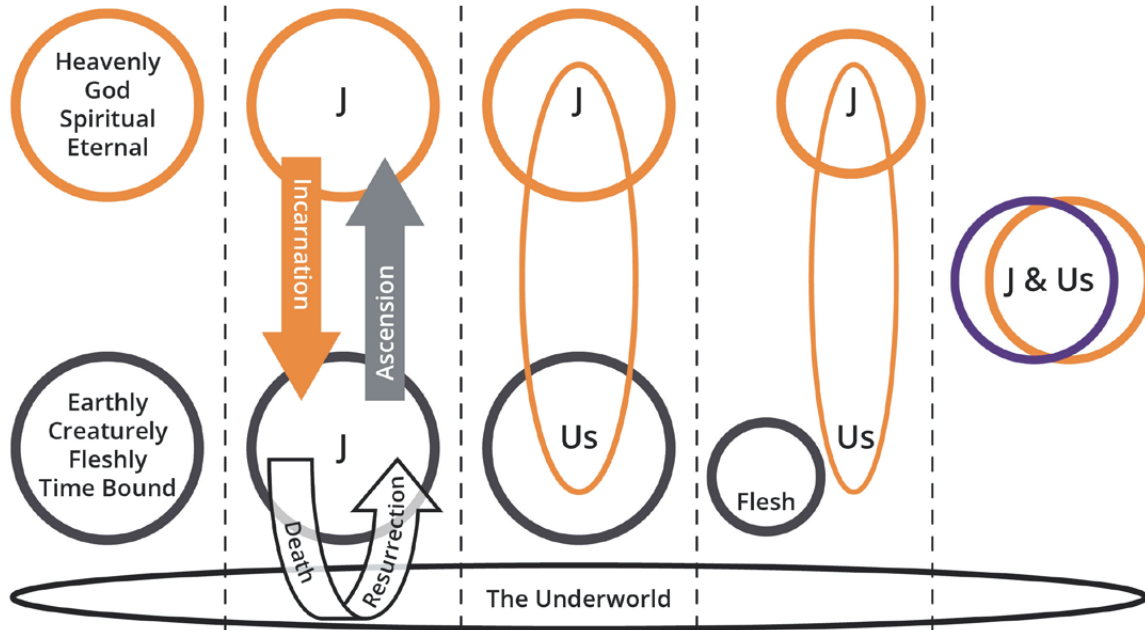
**Read Ephesians 1:3, Ephesians 2:6-7, and John 16:1-7**

5. Can you think of some ways that the Ascension of Jesus changes the relationship between God and humanity?
6. Think about the phrase 'eternal life'.
  - a. When does eternal life begin?
  - b. What might be different between 'eternal life' and 'living forever'?
  - c. What does eternal life mean for those who die in Christ?  
(see 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Luke 23:40-43 and 2 Peter 1:12-15)
7. Why might we think of the return of Jesus as our great hope?  
(See 1 Peter 1:3-7)
8. Do you have some important questions about the return of Jesus that you would like to make note of?

# STUDY TWO

Where to start

## The Messiah Map



Did you know Jesus has promised to return?

What reason do we have to believe He will?

Share some of the things you are wondering about His return?

1. How does the bible describe Jesus in the different 'comings' listed below? From where does he come, where is he coming to, and how is he described?

**a. Incarnation (Christmas)**

Read Philippians 2:6-8, Mark 10:45, and Matthew 8:20

**b. Resurrection and Ascension**

Read Philippians 2:9-11, Acts 2:23-33, Romans 1:3-4, Daniel 7:13-14 and Acts 7:54-56.

**c. The Return of Jesus on the last day**

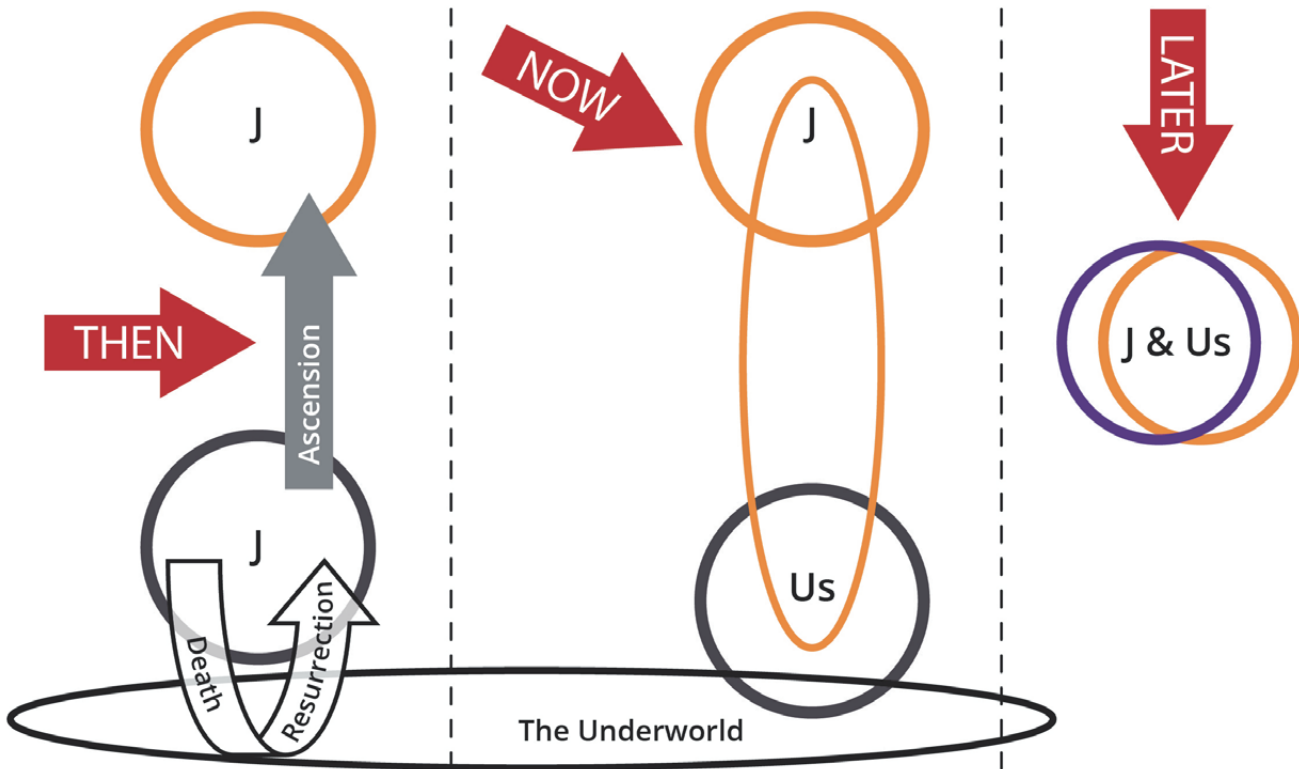
Read Acts 1:10-11, 2 Peter 3:10-13 and Revelations 20:11-15.

2. What do you understand Jesus will do at His return?
3. How can we ensure that we are found righteous on the day of His return?
4. Is it possible to miss the return of Jesus? (How is this like a thief)
5. Is it possible to have missed the resurrection of Jesus? (How is this like a thief)
6. Are there some passages in the bible that you have found tricky to understand with regard to the return of Jesus? How do your answers to questions 2-5 help to serve as guidelines for interpreting tricky scripture?
7. What is the best and only thing followers of Jesus can do help all prepare for the return of Jesus with joyful hope and not dread?

# STUDY THREE

Stand Firm, Keep on Track

## WHERE ARE WE ON THE MESSIAH MAP?



What does a great life now look like?

**Consider the Messiah Map above:**

1. What do you think are the results of a mindset that lags behind God’s time. (To live with a mind that has not understood the comprehensive victory of Jesus by his resurrection)?
2. What do you think are the results of a mindset that has advanced beyond God’s timeline for us. (To live with a mind that sees all of God’s renewal work as being completed)?
3. What do you think a follower of Jesus should expect in our time?
4. What do you think are some of the things that can challenge us from standing firm and keeping on track

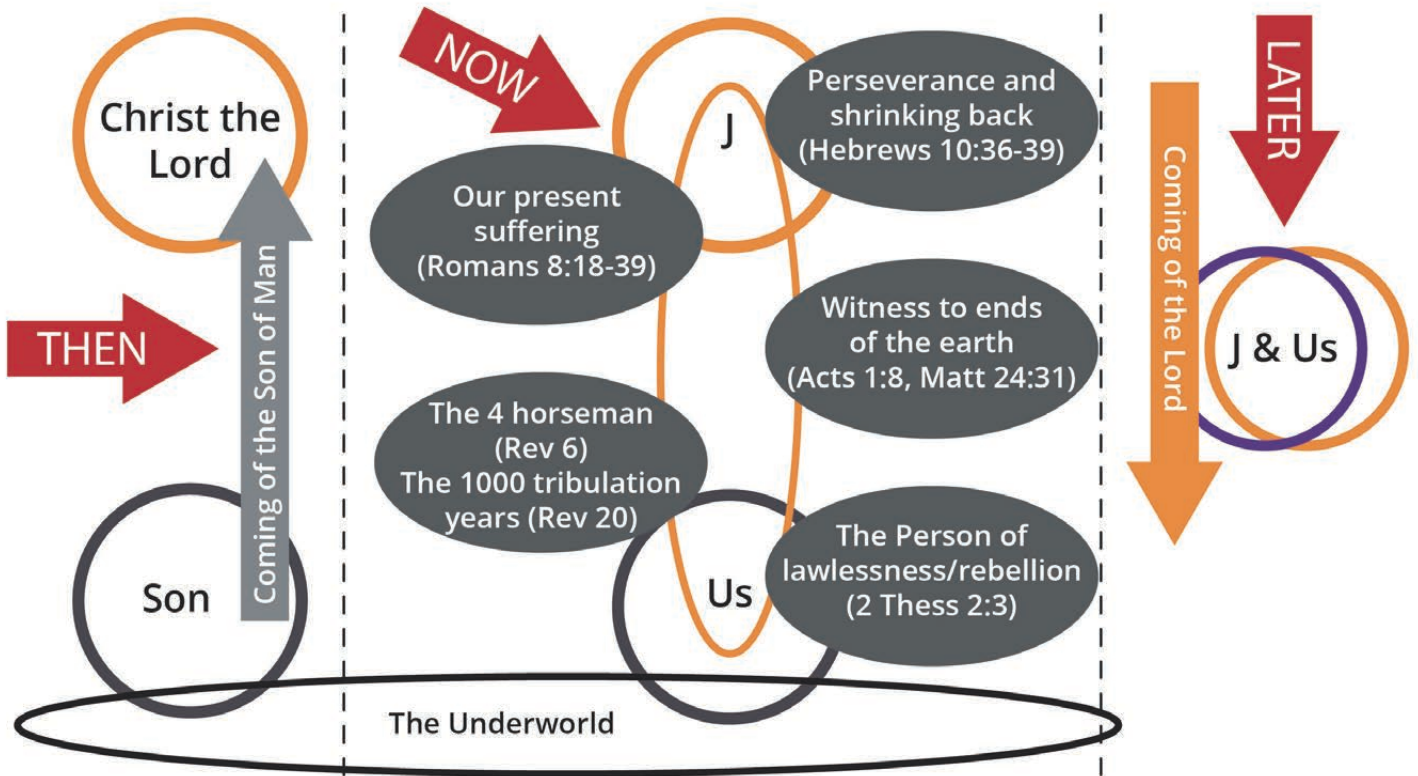
with Jesus? (You may like to see the following for some things that can knock us of track: Hebrews 12:1-4, Titus 1:10-12, 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 2 Thessalonians 3:11-14, Galatians 5:16-21)

**Consider the map on the following page:**

5. Think about the passages shared in the grey ovals:
  - a. What do they teach us about our expectations of now? How is it helpful to be mindful of these things?
  - b. Read again Romans 8:31-39 – How does this text demonstrate the Lordship of Christ, and our certainty to stand firm and keep on track?

# STUDY THREE CONTINUED

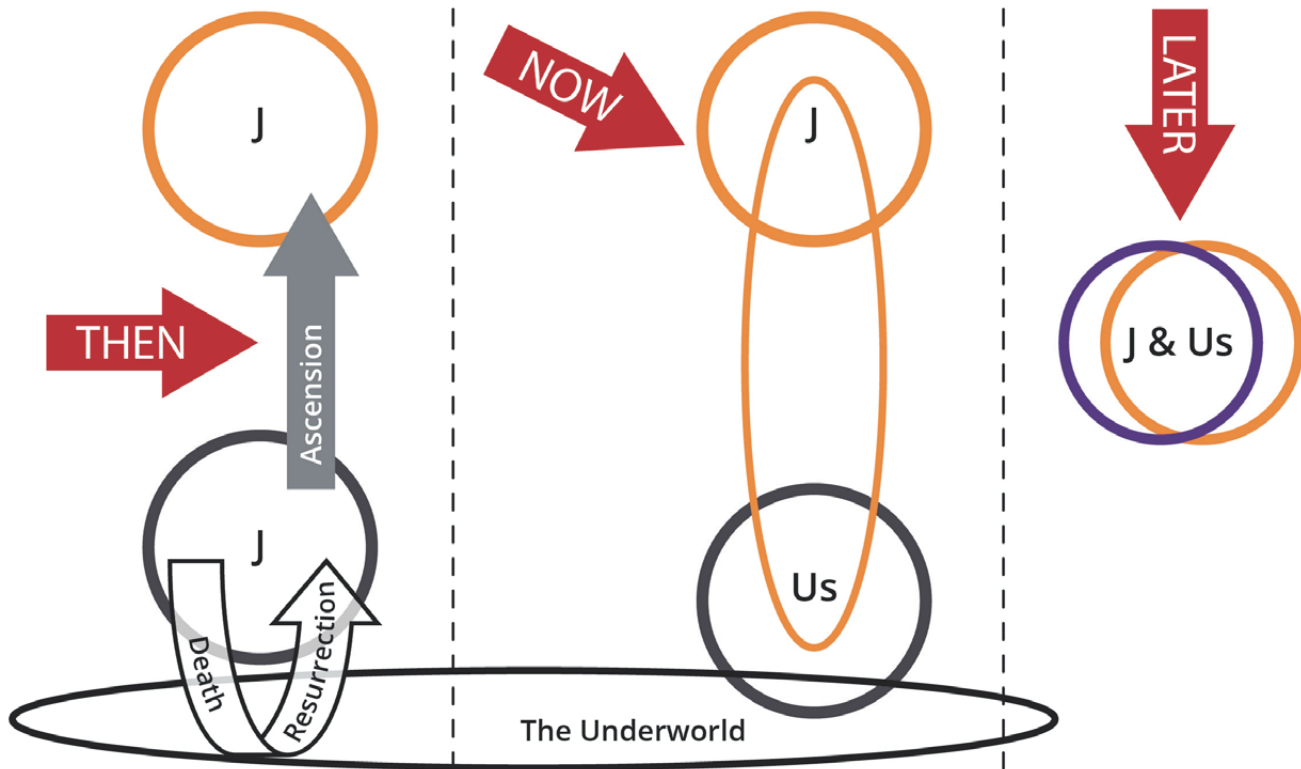
## WHERE ARE WE ON THE MESSIAH MAP?



# STUDY FOUR

Home

## WHERE ARE WE ON THE MESSIAH MAP?



What do you imagine the new creation will be like?

**Consider the Messiah Map above:**

**Read Romans 8:18-39**

1. What expectations and certainties do you take away from this reading, for then, now, and later?
  - a. How do these expectations and certainties align with your initial imaginations of the new creation?
  - b. What do you understand to have been achieved 'now' by the death and resurrection of Jesus, and what do you understand to be 'not yet?'

**Read Revelation 21:5-8**

2. How can we be 'victorious'? (see also 1 Corinthians 15:51-58)
  - a. Why is the 'But' of verse 8 and what follows so important for the new creation? How is this a safe guard for eternity?

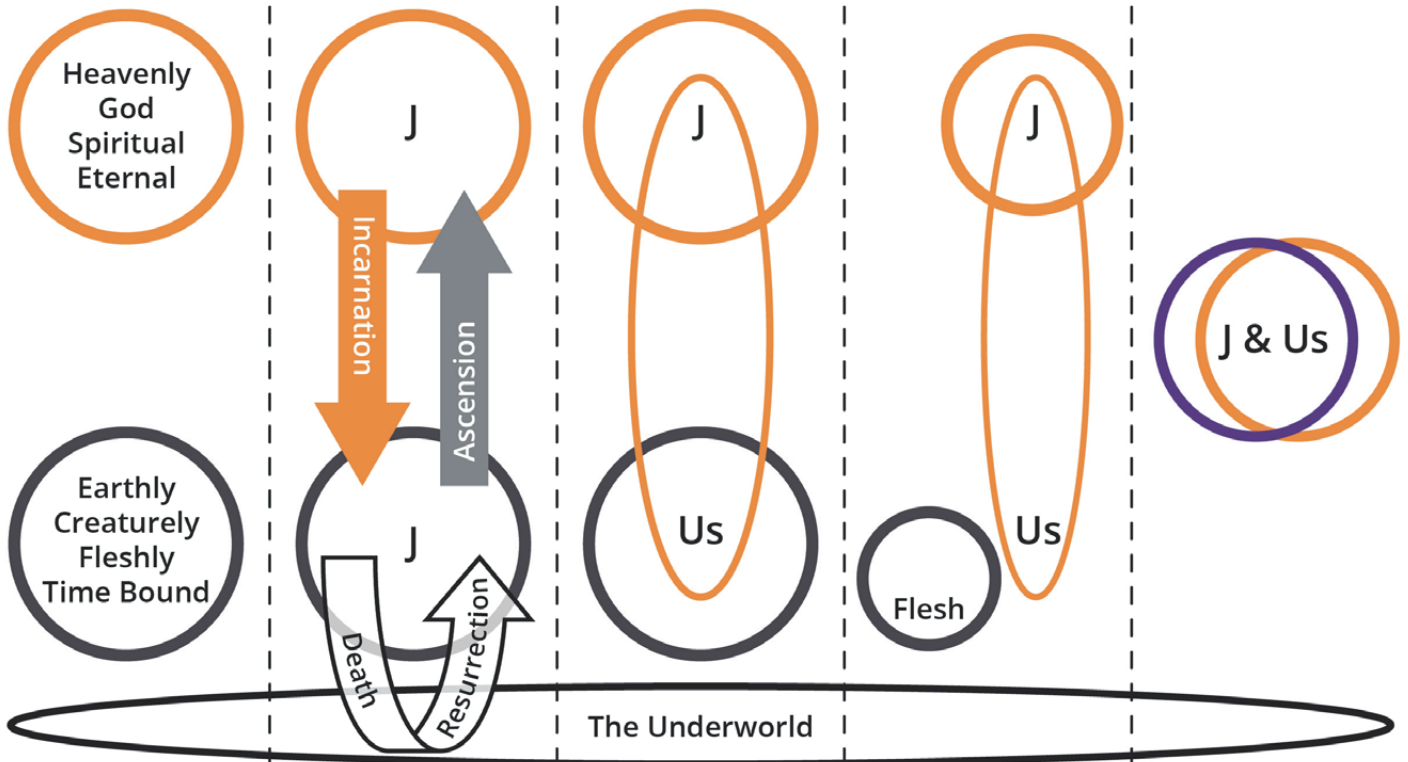
**Read Daniel 12:2**

3. Discuss: How can a good and loving God send people to Hell – eternal contempt?
4. Discuss: How can a just and honest God send people to Heaven – eternal life?

**Take one last look at the full Messiah map on the following page:**

## STUDY FOUR CONTINUED

### The Messiah Map



5. How is the new creation different and so much better than the original?
  - a. How is the relationship between God and humanity different and so much better in the new creation?
  - b. What expectations can we have for how the created order will function in the new creation?

- c. What do you think are the challenges that cause us to at times fixate on the here and now, rather than the glory to come?
- d. What steps do you want to take now, in order to prioritise eternity?