

Small Group Study Guide

Are Things Right With God?

Hebrews 2:14-17

Introduction: For Easter, we are taking a short two week break from our 1 Corinthians sermon series to focus on the humanity of Christ. Today, you are encouraged to consider the question, “Are things right with God?” Between you and God - Are things right? Easter is a great time to be reminded that things between God and us can be right because Jesus Christ became a man and in sharing our humanity he fulfilled a ministry that makes it possible for us to stand before God and know that things are right between us and God. And so, may this study remind you and encourage you about the great things the Jesus has done for you.

Opening Question: Brian quoted from John Piper who has said:

If there were no God, then death would be sad for most people, but it wouldn't be terrifying. It would be sad because life is the basis of all our pleasures—family, friends, work, leisure, food, sex, music—if we lose life, we lose everything that makes us happy—if there is not God. So death would be sad. But not terrifying. Falling asleep and going unconscious and never waking up into consciousness again is a sad farewell to contemplate. The ending of a long, beautiful summer is sad.

But if there is God, if we are created in the image of God, as the Bible teaches, . . . and if he is just and holy and worthy of our love and devotion and worship and obedience, and justly angry at our indifference and distrust and our preference for other things, and if we are going to give an account to this infinite, holy God and be sentenced to heaven or to hell, then death is terrifying if things are not right with God.

1. Have you ever felt terrified or scared or concerned about your own death? If so, explain.

Read Hebrews 2:9-13 (for context):

2. What do these verses say about Jesus? Who is he? What has he done?

Read Hebrews 2:14-17

1. What sticks out to you from this passage?
2. To what extent does Jesus shared our humanity? What phrases and terms does the writer of Hebrews use to describe it?

3. What does the writer of Hebrews say that Jesus, in his humanity, has done?
4. How does Jesus' death render the devil powerless?

Brian said:

Fear of death is something that . . . people experience in different ways. For some, it is a very real thing. It is a fear of the unknown. It is a fear of separation – from loved ones and the things that we know and enjoy. It is the fear of pain. It is the fear of judgment. For others, fear of death may not be something that is always experienced at a conscious level. For many there is a great capacity to live in denial. They simply won't let themselves think about their own death and what might await them. They are able to shut their minds to such thoughts. But when the cancer comes or a loved one dies these thoughts push to the surface. Fear comes. Whether fear of death is a fear that resides at the forefront of our thoughts or whether it is a subconscious thing that we seek to keep below the surface, Jesus, by his death and his resurrection, has set us free from this fear. By his death he took the sting of death and paid the penalty of sin.

5. Do you agree that many people simply won't think about their own death and what awaits them? Why or why not?
6. How does Jesus' death deliver people from slavery to fear of death?
7. Verse 17 says that Jesus became a high priest to make propitiation for the sins of the people. What does it mean that Jesus made "propitiation" for our sins?
8. How does it feel to know that God's anger concerning your sin is satisfied?
9. Do you regularly live as if God IS satisfied concerning your sins? Explain.
10. In light of this passage, how might you counsel a Christian friend who tends to struggle to believe and live in light of the truth that God's anger at him/her for his/her sin has been satisfied in Christ?