



## **Week Five: How to Prepare for the Future – Study Guide**

**August 30, 2014**

All of us would like to know what the future holds, yet none can truly know what tomorrow, or next year, will bring us. However, there is a way to prepare for the future and even know where we will spend our eternal future. So, what's one of the best ways to prepare for the future? Be faithful with what God's given us, and manage those responsibilities to the best of our abilities.

### **Where Am I Today?**

- 1) We all are managing something. We manage things like schedules, businesses, family life, time with our spouses, relationships, and yes, even Life Group. What in your life has become a challenge to manage? How do you think managing what's been given to you is preparing for the future?

### **Into the Bible**

- 2) Jesus gives us an interesting parable about how to prepare for the future. Read **Luke 16:1-13**. Why do you think the manager was commended for being shrewd? Why is faithfulness not dependent on the size of responsibility?



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- 3) Jesus also gives us insight in this chapter on how to prepare for our eternal future. Read **Luke 16:19-31**. What are some truths that we can take away about this story? How can this story give us insight to the importance of planning towards our eternal home more than focusing on our earthly home?

#### How Does This Apply?

- 4) God has given all of us things to do, and what we do with those things matters. Think about the things, or maybe even people, that God has given you to manage and lead. Do you have a plan for what God's given you? If so, what's your plan and how is it working?
- 5) What are some opportunities you might currently be squandering? How can you plan differently, or what changes do you need to make in order to get back on the right track? Reflect and discuss.
- 6) So far, we've been discussing earthly perspectives of planning, managing, and preparing for the future. Now let's look at planning and preparing from an eternal perspective. In what ways are you planning for your eternal future? Does what is after this life, or even the thought of death, scare you? Why or why not?

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#### Continue Learning on Your Own

- 7) The afterlife is a difficult topic to understand and comprehend. If we aren't careful, we can be easily swayed or have difficulty answering questions like, "What really happens to us when we die?" "Do we really go to heaven?" and "Are there other ways to heaven?" To prepare us for future conversations, let's look at some Bible verses and read about what other ideas are out there about death. Here's the key—it's not so much about fully understanding and comprehending heaven and hell, but accepting Jesus as Savior, and that He is the only way to receive salvation.

Read **Matthew 25:31-46**, **John 14:6**, **Acts 4:10-12** and **Revelation 20:13-15**. How can we translate these truths into our conversations?

In a society with different religions, different world views, and varied backgrounds, people hold different viewpoints about death and the afterlife. You can read about what The Cove believes about eternity here: [www.covechurch.org/beliefs](http://www.covechurch.org/beliefs).

For background on what some of the different viewpoints are, you may want to research some topics, including:

- Annihilationism
- Universal Reconciliation
- Naturalism
- Purgatory