



HEAVENLY MINDED *for* EARTHLY GOOD *Leader Manual*

I AM THRILLED that you are considering teaching *Heavenly Minded for Earthly Good*. Most all people--- young and old, male and female--- are curious about life after death. The first time I taught this study, I was surprised at the large number of people who came. Someone in the class quipped, “Everyone wants Heaven!” Isn’t that the truth?

This study is suitable for Bible studies, Sunday School, retreats, or revivals. It’s always best if each participant is able to do the homework in the study book. However, I have taught the material in Sunday School without the class doing any preparation and had a great response. I’ve also used the material at retreat settings. At the conclusion of both, many of the participants wanted to dig into the material on their own.

Heavenly Minded for Earthly Good lends itself to many teaching techniques and styles. Each day’s study contains ample material to support a strictly discussion-based Bible study. However, the use of music, drama, video and video clips can enable the written Word to get even deeper in the soul. In the past I have taught Bible studies that include an hour-long teaching video by the author. So in my preparation of this study, I considered writing additional material for the second hour of each week’s class. But this course covers so much Scripture I feared student overload! The Lord challenged me to “be creative” in communicating the message of Heaven. The class enjoyed the variety that resulted. Feel free to pick and choose from the ideas given in this manual. Perhaps these suggestions will spawn other ideas. Pray over what might enable your group to best experience each week’s lesson. Have fun and be daring, trusting God to lead the way. People learn

in a variety of ways, and God knows just how to get His message written in the human heart!

Suggested formats and time frames

1. ONE-HOUR BIBLE STUDY CLASS.

For a one-hour discussion group, use the questions in the back of the book; they will more than fill an hour's time. If possible, put the pertinent scriptures on PowerPoint; it saves time in class and stimulates discussion. You might consider ending each meeting with the small group discussion question. These questions are easy to answer and designed to help the class members get to know one another. They also provide a way for each participant to share their insights, even in a large class. Consider choosing a song about Heaven (suggestions follow) to begin or end each session.

2. TWO-HOUR BIBLE STUDY CLASS.

⇐ Discussion only: Two-hour Bible study classes provide plenty of time to discuss the homework in its entirety. The first hour might cover Days 1-3, followed by a short break. Then finish with Days 4-5 and a couple of songs. For a good CD with several applicable songs you might check out: *Heaven, Songs of the Great Homecoming* by Integrity Music (various artists).

⇐ Bible Study Plus: Another option is to teach the material in the first hour and use the second hour for a special video, ministry time, or additional teaching. (See Presentation Ideas.)

3. SUNDAY SCHOOL.

⇐ 8-week curriculum: Members will benefit the most if they follow along in the book. If your group does not want to do the homework as preparation for the lesson, simply summarize one week's message each Sunday. Use the chapter introduction to each week's homework. Choose a few of the scriptures from each day's lesson, hitting the highlights and the material that most ministered to you. Obviously, you cannot cover it all! But you can make 3-5 points that underscore the main idea.

⇐ 40-week curriculum: Consider using one day's lesson per Sunday. This would provide *forty weeks* of great Sunday School lessons! With the

depth of Scripture and variety of topics in each day's homework, you'd never lack for material. Class members would truly journey to Heaven!

4. A RETREAT OR REVIVAL.

The message of eternal life is wonderfully suited to retreat and revival settings. Divide one week's message into 2-3 sessions, or divide the entire 8-week message into as many sessions as needed.

A good way to kick off a *Heavenly Minded for Earthly Good* Bible study is to use the *Week One/Day One* message or *What's the Point?* (see Introduction session below) in a church service or luncheon/retreat setting. If you would like Karen to speak at such an event, contact her at www.karenchaffin.com.

Presentation ideas

Below are ideas for the second hour of each week of the study.

I. INTRODUCTION

FIRST HOUR: For the introductory session, allow time to register participants and distribute the books. Familiarize the class with the book and with the homework format. Each week is divided into five lessons; students should allow 30-40 minutes for each day's homework. (Encourage members to set aside time each day and not do a week's work at one setting!)

SECOND HOUR: A lesson entitled *What's the Point?* is available upon request (www.karenchaffin.com) for you to adapt and present to your class. This message is a "pep talk" concerning what the student will learn on their 8-week tour of Heaven. Accompanying PowerPoint slideshow is also available.

Internet sites like www.sermonspice.com have great downloadable video clips to start people thinking about the matter of eternal life. Check out clips featuring street interviews on the question, "What Happens When You Die" or similar topics.

Another option for the second hour of the beginning session is to review the book's introduction and teach Day 1: *Better by Far*.

If your group is crafty, you might like to provide materials to make bookmarks (read last paragraph on page 40 in the study). Or, you are welcome to download bookmarks that match the book cover. (Request by email.)

SUGGESTED MUSIC:

“I Can Only Imagine” by Mercy Me, *Almost There* or *Heaven, Songs of the Great Homecoming*

“Captive Us” by Watermark, *The Purest Place*

“Heaven Is Our Home” by Kathryn Scott, *Satisfy* or *Heaven, Songs of the Great Homecoming*

2. WEEK 1: *A Happy Ending*

FIRST HOUR: Cover the homework, using the questions in the back of the book.

SECOND HOUR: A lesson entitled “Which Dirt Are You?” is available upon request (www.karenchaffin.com) for you to adapt and present to your class. Based on Jesus’ parable of the sower, this message defines true salvation. Accompanying PowerPoint is also available.

A good 5-minute DVD to accompany the lesson is “A Father’s Love Letter.” A free download is available at www.fathersloveletter.com.

Or, you might want to present the gospel message as a follow up on Day Two: *Do You Believe This?* Share your testimony and perhaps have a few people in the class share theirs. End with a time of prayer. In a study about Heaven, you certainly want to give all your participants the opportunity for salvation and for assurance of salvation!

SUGGESTED MUSIC:

“What Could Be Better (The Days Ahead)” by 33Miles, *What Could Be Better*

“Captive Us”

“Heaven Is Our Home”

3. WEEK 2: *Things Worth Bothering About*

FIRST HOUR: Cover the homework.

SECOND HOUR: Consider using “Indescribable,” a powerful DVD on the universe with a message by Louie Giglio. It perfectly caps off *Week Two*

and leads into *Week Three*. Available at www.268generation.com (the green copy).

SUGGESTED MUSIC:

Before the video: “Who Am I” by Casting Crowns, *Casting Crowns* and “Indescribable” by Chris Tomlin, *Arriving*

After the video: “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” by Kathryn Scott, *Satisfy*

OR,

This week’s material also lends itself to a two-hour discussion period. You might conclude the discussion of each day’s homework with small group question, selecting one question that is personal in nature from the day’s homework. With just one question to answer, groups will stay on the topic. End the small group time with a short prayer for the quality of each day’s focus, and begin the next day’s material with the entire group.

SUGGESTED MUSIC:

“Who Am I”

“When It’s All Been Said and Done” *Heaven, Songs of the Great Homecoming* or “When All Is Said and Done” by Geoff Moore and the Distance, *Evolution*

“Captive Us”

4. WEEK 3: *Lost and Found*

FIRST HOUR: Cover the homework. You might like to include a short video clip of the Rapture (many are circulating on the internet). It would also be helpful to draw a timeline on the board or use a PowerPoint version (free download available).

SECOND HOUR: With so much material to cover, it will be difficult to finish within the first hour. Your class may enjoy a slower pace. A 30-minute DVD by Randy Alcorn, the author of *Heaven*, is well suited to the week’s homework. Ask your pastor if your church has it, or visit www.heaveniq.com to order a free copy.

SUGGESTED MUSIC:

“Who Am I?”

“Be Thou My Vision” by Tony Guereo, *Sounds of Saddleback*

5. WEEK 4: *Blueprints of Heaven*

FIRST HOUR: Cover the homework. “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” by Katharine McPhee, *Somewhere Over the Rainbow* would be a great song to begin the discussion on longings for Heaven in Day One.

SECOND HOUR: What a great opportunity to act upon the final challenge of Day Three and have a time of worship! Use props (such as a lampstand, a symbol of Christ, a large chair as a Throne), lighting, and music to portray the Throne Room as portrayed in Revelation 4 and 5.

MUSIC IDEAS FOR A WORSHIP SESSION:

“Longing (Abraham’s Song)” by Travis Cottrell, *The Patriarchs*

“No More Night” by David Phelps, *David Phelps*

“The Bible Experience” by Media Group, reading of Revelation 4 and 5.

“Holy, Holy, Holy” by Keith Green, *Songs for the Shepherd*

iWorship songs: “I Can Only Imagine,” “We All Bow Down,” and “Shout to the Lord.”

OR:

Instead of having a worship service in the second hour, elaborate on one of the following subjects from the homework:

1. *Day Three* scriptures of the prophets’ visions of Heaven.
2. The Tabernacle layout.
3. The New Jerusalem.

SUGGESTED MUSIC:

“Big House” by Charlie B. and the Upward Band, *I Want to Follow You*

“That Where I Am, There You May Also Be” by Rich Mullins, *WOW 1999* (Disc 2)

“The Golden City,” *Heaven, Songs of the Great Homecoming*

6. WEEK 5: *A Change of Clothing*

FIRST HOUR: Cover the homework.

SECOND HOUR: Week Five’s message of resurrection is an excellent opportunity to approach two subjects that concern everyone: loved ones in Heaven and physical healing. Enlist someone to share a testimony of the death of a loved one and the hope and healing Heaven has brought to his or her life. Or, a testimony of physical healing would be appropriate in light of the ultimate and perfect healing of Heaven.

Perhaps the Lord would lead you, as He did me, to address people’s needs of emotional and physical healing. Assemble a prayer team to minister to those who desire healing. Pray corporately for the participants’ fears concerning death.

SUGGESTED MUSIC:

“Wish You Were Here” by Mark Harris

“If You Could See Me Now” *Heaven, Songs of the Great Homecoming*

“Beyond the Sky” by Fernando Ortega, *Home*

“When I Get Where I’m Going” by Brad Paisley & Dolly Parton, *Time Well Wasted*

7. WEEK 6: *Hell Week*

FIRST HOUR: Cover the homework.

SECOND HOUR: What could be better to follow the message of Hell than to teach on witnessing? Two excellent resources are:

1. *The One Thing You Can’t Do in Heaven* by Mark Cahill;

PowerPoint slides are available at www.markcahill.org. Cahill uses an illustration of how we all have tickets to Heaven to give out on Earth, and how we don’t want to stand before God one day with tickets in our pocket. Place several tickets on each table and ask each person take as many as they want before using the illustration. End by encouraging the class to give their tickets away.

2. *Hell’s Best Kept Secret* by Ray Comfort. Transcript and PowerPoint slides are available at www.LivingWaters.com.

End the class time with an invitation for those who would like to commit or rededicate their lives to Christ.

SUGGESTED MUSIC:

“Come Ye Sinners Poor and Needy” *Living Proof Live 2*

8. WEEK 7: *The Crowning Moment*

FIRST HOUR: Cover the homework.

SECOND HOUR: A powerful vision of the Judgment Seat of Christ is depicted in “The Hordes of Hell are Marching Part III” by Rick Joyner. The entire text can be found at www.christianword.org/revival/hordes.html. Consider reading the portion of this vision concerning the tears of Jesus for the lost and Joyner’s response to Christ’s call to share the gospel. Afterward, open the altar for a time of personal response. Communion cups filled with salt water can be offered to represent Christ’s tears.

During the altar time, you might like to conduct a “practice round” of the crowning moment in Heaven. Make a garland of ivy for each person in the class. Have a ministry team available to crown each person as they kneel at the altar. Select from the scriptures concerning reward from *Day Five* to speak over class members as they are crowned. God will use these means of grace to encourage and empower each one who comes forward.

SUGGESTED MUSIC: (for the crowning ceremony)

“When It’s All Been Said and Done”

“If You Could See Me Now”

“We All Bow Down” by Lenny LeBlanc, *His Passion*

“Be Thou My Vision”

“My Redeemer Is Faithful and True” by Steven Curtis Chapman, *First Hand*

“Reach One More” by Rick Muchow, *All About Love*

9. WEEK 8: *The Profound Mystery*

TO CREATE EXPECTANCY and excitement for the last class, email wedding invitations to the “Dress Rehearsal” of the Wedding Supper of the Lamb to each class member (see example on following page). Perhaps someone in your class would like to decorate the room as a wedding, providing a wedding cake and punch. A huppah is easy to construct and a wonderful prop. Enlist someone to play much-loved Heaven hymns on the piano to set the mood! (“When We All Get to Heaven,” “When the Saints,” “When the Roll is Called Up Yonder,” or “I’ll Fly Away.”)

FIRST HOUR: Cover the homework. Conclude the first session with the invitation to say “Yes” to the Bridegroom under huppah. (You might set a wineglass filled with grape juice on a small table under the huppah, and reenact the ancient Jewish wedding traditions as explained in *Week 8*.) Follow with a time for the entire class to recommit their lives to Christ by singing the hymn “Take My Life and Let It Be.”

SECOND HOUR: Use remaining time for wedding festivities and fellowship. Ideas include: a solo of “I Can Only Imagine” with sign language; praise dancers; sounding of the shofar; a banner processional to “Crown Him with Many Crowns.”

You may want to use this final hour to answer questions that have gone unanswered. Ask the class members to give you their questions the week before so that you can research the answer. (Obviously, if the answer isn’t in Scripture, don’t feel compelled to speculate. God knows what we need to know... and leave it at that!)

SUGGESTED MUSIC: Play your favorites from the previous weeks.

A WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT IDEA:

You are cordially invited by

The Glorious Father

*to the Dress Rehearsal
of the Wedding of His Son*

The Lord Jesus Christ

to

His Bride, the Church

Monday, the sixteenth of April

Six thirty in the evening

Colvert Ministry Center

Lastly,

I WOULD LOVE to hear how God directs you to lead this journey to His Heaven! Please feel free to email me; I would be happy to assist you in any way I can. I stand amazed at God and His Word. His promises and His love never fail us; He *always* does exceedingly more than we imagine. Be encouraged; great is His reward!

