

When Faith
Becomes Sight

HEAVEN

JENNIFER ROTHSCHILD

LEADER GUIDE

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LEADER GUIDE

WELCOME! Before you read any further, we want to say how thankful we are for you, the leader. Thank you for your willingness to dive into Scripture, brew the coffee, place the chairs, and set aside the time regularly to meet with other women.

Heaven: When Faith Becomes Sight is a video- and discussion-based Bible study from Jennifer Rothschild. The teaching videos were filmed at The Old Glass Place in Springfield, Missouri with an audience.

Our goal for this leader guide is to help you feel equipped to facilitate and guide your Bible study group gatherings in a way that fosters genuine community, deep conversations, and transformational learning for you and the women you're leading.

We want to encourage you to use this study however it works best for you and your group. If you want to follow this leader guide to the letter, do that! If you want to do your own thing, feel free! Our goal is to give you all the tools you might need as you lead your specific group in your specific setting.

We are grateful for you and praying for you as you lead this study.

Lifeway Women

Weekly Group Meeting Suggested Schedule

Seven Group Meetings • Meeting Length: 1.5 hours

GROUP SESSION ONE—Introduction: Distribute *Heaven* Bible study books, get to know one another, and watch the Group Session One video.

GROUP SESSION TWO—Watch the Group Session Two video. Discuss the video and the Session One personal Bible study.

GROUP SESSION THREE—Watch the Group Session Three video. Discuss the video and the Session Two personal Bible study.

GROUP SESSION FOUR—Watch the Group Session Four video. Discuss the video and the Session Three personal Bible study.

GROUP SESSION FIVE—Watch the Group Session Five video. Discuss the video and the Session Four personal Bible study.

GROUP SESSION SIX—Watch the Group Session Six video. Discuss the video and the Session Five personal Bible study.

GROUP SESSION SEVEN—Watch the Group Session Seven video. Discuss the video and the Session Six personal Bible study.



HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR GROUP TIME

Each group session contains the following elements. We've included a suggested amount of time based on a 1.5 hour group meeting. Adjust as you need to for the time you have together!

BEFORE THE VIDEO (10 MINUTES) This is a time to greet and welcome everyone to the study. Make sure you spend some time on introductions the first couple weeks of the study to help participants begin to know one another. Depending on your meeting time and space, you might consider providing light snacks during this time to foster fellowship in your group.

WATCH THE VIDEO (30 MINUTES) During this time, play the teaching video, encouraging the women to fill in the blanks on the viewer guide and take other notes in the space available. (In the Discussion Guide, which starts on page 7, we've provided you with a fill-in-the-blank answer sheet for each video teaching.)

CONVERSATION GUIDE (50 MINUTES) You'll find two sets of questions in this section. The first set provides an opportunity for your group to review and discuss what you learned in the personal Bible study for that specific week. The second set will help you debrief what you heard in the video teaching. Feel free to adapt, skip, or add questions according to the needs of your group. We encourage you to close your group time with prayer.

HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO HELP YOU LEAD.

HOW TO WATCH YOUR VIDEOS. The videos for this study are available for streaming through the digital access code on the last page of your Bible study book. Look for the cardstock page labeled “**Here’s Your Video Access**” and follow the two steps that prompt you to enter your unique redemption code to gain your video streaming access.

If your group doesn’t have adequate internet connection for video streaming, DVD sets are available for purchase at lifeway.com/heaven.

Each video is intended to be viewed after completing the accompanying week of personal study. We strongly recommend you use the teaching videos as a part of this study, but you can still discover truth from Scripture and grow in your walk with God by simply doing the print portion if your setting doesn’t allow for video.

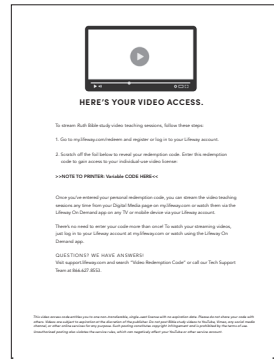
GET THE WORD OUT. Be sure to advertise the study early and utilize all methods for getting the word out. Post it on your church’s website, send emails to potential attendees, and promote it on all forms of social media. It’s best to start advertising the study four to six weeks before it begins. The study is seven sessions long, which means you will meet seven times. Visit lifeway.com/heaven for free promotional materials to help get the word out about your study.

SCHEDULE. Be sure to make everyone aware of the schedule ahead of time and start promptly each week to honor everyone’s time. In your group time, you will watch the teaching video together and discuss what you’re learning. You’ll also be encouraged to spend a good bit of time in prayer.

STAY IN TOUCH. Prepare a sign-up sheet with space for names, email addresses, and phone numbers. You may also include information like birthdays, social media handles, and favorite candy so that you can foster community among group members.

GET COZY. Make an effort to create a comfortable environment for group meetings. Arrange chairs in a circle to encourage conversation. If your group is large, you may want to watch the teaching video together and then split into smaller groups for the discussion time. If you choose to do so, enlist discussion leaders for each group to keep the conversation moving and focused.

CHILDCARE. Be sure to check with participants to see if childcare is needed and organize leaders and space for the children in advance.



BIBLE STUDY BOOKS. Each participant will need a Bible study book. Make sure you leave plenty of time for all the books to be ordered and received between announcing and starting your Bible study. Consider offering a scholarship or buy one-give-one option for those who cannot afford a study book on their own.

EARLY PREP. We encourage you to read through the entire leader guide before the first session and evaluate how this will work best for your group. Highlight specific questions from the leader guide you want to make sure you cover during your group time. We recommend watching the teaching video sessions prior to your meeting, taking note of anything you may want to highlight from the teaching. And be sure you stay on top of your own personal study between each meeting! We've left room in the leader guide for you to write down additional talking points and questions you want to pull in from the personal study.

PERSONAL STUDY. Between each meeting, there are five days of personal study to complete in the Bible study book. In this study, each Day Five is a reflective "Dash Living Day."

PRAYER. Most importantly, be sure to pray for the women who attend the study. And pray for yourself as you prepare to lead. Ask God to draw the women closer to Him as they learn the truth about Heaven.

EVALUATE. At the end of each group session, ask yourself: What went well? What could be improved? Did you see women's lives transformed? Did your group grow closer to Christ and to one another? Also, do a final evaluation at the close of the study.

CONNECT. Find ways to interact and stay engaged with each member of your group throughout the study. Make use of social media, email, text messages, and handwritten notes to encourage them. Continue these connections even after the study ends.

Next, we've provided a discussion guide for each session. Remember these are simply suggestions for how to use your time together. We want to empower you as you lead to do what is best for your group!

DISCUSSION GUIDE

GROUP SESSION ONE

Introduction: Getting the Scoop on Heaven

BEFORE THE VIDEO

Welcome women to the introductory session of *Heaven*. Provide name tags and distribute Bible study books if participants don't have them yet. MEET AND GREET one another! This will be an important part of today's meeting, so spend as much time getting to know one another as you can. (We highly recommend snacks, coffee, and tea!)

WATCH THE VIDEO

Play the teaching video for Group Session One. Encourage women to fill in the blanks on the viewer guide and take other notes in the space available on page 10 or in a personal journal.

Death is not the end of our stories. Death is simply the comma that separates us and transitions us into that forever story of our life.

What we think and what we know about Heaven will determine how we live.

Heaven is a literal place where God dwells, where born again believers in Christ go when they die or when Christ returns, whichever comes first.

Blue flowers in literature, especially in German romantic literature represent transcendence, longing, and an ache for the eternal.

The Bible is what expands and illuminates our vision and our view of Heaven.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

Use the following questions to introduce the study and discuss the Group Session One video teaching. Feel free to adapt, skip, or add questions according to the needs of your group. You'll also find these questions on page 11 of the Bible study book.

- What's the first thing you think of when you hear the word Heaven?
- If someone asked you what you thought Heaven was going to be like, what would you say?
- What has shaped your view of Heaven? What has been the strongest influence on your view?
- Does your view of Heaven affect how you live? If so, how? If not, why should it?
- What's one point/story/truth from the video teaching that resonated with you? Why?
- What are you hoping to get out of this study on Heaven?

Close with prayer.

GROUP SESSION TWO

Living an 8:18 Life

BEFORE THE VIDEO

Welcome participants back to the study. Allow a time of introductions for any newcomers. Fellowship together for a few minutes, then lead the group in prayer to begin.

WATCH THE VIDEO

Play the teaching video for Group Session Two. Encourage women to fill in the blanks on the viewer guide and take other notes in the space available on page 44 or in a personal journal.

THREE Cs FROM ROMANS 8:18

1. Consider

- Consider if suffering is because of sin.
- Consider if suffering is because of circumstances.

2. Compare

- We compare this present suffering to the glory that will be revealed.
- Let the good lead to glory.
- Let the groans lead to glory.

3. Contemplate

- The glory will be revealed in us and to us.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

Use the following questions to discuss the Session One personal Bible study and video teaching for Group Session Two. Feel free to adapt, skip, or add questions according to the needs of your group. You'll also find these questions on page 45 of the Bible study book.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

- Which was your favorite day of study? Why?
- Is there anything in your life, past or present, that stirs in you a desire for Heaven? Should there be?
- What are the implications of Jesus calling Heaven “my Father’s House”? What emotions or thoughts does that title stir in you?
- What did you learn and unlearn about Heaven from this week of study?
- For Paul, dying and going to be with Christ was better than staying alive on earth. Do you feel the same way? Explain.
- Is what Scripture teaches about the last day, when Jesus returns, currently affecting how you live this day? Explain.
- Which *Takeaway Truth* stands out to you and why?
- *Dash Living Day*: What are some things you listed on your Dash Values list and why?

VIDEO TEACHING

- What’s one thing that stood out to you from the video teaching? Why?
- Why is it important for us to consider our suffering?
- How would you define *glory*?
- What does it mean to compare our sufferings? What are we comparing them to? Is that difficult to do? Explain.
- How can both the good and the groans lead to glory? Is that happening in your life? Explain.
- How is glory going to be revealed both to us and in us?

Close with prayer.

GROUP SESSION THREE

Numbering Our Days

BEFORE THE VIDEO

Welcome participants back to the study. Fellowship together for a few minutes, then lead the group in prayer to begin.

WATCH THE VIDEO

Play the teaching video for Group Session Three. Encourage women to fill in the blanks on the viewer guide and take other notes in the space available on page 76 or in a personal journal.

THREE PRINCIPLES AND ONE PRAYER FROM PSALM 90:

1. **Admit our *frailty*.**

- Rebrand your frailty as *strength* and *dignity*.

2. **Acknowledge life's *brevity*.**

- Rebrand every *tombstone* as a *stepping* stone.

3. **Ask God for *clarity*.**

- Time is not a *commodity*. It's something we *steward*.
- Prayer: Psalm 90:17
- Rebrand every day as a slice of *eternity*.

THREE Ls:

1. *Laugh*

2. *Leap*

3. *Look*

CONVERSATION GUIDE

Discuss the Session Two personal Bible study and Group Session Three video teaching using the following questions as a guide. Feel free to adapt, skip, or add questions according to the needs of your group. You'll also find these questions on page 77 of the Bible study book.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

- What was your favorite day of study? Why?
- What does it mean that you were made for eternity? Why is it important we keep that in mind?
- As believers in Christ, what should be our response to what we learn about Hell?
- Why is Jesus the only way to the Father? How is this claim the heart of the gospel?
- How do you answer people who say Jesus's claim is too exclusive and not fair?
- Our works merit reward, but our righteousness is found only in Christ. How does that work?
- Which *Takeaway Truth* stands out to you and why?
- *Dash Living Day*: What did you write on the tombstone and why?

VIDEO TEACHING

- What's one thing that stood out to you from the video teaching? Why?
- How does admitting our frailty better help us live for eternity?
- Jennifer said "Eden had no tombstones." What's the significance of that statement, especially in light of the brevity of life?
- How can we see tombstones as stepping stones?
- What does it mean to number our days, and why is that significant in living our Christian lives the way we should?
- Are you being a good steward of the time on earth you've been given? If so, how? If not, what changes do you need to make?

Close with prayer.

GROUP SESSION FOUR

Getting Ready to Rise

WATCH THE VIDEO

Play the teaching video for Group Session Four. Encourage women to fill in the blanks on the viewer guide and take other notes in the space available on page 106 or in a personal journal.

LISTEN, WILLIS: YOU MAY OR MAY NOT sleep.

- When the Bible speaks of mystery, it's referring to something that had formerly been hidden and has now been revealed.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO GRIEVE WITH HOPE:

- Hurt
- Offer that hurt to God
- Pray
- Expect

LISTEN, WILLIS: YOU WILL rise.

LISTEN, WILLIS: YOU WILL BE changed.

- Death is not the final word; Jesus is the living word. Therefore, death is defeated.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

Discuss the Session Three personal Bible study and Group Session Four video teaching using the following questions as a guide. Feel free to adapt, skip, or add questions according to the needs of your group. You'll also find these questions on page 107 of the Bible study book.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

- What was your favorite day of study? Why?
- Jennifer makes the statement, "It all rests on the resurrection." What does that mean and why is it so true?
- What does it mean that Christ is the firstfruits of the resurrection? Why is this such a hope-filled description for us?
- What is appealing to you about the resurrection body you will receive? Why?
- How has the cruel reality of death touched you and your family?
- Put into words the hope and joy you feel knowing Christ has defeated death.
- Which *Takeaway Truth* stands out to you and why?
- *Dash Living Day*: What were some of the favorite memories you recorded?

VIDEO TEACHING

- What's one thing that stood out to you from the video teaching? Why?
- Why is it important to acknowledge that death hurts in order to grieve with hope?
- Sometimes we choose to wallow in the pain of our grief rather than give it to God. Why do we do that and why is it not healthy?
- Share a personal example of how you've been able to grieve with hope.
- Do you look forward to Christ's return and our resurrection? If so, why? If not, why not?

Close with prayer.

GROUP SESSION FIVE

Making Jesus the Treasure of Heaven

WATCH THE VIDEO

Play the teaching video for Group Session Five. Encourage women to fill in the blanks on the viewer guide and take other notes in the space available on page 138 or in a personal journal.

The true treasure of Heaven is Jesus.

TWO WAYS WE MAKE JESUS THE TREASURE OF HEAVEN:

1. **Seek the point.**

- We need to let the pointers lead us to the point.

2. **Remain in Him.**

- If we remain in Him now, then it will be a reunion with Him then.
- Remaining in Jesus is not just about our position in Him, but our proximity to Him.

If Jesus becomes our treasure of Heaven, He will be our treasure on earth.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

Discuss the Session Four personal Bible study and Group Session Five video teaching using the following questions as a guide. Feel free to adapt, skip, or add questions according to the needs of your group. You'll also find these questions on page 139 of the Bible study book.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

- What was your favorite day of study? Why?
- Are you able to accept there's a spiritual realm that exists beyond what you can see and perhaps comprehend? If yes, what enables you to do so? If not, what hinders you?
- When it comes to questions you have about Heaven, what are you basing your current answers on?
- How would you counsel and comfort someone who's wrestling with the sensitive questions about the eternal destination of young children and/or Christians who die by suicide?
- Consider the questions you ask about Heaven. Why do you think you're asking them? Does that matter? Explain.
- Which *Takeaway Truth* stands out to you and why?
- *Dash Living Day*: Share some of the blessings you listed and why.

VIDEO TEACHING

- What's one thing that stood out to you from the video teaching? Why?
- What is meant by the statement that the true treasure of Heaven is Jesus?
- How do the beautiful things in our lives sometimes get in the way of seeing the main point, which is Jesus? How are these things pointers to what's most important?
- What does it mean to remain in Jesus? How is remaining in Him not just about position but also proximity?
- What is the evidence in our lives that Jesus is our true treasure?

Close with prayer.

GROUP SESSION SIX

Celebrating at the Table

WATCH THE VIDEO

Play the teaching video for Group Session Six. Encourage women to fill in the blanks on the viewer guide and take other notes in the space available on page 172 or in a personal journal.

FOUR TABLES:

1. **Table of showbread** (Exodus 25)
 - Remember: bread
2. **The shepherd's table** (Psalm 23)
 - Remember: lamb
3. **The salvation table** (Matthew 26)
 - Remember: wine

Any table we sit at gives us an opportunity to anticipate the table that is to come.

4. **The marriage supper of the Lamb** (Revelation 19)

THREE PARTS OF THE JEWISH WEDDING TRADITION:

1. **Sign the contract**
2. **Here comes the groom**
3. **The marriage supper**

Our time on the new earth will not just be ethereal; it will be material.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

Discuss the Session Five personal Bible study and Group Session Six video teaching using the following questions. Feel free to adapt, skip, or add questions according to the needs of your group. You'll also find these questions on page 173 of the Bible study book.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

- What was your favorite day of study? Why?
- What are your thoughts and emotions as you consider the return of Christ, the judgment, and taking up residence in the new earth?
- What is something painful or difficult you've faced or are currently facing that you will no longer have to deal with in our forever home? Express the joy that reality brings you!
- Which "no longer" or "no more" resonates most with you and why?
- What's the significance of John pointing out the variety of redeemed people gathered in Heaven? And what's significant about God preserving our tribal, cultural, and national identities?
- Which *Takeaway Truth* stands out to you and why?
- *Dash Living Day*: Based on your biblically informed imagination, describe some of what you think it will be like when you get to Heaven.

VIDEO TEACHING

- What's one thing that stood out to you from the video teaching? Why?
- Which of the three tables (showbread, Shepherd, Last Supper) revealed Jesus to you in a surprising or meaningful way? Explain.
- How does any table we sit at provide an opportunity to anticipate the wedding feast to come? Are you taking advantage of those opportunities? If so, in what way? If not, what can you do to make every table a pointer to the marriage supper table?
- Which part of the Jewish wedding tradition meant the most to you and why?
- How does the marriage supper of the Lamb mark the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan? Describe what the union of Jesus the Lamb with His bride, the church, means to you.

Close with prayer.

GROUP SESSION SEVEN

Walking by Faith Until Faith Becomes Sight

WATCH THE VIDEO

Play the teaching video for Group Session Seven. Encourage women to fill in the blanks on the viewer guide and take other notes in the space available on page 208 or in a personal journal.

TWO PRINCIPLES FOR WALKING BY FAITH UNTIL FAITH BECOMES SIGHT:

1. Learn to Wait Well

- Women who walk by faith wait on God alone.
- Women who walk by sight wait for things from God.
- When our faith becomes sight, we'll realize God was worth the wait.

Biblical waiting is an active anticipation.

2. Persevere

- The woman who walks by faith perseveres.
- The woman who walks by sight might have a tendency to quit.
- When your faith becomes sight, your faithfulness will be affirmed as you receive a crown of life.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

Discuss the Session Six personal Bible study and Group Session Seven video teaching using the following questions as a guide. Feel free to adapt, skip, or add questions according to the needs of your group. You'll also find these questions on page 209 of the Bible study book.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

- What was your favorite day of study? Why?
- Explain the concept of living in the “already and the not yet”? How should this reality shape our existence, our purpose, our focus?
- What does it mean for us to continually seek things above and set our minds on things above? Why is it important and how do we do it?
- Are you currently living with a sojourn spirit? If so, what's the evidence? If not, what's holding you back?
- If Christ returned today, would He find you waiting well—chasing the right pursuits, faithfully stewarding relationships, living on mission? Explain.
- What are your honest thoughts about death? How has this study affected the way you think about it?
- Which *Takeaway Truth* stands out to you and why?
- *Dash Living Day*: Share some of your Dash Living Declarations.

VIDEO TEACHING

- What's one thing that stood out to you from the video teaching? Why?
- How would you define biblical waiting? Why is it important that we embrace the posture of biblical waiting?
- What's the difference in waiting on God alone and waiting on the things of God? What is your tendency to do and why?
- What does it mean to persevere and not shrink back as believers?
- As you persevere, are you able to delight in all things? Even the hard things? Explain.

Close with prayer.

FINISHING WELL

NEXT STEPS Even after the study concludes, follow up and challenge women to stay involved through another Bible study, church opportunity, or anything that will continue their spiritual growth and friendships. Provide several options of ministry opportunities the members can participate in individually or as a group to apply what they have learned through this study.



What's Next?

If you enjoyed this study, check out *Come Home* by Caroline Saunders.

lifeway.com/comehome



VIDEO
ACCESS
STUDY

INTRODUCING BIBLE STUDIES with VIDEO ACCESS INCLUDED!

As trends in media consumption change from DVDs to streaming video, Lifeway made the decision to invest in technology that would allow for Bible studies to be accessed through mobile devices and smart TVs in addition to our website.

The concept of a Bible study book with video access allows us to use the technology to give all participants easier access to teaching videos. This will alleviate a concern we have heard from many group leaders of members who stop coming to their group after they miss a week of study.

How will customers access the videos that come with their Bible study book with video access?

There is a unique access code printed in each Bible study book. They will access their video content at my.lifeway.com or through the Lifeway On Demand app.

How long will they have access to the videos that come with their Bible study book?

There is no expiration date on the video access that comes with their Bible study book. They'll be able to access it as long as it is available through our Lifeway On Demand video apps.

What are the benefits of video access being included in each Bible study book?

- This provides more flexibility for group meeting time. Groups now have the option to have group members watch video sessions outside of group meetings to allow more time for discussion.
- If a group member misses a weekly group meeting due to sickness or travel, they will be able to access the video content on their own and continue in their study.
- Group members can re-watch video sessions that were particularly impactful on their own time.
- This simplifies what a group leader needs to facilitate Bible study. You'll now get everything you need with just the Bible study book.
- Our goal is to provide an affordable option for both individuals and churches who are looking for Bible study options.

What do churches and individuals need to lead a group?

Each group member will need a Bible study book, which will include video access. There is also a DVD option for groups who want a non-streaming viewing option. In addition, select studies provide a Video Streaming - Group option for groups who choose not to use the Bible study books. For the best experience, we recommend each group member have a Bible study book.

When do group leaders need a DVD Set?

Because the Bible study book includes video streaming access, the purchase of the DVD set is optional (not essential) for group leaders. This option is for groups who may not have reliable streaming internet access.