

## Renew: Returning to the Heartbeat of Hope

“The True Hope of Heaven”

John 14:1-4; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 1 Corinthians 15:12-20; Revelation 21:1-7

“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”

– Colossians 3: 1-4

“Heaven in reality itself. All that is fully real is Heavenly. For all that can be shaken will be shaken and only the unshakable will remain.”

– CS Lewis, *The Great Divorce*

“God does not make junk, and God does not junk what he made.”

– Al Wolters, *Creation Regained*

“Heaven means sharing in the blessedness of God so that in the very depths of our being there is divine contentment, joy, and fulfillment. There is total shalom: a sense of sheer well-being. Every need is met. Every longing is fulfilled. Every goal is achieved. Every sense is satisfied. We see him. We are with him. He holds us and hugs us and whispers, ‘This is forever.’”

– Donald Macleod, *A Faith to Live By*

“Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.”

– Thomas Moore, “Come, Ye Disconsolate”

### Questions to Guide Reflection and Response

- Read the Scripture passages. What kinds of questions, thoughts, or feelings were stirred up?
- What are some images of heaven you remember from films, television, or books?
  - Do these images line up with how you think Scripture describes heaven?
- One classic method of sharing one’s faith is to begin by asking a friend or acquaintance, “If you were to die tonight, do you know for certain that you would go to heaven?”
  - In America today, are people still interested in “going to heaven”? Why or why not?
  - Have you ever had a discussion with someone of another faith (or no faith) about heaven?
- Considering the current climate of America—a pandemic, natural disasters, political unrest, and racial strife—how might a true vision of heaven give hope for us in the here and now?
  - How might a true vision of heaven affect your lives each day, in the ordinary and mundane tasks that you fulfill?
- Why is it important that Jesus is both “a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief” (Isa. 53:3) and also “raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Cor. 15:20)?
  - Read the line from Thomas Moore’s hymn above. What are some of earth’s sorrows (both personal and societal) that you long to be healed by heaven?