

## Study 3 – Now & Then

Do we live for Then...or do we live for Now. That's what we're going to investigate in this study.



### Personal Preparation 1 – Living for Now

Because most people aren't concerned with what's going to happen after they die, or they have no idea about what will happen, our culture lives for the now. Instant gratification, the fast-buck...we want whatever we desire, and we want it now. But this is a dangerous attitude, because it leaves one very important thing out of the equation...God.

#### Read 2 Peter 3:1-13

1. What is the mistake people have made? (vv.3-4)
2. Why have they made it? (vv.5-7)
3. What does Paul say the delay is due to? (vv.8-9)
4. What will the "day of the Lord" be like? (v.10)
5. What is Paul's encouragement and motivation to Christians here? (vv.11-13)
6. How much are you shaped by what is to come, and how much are you shaped by what seems permanent here and now?

thoughts. questions. insights.

### Personal Preparation 2 – Living for Then

Paul knew what it was like to suffer, so you could understand him longing for heaven. But his suffering was due to his faithfulness to his calling in life – to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. Let's have a look at Paul's passion, and see if it can put a fire in our belly too!

#### Read Philippians 1:12-30

1. From Paul's words in vv.12-18a, how do you see where Paul's priorities lie?
2. In vv.18b-26, what is the tension Paul sees in his life? How does he resolve it?
3. And what does he see as the role of the Philippians in this life? (vv.27-30)
4. If you had to summarise what the driving force in Paul's life was, what would you say?
5. What can you see as the driving force in your life as?

thoughts. questions. insights.

## Growth Group Discussion Questions

When we read Paul in the New Testament, passion oozes out of his writings. He's passionate about people coming to know Christ, about them becoming mature in Christ – but he's also passionate about what he's got to look forward to when he dies. And he sees this as a huge motivation for how he behaves now. In this study we're going to look at how the Future impacts on the Present.



### Read Philippians 1:12-30

1. What were the issues, questions or new insights you had as you did the preparation this week?
  
2. What do you think the world lives for? What makes you think that?
  
3. In this passage Paul says that "To live is Christ, and to die is gain" (v.21). What does he mean?
  
4. How does he live out this tension?
  
5. What does Paul think it will look like to "conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ"? (v.27)
  
6. What are the ways you can see you're living for Now, and in what ways can you see you're living for Then?
  
7. In the light of the fact that we are only passing through this world, but are residents of heaven, in what ways should this affect:
  - Relationships
  - Jobs
  - Money
  - Ministry

**pray.**

- Pray that we would be people who live now as though we were in the New Creation.
- Pray that we would have wisdom and discipline to live out our calling Now.