



Today, we wrap up our series on the Book of Daniel. Throughout this study, we've focused on the first six chapters of Daniel's life as an exile in Babylon. The final six chapters of the Book of Daniel could be an entire series focusing on prophecy. After all, chapters 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 speak about Daniel's various visions of the end of time. The most helpful thing we can do with this subject matter of these final chapters is to go to a specific passage in Daniel 12 which refers to the Great Tribulation. Each week of this series, we've encouraged you to make a commitment that connects with each passage we've studied. Today, our final commitment for this study is: I Will Live for Eternity.

SCRIPTURE: Daniel 12:1-4

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Looking back at your sermon notes, what encouraged or challenged you the most?
2. Our final "Life Commitment" for this series is "I Will Live for Eternity." What does it mean to live with this focus? How would you rate your eternity focus on a scale from 1–10?
3. What distracts us from living with eternity in mind? When are you most likely to reflect on the hope of eternity and most desire its arrival?

What distracts us from living with eternity in mind? The short answer is "life" itself. We have so many good and necessary things to pay attention to daily that it doesn't take long before we only look down at what's in front of us. We're most likely to reflect on the hope of eternity and desire its arrival when we're forced to reckon with the reality of mortality.

4. Read Daniel 12:1-4 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. What do these verses teach us about eternity? How do they encourage you? How do they serve as a sobering reminder?

These two Bible passages speak to the reality of eternity – both the coming judgment for sin and the hope of Heaven available in Christ. There will be a time when God's judgment for sin is poured out. There will be a time when Christians and non-Christians are separated – Christians to Heaven and non-Christians to Hell. There will be times on earth when we experience the heartbreak of death – but in Christ, we have the hope of Heaven, the promise of a renewed body, and a reunion with fellow Christians who have gone before us in death – to comfort us and our grief.

5. Everyone you've ever known will end up in one of two places when they die: Heaven or Hell. With this reality in mind, how can we begin to live with a greater concern for the salvation of others?

"God gave us a glimpse of tomorrow so that we would have courage for today." - Jeff Crawford

When you go into the office tomorrow, you should be concerned for the people around you and where they'll spend eternity.

When you go to school tomorrow, you should be concerned for other students and live with the burden of where they will go when they die.

6. Throughout the Book of Daniel, we get more than one glimpse of Daniel's commitment to prayer. On a scale from 1–10, how would you rate the quality of your prayer life? Why was an active prayer life important to Daniel, and why should it be important to us?
7. How should Daniel 12 lead us to focus our prayer life on matters of eternity? How can we make prayer a more significant part of our small group experience?

Ask God to give you a burden for those around you. Are there friends, family members, or people you work with or go to school with who don't know Christ? Begin to bring them before God in prayer. Ask the Lord to soften their hearts and give you the opportunity to share the gospel with them or invite them to join you at Cross Church. In your small group, pray together for people God has given you a burden. Pray for one another to have the courage to share the gospel with those for whom you are burdened.

8. Reflecting on Daniel's life, what were some practical things he did that we could apply in our own lives as we, in a sense, live as exiles in a world that isn't our eternal home?

The last half of the Book of Daniel is for more than just getting us to guess different things regarding the end times. These final chapters of this book offer encouragement to Christians for the various trials in life; the hope of Heaven sustains us through it all. Additionally, the Book of Daniel reminds us that we live on a timeline with an end date, so we should live with that reality in mind and do all we can to reach others with the good news of the gospel.