

## Introduction to Leader's Guide

Welcome! The book *Preparing for Glory: Biblical Answers to 40 Questions about Living and Dying in Hope of Heaven* explores the biblical perspective on death, dying, and eternal life. It helps people learn to live well by facing mortality. I am honored that you are choosing to guide others along this journey, and I am eager to equip you to lead discussions and to facilitate a deeper understanding of the hope of eternal glory.

This Leader's Guide is designed to enhance your ability to foster meaningful conversations surrounding essential questions: What happens when we die? How can we leave legacies that bless our loved ones? Do we truly believe that our days are numbered? How do we navigate grief—both personally and as we support others?

Together we will explore the biblical promises of everlasting peace, joy, and rest; as we do so, we will approach life and death with greater intentionality and hope. As a leader, you play a vital role in creating a safe and supportive environment for individuals to grapple with these profound questions and to better understand the hope of the gospel in the process.

Before you begin, read the How to Use This Book section on pages 15–16. Remind group members that the discussions may evoke strong emotions, especially if they have experienced recent loss. As you prepare to lead your group, pray that you would be attuned to the individual needs of your participants. Remind them that it's fine to skip certain entries and return to them when the time is right.

This section will also help you understand how the readings are organized so that you can decide how to lead your group. Each chapter includes a Scripture verse, a prayer, suggestions for further reading, listening, or watching, a verse from a classic hymn, and a reflection question. This versatility allows you to tailor each session to the specific needs and interests of your participants. For some sessions, you may want to use one of the additional resources to enhance your time together.

Encourage your group to study the noted biblical passages for additional encouragement and understanding. The Further Encouragement resources, accessible through QR codes, will also help those who want to explore further. For a comprehensive list of these links, visit [prpbooks.com/book/Preparing-for-Glory](http://prpbooks.com/book/Preparing-for-Glory).

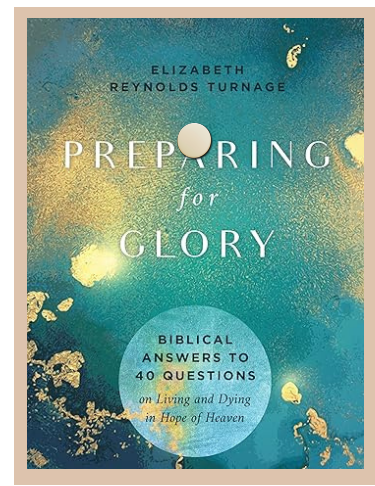
Remind your group that the short Q&A format introduces key concepts, but it may not cover every nuance of the complex topics. To address this, a detailed bibliography at the end of the book, categorized by topic, provides additional resources. Know that you as the leader do not have to have all the answers to every question that may arise. Feel free to point group members to further resources.

Finally, know that I am praying for you as you lead others through this essential work of preparing for glory. I am grateful for you and happy to come alongside you. If I can assist you in any way, please contact me at [etlivingstory@gmail.com](mailto:etlivingstory@gmail.com).

Elizabeth ReynoldsTurnage

If you are new to leading groups, or even if you have led them for a while, you may want to read these [wonderful tips](#) on leading groups from Bible study authors Christine Gordon and Hope Blanton.

# PREPARING FOR GLORY READING SCHEDULE 4 - WEEK FORMAT



BEFORE SESSION	READ
ONE DATE_____	Read Introduction, How to Read This Book, and Questions 1-10. Respond to reflection questions. Make note of any questions you have.
TWO DATE_____	Read Questions 11-20. Respond to reflection questions. Make note of any questions you have.
THREE DATE_____	Read Questions 21-30. Respond to reflection questions. Make note of any questions you have.
FOUR DATE_____	Read Questions 31-40. Respond to reflection questions. Make note of any questions you have.
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## Four Week Suggested Approach

### Session 1: Read Introduction, How to Use This Book, Questions 1–10

Themes in the first ten readings: glory, death, resurrection, angels, heaven, the new heavens and the new earth

Note: We ground our discussion of death in the hope of glory. People in our world may increasingly advocate discussing death, but Christians discuss death in the context of resurrection, and that makes all the difference. The foundation for this discussion is in the hope of glory (see Introduction and Question #1).

1. Pray to open the study.
2. In the introduction, I shared personal experiences from the valleys of life, illustrating the universal need to confront our fear of death with the assurance of heaven. Possible opening question: Did any of Elizabeth's stories resonate with you because of challenges you have faced?
3. A follow-up or alternative question: Why did you want to study this book?
4. Spend some time on Question 1 and the meaning of the word glory.
5. Group Questions 2–6 together, because they focus on death and our hope in death.
6. Group Questions 7–9 together, because they focus on heaven and resurrection.
7. Pray to close. Choose a prayer from one of the readings to pray together if that seems helpful.

### Session 2: Read Questions 11–20.

Themes: new heavens and new earth, judgment day, hell, aging, sickness, and dying

Note: Be aware that discussing judgment and hell can be difficult. Pray specifically in advance about how you will handle this discussion. Many Christians are understandably agonized by the thought that a loved one might go to hell. Show compassion and avoid making judgments about where any soul might be, because we cannot know. You may wish to read the Further Encouragement resources on the more difficult topics before leading this session.

1. Pray to open.

2. It will be helpful to root the discussion of judgment and hell in the hope of the new heavens and the new earth, Questions 10 and 11. Begin here and consider reading Revelation 21 and 22 and going through the reflection question on page 56.

3. Discuss Questions 12, 13, and 14 together, inviting concerns and questions.

4. For the other questions, see which reflection questions members would like to discuss.

5. In case members have not prepared, choose 4-7 reflection questions you think you should discuss.

6. Pray to close. Choose a prayer from one of the readings to pray together if that seems helpful.

### **Session 3: Read Questions 21-30.**

Themes: preparing practical, spiritual, and emotional legacy, caring for the sick and dying

Note: Some members of your group may feel overwhelmed by thinking about legacy tasks. Assure them that these tasks can be completed over a period of time. (If you feel it appropriate, point them to the self-paced, ten-session, online course I offer with social worker, Kelly Markham: [Organizing Your Life and Legacy.](#))

1. Pray to open.

2. Group Questions 20, 21, and 22 together. If your church or organization has documents that help members plan for burial or cremation and for funeral or memorial services, consider providing those.

3. Group Questions 23 and 24 together because they focus on stewardship of material possessions.

4. Group Questions 25-28 together because they focus on non-material legacies.

5. Discuss Questions 29-30 together because they focus on how the church helps to care for the sick and dying.

6. Pray to close. Choose a prayer from one of the readings to pray together if that seems helpful.

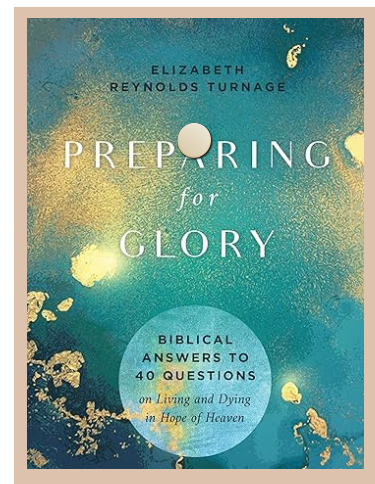
#### **Session 4: Read Questions 31–40**

Themes: caring for caregivers, how being a church member prepares us for glory, the hope of glory and finishing well

Note: This session will take you into the final sections of the book, which focus on the journey of grief and ending well. Grieving members may experience fresh grief. Some members may especially need to hear the hope offered in Question 38 regarding grieving for a loved one who may not have been a believer. Enter this time prayerfully, asking the Spirit to make you sensitive to grieving members. Allow time for lament.

1. Pray to open the study.
2. Group Questions 31 and 32 together, because they focus on care for caregivers.
3. Group Questions 33 and 34 together, because they focus on the ways church participation prepares us for glory.
4. Group Questions 35–40 together, because they focus on the journey of grief.
5. Spend some time on the final reflection questions of the book: “What do you hope for as you approach the end of this journey? How will you continue to prepare for glory?”
6. Pray to close. Choose a prayer from one of the readings to pray together if that seems helpful.

# PREPARING FOR GLORY READING SCHEDULE 6-WEEK FORMAT



BEFORE SESSION	READ
ONE DATE_____	Read Introduction, How to Read This Book, and Part One: Questions 1-7. Respond to reflection questions. Make note of any questions you have.
TWO DATE_____	Read Part Two: Questions 8-14. Respond to reflection questions. Make note of any questions you have.
THREE DATE_____	Read Part Three: Questions 15-19. Respond to reflection questions. Make note of any questions you have.
FOUR DATE_____	Read Part Four: Questions 20-28. Respond to reflection questions. Make note of any questions you have.
FIVE DATE_____	Read Part Five: Questions 29-34. Respond to reflection questions. Make note of any questions you have.
SIX DATE_____	Read Parts Six and Seven: Questions 35-40. Respond to reflection questions. Make note of any questions you have.
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## **Session 1: Introduction, How to Read This Book, Part One: 1–7**

**Themes in Part One:** eternal glory, death, Christ's resurrection, angels, heaven  
**Note:** We ground our discussion of death in the hope of glory. People in our world increasingly advocate discussing death, but Christians discuss death in the context of resurrection, and that makes all the difference. The foundation for this discussion is in the hope of glory (see Introduction and Question 1).

1. Pray to open the study.
2. In the introduction, I shared personal experiences from the valleys of life, illustrating the universal need to confront our fear of death with the assurance of heaven. Possible opening question: Did any of Elizabeth's stories resonate with you because of challenges you have faced?
3. A follow-up or alternative question: Why did you want to study this book?
4. Spend some time on Question 1 and the meaning of the word glory.
5. Group Questions 2–6 together, because they focus on death, our hope in death, and what happens to us when we die.
6. Spend some time talking about Question 7 and the hope of heaven.
7. Pray to close. Choose a prayer from one of the readings to pray together if that seems helpful.

## **Session 2: Part Two: Questions 8–14.**

**Themes in Part Two:** the day of the Lord, new heavens and new earth, final judgment

**Note:** For obvious reasons, discussing judgment and hell can be difficult. Pray specifically in advance about how you will handle this discussion. Many Christians are understandably agonized by the thought that a loved one might go to hell. Show compassion and avoid making judgments about where any soul might be, because we cannot know. You may wish to read the Further Encouragement resources on the more difficult topics before leading this session.

1. Pray to open the study.
2. Begin by talking about Questions 8 and 9 and how the day of the Lord brings hope to believers.

**SIX WEEK**



1. It will help to root the discussion of judgment and hell in the hope of the new heavens and the new earth, Questions 10 and 11. Begin here and consider reading Revelation 21–22 and going through the reflection question on page 56.

2. Discuss Questions 12–14 together, inviting concerns and questions.

3. Pray to close. Choose a prayer from one of the readings to pray together if that seems helpful.

### **Session 3: Read Part Three: Questions 15–19.**

Themes in Part Three: aging, sickness, and dying

Note: It would be helpful to begin this section by inviting discussion of how people view aging and how Christians might look at aging differently. Additionally, you might ask if people have stories of doubt or confusion around the “prosperity gospel” mentality.

1. Pray to open the study.

2. Discuss Question 15, the art of dying.

3. Discuss Questions 16 and 17 on aging.

4. Discuss Question 18 on misconceptions about faith and health.

5. Discuss Question 19 on which medical means to consider at the end of life. Because there are so many things to understand about medicalized dying, encourage people to watch the further encouragement resource with Dr. Kathryn Butler.

6. Pray to close. Choose a prayer from one of the readings to pray together if that seems helpful.

### **Session 4: Read Part Four: Questions 20–28.**

Themes in Part Four: legacy—practical (documents, financial, final wishes, etc.), spiritual (non-material), and emotional

Note: This section gives practical instruction on preparing a legacy. Some members of your group may feel overwhelmed by thinking about legacy tasks. Assure them that these tasks can be completed over a period of time, but also encourage them that the time to begin is now. (If you feel it appropriate, point them to the self-paced, ten-session, online course I offer with social worker, Kelly Markham: [Organizing Your Life and Legacy.](#))

1. Pray to open the study.
2. Group Questions 20–22 together. If your church or organization has documents that help members plan for burial or cremation and for funeral or memorial services, consider providing those.
3. Group Questions 23 and 24 together, because they focus on stewardship of material possessions.
4. Group Questions 25–28 together, because they focus on non-material legacies.
5. Pray to close. Choose a prayer from one of the readings to pray together if that seems helpful.

**Session 5: Read Part Five: Questions 29–34.**

Themes in Part Five: benefits of church membership for aging, sickness, and dying; caring for the dying; caring for caregivers

Note: Be aware that though we are called to care for “the least of these,” some people have experienced trauma around death and dying and hospitals. Encourage these people (as I mention in Question 29) that they can serve in other ways besides visiting. Additionally, be aware that the health of many caregivers suffers, and if you have caregivers in the group, encourage them to tend to their own mental, physical, and spiritual well-being.

1. Pray to open the study.
2. Group Questions 29–30 together, because they focus on care for the sick and dying.
3. Group Questions 31 and 32 together, because they focus on caregivers’ well-being.
4. Group Questions 33 and 34 together, because they focus on how church membership and spiritual disciplines benefit us in preparing for glory.
5. Pray to close. Choose a prayer from one of the readings to pray together if that seems helpful.

## **Session 6: Read Parts Six and Seven: Questions 35–40.**

**Themes in Parts Six and Seven:** the journey of grief and ending well

Note: This session will take you into the final sections of the book, which focus on the journey of grief and ending well. Grieving members may experience fresh grief. Some members may especially need to hear the hope offered in Question 38 regarding grieving for a loved one who may not have been a believer. Enter this time prayerfully, asking the Spirit to make you sensitive to grieving members. Allow time for lament.

1. Pray to open the study.
2. Discuss Question 35 on the impact of grief.
3. Discuss Question 36 on lament. If you have time, read some of the biblical laments, and/or ask if anyone would like to share a lament prayer they wrote.
4. Group Questions 37–39 together and ask which of these people would like to discuss further.
5. Discuss Question 40. Spend time imagining the glory that awaits. Ask each member to share their hopes and/or plans for continuing to prepare for glory after the group has ended.
6. Pray to close. Choose a prayer from one of the readings to pray together if that seems helpful.