

## The Gables – Where Do We Go When We Die?

### Ice Breaker –

No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. – Steve Jobs (former Apple CEO)

Source:

[http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/s/stevejobs416855.html?src=t\\_destination](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/s/stevejobs416855.html?src=t_destination)

### Lesson –

**Rick:** Hey Donna! That was an interesting quote, wasn't it? Have you ever heard of Steve Jobs?

**Donna:** Wasn't he some computer guy, or something?

**Rick:** Yes. He was the CEO of Apple, which makes Apple computers and smart phones. He died of pancreatic cancer in 2011.

**Donna:** Was he a Christian?

**Rick:** No. He said, "I think different religions are different doors to the same house. Sometimes I think the house exists, and sometimes I don't. It's the great mystery."

**Donna:** What did he mean by that?

**Rick:** I think he meant that he wasn't always sure God existed. I think he was also saying that we could get into heaven (God's house) after we die, through many different religions, not just Christianity.

**Donna:** Is that true?

**Rick:** Not according to the Bible. Jesus said in John 14:6 that "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

**Donna:** What about all the other religions of the world like Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Judaism? Are they all wrong?

**Rick:** They all espouse elements of truth, such as the Golden Rule (i.e., do to others what you would have them do to you), but they are not *the* whole truth.

**Donna:** Isn't it arrogant to think there is only one way to God?

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**Rick:** What is 2 X 2?

**Donna:** 4.

**Rick:** What if one person thinks the answer is 3 and another thinks the answer is 5, even if they're intelligent, sincere and well-meaning people who believe it. Are they right or are they wrong?

**Donna:** They're wrong.

**Rick:** How could our universe, our planet, and our bodies be so tightly integrated, so finely tuned, and so expertly organized to function, if there were tens or hundreds or thousands of gods all involved in the creation, with different characters and qualities, or if no creator was involved in creation and everything just got here by accident?

**Donna:** I don't know.

**Rick:** When you buy a new electronic appliance at the store, and don't know how to use it, what's the first thing you should do?

**Donna:** Read the manual.

**Rick:** Correct. What's the first thing you should do when trying to learn more about the how we got here and what our purpose in life is?

**Donna:** Read the manual. But which one? There are so many to choose from.

**Rick:** Yes, there are lots of manuals out there about life.

- You can choose to rely totally on science books. They have a lot of valuable knowledge to offer, but they're updated every year or so as human beings learn more about our universe.
- You can investigate the books used by the great world religions, such as Islam's *Quran*, Hinduism's *Vedas* and Buddhism's *Sutras*.
- Each of them contain elements of truth, but there is only one book that is *the* whole truth and never changes.

**Donna:** How do you know the Bible is true?

**Rick:** There are many ancient artifacts that attest to its authenticity.

**Donna:** Like what?

**Rick:** The Dead Sea Scrolls, which were discovered between 1946 and 1956 in eleven caves near the Dead Sea in Israel, are 2,000 to 2,500 years old and contain many of the same books included in our Bible today, such as the book of Isaiah.

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**Donna:** That doesn't mean they're accurate.

**Rick:** After comparing these and other artifacts to the Bible we use today, researchers determined they are essentially the same. Do you believe the versions of Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad* that sit in shelves in the town library are accurate?

**Donna:** Yes.

**Rick:** There are only about 70 ancient artifacts that attest to the authenticity and age of Homer's books, but there are over 22,000 ancient artifacts that attest to the authority of the Bible.

**Donna:** What does the Bible say about the accuracy of the Bible?

**Rick:**

- In John 10:35 Jesus said, "... the scripture cannot be broken..." He was therefore attesting to the "complete authority and reliability of the Old Testament."
- In 2 Timothy 3:16, the Apostle Paul wrote that "All scripture is God-breathed."
- In Psalm 12:6, King David testified, "... the words of the Lord are flawless..."
- Proverbs 30:5 says: "Every word of God is flawless..."

**Donna:** Why do *you* think the Bible is God's Word?

**Rick:** Because it changed my life. It helped me realize that I was a sinner, that I had no hope of pleasing God because of all the mistakes I'd made in life. I was afraid that if I died I would stand before God and he would send me to hell because I deserved it.

**Donna:** Would God really do that?

**Rick:**

- Here's an excerpt from Revelation 20: 11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.
- Here's another excerpt from Revelation 21: 5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these

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words are trustworthy and true.” 6 He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7 Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children. 8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”

- Passages like this frightened me. Then I learned about the Good News offered by God in the Bible. It said that God was willing to forgive my sins and remember them no more.

**Donna:** Really? Where does it say all that?

**Rick:** Hebrews 8:12 says, “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

**Donna:** What else does the Bible say about this?

**Rick:** Romans 3:23 says that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Romans 6:23 says that the wages of sin is death, meaning the penalty for our sins is spending eternity in hell and later in the Lake of Fire. God knows we’re all in trouble, because he is just, but he provided a solution to our problem, because he is merciful. He sent his one and only son into the world to die on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins so we wouldn’t have to go to hell.

**Donna:** How do we make sure we go to heaven, and not to hell, when we die?

**Rick:**

- John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” We have to take God at his word that Jesus paid the price for our sins.
- Romans 10:9 says, “That if you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart, that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”
- Luke 13:13 says, “I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”
- So, we must believe in Jesus, we must receive God’s gift of his sacrifice on the cross for our sins, we must be willing to turn away from our previous life of sin, and then we can be assured that God will forgive us and remember our sins no more.
- We don’t want to leave something this important to chance. We need to make sure we know where we’ll go when we die.