

ETERNITY – THE ULTIMATE CHOICE

Author:
Marc Estes

*Disclaimer: This is an older resource not currently in use at Mannahouse

Mannahouse
9200 NE Fremont Ave.
Portland, Oregon 97220
www.mannahouserresource.com

Updated: 03/04/2022



Eternity – The Ultimate Choice

By MARC ESTES





9200 NE Fremont • Portland OR, 97220

Introduction

Throughout history, mankind has pursued the hope of defining eternity. Many questions have surfaced regarding the exact definition of our eternal state, while even more controversy surrounds the methods of reaching a desired eternal destination.

Throughout time, millions have adhered to the concept of reincarnation, and others have believed that after death mankind ceases to exist. Many have also firmly believed in heaven and hell as the only eternal options, and some have even believed in some other eternal state contrary to those listed here. Still countless others simply choose not to think about it.

ULTIMATE CHOICE 1

Which definition of eternity is correct? Is there a way to prove one definition to be true? Is there a specified path on which one reaches the desired eternal place?

The contents of this booklet will assist you in making the *Ultimate Choice* and will also affect the way you live your life. Please take your time to carefully read through this material.

**YOUR ETERNAL
DESTINY IS AT STAKE!**

ULTIMATE CHOICE 2

Where Will You Spend Eternity?

Each person has a certain perception of life after death. Your beliefs may define your concept of eternal destiny. Your philosophy of eternity forms a window through which you view life on earth, and this view ultimately affects your behavior and values. Carefully consider the question being presented, and then mark the one that best describes your answer.

Where **do you think you**
will spend **eternity**?

- ☐ On Earth
- ☐ In Heaven
- ☐ In a Higher State of Consciousness
- ☐ In Hell
- ☐ Reincarnated
- ☐ I Will Cease to Exist
- ☐ I Don't Know
- ☐ Other: _____

ULTIMATE CHOICE 3

Why Do You Believe This?

Why do you believe you will spend eternity in this manner? Please write your answer below:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. On the right side, there is a small portion of a purple object, possibly a book cover or a folder, which is partially cut off by the edge of the frame. The paper appears to be part of a binder or a notebook.

ULTIMATE CHOICE 4

Must Eternal Destiny be Based Upon Ultimate Truth?

Many ingredients shape your view of eternity.

Most agree that any important decision made in life should be supported by the best available facts. Important decisions should be based on truth, or you will undoubtedly regret the consequences.

Although many theories of eternity may seem valid, it is critical that eternal destiny is based only upon proven, objective truth and not on any other means.

Sacred writings of most religions claim to have the absolute truth.

The way you are brought up, the culture in which you live, what you are taught in school—all have an impact on your perception of eternity. These ingredients form a belief system that frames your life-style, attitudes, standards, and character.

You would never consider giving unknown medicine to a critically ill person or jumping from a plane without first checking your parachute. In like manner, when considering the most important decision of all—your eternal destiny—you should not base this decision on anything but fact.

You must determine which one is correct before investing your life in its cause!

ULTIMATE CHOICE 5

Is the Bible Absolute Truth?

Many scholars, historians, and journalists agree that the Bible is considered the greatest book ever written. It is, without contest, the all-time best-seller of any book in history, and it continues to escalate in its circulation. It has been a source of hope and faith to countless millions. Yet, the Bible itself claims to be more than a popular book. It claims to be the perfect and inspired Word of God.

For the Bible, or any book, for that matter, to achieve a status of infallibility, it must pass a series of objective tests to prove its claim. What follows are fourteen criteria, proving that the Bible is the only book ever written which passes these tests.

This claim has caused great debate in regard to its absolute credibility. Can one book be 100% accurate, true, and contain every answer for humanity?

ULTIMATE CHOICE 6

14 Tests to Validate the Bible as Truth

1. Scientific Accuracy *No single scientific fact or discovery has ever disproven a biblical statement.²*

2. Archeological Accuracy *Over 5000 archeological sites described in the Bible have been verified through archeological finds. None have ever contradicted the Bible.*

3. Historical Accuracy *Many skeptics have labeled the Bible as a collection of myths, poems, and fictional stories. However, secular research continues to endorse the reliability of the Bible. According to Josh McDowell, "Many who have set out to disprove the Bible are some of its greatest supporters."*

4. Manuscript Accuracy *The Bible has more manuscript evidence supporting its reliability and accuracy of translation than any other ten pieces of ancient literature combined, such as the writings of Plato or Aristotle.⁴*

ULTIMATE CHOICE 7

5. Accurate Predictions

The Bible is filled with predictions that have been fulfilled with flawless attention to detail.

6. The Law of Compound Probabilities

Christ fulfilled 332 prophecies in perfect order. The odds of this occurring are beyond coincidence, chance, or human manipulation. This would be comparable to the odds of someone wearing a blindfold and finding a dime lost in our solar system.⁵

7. Indestructibility

Since its inception, the Bible has weathered the trial of constant attack, yet no errors have ever been found. Furthermore, it continues in great circulation today.

8. Enduring Popularity

Over twelve billion copies have been produced since its first printing.

9. Complete Unity

Spanning a 1600 year period, the Bible was written by forty different people from all walks of life and cultures, yet no contradictions exist.

10. Changed Lives

Billions of lives have been miraculously transformed by its teachings.

11. Support of World Leaders

Many great leaders have based their lives on the Bible's accuracy.

12. Sacrificial Support

No other book in history has the support of millions who have given their lives to defend its cause.

13. The Support of Jesus Christ

Sacred scripture was personally endorsed as the infallible Word of God by Jesus Himself.

14. Supernatural Support

Legal experts state that the evidence concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ is overwhelming and the biblical facts would stand up in any court of law.

**NO OTHER RELIGIOUS BOOK
COULD EVER PASS MORE THAN JUST
A FEW OF THESE TESTS.**

ULTIMATE CHOICE 8

ULTIMATE CHOICE 9

Who is God Anyway?

Based upon your beliefs, how would you best define God?

- ☐ One of Many Gods
- ☐ One and Only Almighty God
- ☐ Greater Among Equals
- ☐ A Force
- ☐ Every Person is a God
- ☐ God Does Not Exist or is Dead
- ☐ Other _____

How would you best define the character of God?

- ☐ Loving
- ☐ Kind
- ☐ Perfect
- ☐ Gentle
- ☐ Egotistical
- ☐ Evil
- ☐ Sternly Judgmental
- ☐ Distant
- ☐ All Powerful
- ☐ Knowing Everything
- ☐ Having All Things Under His Control
- ☐ Lacking Concern for Humanity
- ☐ Uncompassionate
- ☐ Other _____

.....→ **ULTIMATE CHOICE 10**

Defining God

The following descriptions of God are found in the Bible.

Who is God?

A Spirit.....John 4:24
 Only One God.....Deuteronomy 6:4
 A Person.....John 17:1-3
 Three in One.....2 Corinthians 13:14
 All Powerful.....Revelation 19:6

What is God Like?

Unchangeable.....Numbers 23:19
 Unequaled.....Isaiah 40:13-25
 Infinite.....I Kings 8:27
 All Powerful.....Jeremiah 32:17
 Ever Present.....Psalms 139:7-12
 All Knowing.....I John 3:20

Does God Care About Me?

Loving.....I John 4:8,16
 Truthful.....Psalms 117:2
 Merciful.....Lamentations 3:22,23
 Fair.....Psalms 89:14
 Pure.....Revelation 4:8
 Patient.....Exodus 34:6-7

ULTIMATE CHOICE 11 ←.....

What is Sin?

Let's review how others define sin. Both non-religious and religious writings have labeled sin in the following ways:

- Straying from the Correct Path
- Missing the Target
- Taking a Wrong Turn for the Worst
- A Misdeed or Trespass
- Moral and Spiritual Depravity
- Eternal Separation from God
- Resulting in Death
- Anything in Contradiction with God
- An Inherent Trait Born in Every Man

What words would best describe your definition of sin?

- ☐ Sin is Relative (based on one's personal opinion)
- ☐ Sin is a Concept of the Past
- ☐ Sin is Only a Religious Term
- ☐ Sin is a Condition of the Heart
- ☐ Sin is Rebellion Against God
- ☐ Other: _____



ULTIMATE CHOICE 12

Sin Defined Biblically

The Bible is very clear in defining sin.

Rebellion Toward God

Isaiah 1:28 "But all sinners will be completely destroyed, for they refuse to come to the LORD."

Hostility Toward God

Romans 8:7 "For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will."

Deliberate Wrongdoing

Daniel 9:5 "But we have sinned and done wrong. We have rebelled against you and scorned your commands and regulations."

Harming Others

Proverbs 24:2 "For they spend their days plotting violence, and their words are always stirring up trouble."

Violation of God's Law

Romans 3:20 "For no one can ever be made right in God's sight by doing what his law commands. For the more we know God's law, the clearer it becomes that we aren't obeying it."

Resulting in Death

James 1:15 "These evil desires lead to evil actions, and evil actions lead to death."

ULTIMATE CHOICE 13

The Ultimate Effect of Sin

The Bible clearly indicates that sin resides in the heart of every person.

Jeremiah 17:9 "The human heart is most deceitful and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?"

Sin severs relationship between God and man. God's *Ultimate Desire* to have an eternal relationship with mankind is impossible because of our fallen nature.

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard."

The *Ultimate Effect* of sin is permanent separation of man from God.



ULTIMATE CHOICE 14

The Ultimate Penalty

Every choice bears a consequence. Whether one breaks a law of nature, a law of God, or a law of the government, the result is the same. Punishment must be served in some way!

The penalty for speeding is a ticket, theft results in imprisonment, and murder can be punishable by death.

The more important the law, the greater the violation, and the more severe the punishment. God's law establishes the penalty of sin as death, eternal separation from God. This is the *Ultimate Penalty*! Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death . . ."

Sin is one-sided, but its consequences are not. Sin elicits God's wrath and displeasure, and necessarily so, because God loves His creation; He is against whatever behavior hurts people.

Without debate, the *Ultimate Penalty* affects us all.

Romans 1:18 "But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who push the truth away from themselves."

Is there any hope for you to receive an exemption from this penalty?

ULTIMATE CHOICE 15

Is there Any Hope?

Despite sin, God, in His love and compassion, has chosen a way to forgive the sins of mankind. His *Ultimate Desire* is that we would experience a personal, never ending relationship with Him.

Although God wants eternal life for us, is this *Ultimate Hope* possible in the face of His holiness and uncompromising justice?

If God is to remain just and loving simultaneously, justice and mercy must work together. This is revealed in God's *Ultimate Plan* for mankind.

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise to return, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to perish, so he is giving more time for everyone to repent."

Isaiah 30:18 "But the LORD still waits for you to come to him so he can show you his love and compassion. For the LORD is a faithful God. Blessed are those who wait for him to help them."

ULTIMATE CHOICE 16

God's Ultimate Plan

With full knowledge of our offenses toward Him and others, God lovingly responded by taking the punishment for the offenses on Himself. Both the pain of the offenses and the punishment for our sins were fulfilled in the death of Jesus Christ.

**GOD'S
ULTIMATE PLAN
EXCHANGED
HIS OWN LIFE
FOR YOURS!**

Romans 5:8-9 "But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's judgment."

Colossians 1:19-22 "For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, and by him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of his blood on the cross. This includes you who were once so far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions, yet now he has brought you back as his friends. He has done this through his death on the cross in his own human body. As a result, he has brought you into the very presence of God, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault."

ULTIMATE CHOICE 17

The Ultimate Victory

The **Ultimate Victory** is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

In resurrecting Jesus Christ, God provided a pardon for sins forever. Because Jesus lives forever, God and His justice will never seek another payment for sin.

This **Ultimate Victory** gives us the assurance and confidence that it is possible to be exempt from the punishment of sin to enjoy abundant life forever with Him.

When He rose from the dead, Jesus conquered both the punishment for sin, which is death, and the power of hell, which is the influence of evil.

John 11:25-26 "Jesus told her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die like everyone else, will live again. They are given eternal life for believing in me and will never perish. Do you believe this . . . ?'"

1 Peter 1:21 "Through Christ you have come to trust in God. And because God raised Christ from the dead and gave him great glory, your faith and hope can be placed confidently in God."

ULTIMATE CHOICE 18

Jesus is the Only Way to Eternal Life With God

Even after having a clear understanding of the **Ultimate Penalty**, many still rely on their own ideas to establish a relationship with Christ and to spend eternity with Him. Many attempt to do good deeds, be good people, do the best they can, and even go to church. However, these noble acts still fall short of removing the penalty of personal sin.

Your eternal destiny can only be secured by understanding that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ provided the only way for you to experience a lifelong, eternal, personal relationship with God.

Ephesians 2:8-9 "God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it."

John 14:6 "Jesus told him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.'"

Acts 4:12 "There is salvation in no one else! There is no other name in all of heaven for people to call on to save them."

ULTIMATE CHOICE 19

The Ultimate Need

Every person is born with the same inherent needs, regardless of cultural, ethnic, or social settings. Check the ones that best describe your needs:

- ☐ Hope ☐ Blessing ☐ Acceptance
- ☐ Peace ☐ Significance ☐ Relationship
- ☐ Joy ☐ Security ☐ Harmony
- ☐ Love ☐ Prosperity ☐ Identity

The nature and character of God make Him the only one who can meet your needs and solve your problems.

NEED	COUNTERFEIT	ULTIMATE FULFILLMENT
Love	Sex & Affection	Relationship with God
Joy	Habits & Hobbies	Strength of God
Identity	Career Ambition	Relationship with God

Unfortunately, we attempt to fill these needs with counterfeit solutions, such as improper relationships, bad habits, hobbies, and careers, only to find that the vacancies in our hearts still exist and the potential for continual failure remains extremely high.

.....▶ **ULTIMATE CHOICE 20**

The Ultimate Choice

It is clear that Jesus is the only hope for humanity.

You face an **Ultimate Choice** today to accept or deny Him.

The hardest part of dieting is, first, the decision to "just do it." So it is with beginning a personal relationship with Christ.

Though Jesus died to pardon sins, not everybody will go to heaven. The difference lies in whether someone translates this truth into a personal reality through decision, surrender, and commitment.

Decision: It starts by deciding to confess your wrongdoings, turn from them, and believe in Jesus.

Romans 10:9 "For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

Surrender: A relationship with Christ requires that you make Him priority in your life and turn from your sins.

Acts 3:19 "Now turn from your sins and turn to God, so you can be cleansed of your sins."

ULTIMATE CHOICE 21 ◀.....

The Ultimate Choice

Commitment: When considering marriage, a person must count the cost of entering into a permanent relationship; so it is with Christ. Unfaithfulness causes extreme complications in any relationship, especially in a relationship with Christ.



Luke 14:27 "And you cannot be my disciple if you do not carry your own cross and follow me."

THE ULTIMATE CHOICE:

Are you now willing to make the right decision by surrendering your life and committing it to Jesus Christ?

ULTIMATE CHOICE 22

The Ultimate Prayer

You can begin a personal relationship with Jesus Christ right now by praying the following prayer to decide, surrender, and commit.

"Lord Jesus,

I come to You right now, confessing that I am a sinner and realizing that sin was the reason You died on the cross. I am so sorry, and I ask that You please forgive me of any sin I have ever committed. I want to stop trusting in myself and start trusting in You. Help me to turn away from all sin and to follow You and Your Word for the rest of my life. I ask You to come and live inside of me and become my Lord, my Savior, and my best friend. You are number one in my life. In praying this prayer, I now confess with my mouth and believe in my heart that I have made the Ultimate Choice to spend eternity with you.

In Jesus' Name, Amen."

ULTIMATE CHOICE 23

The Ultimate Path

Now that you have asked Jesus Christ to be a part of your life, it is imperative that you begin your new relationship by walking down His *Ultimate Path*.

U—Understand that it pleases God when you turn from sin.

God desires that you live a life that is pleasing to Him. 1 Peter 1:14-16 "Obey God because you are his children. Don't slip back into your old ways of doing evil; you didn't know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God—who chose you to be his children—is holy. For he himself has said, 'You must be holy because I am holy.'"

L—Live the rest of your life in the *Ultimate Relationship*.

You have become a representative of the Kingdom of God. Ephesians 4:1 "Therefore I . . . beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God."

T—Take time to read the *Ultimate Book*.

Begin your Bible reading with the book of John, and get to know God through His Word. 1 Peter 2:2 "You must crave pure spiritual milk so that you can grow into the fullness of your salvation. Cry out for this nourishment as a baby cries for milk . . ."

I—Immediately begin building a daily prayer life.

Your relationship with God will only be as strong as your prayer life. Spend time frequently praying during the day. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 "Always be joyful. Keep on praying. . . ."

M—Make new relationships with other Christians.

Find Christians who will help you with your new relationship with Christ. Hebrews 10:24-25 "Think of ways to encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds. And let us not neglect our meeting together . . ."

A—Attend church regularly.

Find a church which teaches that the Bible is the infallible Word of God. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. It is God's way of preparing us in every way, fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do."

T—Thoroughly involve yourself by serving in a church and in God's cause.

You have a purpose and a destiny in God. Seek assistance to discover and develop it. Romans 12:4-6 "Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are all parts of his one body, and each of us has different work to do. And since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others. God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well. . . ."

E—Encourage others to make the Ultimate Choice!

Tell your relatives, neighbors, and co-workers about your new relationship with Christ and what such a relationship could do for them. John 15:8 "My true disciples produce much fruit. This brings great glory to my Father."

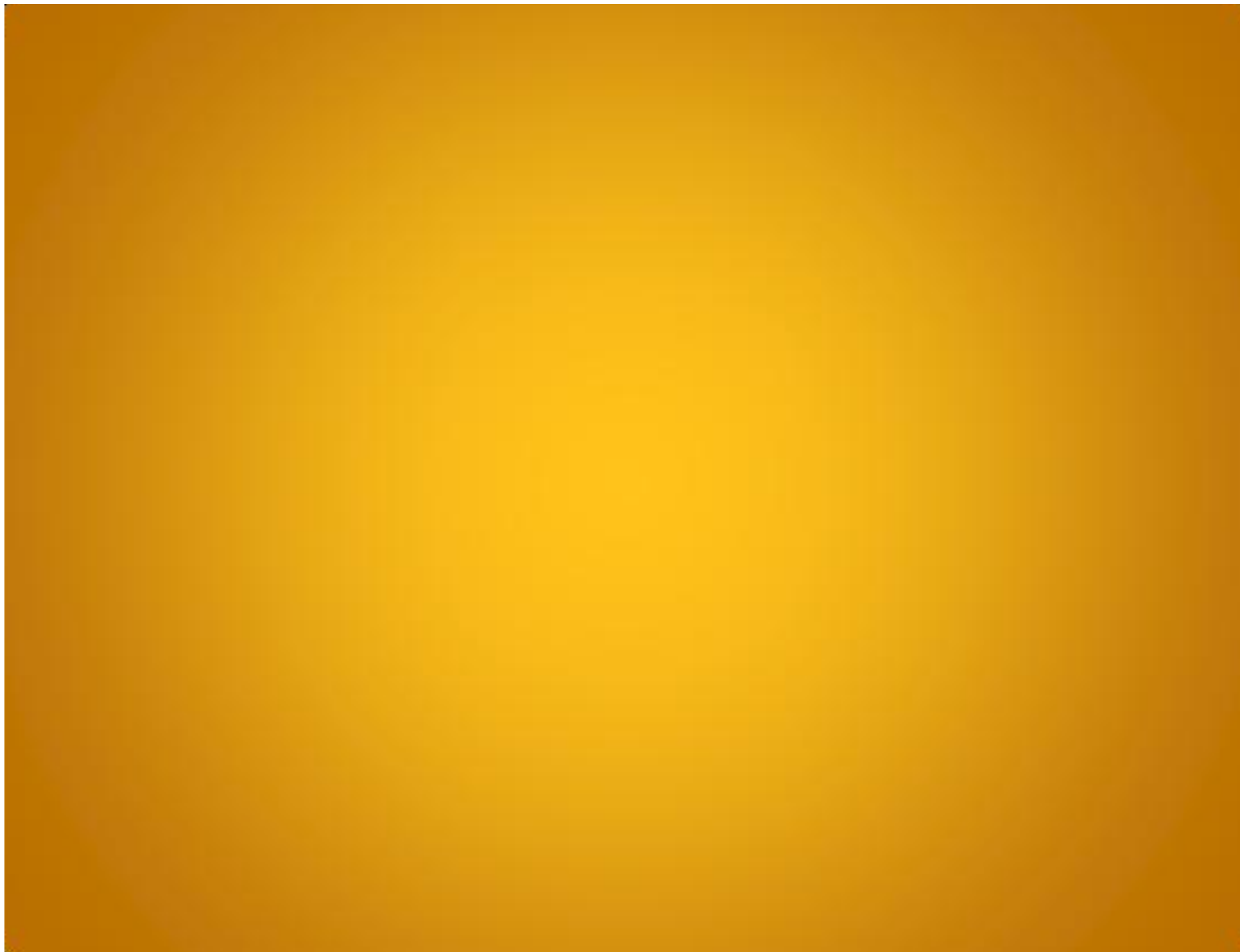
ULTIMATE CHOICE 26

Footnotes

1. *Is the Bible The Word of God*, CEI.
2. Creation Research Center, San Diego, California.
3. *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, pp. 19, Josh McDowell.
4. *Science Speaks*, Peter Stone.
5. *Is the Bible the Word of God*, pp. 25, CEI.

All Scriptures Taken From the New Living Translation.

ULTIMATE CHOICE 27



Check out more free tools on our website: mannahouseressource.com



MANNAHOUSE RESOURCE

MANNAHOUSE RESOURCE serves the entire church - from members to pastors, worship to kids, small groups to colleges. The resources we've curated come from proven churches in the Mannahouse Global Movement.



SCAN FOR MORE
RESOURCES

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU GROW



Resources: Free resources to help you take the next step forward.



Training: World-class courses from Portland Bible College professors.



Books: Essential print books from our authors.



PORTLAND BIBLE COLLEGE



LIVE AND ONLINE DEGREES

Earn a Bachelor's Degree in Theology or Music.
Book a campus tour or virtual experience now!



PBCACCESS.com

Audit Bible & Theology Courses on Demand.
Try for 7 days. Cancel anytime.

Gods Story.
Your Future.
Debt Free



A MANNAHOUSE MINISTRY

portlandbiblecollege.org