



Insane for the Light, A Spirituality for Our Wisdom Years, by Ronald Rolheiser

Week 9- Chapter 8: Thoughts on the Afterlife

- **Check in Question:** How do you envision heaven?

Opening Prayer

Loving and Eternal God,
You have created us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You. Deep within each of us is a longing to be united with You forever, to share in the joy, peace, and love of Your heavenly kingdom.

As we gather today, awaken in us a deeper desire for You. Help us to look beyond the distractions of this world and focus our hearts on the promise of eternal life. Draw us closer to Your Son, Jesus, who came to show us the way to the Father and opened for us the joys of heaven.

May everything we do, say, and pray today lead us into a more intimate relationship with You. Strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, so that one day we may rejoice in Your presence with all the saints and angels, forever united with You in heaven.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Reflection questions:

As you read through the following questions, select one or two that speak to you and be ready to share your reflection.

Chapter 8

1. If there are people you consider enemies, how do you feel about the possibility of sharing eternity with them in heaven?

2. When you imagine heaven, do you picture its gates as wide open to many or narrow and selective? Why?
3. Do you think God's love ultimately desires to draw everyone into heaven? What are your thoughts on that possibility?
4. Is it possible for a person to permanently distance themselves from love? Why or why not?
5. Rolheiser writes, "We need to distinguish between what we consciously want and what we implicitly, deeply want. They are often not the same." Have you ever experienced a conflict between these two desires? What did you learn from it?
6. Rolheiser suggests that living in denial or self-deception may be among our most dangerous sins because it jeopardizes our spiritual and emotional well-being. How do you respond to that idea?
7. Martin Luther's phrase "Sin boldly!" was not an invitation to sin, but a warning

against hiding our weakness behind lies and self-righteousness. How might you counsel someone struggling to admit their failures honestly?

8. Rolheiser describes the afterlife as being "in Galilee with Jesus"—a place where wounds are healed and life is brought to completion. How do you imagine this reality for someone you have loved and lost?

9. In what ways do your loved ones continue to live within you? What values, habits, or qualities have you inherited from them?

10. Karl Rahner describes us as "unfinished symphonies," suggesting that no relationship is ever fully complete in this life. Rolheiser adds that in God, it is never too late for healing and reconciliation. Have you experienced a relationship in which old wounds have been healed or diminished over time?

11. What are your thoughts on Rolheiser's reflection on Christ's descent into hell—that Jesus enters every darkness, even the darkness that may follow us into death, in order to bring healing?



The Light of the World William Holman Hunt (1827–1910)

Closing Prayer

For whom and what shall we pray...

Loving God,

We thank You for the reminder that we are “unfinished symphonies,” still being shaped by Your grace. Heal the wounds within us and between us, and where relationships have been strained, bring the quiet gift of reconciliation in Your time.

Teach us to trust that it is never too late for Your healing love to reach what is broken in our lives and in our memories.

Lord Jesus, You enter even the darkest places of human experience. Nothing is beyond Your presence or Your saving love. Enter our own darkness and the darkness of those we love, and bring us into Your peace.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Overview of our meetings

Week 10- Chapter 9: A Paradigm from a Christian Mystic (p. 153-174)