The Promise of Heaven, the Threat of Hell . . . Are They Optional?
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from St. Thomas Aquinas’s sermon notes on the Apostles’ Creed, §11 and §12:

faith and hope in the resurrection of the body helps us in four ways:
1) they remove the sadness occasioned by the death of others (or our own) I Thes 4:12
2) they remove fear of death Heb 2:14–15
3) they inspire us with the motive to do good works I Cor 15:9
4) they draw us away from evil John 5:29

the four conditions applicable to all who rise from the dead:
1) identity of body I Cor 15:53 and Job 19:26
2) different quality of body I Cor 15:53 and Matthew 22:30
3) integrity of body I Cor 15:52
4) perfect age Eph 4:13

the good will receive four gifts: (the damned will experience four evils:)
1) clarity Mt 13:43
2) impassibility I Cor 15:43 and Rev 21:4
3) agility Wis 3:7
4) subtility I Cor 15:44
1) opacity Is 13:8
2) passible but never destroyed Is 66:24
3) weighed down Ps 149:8
4) carnal Joel 1:17

eternal life means perfect union with God: sight, praise, fulfillment, delight, honor, knowledge, security, companionship (no jealousy)

everlasting death means pain of loss and aversion from God and all good things, remorse of conscience, pain of sense, despair of salvation

Novels to read:
Chariot of Fire, E.E.Y. Hales (Doubleday)
Descent into Hell, Charles Williams (Eerdmans)
The Great Divorce, C. S. Lewis (HarperCollins)
The Last Battle, C. S. Lewis (HarperCollins)

Movies to see:
“Stairway to Heaven,” David Niven, 1946 (re-released by Martin Scorsese through Columbia)
“Babette’s Feast,” 1987
“Places in the Heart”

Books to read:
Faith / Hope / Love, Josef Pieper (Ignatius Press)
Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Heaven, Peter Kreeft (Harper & Row)
Love Is Stronger Than Death, Peter Kreeft (Harper & Row)
The Weight of Glory and “Learning in War-time,” C. S. Lewis (HarperCollins)
The Problem of Pain, C. S. Lewis (Simon & Schuster; HarperCollins)
Dare We Hope “That All Men Be Saved”? Hans Urs Von Balthasar (Ignatius)

On eschatology and the new creation, see the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences http://www.ctns.org/