

Will My Pet Be In Heaven?

(appropriate for Mid-schoolers and older)

Michael R. Daily, March 2010

Other youth bible studies by Michael Daily available at: <http://gciweb.org/2011/04/youth-bible-study-materials-michael-r-daily/>

Preparation: Buy a baby bottle and a pacifier. Fill the bottle with milk. Buy ring pop candies, one for each student.

Hand out ring pops to all the kids. Ask them to unwrap them and start enjoying them (they look like pacifiers).

Let's make a list of all the things in life that bring us joy and pleasure – the things that make life worth living.

Pets Games Foods Friends Entertainment Hobbies Sports Music

(Write their list on the board).

Good. Now let me tell you about a friend of mine named, Billy. Billy sends his regrets that he can't be here tonight (turns out he's in the pen) but I brought a picture of Billy (show picture of baby with a concerned look on his face. This link has a good picture - <http://sinekpartners.typepad.com/refocus/2008/08/starting-a-busi.html>)

(OK girls let's say it together, 1, 2, 3, "Awwwwww!")

This is Billy. Billy is a baby but he's different from most babies because he understands and speaks English!

As you can see from his expression Billy is a little concerned about the future. You see, Billy gets a warm milk bottle every two hours and he loves his milk bottle! (hold up milk bottle)

Nothing like a tall, warm one – life doesn't get any better than that!

And if things get a little stressful there is nothing like a nice juicy pacifier to calm you right down. (hold up pacifier)

But he's a little concerned about the future. He knows his Mom and Dad are looking forward to the day when Billy will be in mid-school and how much fun that will be for him.

So he's been listening in on the older kids talk about being in mid-school but its got him a little worried.

Billy says, "When the older kids are talking I never hear them even mention warm milk bottles or pacifiers".

When I told him I was going to see some mid-schoolers tonight he wanted me to ask you some questions.

Billy wants to know, "When I am in mid school will I be able to have my warm milk bottle in the mid school cafeteria because I really love my warm milk bottle!

What should we tell him?

"And I could never make it between bottles without my pacifier, it makes me feel so good to have it in my mouth everywhere I go. Will I be able to suck on my pacifier in my mid-school classes? I can't imagine being happy if I can't."

What are we going to say to Billy? If we try to describe the fun parts of being a mid-schooler will he be able to understand? Probably not. All he knows is there are no warm milk bottles and no pacifiers.

What's the real problem here?

First, Billy is going to be a different person when he gets to mid-school and the things he loves now are different from the things he will love in mid-school.

When Billy is a mid-schooler he will think milk bottles and pacifiers are silly. Billy is going to change.

Second, the new things that he will experience as a mid-schooler (pizza, hamburgers, you name it) are so much more satisfying than milk and pacifiers. But if we tried to explain that to Billy he would not understand would he?

What it really comes down to is he is going to have to trust his Mom and Dad when they say that there will be lots of fun things about being a mid-schooler.

What about you?

Let's go back to that list of things we love about our lives as mid-schoolers.

Which of these things does God tell us will be in Heaven? (not very many)

Are there any that God says will not be in Heaven?

Are there any that God does not mention one way or the other? (most of them)

The fact is there are many things about life on Earth that we love. Will all these things also be in heaven?

God does not say. He does not say yes and He does not say no.

Secret Things

Deuteronomy 29:29 - "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.

The Bible says that there are secret things (there are also hidden things – see appendix on hidden things).

Did you know that God has chosen to keep some things secret from you? These are things that He has made it impossible for you to know the answer to.

Why would He do that?

Because He wants our faith and hope to be focused on Him and His character, not on some "thing".

Deuteronomy 6:5, 13

⁵"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

¹³"You shall fear only the LORD your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name.

Deuteronomy 10:12

"Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,

(Mark 12:28-31)

One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?" ²⁹Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; ³⁰AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' ³¹"The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

We are to love, fear, worship, and serve God above everything else with all of our heart, soul, mind, & strength.

This is a really big deal to God. There is nothing more important to Him (it's the foremost commandment)

Deuteronomy 13:3-4

you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your God is testing you to find out if you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴"You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him.

What is God going to do to see if He is number one in our lives according to this verse? He is going to test us!

Proverbs 16:2

All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, But the LORD weighs the motives.

What does this verse say God is going to do? He is going to evaluate and judge what motivates us to think and do the things we do. He's looking to see if loving Him is our primary motivation.

Jeremiah 17:10

"I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.

Here it is again. God is searching our hearts to see where our affections are. To see where He is in our list of things we love. He also is testing our minds to see where He is in our list of priorities. Is He number 1?

John 21:12-15

Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples ventured to question Him, "Who are You?" knowing that it was the Lord. 13Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and the fish likewise. 14This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead. 15So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You " He said to him, "Tend My lambs."

One of the reasons God has made some things secret is to test us to find out if we really do love Him completely. He weighs our motives, searches our hearts, and tests our minds.

The question God wants to answer is, "(your name here), do you love me more than these?" (point to the list on the board)

This is why God does not tell us if these things will be in heaven or not. He wants your focus to be on Him.

God's Promises About Heaven

God has given us some promises about Heaven. The question is, "Do you believe Him?"

(II Corinthians 5:7 – for we walk by faith, not by sight)

I Corinthians 2:9

but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."

Psalm 16:11 - You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

God promises us fullness of joy and pleasures forever beyond what we can imagine. In other words God promises that in Heaven there will be no disappointment and that our experience of joy will be completely full with no shortage or gap. We will experience pleasures for all of eternity. The specifics are not revealed but they are described as being things beyond our current ability to comprehend or even imagine. The question is do we believe Him and trust Him?

The fact is your flesh has not been perfected yet.

When Christ returns your flesh will be changed. You will not be exactly the same person you are today.

Kind of like Billy. He will not be the same person in mid-school that he is today.

You will have no unfulfilled desire in heaven. This can occur in two ways:

- 1) Some of your desires will be fulfilled or exceeded
- 2) Some of your current desires will disappear.

Either way you will feel no sense of loss.

Will Our Pets Be In Heaven?

Some people wonder, "Will my pet be in Heaven?" The answer to that question is found in the following verse.

Ecclesiastes 3:21

Who knows that the breath of man ascends upward and the breath of the beast descends downward to the earth?

What does this verse say about our pets? (it says, "who knows")

In other words God is saying, "I'm not telling. It's a secret thing".

Why? Because God is testing you. He wants to find out if you love Him more than your pet.

Appendix on Hidden Things

Hidden things are things that God reveals to some people but not others.

A doctrinal example is that God will reveal things to those who diligently seek Him and obey Him.

John 14:21

"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

Historical narrative examples, usually related to prophetic revelation, have also occurred in the past.

Daniel 2:19-22

Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven; ²⁰Daniel said, "Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For wisdom and power belong to Him. ²¹"It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding. ²²"It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, And the light dwells with Him.

Isaiah 48:1-7

"Hear this, O house of Jacob, who are named Israel And who came forth from the loins of Judah, Who swear by the name of the LORD And invoke the God of Israel, But not in truth nor in righteousness. ²"For they call themselves after the holy city And lean on the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts is His name. ³"I declared the former things long ago And they went forth from My mouth, and I proclaimed them Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass. ⁴"Because I know that you are obstinate, And your neck is an iron sinew And your forehead bronze, ⁵Therefore I declared them to you long ago, Before they took place I proclaimed them to you, So that you would not say, 'My idol has done them, And my graven image and my molten image have commanded them.' ⁶"You have heard; look at all this. And you, will you not declare it? I proclaim to you new things from this time, Even hidden things which you have not known. ⁷"They are created now and not long ago; And before today you have not heard them, So that you will not say, 'Behold, I knew them.'

Revelation 10:1-4

I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire; ²and he had in his hand a little book which was open He placed his right foot on the sea and his left on the land; ³and he cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars; and when he had cried out, the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices. ⁴When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them."

II Corinthians 12:2-4

I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago--whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows--such a man was caught up to the third heaven. ³And I know how such a man--whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows-- ⁴was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak.

Appendix on Animals in the Millennial Kingdom and in Heaven

Millennial Kingdom

We know from the following passages that there will be a large variety of familiar animals in the 1,000 year millennial kingdom and that they will behave differently than animals currently do. They will act more like animals did originally, before Adam's sin. But we don't know if these are animals that once lived on the Earth before the millennial kingdom and died or new animals born during this period.

Isaiah 11:6-10

And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the young goat, And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little boy will lead them. ⁷Also the cow and the bear will graze, Their young will lie down together, And the lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁸The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. ⁹They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea. ¹⁰Then in that day The nations will resort to the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal for the peoples; And His resting place will be glorious.

Isaiah 65:17-25

"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind. ¹⁸"But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing And her people for gladness. ¹⁹"I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; And there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying. ²⁰"No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Will be thought accursed. ²¹"They will build houses and inhabit them; They will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. ²²"They will not build and another inhabit, They will not plant and another eat; For as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people, And My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands. ²³"They will not labor in vain, Or bear children for calamity; For they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD, And their descendants with them. ²⁴"It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. ²⁵"The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent's food They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the LORD.

Horses in Heaven

We know from the following passages that there are horses in heaven. What we don't know is if these are horses that once lived on the Earth and died or a special type of horse created only for heaven.

II Kings 2:11

As they were going along and talking, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven.

Revelation 19:11-14

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. ¹²His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. ¹³He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Will My Pet Be In Heaven?*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Deuteronomy 29:29

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Deuteronomy 6:1-13, Deuteronomy 10:12-13, Mark 12:28-31

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Deuteronomy 13:1-4, Proverbs 16:2, Jeremiah 17:10

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JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Will My Pet Be In Heaven?*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *John 21:12-15*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *II Corinthians 5:7*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *I Corinthians 2:9, Psalm 16:11*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Will My Pet Be In Heaven?*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Ecclesiastes 3:21*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *John 14:21*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Daniel 2:19-22, Isaiah 48:1-7*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Will My Pet Be In Heaven?*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Revelation 10:1-4, II Corinthians 12:2-4*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Isaiah 11:6-10, Isaiah 65:17-25*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *II Kings 2:11, Revelation 19:11-14*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

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