



Is God Fun?

For the believer in Jesus, Heaven will be fun forever!

August 28, 2022 – Part 6

John 3 ¹⁵ so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life. ¹⁶ “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ “There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God’s one and only Son. NLT

Romans 10 ⁸ In fact, it says, “The message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart.” And that message is the very message about faith that we preach: ⁹ “If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. ¹¹ As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” NLT

1 John 5 ¹ Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has become a child of God. And everyone who loves the Father loves his children, too. ¹¹ And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God’s Son does not have life. ¹³ I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life. ¹⁴ And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him. ¹⁵ And since we know he hears us when we make our requests, we also know that he will give us what we ask for. NLT

...While no two stories were identical, many shared common core traits. Moody described what was commonly reported, which generally followed a certain sequence. It begins with a dying man (or woman) reaching a climax of intense physical anguish, even hearing the attending physician announce his death. Immediately, he finds himself no longer in his physical body, yet often still in the immediate surroundings. He is now merely observing his own body from a distance, and even witnessing efforts to resuscitate his body. At first, he is confused and unaware that he has died, but shortly, he becomes somewhat adjusted to this new state of being. He takes note that he seems to still have a body, but one that is very different than his previous physical body in nature and ability. Eventually, others also show up to offer support in various ways. He sees the spirits of deceased family and friends. Then a being of light appears, brighter than the sun, who is described as uniquely and supremely warm and loving. This loving being asks questions communicated through thoughts, leading him to examine his actions, often including a living replay of his entire life. Afterward, he encounters some sort of boundary, seemingly the border between earth life as he knows it and eternal life. But at the edge he discovers he must return to earth because it is not yet his time to die. He protests and does not want to return due to the powerful feelings of peace, joy, and love enveloping him. But even though he is resistant, he finds himself back in his physical body and continues to live.

I sat on my bed, stunned after I finished reading the book (*Life After Life* by Dr. Raymond Moody). I remember thinking, *If there’s even a shadow of a chance that this is true, I had better find out – nothing’s more important.* I’ve become convinced that God loves each of us like no other, and that most people are just like I was – they just don’t realize how great life with God can be: starting in this life, but even more so in the Life to come.

A Boring Heaven? ...I find that most people, whether Christ-followers or not, have a horrible view of Heaven. At best it's a cloudy, ethereal, disembodied, nonphysical experience – yeah, maybe with love, joy, and no suffering sprinkled in, but if we're honest, we don't really get *excited* about it. We can't imagine actually *liking* it. At worst, people think of it as an endless, boring church service, singing songs you're not excited about – forever! That sounds horrible to me, and I'm a pastor!

How you think about Heaven affects everything in life – how you prioritize love, how willing you are to sacrifice for the long term, how you view suffering, what you fear or don't fear. I'm convinced we can't even begin – but we should try – to picture how magnificent, how spectacular, **how much fun heaven will be** – how much of what we love about this life and more awaits us in eternity. As the Scripture says, “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Corin 2:9 NLT). But that doesn't mean we shouldn't use our imaginations to the limit trying to understand.

...I'm convinced a main reason many people (Christian or not) live materialistic, self-centered lifestyles is their poor view of the life to come. They can't imagine Heaven, so they don't live for it. But all the great heroes of faith “were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them” (Hebrews 11:16 NLT). Imagining and living for Heaven is not optional to God – it's the hope God wants us to hold in our mind's eye.

Loving Life: My hope is that you will begin to see with this God-given gift called imagination that Heaven is not imaginary, but more Real than the world we know. I'm convinced your Creator loves you more than you can imagine – and you will love life with him!

...I suddenly was in the very dark tunnel going up, up, up....After passing through from that very dark tunnel, it has changed to very bright light. I had seen a very bright light, I thought it was sun, but it was not. I don't have an idea where that light came from. Someone spoke to me for a while, I heard, and that voice came from that light. You know what I felt when I saw that light? When I saw that bright light, I felt that someone loves me very much (but no idea who it was). I was very overwhelmed with that bright light. And while I was there, I felt the love, and that Love I never felt before. That light welcoming me very warmly and loves me very much My words to the light before I [revived] was this: *I wanted to stay here, but I love my two kids.* When I said this, I suddenly woke up....Was it true that the light was GOD? Reason why I felt very overwhelmed? I felt that only that light ever love me and no one does. All people know only to beat me, hurt me, criticized me, offended me and many more. Nobody love me like that kind of love before. How I wish, my two kids and me could go there and feel that love forever.

I hope you become convinced that your Creator has crazy love for you. But he won't force himself on you; he gave you a free will. He lets us decide if we will seek to know him and love him back, as you will see.

...C.S. Lewis once said, “If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next....Aim at Heaven and you will get earth ‘thrown in’: aim at earth and you will get neither.” In the Western world, we live for retirement. We have a vision, a mental picture in our imaginations, of what retirement will be like. Because we can picture it, we will work for it, save for it, sacrifice for it. There's nothing wrong with retirement, but it only lasts a few decades at best. What if we became people who have a vision for the ultimate Life to come? What if it's true that this life is merely a tiny taste on the tip of our tongues of the feast of Life yet to come? What if Heaven is going to be better than your wildest dreams? And what if how you live really does matter for the Life to come?