

A Study of Heaven – Week 10

What About Children?

There are a number of reasons that God would allow children to go straight to heaven.

The primary reason is His character.

Which attributes of God are given in the following verses that would lead you to believe that children who die before the age of accountability are in heaven?

- a. Matthew 6:9 He is our Father
- b. Deuteronomy 1:29-31 He has the Father's love
- c. Psalm 86:15 Compassion and mercy, longsuffering (slow to get angry), unfailing love and faithfulness
- d. Psalm 145:9 Goodness and compassion
- e. Genesis 18:25 Fair and Just

The word 'children' is used almost 100 times in the Gospels alone.

The following verses tell us when God first knew us. How soon in our life's journey was that and who is speaking in these verses?

- a. Psalm 139:13-17 In the womb, King David
- b. Jeremiah 1:5 At conception, God
- c. Psalm 22:9-10 As a baby, King David

Deuteronomy 1:39 tells us that there is a point when a child knows the difference between good and evil. Because the Israelites refused to trust God, the adults would never enter it but the children were not held accountable.

God did not say that children are sinless, just that they are not held responsible for their sins. Children are not the same as adults who willfully and knowingly commit sins.

The Condition of Salvation

We have discussed the ‘unforgivable sin’ or the sin that will keep you out of heaven. I believe that it is rejecting the work of salvation and thus rejecting the Father and the Son even unto death. It is the foundation of the Gospel.

Dr. Jeremiah says that “Children too young to know and understand the Gospel cannot willfully reject it.” The same applies to people with mental disabilities who are unable to grasp the concepts of the Gospel.

John MacArthur says “Little children have no record of unbelief or evil works, and therefore, there is no basis for their deserving an eternity apart from God. . . They are graciously and sovereignly saved by God as part of the atoning work of Jesus Christ.”

Charles Spurgeon said in his sermon “The Way of Salvation”, “Are [infants] saved? And if so, how? I answer, saved they are beyond a doubt; all children dying in infancy are caught away to dwell in . . . heaven . . . But mark this – no infant was ever saved apart from the death of Christ. Christ Jesus has with his blood bought all those who die in infancy . . . They are washed from all original corruption which they had inherited from their parents, and thus washed and cleansed they enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

The Compassion of the Savior

The following describe Jesus' love for children. What do we learn about children and the heaven in these verses?

- a. Matthew 19:13-14 "The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these." (Mark 10:13-14 or Luke 18:15-16, they all say the same thing.)
- b. Matthew 18:1-5 - The greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven are the children. We have to come like a child. Receiving a child is like receiving Jesus Himself.
- c. Matthew 18:14 – God the Father does not want any child to perish.

Remember the child of David and Bathsheba that was conceived out of wedlock? 2 Samuel 12:15-23 tells the story. The last verse tells us what the "Man after God's own heart" says about the death of a child. Where does this verse say that David and the baby will be together?

Regarding the age of accountability, it is not based on age. It is the age at which a child is able to understand the Gospel and understand what rejecting it means. Dr. Jeremiah believes that Jesus reached this age before 12 because in Luke 2:41-50, He told His parents that He "must be about My Father's business."

How old will children be in heaven (or us for that matter)? There is no information to answer this question in the Bible. Some believe

that Jesus was 33 and Adam and Eve were created as an adult, then children will be in their 30's in heaven. Other people believe that the babies will grow up on the New Earth.