

## WILL CHILDREN BE RAPTURED?

Selected scriptures

### Introduction

- I. The **Character** of God – Deuteronomy 1:29-31, Psalm 86:15, Psalm 145:9, Deuteronomy 1:39, Jonah 4:11, Ezekiel 16:20-22, Jeremiah 2:34, Jeremiah 19:4
  
- II. The **Condition** for Salvation – Isaiah 7:16
  
- III. The **Compassion** of the Savior – Matthew 19:13-14, Matthew 18:14
  
- IV. The **Child** of David – 2 Samuel 12:14-23

### Conclusion

1. What About the **Age of Accountability?** – Psalm 51:5, Psalm 58:3, Isaiah 7:16
  
2. How Old Will Children Be **in Heaven?** – Isaiah 11:6, 7-8

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

### Getting Started

1. Think of loved ones who have already gone to heaven. What do you remember most about them? What do you miss most? **We are wired to long for heaven. Not just the Genesis 1, Garden of Eden perfection, but the togetherness that exists there - together with our Lord and together with those we love and miss.**
2. When you think of joining them in heaven, what thoughts run through your mind? What feelings rise up inside of you? **It might help to think of it in the following terms: Those who have died in Christ haven't exactly gone away - more like they *moved* away. They simply live in a place far away, which we are also planning to move to in the future. Framing it this way might help your people see it differently - think of "catching up" with your loved ones in heaven! Like introducing them to people you know, telling them about kids/grandkids you've had since they left, and telling stories they weren't on earth for.**

### Going Deeper

1. Joining God, our heavenly Father, in heaven is a beautiful picture. What hopes do you have about your first in-person encounter with your Abba Father? **This question is extremely personal and goes to our individual relationships with God. Some of us want to hear He's proud of us, some of us just want a hug, others will want to ask questions. All of us will fall down in worship.**

2. Read Psalm 86:15 and 145:9. Of these listed attributes of God, which one helps you feel most connected to Him?

3. Pastor Jeremiah said that “the character of God provides a special grace for those who cannot believe.” How does this knowledge create a redemptive picture of our Lord with regard to children who die before they are mature enough to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior? **The same question could be asked with regard to those who do not have the mental faculties to understand the Gospel even into adulthood. In *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis speaks of the concept of “raw material” as it pertains to our capacity. His overarching point is that everyone has a different starting point, and only the Lord knows what internal growth and effort has taken place with our raw material as the starting point, and this is where God’s special grace comes in!**

4. Read Matthew 18:14 and 19:13-14. Jesus had an incredible love for children. Describe someone you know who has displayed this kind of affection for kids. **A rare and beautiful quality, indeed!**

5. Thinking forward to your own entrance into heaven, who do you most want to see and reconnect with upon your arrival? This could be someone we have known and loved who went on ahead of us, or a “celebrity” of the faith we have always wanted to meet (e.g., Moses, Esther, Paul, St. Augustine, Martin Luther, etc.). Most of us have a list of both! Bonus: What do you want to talk to them about/ask them?

### Applying the Message

1. How ready are you to die? What thoughts and feelings show up in you when you consider your own departure from this life? A tricky topic, to be sure. Some vibrant Christians can't help but be nervous or downright terrified of death. Model a lot of grace to anyone who is willing to share this! We have faith and hope, but death is *still* on the other side of a veil we can't actually see past. Many others (I know several) are antsy to get to heaven, knowing that is when/where our real lives begin. Yet others just simply aren't ready - either they don't want to leave this life quite yet or they do not have certainty of their own salvation. Bonus: How does your perspective on this make life easier? How does it make life more difficult?
  
2. How does placing *all* of your faith, hope, and trust in Jesus Christ change the way you prepare for meeting Him face to face? It is Jesus Himself who made the way to heaven - our getting there is only possible because He wants us there and did whatever He had to do to make it happen.