



Where do babies go...

When they die?

Someone once said, "There is no pain so great as for parents to outlive their children." Regardless of the age of the child, the grief is incomprehensible. The plans and dreams are now gone -- only to be played out continually in the mind of the bereaved parent. With many, this grief is only compounded by the theological question of the hereafter: "Where did my baby go?"

To answer this most important question, let's first look at the Bible and see how God views children. Ps. 127:3, 5 states ~

"Children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is his reward. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them."

In the New Testament, shortly before His crucifixion, several children were brought to Jesus in order that He might bless them. His disciples protested to which the Lord responded ~

"Let the little children come to me and *do not forbid them*; for of such is the kingdom of Heaven."  
Matt. 19:14 (italics added)

Jesus, when asked in the previous chapter by his disciples who would be the greatest in the Kingdom, had this to say ~

"Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the Kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me." (Matt 18:3-6)

Have you ever noticed how easily children believe in and follow Jesus? David stated that he was conceived in sin (Ps. 51:5). Even though born with a sin nature like all of us (just be 5 minutes late with your 3 month-old's dinner!), it appears as if children have an in-born desire to know and love God. Solomon wrote in Eccl. 3:11 that God has placed within the heart of each person a capacity to know Him and to have our hearts filled with Him.

Cares, concerns and temptations of this life obscure and quench this desire until we reach adulthood (what many call the age of accountability, Rom 3:20; 5:13) and we must make a conscious decision to forsake the old life, turn away from it and follow Jesus. But who would question the innocence of a little baby? Who would doubt its purity? What right-thinking person could ever look into the face of a child and not be moved with compassion? If this be true of man, with all of his short comings and sinfulness, how much more true of the God of mercy and compassion? We have already seen how He views the cherub faces of His most precious creatures.

The Bible teaches us that Jesus died to take away the sins of the world (Heb. 9:28). His sacrifice was more than sufficient to remove the penalty for all sin -- past, present, and future. No one -- from the best to the worst of us will stand before God on the basis of the sinful things that we have done. Jesus paid the price for all sin. If we accept that price as a free gift by repenting of our sins and giving our lives to God, we are declared new creatures -- sinless, totally righteous in the sight of God. When humans stand in the presence of the Lord to be judged, the only question the Supreme Judge will ask us is, "Did you accept the forgiveness for your sins offered by My Son?" We are not judged for our sinfulness, but for our acceptance or our rejection of the free gift of salvation offered through the shed blood of Jesus.

Prior to the sacrifice of Christ, God's holiness prevented any sinful person from entering His presence. Since we are all sinners (Rom. 3:23), no one could be in heaven. The people who lived faithful lives in the Old Testament looked forward to the death of Jesus. When they died, they waited their redemption in a place described as Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22). This is not a place called Purgatory (the Bible does not teach of such a place) by some, but was a place, prior to the cross where the faithful rested --awaiting their release (Ps. 68:18, Eph. 4:18) by Jesus. Before Jesus' sacrifice, no one could be saved; after His

death, God could if He wanted, allow everyone into His presence. Jesus' redemption was more than enough to satisfy God's holiness with regard to our sinfulness. The most vile person to have ever lived could go to heaven and Jesus' blood would make him righteous. God has chosen, however, to limit it to those of us who willfully accept His forgiveness by repenting of our sins and turning to Him. Hell, therefore, is reserved specifically for those who reject that provision by not repenting and turning away from their sins.

Children have not rejected anything. They are completely trusting. Innocent. They are, as the Bible states, what we are to become in order to be covered by the work of the cross.

One of the greatest sounds in all the world is heard in the parking lot of the neighborhood municipal swimming pool. The laughter, the shrieks of joy, the happy voices will bring a smile to the most insensitive countenance. In heaven, millions of these happy voices blend together in a symphony of joyous praise to our Creator.

If we return to our passage concerning children found in Matthew 18, we find that in verse 6 Jesus continues by saying ~

“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”

The Lord does not want anything to hinder the children in coming to Him. He paid a tremendous price to have them in His presence. He loves them very much. What comfort there is for us to know that if we are born again and have given our lives to Jesus by turning from our sins, we will some day be united with our precious children!

While not the focus of this tract, there is a related question that must be addressed at this point: How could a good and loving God have allowed my baby to suffer and die? It seems that if He is good enough to hate evil and big enough to prevent it, that He would. This is a complex issue that has baffled the theologians and philosophers since the beginning of time. No single answer will suffice. It must be remembered, however, that when sin entered the world, God's creation became fallen. There was a curse upon it. Disease, pain, and torment became the norm. Men were evil and did evil things. The whole universe was in rebellion against God. For many reasons, most of which are beyond human comprehension, our benevolent Lord allows the continuance of evil as He patiently waits for more and more to come into His Kingdom by accepting Jesus as their Lord and Savior. The day will come when He will remove the presence of evil from us. On that day, it will be too late to make a decision to follow Him or not. The die will have been cast. 2 Peter 3:9 tells us ~

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

His desire is that not only should the babies come to Him, but that everyone would turn from their sins and receive the forgiveness and righteousness that is His alone to give. Have you made that most important decision? Have you allowed the Lord Jesus to come into your heart and wash your sins, heal your pain and fill you with the knowledge of His Presence? Job was a man in the Old Testament well acquainted with grief and suffering. He too had many questions. But then he met the Lord and found Him to be completely sufficient to his every need.

Jesus is able, more than able to meet you where you are today and supply all your needs according to His riches in glory (Phil. 4:19). Won't you let Him today?

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