

Will We Know Each Other In Heaven?

by Bobby L. Graham

Question

What does the Bible say about knowing each other in heaven?

Answer

This question is one that people interested in heaven have long discussed. I believe the Bible teaches personal recognition in heaven, based on some very convincing principles of divine truth. According to **1 John 3:2**, we will be like the Lord, seeing Him even as He is. We shall know Him, and therefore, be knowable.

“Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is” (1 John 3:2, NASB).

Though incomplete in our knowledge of the afterlife (*“it has not yet been revealed what we shall be”*), John affirmed our confidence in being like the Lord when He is revealed at the resurrection of all and the return of Jesus. When the resurrection occurs, our bodies (whether dead or alive) will be changed (**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**). It follows, therefore, that the same spiritual state will remain in the judgment and the heavenly state.

David’s statement concerning being with his son who had died: *“But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me”* (confer **2 Samuel 12:23**), also implies that personal recognition shall exist. This meaningful and confidence-instilling affirmation becomes meaningless without the understanding that we shall know each other in heaven.

The Lord’s description of the kingdom – both in its temporal phase and its heavenly phase – in **Matthew 8:11ff**, further implies personal recognition in heaven. That the eternal phase of the kingdom is here included can be easily seen by contrasting the state of the *“sons of the kingdom”* who are cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, which is a picture of the final punishment of the wicked (**v. 12**), with the blessedness enjoyed in the kingdom with saints like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were not part of the kingdom of Christ when they walked the earth. It is the extension of this enjoyment to the eternal kingdom, which is necessarily implied in this passage.

That individuals retain their identity and power to recognize others, as well as their consciousness and mental powers, is seen again in the rich man depicted by the Lord in **Luke 16:24**. He obviously recognized Abraham when he called him by name.

When Lazarus had died, his sister, Martha, expressed her hope of **being with** (*i.e., seeing and knowing*) him in the resurrection. Jesus told her that she could see Lazarus immediately, because He (Jesus) is the resurrection and the life (**John 11:21ff**). Herein lies the real and profound hope of knowing each other in the future world.

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