

Read: 1 Peter 1:3-9

I'm Going Home

1 Peter 1:3,4

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Imagine you are on a camping trip. There are some fun things about camping. Hiking and cooking outside can be a great adventure. Even sleeping on the ground in a tent can be fun... for a while. After some time, the mosquitoes in your tent and the ants on your food are not fun. You start to feel the stones underneath your sleeping bag, and it is hard to sleep. You long for the clean sheets on your comfortable bed at home. But you cannot sleep in it yet. You must wait until the camping trip is over and you are home.

Just like your bed belongs to you even while you are away on a camping trip, heaven is yours right now, even while you live here on earth. Jesus won heaven for you when he lived and died perfectly. When Jesus rose from the dead, our hope for heaven was secured. Let there be no doubt. We will rise from the dead, just like Jesus, and we will live in our forever home, heaven.

But we are not there yet. For a time, we will live here on earth. There are things on earth we enjoy—love, family, vacation, pets, toys... the list goes on. These things are blessings from God. Yet, even with these blessings, sin has made this world a difficult one. Sin causes us to hurt each other with our words and actions. Without faith in Jesus, sin would keep us from going to our home in heaven. Sickness, sadness, and death are a result of sin and will be a part of our life as long as we are on earth.

When we feel sadness over these things, take heart! God has not left us alone on earth to endure the hardships caused by sin. He has promised to always be with us, and he will work these difficult things out for our good. He uses hardships to make us stronger and bring us closer to him. Through faith in Jesus, our sins are forgiven, and we journey with Jesus safely home to heaven.

Yes, camping can be fun, and it can be difficult. Life on this earth brings joy because of Jesus and sorrow because of sin. Whether today is a joyous day or a day heavy with sadness and difficulty, because of Jesus, there is a better day coming. Because of Jesus, we are going Home.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Name two things you really enjoy in your life.
- How is living in heaven better than living on earth?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- One of the things we know about heaven is we will be with Jesus. What would you like to say to him?
- How could you say this to Jesus right now?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- We do not know everything about heaven. But we do know some things. Think of at least two things we know.
- How does knowing you have a place in heaven help you on a difficult day here on earth?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, we can never thank you enough. You washed our sins away so we can live with you forever in heaven. Help us remember you are always with us on earth and you will bring us safely home when our life here is done. Amen.