

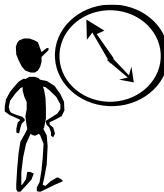
THE BATTLE CREEK BULLETIN

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Time of Assembly



Sunday:

Bible Study 4:00 p.m.
Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 p. m.

Would You Eat Barf?

By David Diestelkamp

Man's best friend does it. Dogs are known to eat their own barf. It's disgusting to us, and it's supposed to be revolting when Peter uses it as a vivid picture of a Christian returning to the pollutions of the world after having escaped them through Jesus Christ (2 Pe 2:20-22). You may not want to talk about it, but remember, the Holy Spirit is the One Who wants us to think about it!

So, why do dogs eat their own vomit anyway? I had to ask, and Google provided some unappetizing, but rather insightful and unexpectedly applicable answers:

Vomit smells and tastes delicious (to a dog). Rover.com says that a dog's incredible sense of smell (which is 10,000 to 100,000 time more powerful than ours [iheartdogs.com]) is able to recognize food particles in barf and thinks, "Yum!" Spiritual vomit is the same for many of us. There are particles of good, of fun, of pleasure, and of pride in sin. We are attracted by the particles while thinking they somehow outweigh or justify the disgusting pile of revolting sin we have to swallow to obtain them. As a temptation, the devil showed Jesus, "...all the kingdoms of the world and their glory" (Mt 4:8). He didn't show Jesus the revolting filth he and sin had caused in this world. But remember, even these particles of glory were not worth Jesus worshipping the devil – and they aren't worth it for us either!

Vomit doesn't taste bad (to a dog). Dogs have one-sixth the taste buds of humans, so they are not nearly as sensitive to flavor (wisconsinpetcare.com). Vomit seems like a good food source when you don't care about how it tastes. So, when our sensitivities to this world become dulled and darkened (He 5:14), we'll consume things we would have found distasteful had our senses not been seared by the world and

sin (1 Ti 4:2). Paul describes the unbeliever's walk as one of darkened understanding, ignorance, blindness of heart, being past feeling (Ep 4:17-19). The world is desensitized to what is good and bad. It's no wonder sin is consumed without gagging.

Vomit has roots in natural behavior (to a dog). According to Rover.com, in the wild, mama dogs may chew up a meal and regurgitate it for their puppies. Things can seem like a good food source because of how we were raised, what our parents or friends or neighbors or culture did or didn't do. Sin can seem natural, not only because of our sin-soaked environment, but also because without Christ we are "by nature children of wrath..." (Ep 2:3). Sin and the desires of the flesh feel and seem "natural" to us. We have to look outside our natural world to Jesus to find anything different, and few are willing to do that.

Vomit is a special opportunity (to a dog). Dogs view vomit as a quick and easy way to eat again. It is "a second opportunity to enjoy a good meal" (iheartdogs.com). How many compromises do we make, how many sins are tempting because they are quick and easy? And the devil presents sin as a special occasion, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, a rite of passage, and an exception, the only option. "Seize the moment," the devil says. The Lord says, "Today is the day of salvation" (2 Co 6:2).

Almost every pet website article ended with a warning that dog vomiting and its consumption may be a sign of pet illness. So, I'll end with the same warning from the Holy Spirit: "...if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: 'A dog returns to his own vomit,' and, 'a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire'" (2 Pe 2:20-22).

Shall We Know One Another in Heaven?

By Hoyt Houchen

Man is confronted with many mysteries, thus causing him to ponder on many questions. He is made to wonder about death, immortality, what is beyond and shall we know each other in heaven. The subject of future recognition in heaven that is discussed in this article pertains to saints. As we give attention to this question, we are aware that our soul's salvation does not depend upon the answer; nevertheless, it is thought provoking and motivates us to delve into the Scriptures to determine if they provide the answer. Some questions which concern us are not answered in the Scriptures, thus they remain mysteries and must be classified in the file of curiosity. We do not believe, however, that the question under consideration is in that category. Every devoted Christian

has probably given thought to this question. When one of our loved ones (a saint) departs from this life, we are sustained by the hope that we shall be united with him in heaven. Shall we recognize each other? We address ourselves to this question. While the Bible does give some teaching about future recognition, nevertheless, there are questions which remain unanswered, especially those involving details or specifics. The Bible teaches that heaven is real, but shall we as saints know each other in heaven?

A significant phrase is found in Genesis 25:8 where we are told, "And Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people." "He was gathered to his people." This phrase, or a slight variation of it, is used with reference to Ishmael's death (Genesis 25:17), the death of Isaac (Genesis 35:29), the death of Jacob (Genesis 49:29,33) and to Moses and Aaron (Deuteronomy 32:50). Moses was not buried in the sepulchers of his fathers, but in an unknown place "in the valley of Moab" (Deuteronomy 34:6). So, the phrase "gathered unto his people" would not refer to the burial of the body, but to the reunion of the spirit with those who had died before.

On the occasion of David's child who had died, he said: "Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me" (II Samuel 12:23). David realized that someday he would go to be with the child.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "...we are your glorying, even as ye also are ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus" (II Corinthians 1:14). Paul also wrote to these brethren: "knowing that he that raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you" (II Corinthians 4:14). And, he wrote to the Thessalonians: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus at his coming?" These are times of future rejoicing and glorying, thus it seems reasonable that Paul in these verses is referring to the "day" when the Lord Jesus will come to judge the world. Paul and his readers will be in one another's presence at that time.

The passage in I Thessalonians 4:13,14 is one of hope and comfort for Christians whose loved ones had died. Paul admonished his readers that they "sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope" (I Thessalonians 4:13). Their hope was not only that of the loved being at home with God, but it is also reasonable that there was the hope of someday seeing that beloved saint and being with him forever. This Scripture affords us the same hope today.

The foregoing Scriptures are some which convey the idea that the faithful who die will be united with the other faithful who have already departed from this life. There will be a meeting together.

Will there be future recognition? There are two passages in particular which lend evidence to this. (1) The transfiguration (Matthew 17:18; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36). Christ was transfigured on the mountain and there appeared with him Moses and Elijah.

Moses had been dead for nearly fifteen hundred years, and his body lay in an unknown grave. Elijah did not die, for he was taken up into heaven by a whirlwind (II Kings 2:11). The body of Moses turned to dust and Elijah had been changed. These men were clothed with different bodies from what they had here upon earth, but they appeared to the disciples and were talking with Jesus. They were both recognized. (2) The rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). Although some classify this account as a parable, a parable represents something that actually occurs. The rich man recognized Lazarus and Abraham in the unseen world. He still possessed memory, for he was told to remember that in this world he had good things and Lazarus evil things. He also remembered that he had five brothers still living. He requested that they be warned, lest they too, should come to torment. A great gulf in Hades separated the righteous from the wicked, and although it was too late for the rich man to be changed, there was recognition.

The Scriptures teach that at the resurrection of the dead, it is our physical bodies that will be changed, not our spirits. This is made clear in I Corinthians 15 (see I Corinthians 15:35-38). This body will be changed from a mortal body to an immortal one. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (I Corinthians 15:53). There can be no doubt that the mortal and the corruptible refer to the physical body. Certainly, the spirit is neither corruptible nor mortal. When we are raised from the dead, we shall have a body which pleases God to give us. It will be a changed body (I Corinthians 15:51,52). "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body" (I Corinthians 15:44). This being true, we shall not be known in heaven by our natural (physical) bodies as we are known here upon the earth, but this is not to suppose that our spiritual bodies will be without form and features. Jesus, Moses and Elijah were transfigured. Webster defines "transfiguration" as "a change in form or appearance" (Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, p. 1252). They were transfigured, but they were recognized. The Lord will clothe us with bodies which he has prepared; they will be fashioned anew to be "conformed to the body of his glory" (Philippians 3:21). Our bodies will be transformed into the likeness of his body in the glorified state. John wrote, "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is" (I John 3:2). If we shall recognize God in his manifested form, then, does it not stand to reason that we shall recognize one another in whatever likeness he shall prepare for us? There will be recognition in heaven. How the resurrection and transformation will take place, our finite minds cannot comprehend it, much less can we explain it. By the same faith that we accept all the miracles in the Bible, let us anticipate this great miracle which is yet to occur, and believe it with all our hearts.

The very thought of knowing one another in "the land that is fairer than day" is a great hope for Christians and should motivate us to endeavor even more to please God, and be assured that someday we can live forever in that most wonderful and indescribable place known as heaven.

With God

By Kelsey Harris

I like to be by myself, but I can't stand being alone.
I love the dark, but I hate not being able to see.
I enjoy meeting new people, but I hate being with strangers.
I want my voice to be heard, but I despise talking loud.
I want to be in a hall of fame, but I don't like being the center of attention.
I want to have my most complicated problems solved, but I don't want complicated answers.
I want to always be healthy, but not have to take medicine.

The answer is...God!

With God, I can be away from the world, by myself, but not alone, for He is with me.

With God, I can be in the dark, be blind, but see more than people of this world can see.

With God, I can meet new people, but they won't be strangers, because they are children of God, like me.

With God, my voice can be heard even when I whisper.

With God, I can enter His hall of fame, but not deal with the pressure of earthly fame.

With God, I can have even my most complicated problems solved with a simple answer.

With God, I can have an incurable disease, yet be healthy in what matters most.

Without God, I will be with the world, and be totally alone.

Without God, I will walk around with my eyes wide open, but not see as much as the Christian blind man sees.

Without God, I will meet all the people in the world, but they will always be strangers.

Without God, I will have to raise my voice as loud as I can to be heard, but still not be heard when it matters most.

Without God, I will work extremely hard to get into a worldly hall of fame, but not get into the highest one.

Without God, my most complicated problems can't be solved, and the attempts will be so complicated that I won't understand them.

Without God, I will have to take pill after pill, but will always be incurably sick.

With God I can achieve anything.

Without God, I achieve nothing.

What's your choice?