

# Can You Relate?

“Heaven Can Wait?” or “I Can’t Wait?”

In the movie *Heaven Can Wait*, a rookie angel makes a serious beginner’s mistake:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHJoH9IFboo>

If found in the same situation would your reaction be that of the movie’s fictional character, Joe Pendleton, who could not get out of heaven and back to earth soon enough? Or would your attitude be the fulfillment of the real-life Paul the Apostle’s great hope that:

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. <sup>Philippians 1:21</sup>

Do you share these great Christian ambitions – are these your aspirations? Or instead, do these seem to be foolish and unrealistic hopes, simple hyperbole?

If these statements do not make sense to you is it because, like Joe Pendleton, the lure and love of the world is too great. Or is your faith so small as a result of not seriously doing, as related in *John 6*, the “work of God . . . to believe in His Son” – life’s most important, one-time, opportunity “to get it right?”

If we are not now seeking and finding greater and growing faith in Christ, or a fear of tomorrow’s death grips us, it is certainly time (as the *Bible* tells us) to:

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you – unless, of course, you fail the test?  
<sup>2Cor 13:5</sup>

For the unmistakable true Christian faith is one of “I can’t wait!” not “Heaven can wait until there is nothing left for me here and then I will regretfully and reluctantly settle for heaven as second best.”

## Examine Ourselves? But How?

First, certainly, not in the most common way, that of Social Proof: looking around, comparing ourselves to others and assuming, because we are in an upper percentile of “good” people, that God has to be pleased with us. And that any confidence we may have is not based on being confirmed by any person, including a pastor or priest.

Neither is saving faith a “blind faith” believing in a future heaven without current ability to “test ourselves.” For Jesus makes it clear our faith for heaven is based on our faith received and practiced here and now; maturing and growing as we use it on a daily basis:

I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? <sup>John 3:12</sup>

Thus, the only reliable way to test our faith is by a comparison to what God says in His Word (for the Christian as primarily found in the *New Testament*):

- God's Imperatives (unequivocal directives): These commands start with Jesus' first and greatest imperative necessary for salvation and on-going sanctification – "Repent!" All of God's Graces are accompanied by associated specific imperatives, thus ignorance of what God commands, in His Word, will not end in bliss for those failing the "in faith" test at death.
- Indicatives (signs) of a genuine Christian: as examples, God's promises "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" for every Christian.

God's imperatives, when seen being fulfilled, are our tangible proofs (indicatives) He is with us, providing a necessary foundation for an on-going living and growing faith that all authentic Christians possess.

Who, in being required to ultimately take an important test, would reject a "take home" pre-test if offered? This is a great Grace of God – will we accept this kind offer or ignore and reject it, taking our chances that our faith is adequate to face life's end of life examination?

Oh, the peace it brings in being able to truly feel and say in faith:

For to me [for you?], to live is Christ and to die is gain. <sup>Philippians 1:21</sup>