

I Can Only Imagine

Bible Story: I Can Only Imagine (Heaven/All Things New) • *Revelation 21:3-5a*

Bottom Line: Following Jesus will turn out greater than you can imagine.

Memory Verse: *God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift. Ephesians 2:8 (NirV)*

Life App: Faith—Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Small Group

Heaven's Happy Dance

What You Need: Clear jars or glasses, clear soda, raisins

What You Do:

- Invite kids to show you how they look when they are really excited about something.
- Encourage them to smile, clap, shout, wiggle, and jump around.
- Gather kids for the following experiment to illustrate a "raisin happy dance."
 - Pour the soda into the clear jar or glass.
 - Let each of the kids drop a raisin into the soda and watch what happens.
 - The raisins will move up and down with the carbonation of the soda.
- Discard the ingredients and repeat the experiment, if desired.

What You Say:

"The raisins couldn't sit still, could they? They jumped for joy. You can jump for joy when you think about heaven! God loves you SO much, and He wants to share His wonderful heaven with you some day. That's why He sent Jesus to be your Savior. The Bible tells us all about Jesus and His story. The more you learn, the better you can know and follow Him. AND, **[Bottom Line] following Jesus will turn out greater than you can imagine.** I'd say that's worth dancing about. Let's do a 'heaven happy dance' right now!"



READ ECCLESIASTES 3:11-14

DAY 1

Get a sheet of paper and draw the most amazing place you can imagine. It might be a real place, or it could be something you completely make up . . . like a real-life Candy Land. If you have time, go all out with markers and colored pencils and even glitter or stickers. Leave the paper blank on the other side and hold on to it for tomorrow.

No matter how awesome your imaginary land might be, it can't come close to what God says heaven will be like. As much as we want to imagine how things will turn out in the end, we simply can't imagine how great heaven and living with God forever will be!

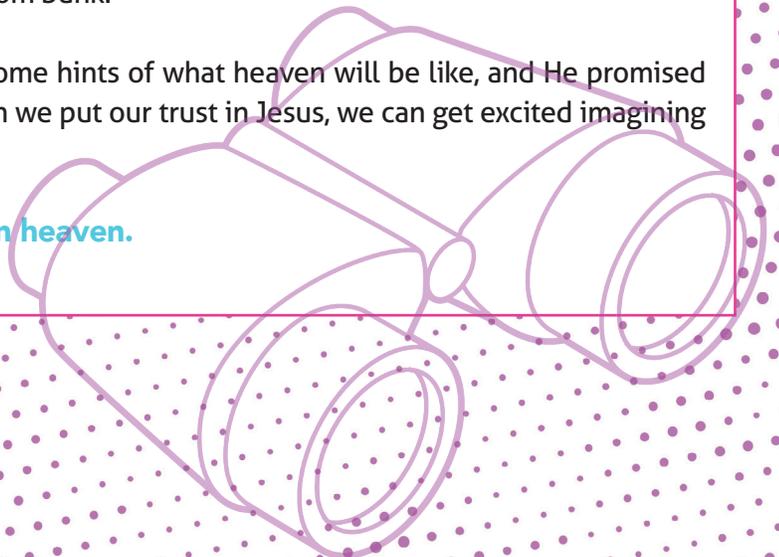
Know that following Jesus will turn out greater than you can imagine!

READ JOHN 14:2-3

Grab your sheet of paper from yesterday, where you drew the most amazing place. Flip it over and now draw your dream room. What color would the walls be? Would you line it with bookshelves or display cases for your LEGO® creations? Would you have a bunk bed or maybe a canopy? Now think about who your roommate might be in this dream scenario—or your next-door neighbor. Maybe your parents are just down the hall, but your best friend is in the bottom bunk.

It's fun to imagine, isn't it? Jesus gave us some hints of what heaven will be like, and He promised there are many rooms—room for all of us! When we put our trust in Jesus, we can get excited imagining what following Him will look like for eternity!

Thank God for preparing a place for you in heaven.



READ PSALM 16:11

DAY 3

Put a smiley face besides the things that make you really happy. You can put two smiley faces besides the ones that make you the most happy.

PUPPIES
MOVIES
CANDY
ROLLER COASTERS
BOOKS

MUSIC
FRIENDS
VIDEO GAMES
DANCING
FAMILY

Believe it or not, following Jesus can give you more joy than all these things combined. That may be hard to imagine, because we're only experiencing Jesus on this side of heaven. But one day, when we are with Him forever, all these things will pale in comparison to being with Jesus!

Ask God to give you a taste of the joy to come in heaven.

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 2:9

DAY 4

What is the coolest thing in nature you've ever seen? _____

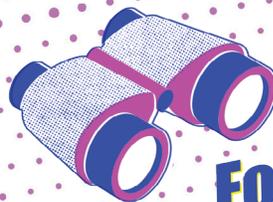
What is your favorite song to listen to? _____

What is the most amazing fact you've ever learned? _____

_____ (Here's one for you . . . the woodpecker's tongue is wrapped around his brain for an extra level of protection when he pecks!)

Isn't it awesome to know that in heaven, you'll see things unlike you've ever seen before? And the sound of worshipping God will be the best music you've ever heard? And you'll know everything there is to know about God and Jesus? Put on your favorite song as you go about your day, and imagine how great heaven's sights and sounds will be.

Thank God for the promise of heaven.



Following **JESUS**
will turn out greater
than you can imagine.



WEEK FOUR

HEAVEN • REVELATION 21:3-5A



SAY THIS:

FOLLOWING JESUS WILL
TURN OUT GREATER THAN
YOU CAN IMAGINE.



REMEMBER
THIS:

"God's grace has saved you
because of your faith in Christ.
Your salvation doesn't come from
anything you do. It is God's gift."

EPHESIANS 2:8, NIV



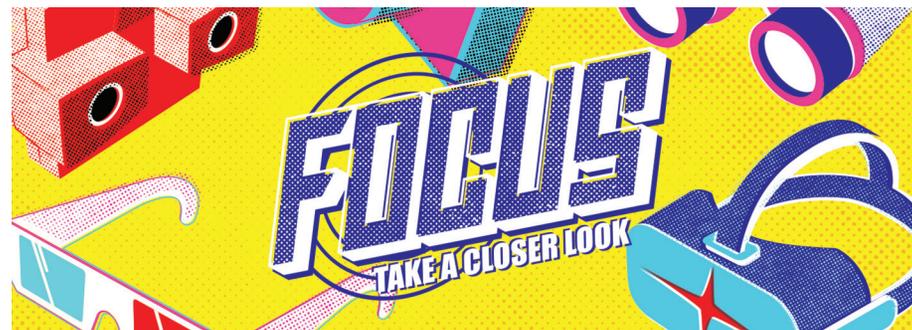
DO THIS:



While driving around, have your
child look out the window and
talk about the things you see
here on Earth and what they will
be like in heaven. For example,
you see a flower and you can say
you think the flower will be even
bigger or brighter in Heaven.
Heaven will have an ocean that
is crystal clear and the most
beautiful blue.

FAITH:

TRUSTING IN WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE
BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU CAN SEE



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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE FUTURE THERAPIST OF MY CHILDREN

By Jon Acuff

Dear therapist who may one day be counseling my children,

There are two things I need to say right out of the gate:

- 1. I tried my best.
- 2. I hope you have a sound machine.

The second point is more of a personal preference rather than a revelation. Having gone to counseling myself, I appreciate when a therapist has some sort of sound machine that makes you feel like you're at the beach. Gentle electronic waves lapping against the shore tend to help you forget you're actually in a strip mall off the highway. The second point is easy to address, the first point is a little more detailed.

I did try my best as a parent, but I know my kids are going to have many, many things to tell you about someday. They will sit on a couch and regale you with stories from their childhoods. Some will make you laugh. We put a high price on humor in our family, and laughter often filled the halls of our home.

Some stories will be gross. Ask them about the time we thought a squirrel had died within our walls. Turns out it was a year-old ostrich egg that had cracked undetected in a decorative bowl. The smell was like getting punched in the face by a vengeful bird from another continent.

Other stories will not be as funny, and you will quickly discover something I had to

admit a few years into the adventure of parenting. I am not perfect. I tried to be for the first few years. I promise I did. But all too often . . .

I was impatient with my kids. I lost my temper over things that didn't really matter.

I discouraged when I should have encouraged, or encouraged when I should have been more realistic.

I gave them bad advice. I took some things too seriously and others too casually.

I chased after my work instead of after them. I was on the road traveling for business, trying to be somebody when I already was somebody . . . A dad. A father. And in this case, a launch pad for some therapist's new boat.

Tell my kids I love them. That I'm so proud I got to be their dad. Tell them parenting involves a lot of mistakes, and forgiveness, and messiness, and laughter. Tell them I'll pick up the bill for your work—which I assume might be high, depending on the quality of sound machine you've got.

Sincerely,

A not-so-perfect parent.

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For more blog posts and parenting resources, visit: **ParentCue.org**



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