

THE COMPLETE EIGHT-ISSUE COLLECTION

by Rick Melick

SEE YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE

A Tour of Heaven

ISSUE 1 OF 8
Punching My Ticket

ISSUE 2 OF 8
Prepare for Landing

ISSUE 3 OF 8
Meeting in the Middle

ISSUE 4 OF 8
Eternity Reveals What Life Conceals

ISSUE 5 OF 8
One Way or the Other

ISSUE 6 OF 8
Highway to Heaven, Mile Marker 1,000

ISSUE 7 OF 8
Leaving the Light On

ISSUE 8 OF 8
Now That I'm Here

ALL EIGHT
Remember It! Eight truths for the journey

SEE YOU ON THE

OTHER SIDE!

TRUTH 1

A TOUR OF HEAVEN / ISSUE 1 OF 8



Who gets into heaven? (Hint: you can't earn it!)

Punching My Ticket



All aboard for a tour of heaven!

by Rick Melick

Welcome to the Tour!



Hi! I'm Baxter, Joy and Pastor Rick's dog. I'll be your tour guide!

Eight stops. Eight truths to remember.

Read the panels from top to bottom. Take your time, ask questions, and enjoy the tour.


Saturday morning. Capitol City Church.
A field trip on a SATURDAY? Who signed us up for this?
A TOUR OF HEAVEN
That would be me!
THE DOG CAN TALK?!
Name's Baxter. Thirteen pounds of pure tour guide!
I live with Pastor Rick and Joy. Today, you're touring heaven!



Sam: A tour of heaven? Like, a class about heaven?
Baxter: Eight stops. One big question. Hop on!



Maya: What's the big question?



Baxter: "What will matter most to me five minutes after I die?"
Eli: Whoa. That got serious fast.



Baxter: Don't worry. There will also be jokes. And possibly rabbits.
RUMBLE RUMBLE (the tram starts)



Stop 1: What Do You Picture?
Pastor Rick: Welcome, tour group! Quick question. When you hear the word "heaven," what do you picture?



Eli: Clouds. Harps. Kind of boring, honestly.
Sofia: Being with my family.
Sam: Seeing my grandpa again.



Pastor Rick: Those are good answers, all of them. I asked a friend that same question once. Want to hear what he said?



Pastor Rick: What do you picture when you think about heaven?
Friend: Meeting Jesus. And my dad will be right behind him!



Pastor Rick: That's great! What's next?



Friend: I don't know. I hope there's an orientation class. A tour of heaven! You ride a tram and take the tour.



Eli: Wait. A tram tour of heaven? That's what WE'RE doing!
Baxter: Now you're getting it. Your friend's wish came true. Welcome aboard!



Pastor Rick: Here's our tour rule. Lots of ideas about heaven come from cartoons and movies. Some are fun. But they aren't true. On this tour, we stick to what the Bible says.



Maya: Rule number one. Got it.



Stop 2: The Pearly Gates.
Baxter: Speaking of cartoons...



Here's how lots of people picture it...



St. Peter: Hmm... let me find your name...



St. Peter: Found it! Now answer three questions. Get one wrong, and...
GULP!



Eli: Does he at least have an iPad? Not an Android?
Pastor Rick: Definitely an iPad. But here's the thing: that's not in the Bible at all.



The city of God, from Revelation 21.



Sofia: The gates are… open!
Pastor Rick: Twelve gates. Each one made from one single pearl. And the Bible says they will never be shut. Ever.



Baxter: Whoa fact! The city is about 1,400 miles on each side. That's like driving from Des Moines to Denver and back. And it's just as tall!
Eli: That's one big oyster.



The tour stops at the Welcome Center.
Maya: So if nobody's guarding the gate… how does someone get in?



Eli: Easy. Be a good person. I'm pretty good. Way better than my little brother.



Pastor Rick: Here's the problem. God doesn't grade on a curve. His standard isn't "better than your little brother." It's perfect.



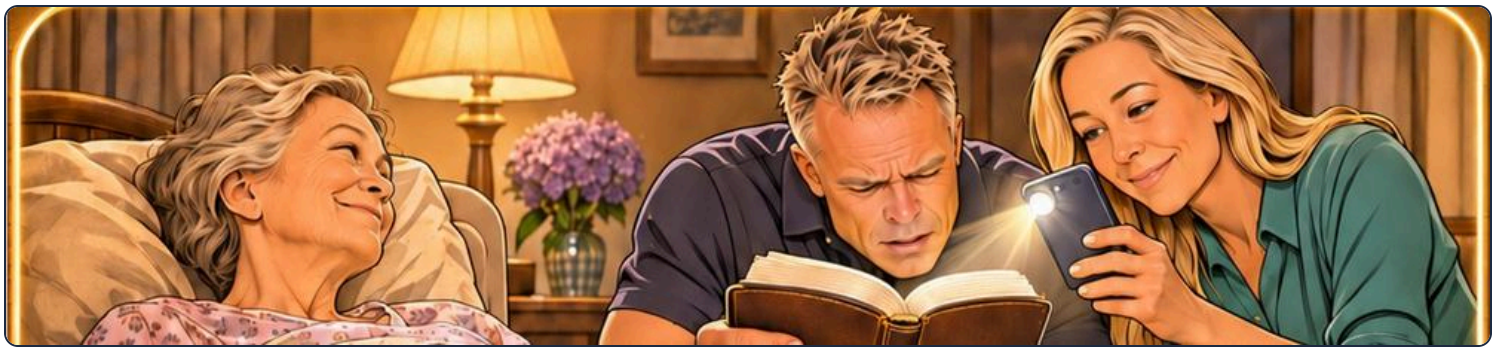
FWEEEEE (air leaking out)
Eli: …Oh.



Pastor Rick: "Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory. The free gift of God's grace makes all of us right with him." That's Romans 3:23–24.



Sam: Everyone? Even pastors?
Pastor Rick: Especially pastors. Let me tell you about a friend of mine.



Pastor Rick and Joy visit a friend who is very sick.
Joy: Can you see now?
Pastor Rick: Barely. Who prints Bibles this small?



Friend: I just wish I had done more for Jesus.



Pastor Rick: You haven't done enough.
Pastors love a dramatic pause.



Pastor Rick: And I haven't done enough either. Nobody can. Getting to heaven isn't about what we do.



Friend: Oh, I know. It's all God's grace. I'm not afraid. I'm ready to see Jesus.



Sam: So if nobody can earn it... how do we get it?



Stop 3: Paycheck or Present?
Pastor Rick: Which one do you earn?
All Kids: The paycheck!
Pastor Rick: And which one is a gift?
All Kids: The present!



"When you sin, the pay you get is death. But God gives you the gift of eternal life. That's because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done." Romans 6:23 (NIrV)



Pastor Rick: Jesus already paid for this gift. It already has your name on it. But a gift isn't really yours until you do one thing.
Eli: Open it?
Pastor Rick: Receive it.





Baxter: Here's how you receive it. Easy as A-B-C!



ADMIT. "God, I have sinned. I'm not good enough on my own."
BELIEVE. Jesus is God's Son. He died for my sins and rose again.
CHOOSE. "Jesus, I want to follow you as my Savior and Lord."



Pastor Rick: You can talk to God about this anytime, in your own words. And you can always talk to a grown-up who loves you or a kids' leader. They'd love to help.



REMEMBER IT! Truth 1 of 8: Heaven is God's gift.
Baxter: Say it three times! Next stop: what happens when someone who loves Jesus dies. Bring tissues. And snacks.

Talk About It with Baxter

What is the difference between earning something and receiving a gift?

What helps you understand God’s grace?

Tell a grown-up why heaven is God’s gift.

REMEMBER IT!



Heaven is God's gift.

Say the truth in your own words. Then tell someone!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Meet Pastor Rick!

Pastor Rick Melick is a pastor in Des Moines, Iowa. He loves telling stories (especially funny ones) and helping people of all ages find out how much Jesus loves them.

Pastor Rick's Fun Facts:

He has lived all over the country: California, Washington, Texas, Tennessee, Arkansas, and now Iowa.

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MEET BAXTER, YOUR TOUR GUIDE!

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I weigh 13 pounds. That's 13 pounds of pure tour guide!
I'm a scruffy tan terrier mix. Nobody knows exactly what breed I am. I like to keep people guessing.
I do NOT like rain. Not even a little.
I DO like rabbits. And treats. Mostly treats.
My big sister, Daisy, is a 60-pound poodle. She's WAY bigger than me, but she likes to stay home, so I do all the touring!
Thanks for taking the tour with me. See you on the other side!



See you on the other side!

SEE YOU ON THE

OTHER SIDE!

TRUTH 2

A TOUR OF HEAVEN / ISSUE 2 OF 8



What happens when someone who loves Jesus dies?

Prepare for Landing



Bring tissues. And snacks.

by Rick Melick

Last Time on the Tour



Heaven is God's gift.

Eight stops. Eight truths to remember.

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A Tour of Heaven, Stop 2.
Baxter: Next stop: what happens when someone who loves Jesus dies.



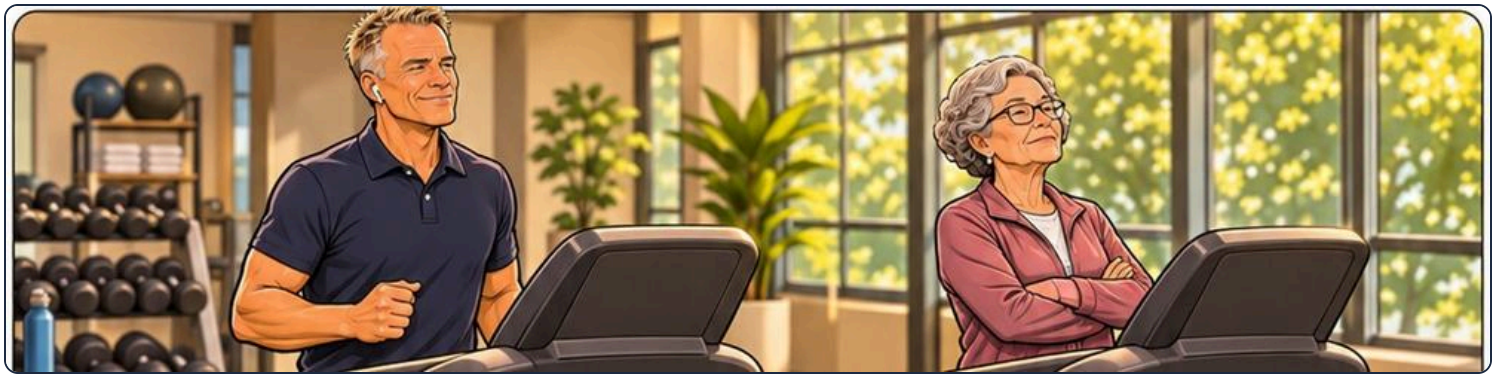
Sofia: You okay?
Sam: My grandpa died last year. I just… don't know where he is.



Baxter: Then this is the perfect stop for you, buddy.



Pastor Rick: One day at the gym, my shoe came untied. So I put my foot up on the treadmill rail to tie it.



Lady: Quit bragging! You're showing off that you can lift your leg that high!



Pastor Rick: Bragging? I can't squat down to tie my shoes. I've got bad knees!



Pastor Rick: In heaven, we won't have to worry about bad knees. See you on the other side! SHUFFLE SHUFFLE (she moves down a treadmill)



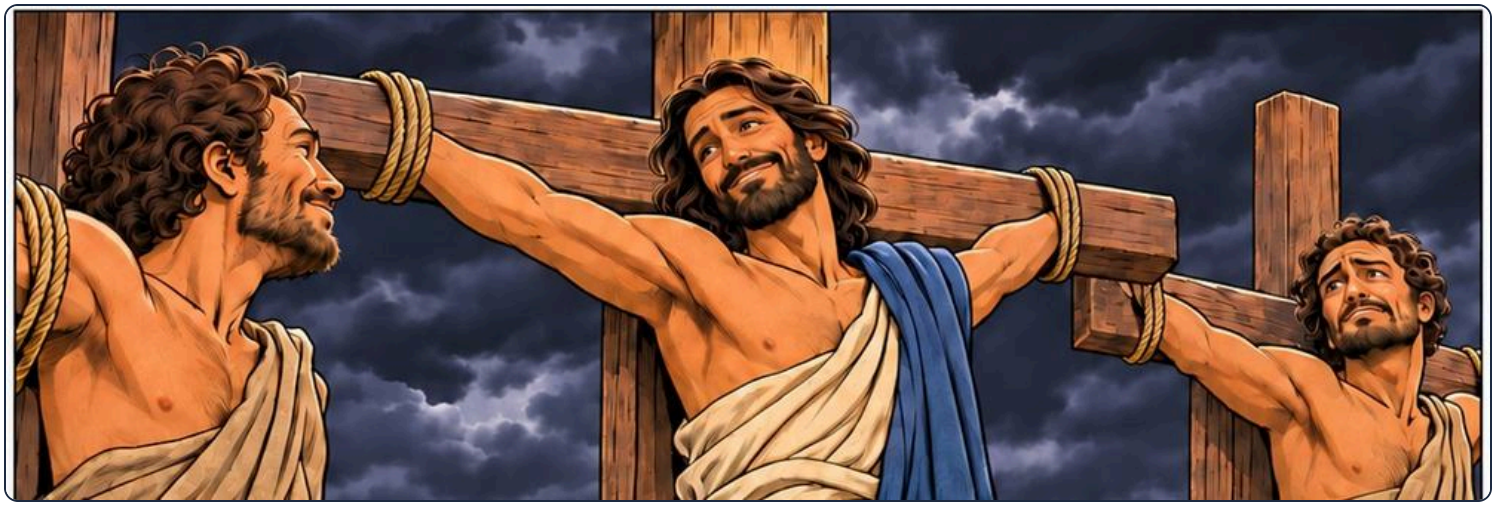
Eli: She moved treadmills!
Pastor Rick: She sure did. But I meant it. In heaven, no more bad knees. No more pain. No more being sick.



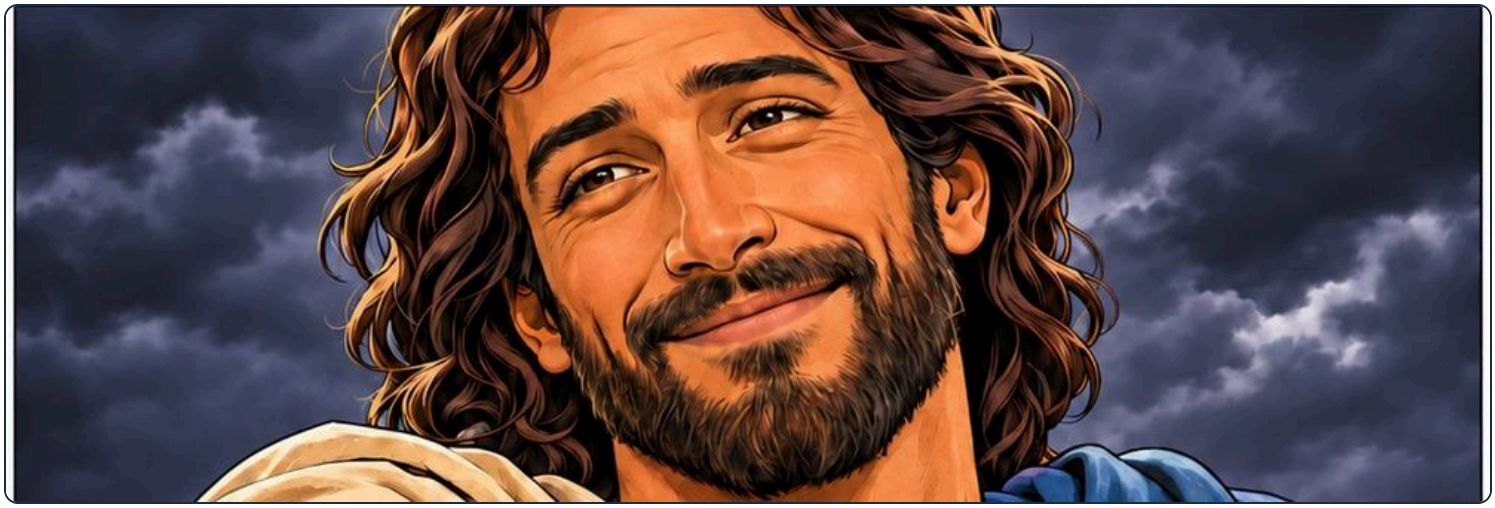
Pastor Rick: Here's something true: everybody dies someday. The Bible says we die once. But for people who love Jesus, dying isn't the end of the story.



Pastor Rick: It's more like the end of a long flight, when the plane lands and you finally get to go home.



When Jesus died on the cross, two men were on crosses next to him.
One of the men: Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.



Jesus: Today you will be with me in paradise.



Maya: Today. Not someday. TODAY.
Pastor Rick: That's right. Paradise is where people who love Jesus go the moment they die. They're with him. They're happy. They're home.



Sam: My grandpa loved Jesus. He read his Bible every morning.



Pastor Rick: Then your grandpa is with Jesus right now. He's not hurting. He's not scared. And if you love Jesus too, you'll see him again.



Sam: See you on the other side, Grandpa.



Baxter: I'm not crying. There's just a lot of cloud dust up here.



Stop 2: Do People Become Angels?
Eli: Wait, so is Sam's grandpa an angel now? With wings and a harp?



Pastor Rick: When I was a kid, I was afraid I'd turn into one of those chubby baby angels from the greeting cards. Sitting on a cloud. Playing a harp. For a thousand years.
plink... plink...



All Kids: Nooo thanks.



Pastor Rick: Good news: it's not true! Angels are a different kind of being. God made them separately. People never turn into angels. God made you to be YOU, and in heaven you'll still be you.



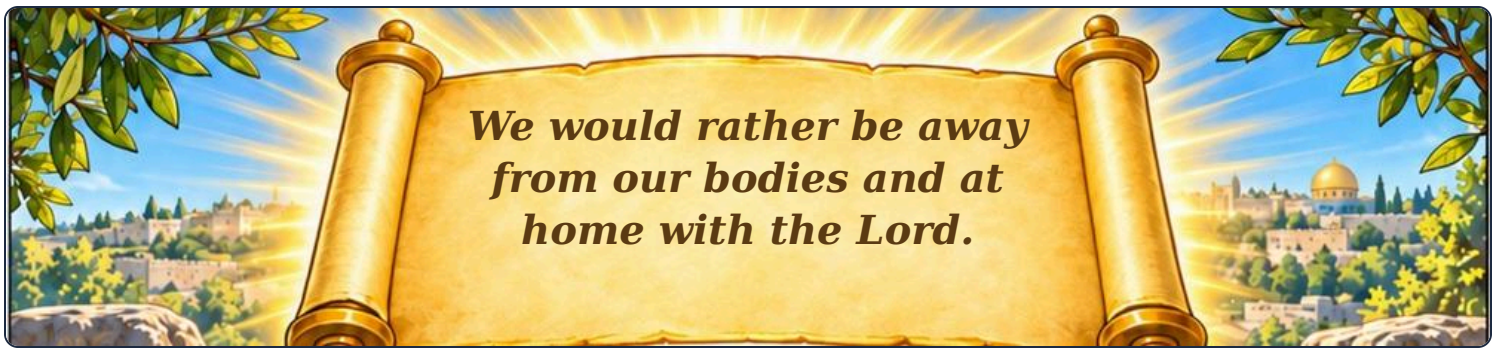
Stop 3: Your Body Is a Tent.
Baxter: Who's been camping?



Sofia: Once. It rained. The tent leaked. My sleeping bag got soaked.



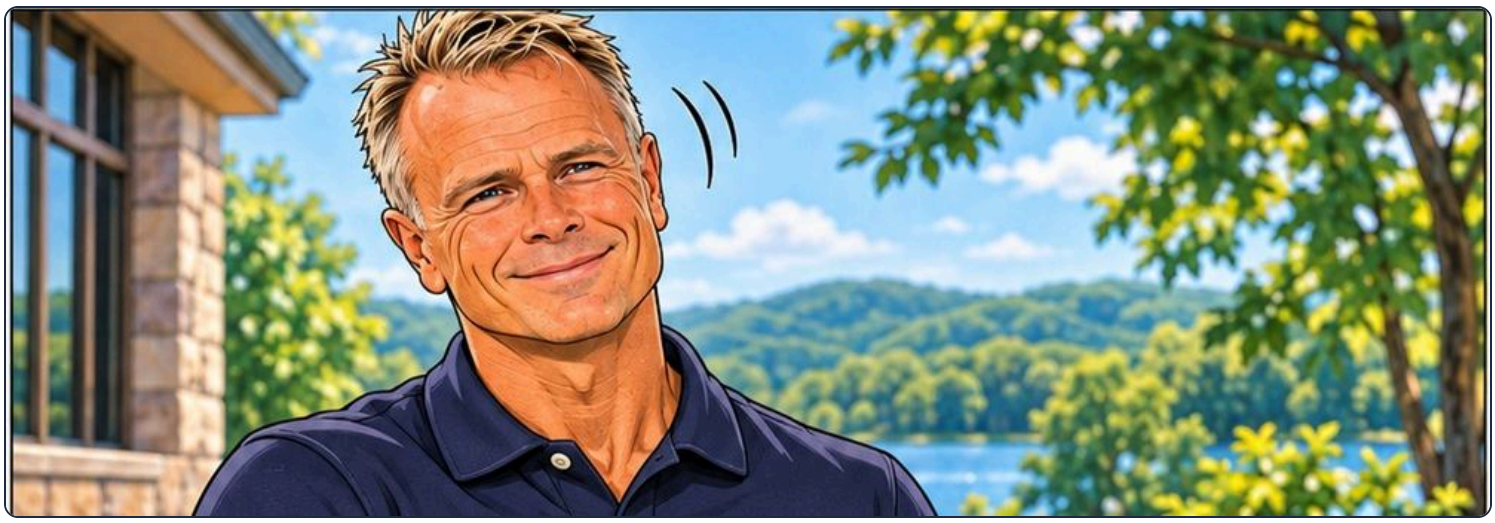
Pastor Rick: The apostle Paul made tents for his job. So he said our bodies are like tents. They're good for now, but they wear out. Someday they get folded up. And the real you, the part that thinks and loves and laughs, goes home to Jesus.



"We are certain about that. We would rather be away from our bodies and at home with the Lord." 2 Corinthians 5:8 (NIrV)



Maya: So at a funeral… the person isn't really there?



Pastor Rick: If they loved Jesus, that's just the tent they used to live in. The real them is already home. And someday God will give us brand-new bodies that never wear out. We'll get to that at our last stop.



Stop 4: The Finish Line.



Pastor Rick: The Bible says everyone who follows Jesus will stand before him someday. When I was a kid, that scared me.



Pastor Rick: I pictured a giant movie screen showing every bad thing I ever did. Honestly, I was more scared of Grandma than anyone.



Eli: Grandmas know EVERYTHING.



Pastor Rick: But that's not what it means. The Bible says if you follow Jesus, your sins are forgiven. Gone. As far as the east is from the west.



Pastor Rick: It's more like a race. Jesus will celebrate the ways you lived for him:
the kind words, the times you forgave, the times you shared, the times you told someone about him.



Pastor Rick: You're saved by grace. And Jesus rewards how you live.



Pastor Rick: One more story. My family was fixing up a little cabin in Arkansas. I call it the Shabin: part shack, part shop, part cabin.



Pastor Rick: I was cold and wet. Then I looked through the window and saw my whole family together, laughing.



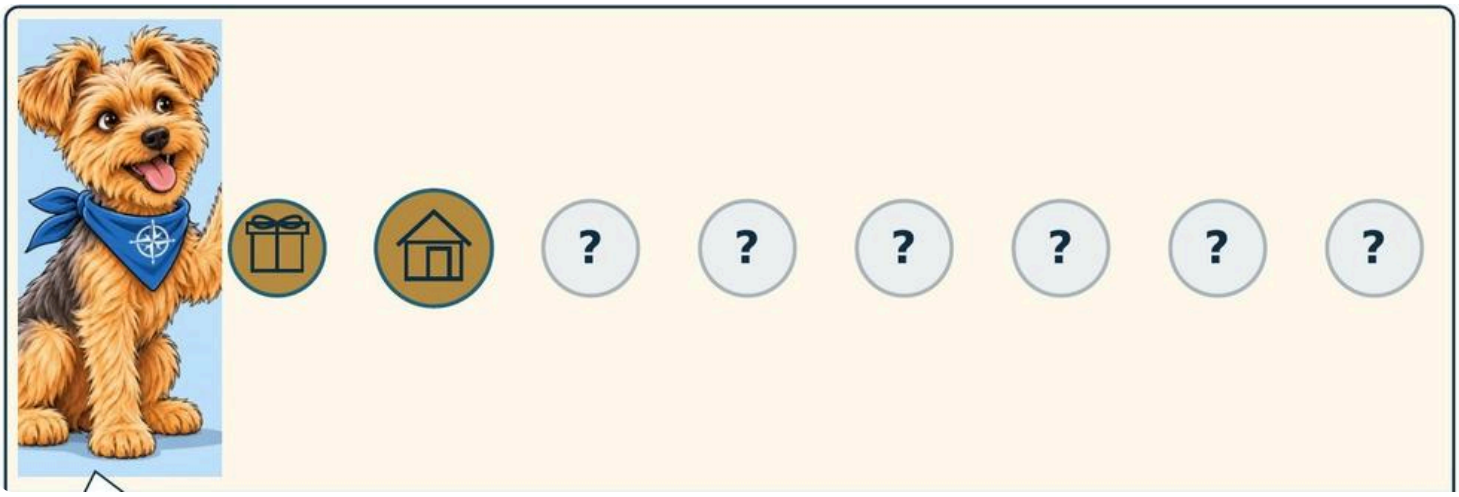
It was as if God whispered: "You think this is good? Just wait till you get home."



Sam: Just wait till you get home. I like that.



Baxter: I hear the Shabin has rabbits. Lots of rabbits. (Just kidding. Jesus is the best part!)



REMEMBER IT! 1. Heaven is God's gift. 2. At home with Jesus. NEW!
Baxter: Say both out loud! Next stop: Jesus is coming back. And there are some BIG words ahead.

Talk About It with Baxter

Where are people who loved Jesus after they die?

What part of being at home with Jesus brings you comfort?

Tell someone one hopeful thing you learned.

REMEMBER IT!

? ? ? ? ? ?

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Say the truth in your own words. Then tell someone!

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I DO like rabbits. And treats. Mostly treats.
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Thanks for taking the tour with me. See you on the other side!



See you on the other side!

SEE YOU ON THE

OTHER SIDE!

TRUTH 3

A TOUR OF HEAVEN / ISSUE 3 OF 8



What do we do while we wait for Jesus?

Meeting in the Middle



Don't panic! Don't quit!

by Rick Melick

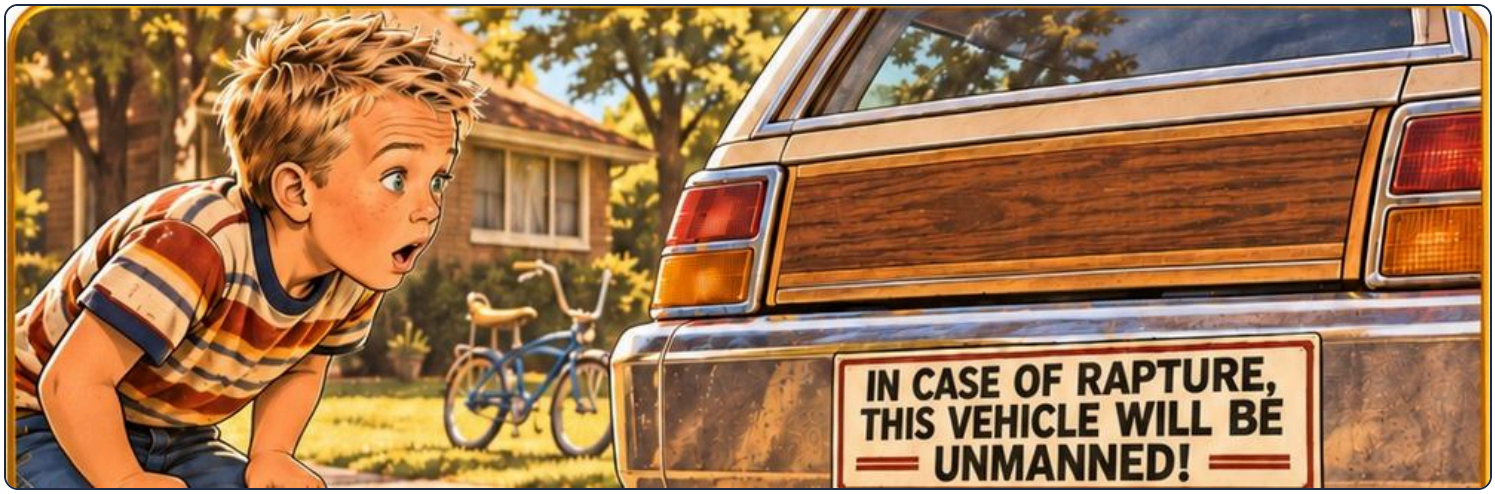
Last Time on the Tour



At home with Jesus.

Eight stops. Eight truths to remember.

Read the panels from top to bottom. Take your time, ask questions, and enjoy the tour.



Pastor Rick: When I was a kid, some cars had this bumper sticker.



Pastor Rick: I pictured Jesus coming back and finding nothing but a pile of clothes where my mom used to be.
POOF!



Eli: Okay, THAT is creepy.
Pastor Rick: It scared me for years. But here's the good news: Jesus never wanted his followers to be scared.



A Tour of Heaven, Stop 3.
Baxter: Caution! Big words ahead! Stay inside the tram at all times.



Maya: I'm ready. Hit me with the big words.



Pastor Rick: Word one: tribulation. It's a seven-year time of big trouble on earth, before Jesus comes back to set everything right.



Pastor Rick: Word two: rapture. That's when Jesus gathers his people to be with him. The Bible says it happens in the blink of an eye, with the sound of a trumpet.
TA-DAAAA!



Baxter: A blink takes about one-third of a second. I just blinked. Did you see it? Neither did I!



Maya: So does Jesus gather his people before the seven years or after?



Pastor Rick: Here's an honest answer. Some Christians believe Jesus gathers his people before the tribulation. Others believe it happens at the end.



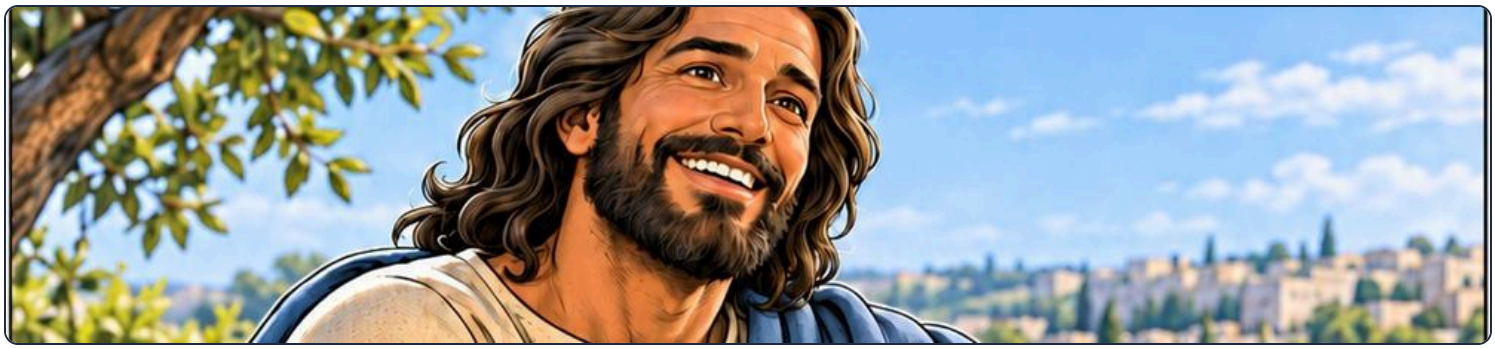
Pastor Rick: People who love Jesus and study the Bible carefully don't all agree.
And that's okay. You can study it for yourself someday.



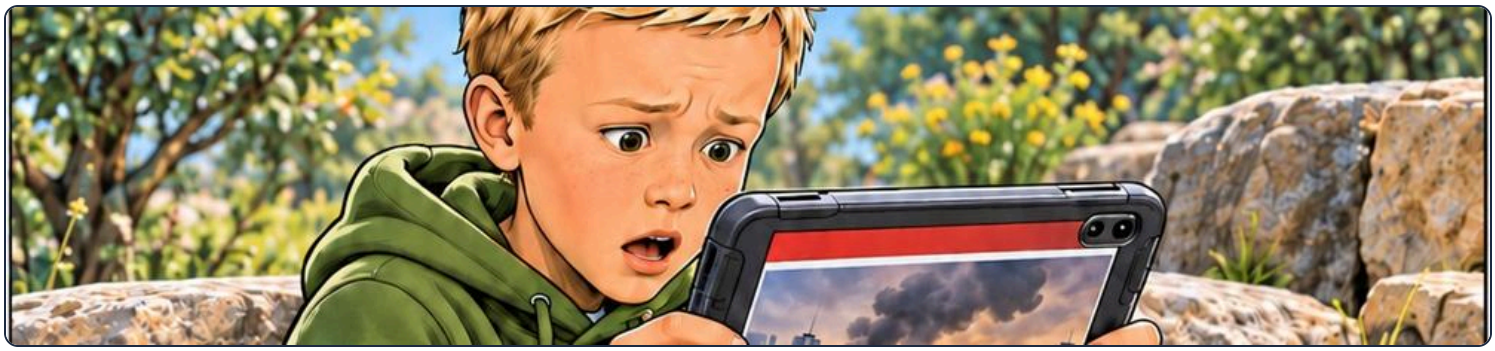
Pastor Rick: But here's what we ALL agree on...
All Kids: Jesus is coming back!



Stop 1: Don't Panic!
Jesus' friends once asked him how the world would end.
Disciple: What will happen? How will we know?



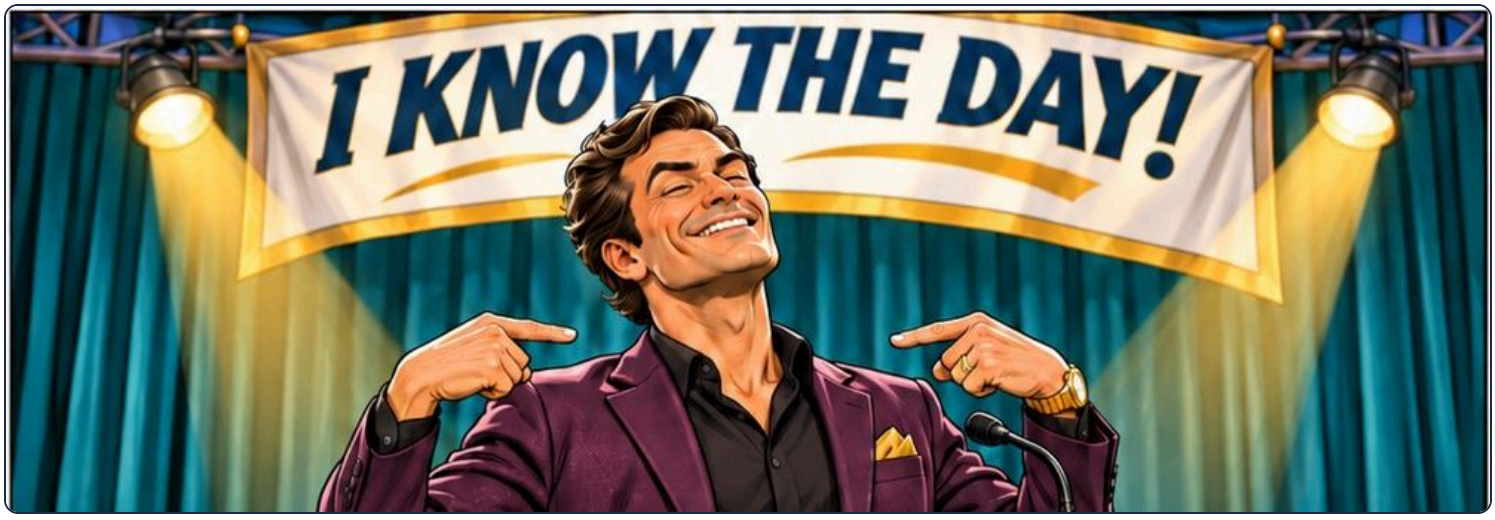
Jesus: You will hear about wars. There will be earthquakes and hard times. But don't be alarmed.



Sam: Sometimes the news scares me.



Pastor Rick: Jesus knew all of it would happen. He isn't surprised, and he isn't worried. He's still in charge. So we don't have to panic.



Pastor Rick: Jesus also said some people would try to fool us. They'll say, "I know exactly when Jesus is coming!" or "Follow ME!"



Maya: How do we know who's telling the truth?



Pastor Rick: Easy test. Do they point to themselves? Or do they point to Jesus and the Bible? Real teachers always point to Jesus.

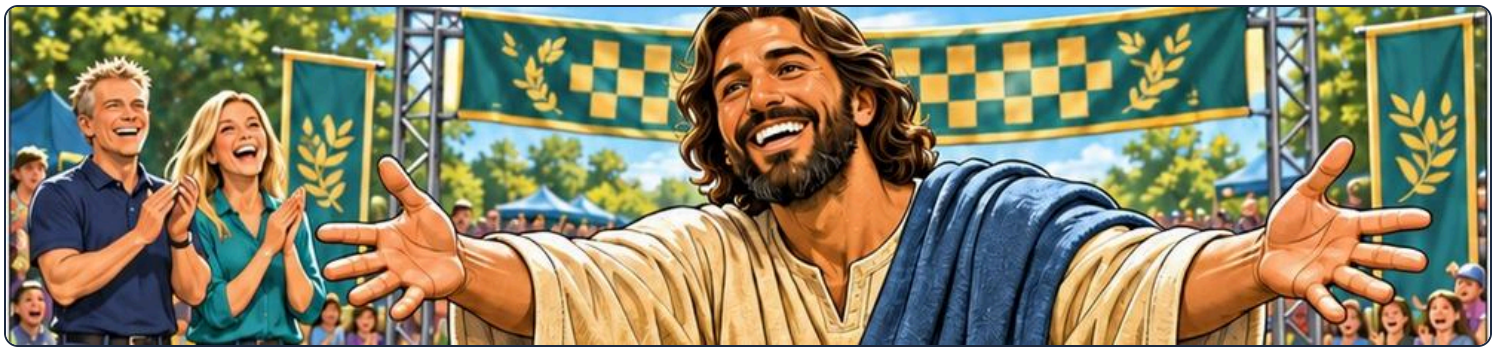


Stop 2: Don't Quit!

Pastor Rick: Following Jesus isn't always easy. Sometimes people make fun of you. Sometimes doing the right thing is hard.



Sofia: Last week some kids laughed at me for praying at lunch.



Pastor Rick: Jesus promised that whoever stands firm to the end will be saved. He's like a coach at the finish line, cheering: "Keep going! You can do it!"



Baxter: I hate going outside when it's raining. But when I really need to go, I go anyway. That's standing firm. (Okay, it's not exactly the same thing.)



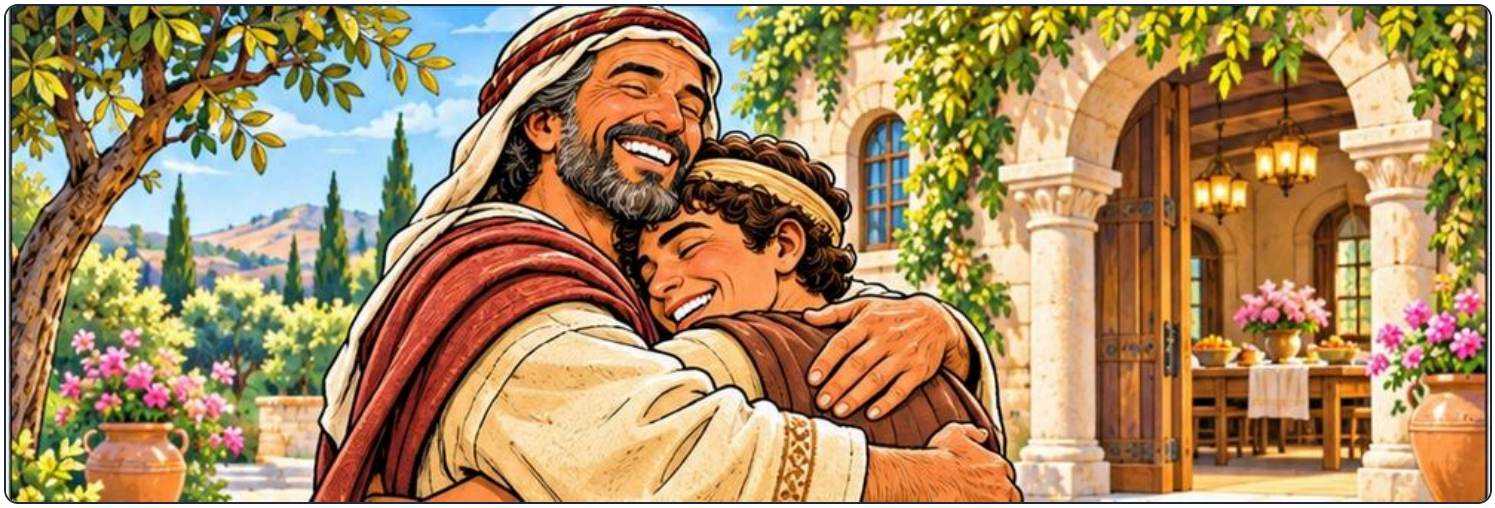
Stop 3: Don't Waste the Wait!

Pastor Rick: Jesus told a story about a master who went on a long trip. He put his servants in charge of the house.

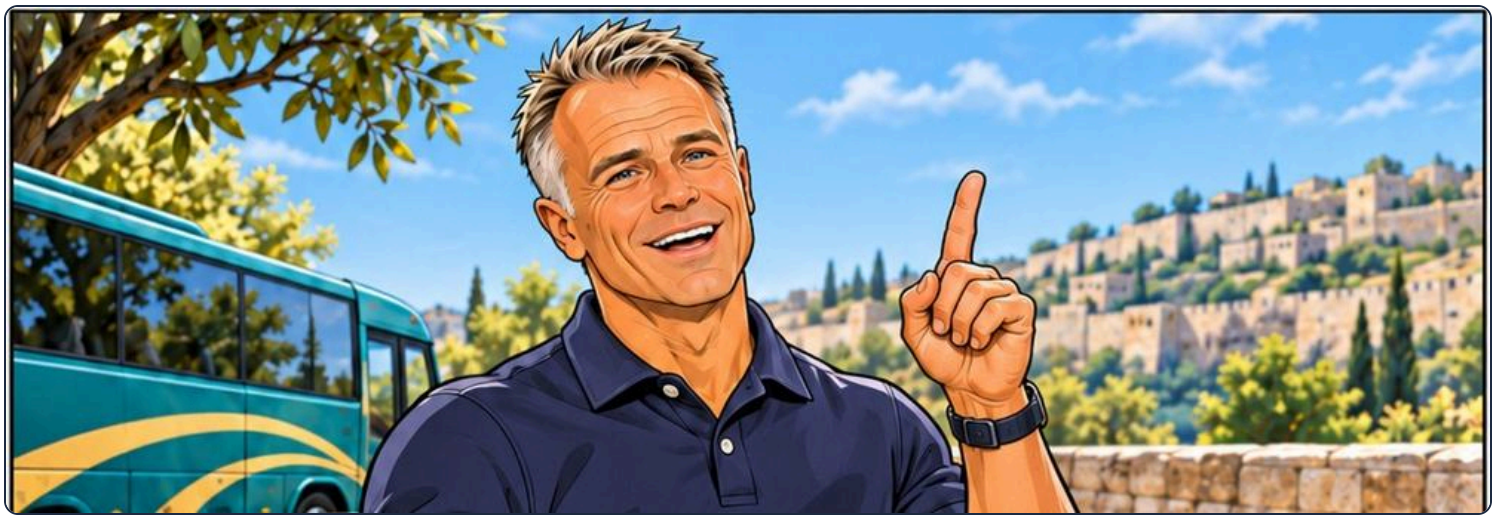


Pastor Rick: One servant got right to work. Another one just lay around.

Eli: I know which one I'd be. The couch one.



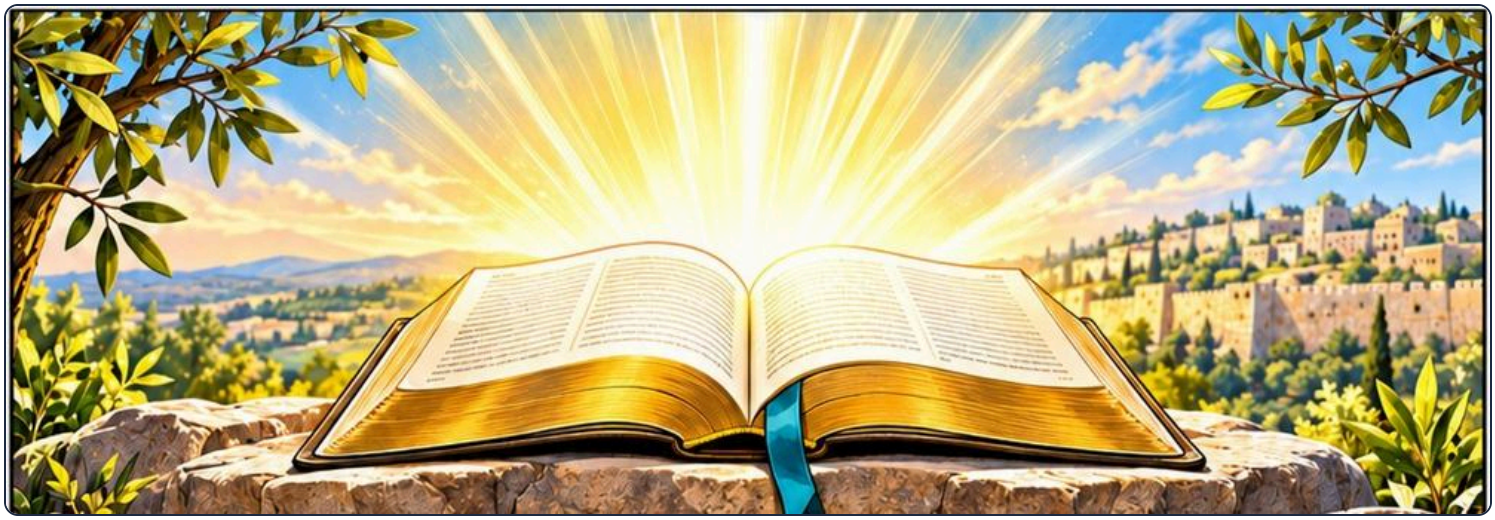
Pastor Rick: When the master came home, the servant who did a good job got a reward.



Pastor Rick: We're like that servant. Jesus has gone to get our forever home ready. While we wait, he wants us to live for him.



Ways not to waste the wait: Pray. Help a friend. Serve someone who needs it. Invite someone to church.



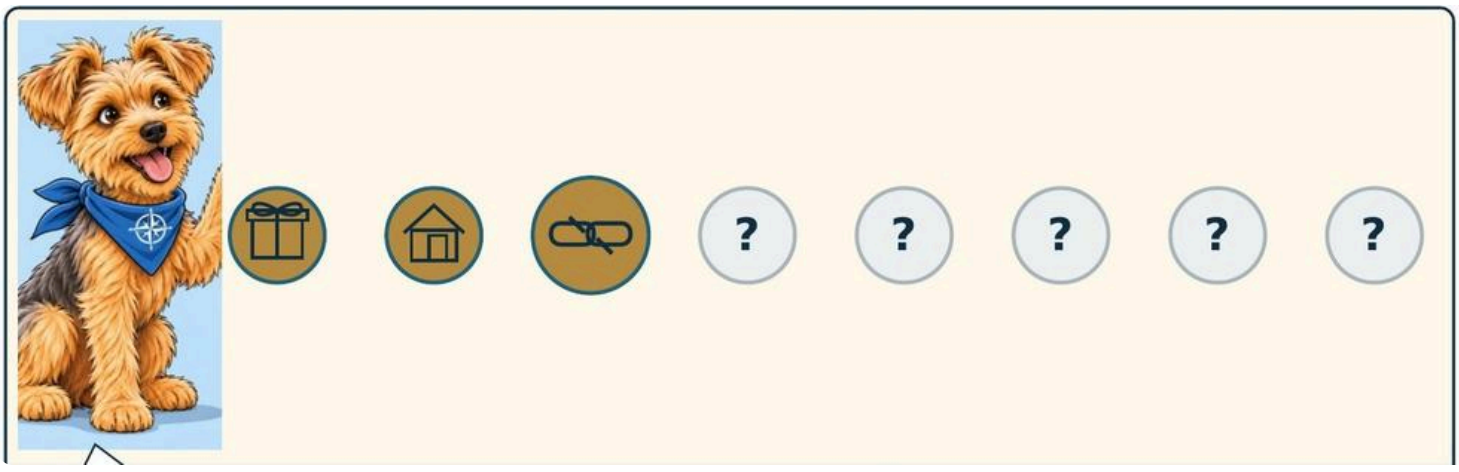
"So you also must be ready. The Son of Man will come at an hour when you don't expect him." Matthew 24:44 (NIrV)



Sam: What does "ready" mean?
Pastor Rick: It means you've decided to follow Jesus, and you live for him every day. Then it doesn't matter when he comes. You're ready!



Baxter: Three don'ts and one do!



REMEMBER IT! 1. Heaven is God's gift. 2. At home with Jesus. 3. Keep trusting Jesus. NEW!
Baxter: Say all three! Next stop is a hard one. But it starts with a story about me. Unfortunately.

Your Tour Notes

Something I want to remember...

A question I want to ask...

A picture of what I learned...

Your Tour Notes

Something I want to remember...

A question I want to ask...

A picture of what I learned...

Talk About It with Baxter



What are the three “don’ts” from this stop?



How can you use the waiting time to help someone?



Tell a friend why you can keep trusting Jesus.

REMEMBER IT!



Keep trusting Jesus.

Say the truth in your own words. Then tell someone!

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Eternity Reveals What Life Conceals



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Last Time on the Tour



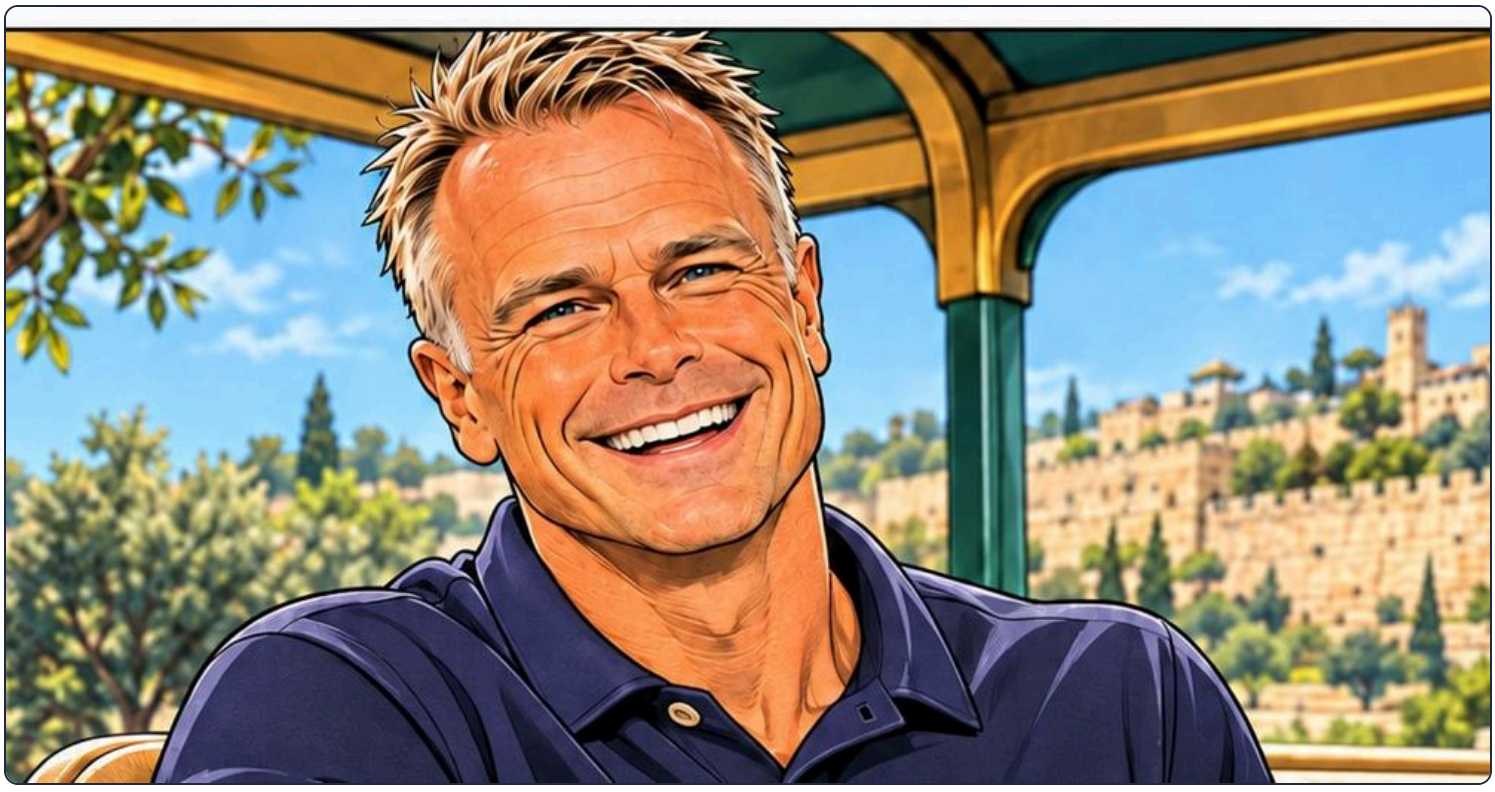
Keep trusting Jesus.

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A Tour of Heaven, Stop 4.
Eli: Uh, Baxter? You okay down there?
Baxter: You tell this story. I'll be under here.



Pastor Rick: Fine, I'll tell it.



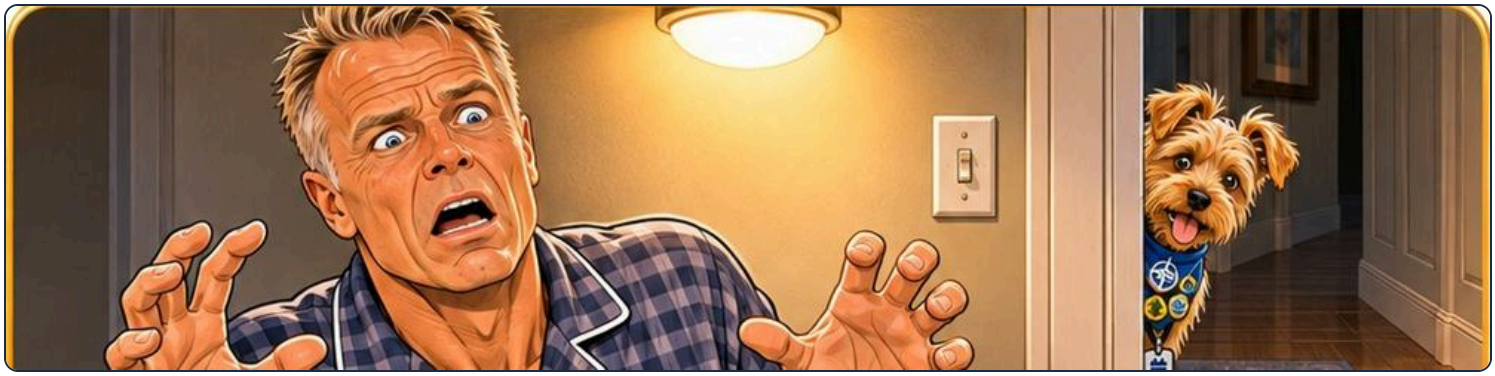
Pastor Rick: It had rained for two weeks straight. And Baxter HATES going out in the rain. **SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH**



Pastor Rick: So at three in the morning, I let him out.



Pastor Rick: He finally came back in. I walked back to bed in the dark, in my socks. **SQUISH.**



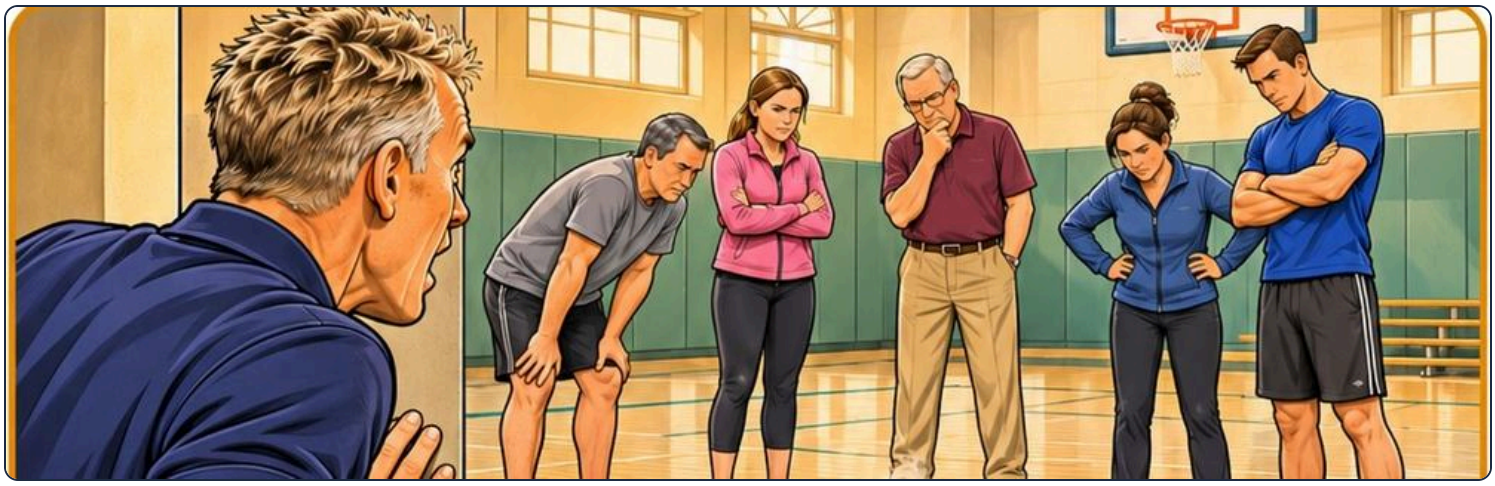
Pastor Rick: BAXTER!



Pastor Rick: I scrubbed my foot in the shower. Joy cleaned the carpet. It was a bad night.



Eli: HE STEPPED IN IT!
Baxter: It was RAINING. A dog has his limits.



Pastor Rick: Two days later, at the gym, I saw something on the floor that looked EXACTLY like Baxter's little surprise.
Pastor Rick: If that's what I think it is, I'm getting a new gym.



Manager: Relax. It's not poop. It's got grass in it. It's just mud.



Pastor Rick: Once I decided it really was mud, everything changed. I stayed.
What I believed was true changed what I did.



Stop 1: IF or SINCE?

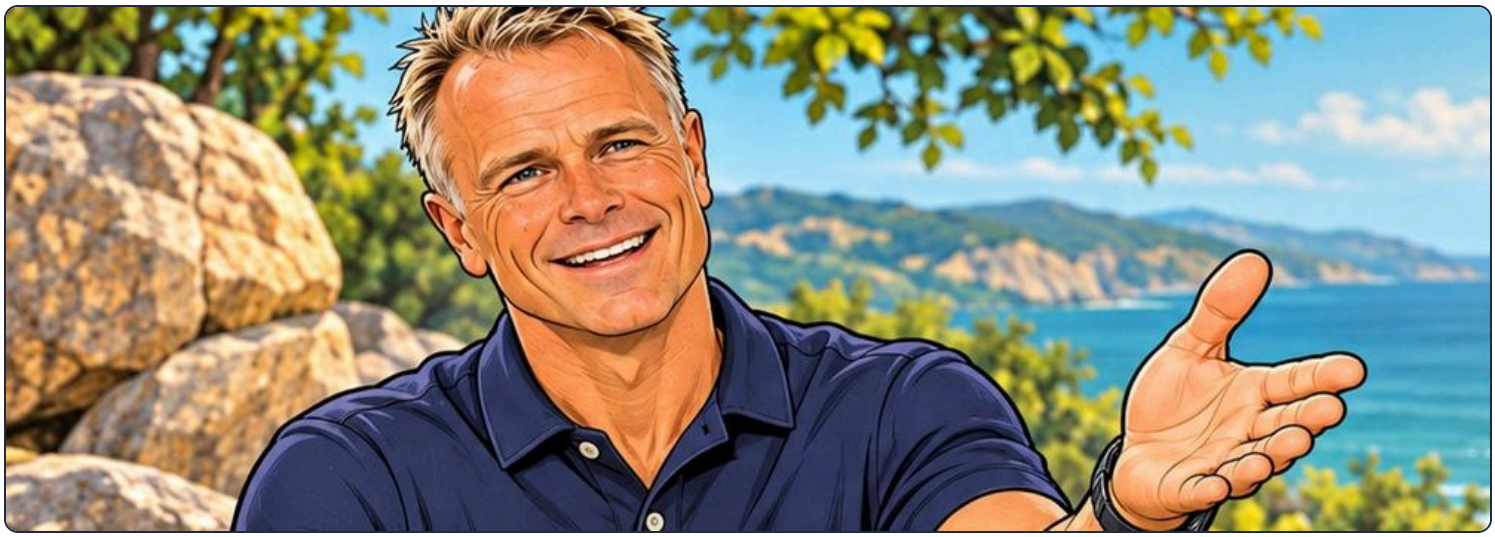
Pastor Rick: Some people say, "IF the Bible is true, maybe I'll follow Jesus."
They're still wondering. Others say, "SINCE the Bible is true, I'm going to follow Jesus."
They've decided.



Pastor Rick: Jesus said a life built on his words is like a house built on solid rock. When the storms come, it stands.



Maya: What if you're still at IF?



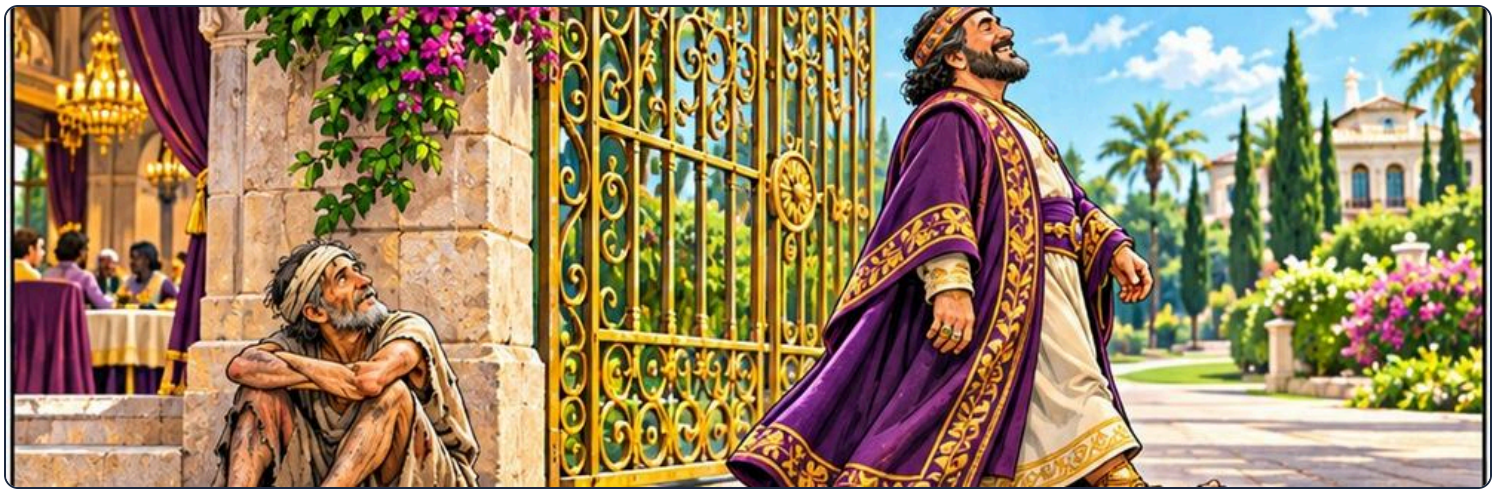
Pastor Rick: That's okay. Keep asking questions. God loves honest questions. But I hope you'll get to SINCE. Because the Bible really is true.



Stop 2: Two Men, Two Gates.
Pastor Rick: Jesus told a story about two men. One was very rich. He wore expensive purple clothes and threw a feast every day. His life was all about him.



Pastor Rick: The other man was named Lazarus. He was poor and sick. Someone had left him right outside the rich man's gate.



Pastor Rick: Every single day, the rich man walked past him. And every single day, he did nothing.



Pastor Rick: Then both men died. Angels carried Lazarus to be with Abraham in paradise. He was comforted at last.



Pastor Rick: The rich man went to a place called Hades, a place of punishment for people who turn away from God. He was in pain, and he was sad.



Pastor Rick: He begged for help. But there was a huge canyon between them, and nobody could cross it.

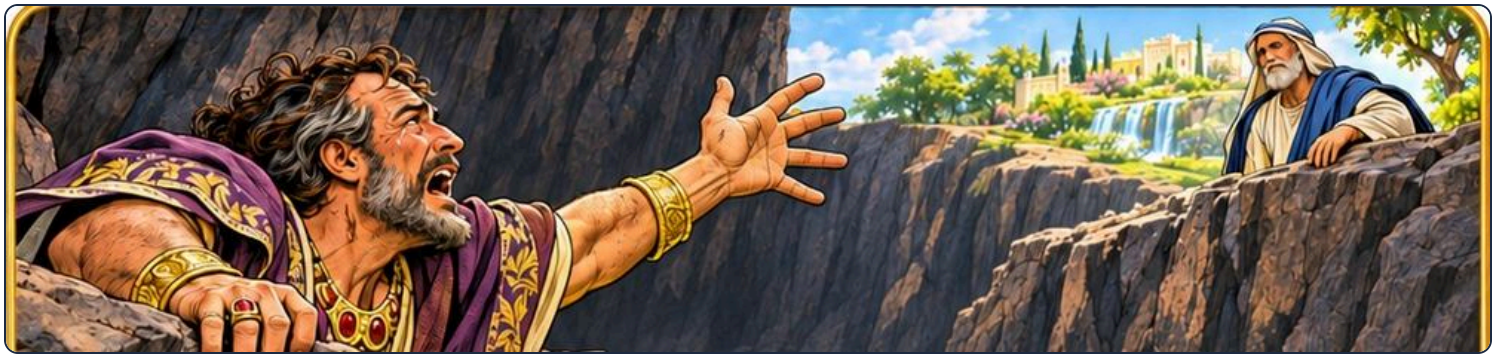


Sam: That's really sad.



Pastor Rick: It is. Jesus told this story because he loves us and doesn't want anyone separated from God. Here's the saddest part: the rich man could have walked through his own gate to help Lazarus anytime. He never did.

The gate he would not cross became the canyon he could not cross.



Stop 3: There's Still Time.
Rich Man: Please! Send Lazarus to warn my five brothers! I don't want them to come here too!



Abraham: They have God's Word. They should listen to it.



Rich Man: But if someone came back from the dead, they'd listen!



Abraham: If they won't listen to God's Word, they won't listen even if someone rises from the dead.



Eli: Wait. Somebody DID come back from the dead!
Maya: Jesus!



Pastor Rick: Exactly. And here's the most important part: the rich man's brothers still had time to choose. And so do you. What decides forever isn't being rich or poor, or good or bad. It's what you decide about Jesus.



"I tell you, now is the time God shows his favor. Now is the day he saves." 2 Corinthians 6:2 (NIrV)



Stop 4: Who's at Your Gate?
Pastor Rick: Jesus also wanted us to look around. Is there someone at YOUR gate?



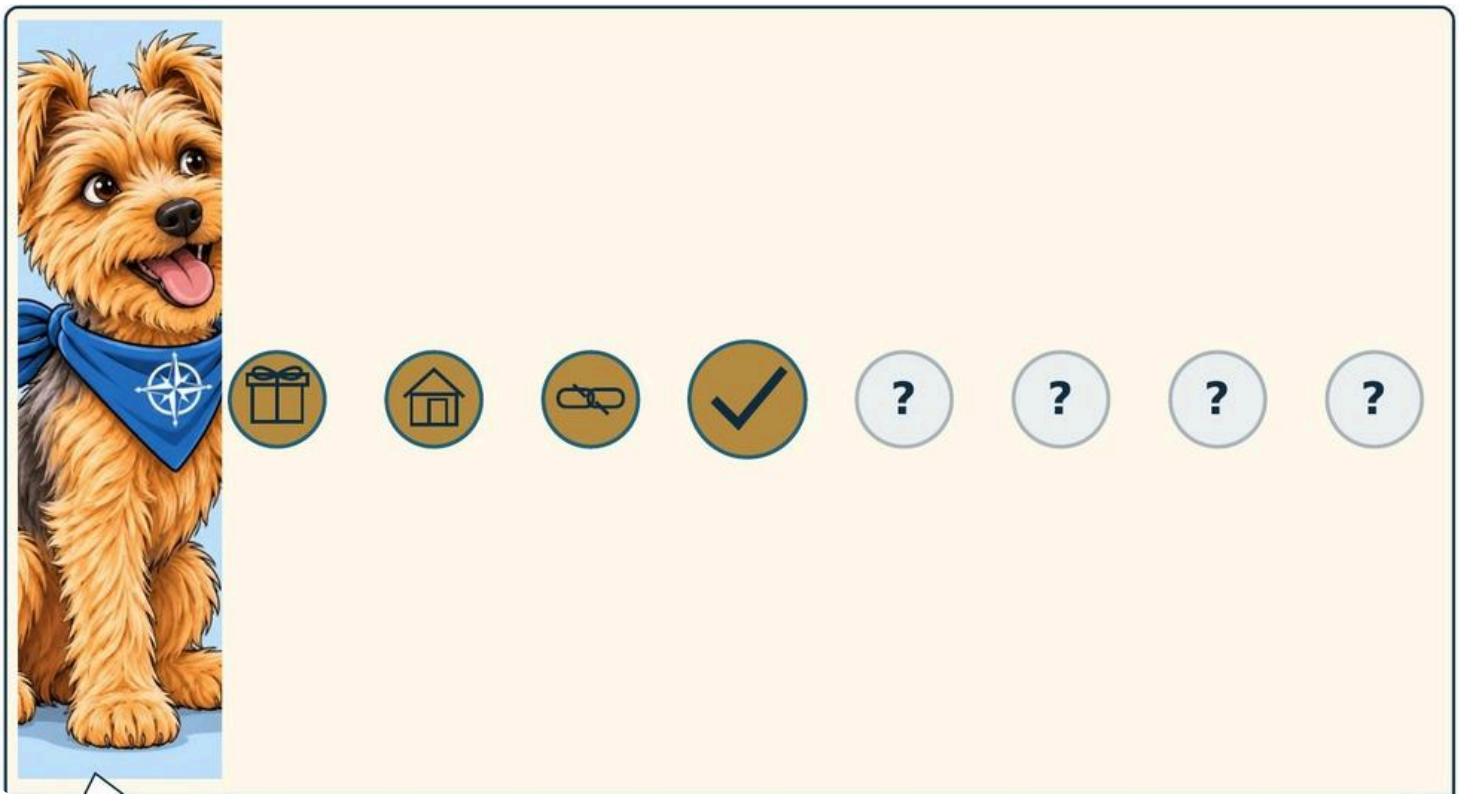
Sofia: There's a new girl at my school. She always eats by herself.



Pastor Rick: You can be the one who stops. The one who helps. The one who tells them about Jesus.



Baxter: Remember the A-B-C from our first stop? Admit. Believe. Choose. You can do it anytime. And now is a really good time.



REMEMBER IT! 1. Heaven is God's gift. 2. At home with Jesus. 3. Keep trusting Jesus. 4. Say yes to Jesus today. NEW!

Baxter: Say all four! Next stop: Pastor Rick in a checkout line. It gets intense.

Talk About It with Baxter

What did the rich man fail to notice at his gate?

Who near you could use kindness this week?

Tell a grown-up why saying yes to Jesus matters today.

REMEMBER IT!

? ? ? ?

Say yes to Jesus today.

Say the truth in your own words. Then tell someone!

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I do NOT like rain. Not even a little.
I DO like rabbits. And treats. Mostly treats.
My big sister, Daisy, is a 60-pound poodle. She's WAY bigger than me, but she likes to stay home, so I do all the touring!
Thanks for taking the tour with me. See you on the other side!



See you on the other side!

SEE YOU ON THE

OTHER SIDE!

TRUTH 5

A TOUR OF HEAVEN / ISSUE 5 OF 8



When is Jesus coming back?

One Way or the Other



Nobody knows the day.
Not even me!

by Rick Melick

Last Time on the Tour



Say yes to Jesus today.

Eight stops. Eight truths to remember.

Read the panels from top to bottom. Take your time, ask questions, and enjoy the tour.



Pastor Rick: Joy and I were in the checkout line at the store. I do NOT like waiting in line.



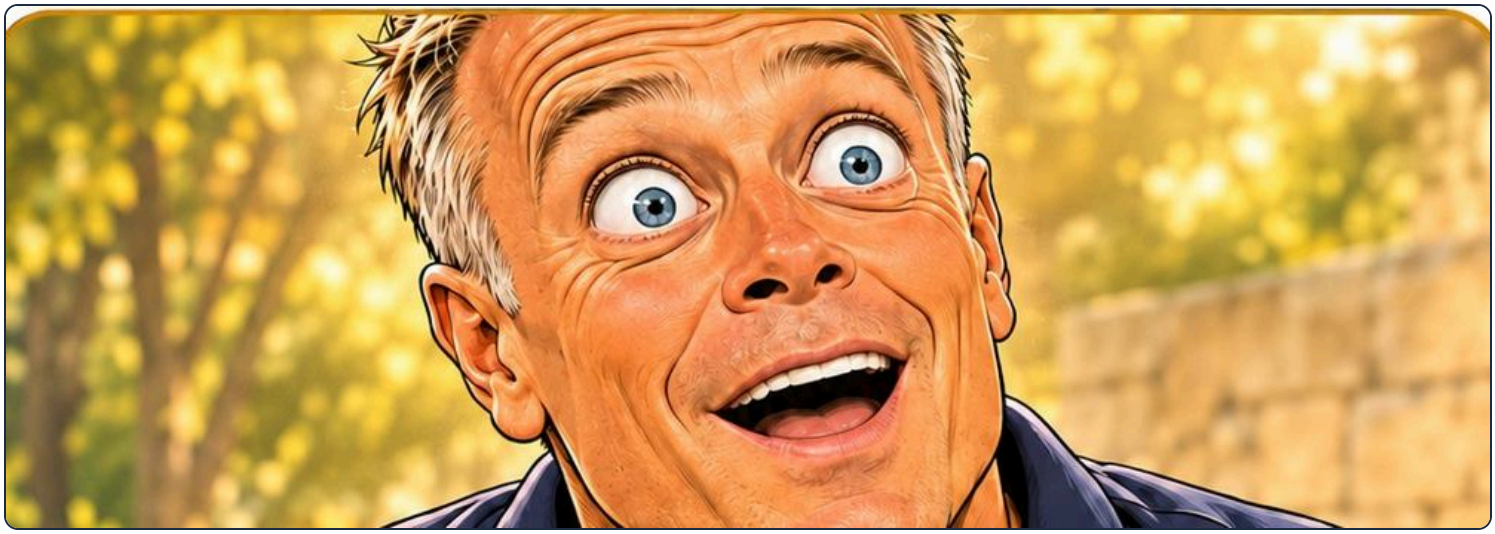
DING!
Loudspeaker: Register number five is available!



Pastor Rick: The lady in front of us didn't move. She just kept talking on her phone.
Lady: ...and then SHE said...



Pastor Rick: Finally she turned around to the whole line, kicked her leg out, and said...
Joy (acting it out): Hee hee! I'm multitasking!



Pastor Rick: Multitasking means doing two things at once. She was barely tasking!



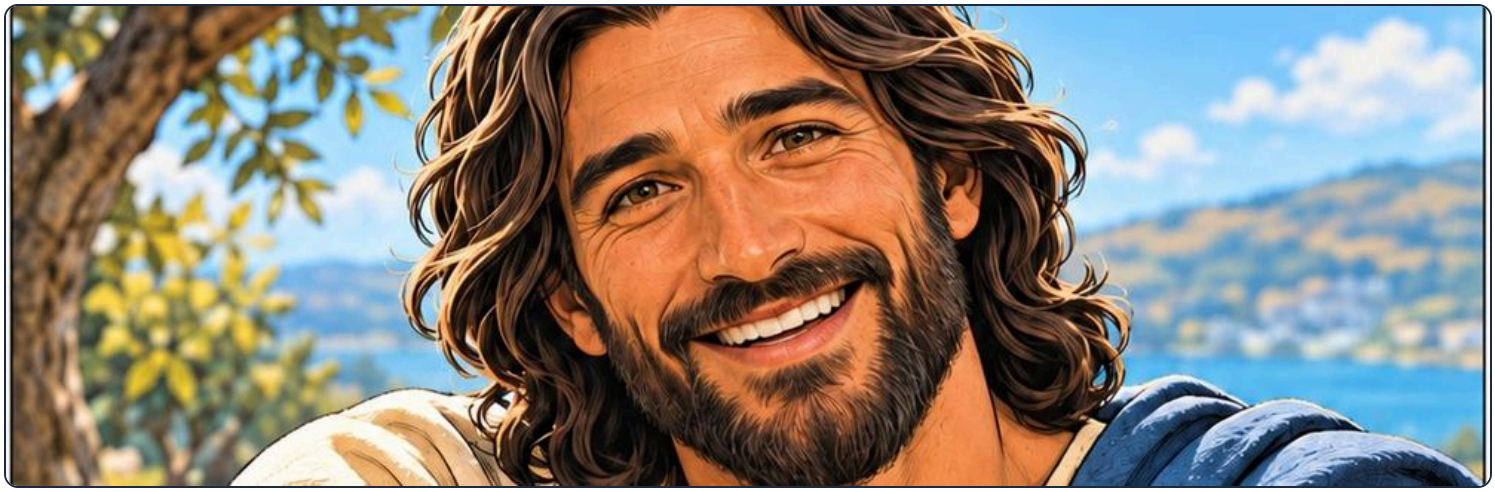
Eli: Barely tasking! I'm using that on my sister.
A Tour of Heaven, Stop 5.



Pastor Rick: Whether you're a barely-tasker or a multitasker, Jesus has an invitation for you. This stop talks about some hard things. So let's start where Jesus started.



Stop 1: Come to Me.



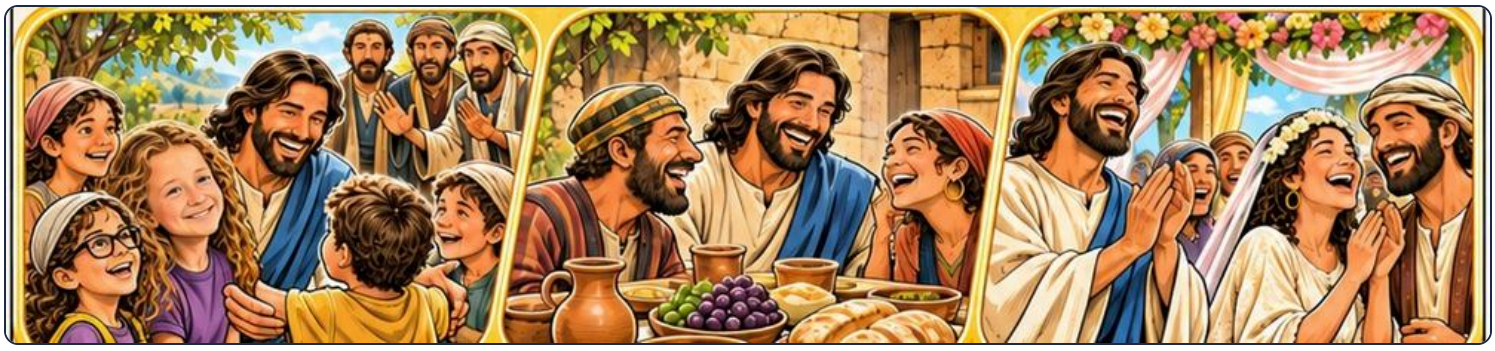
Jesus: Come to me, all you who are tired and are carrying heavy loads. I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28 (NIrV)



Sam: What if you're tired on the inside? Like, worried?



Pastor Rick: That's exactly who Jesus was talking to. He says, "Come to me. I'll help you carry it."



Pastor Rick: Jesus spent three years showing his arms were open. He welcomed kids. He ate with people nobody liked. He even did his very first miracle at a wedding, just to keep the party going.



Baxter: When Pastor Rick's whole family visits, there are ten people and FOUR dogs in the house. It's loud and crowded and my favorite. Jesus liked a happy crowd too!



Stop 2: Sheep and Goats.
Pastor Rick: Jesus said that one day he will come back in glory with all his angels. He'll sit on his throne as King. And all the people of the world will be gathered in front of him.



Pastor Rick: Then Jesus will separate them into two groups, the way a shepherd separates sheep from goats.



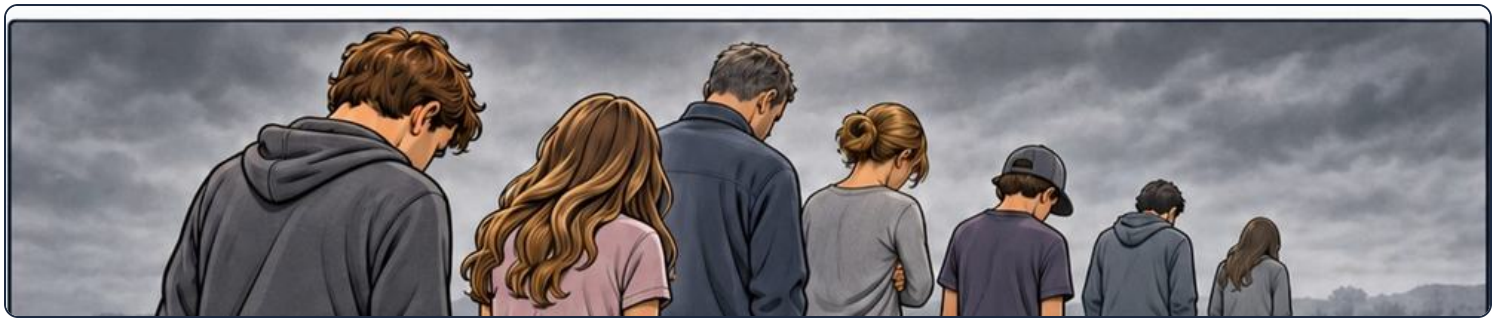
Pastor Rick: I owned goats once. Stinkiest, nastiest animals I ever had.
MEHHH!



Sofia: Wait, so some people are GOATS?
Pastor Rick: Jesus isn't calling anyone a goat! He's using a picture everyone back then understood. Shepherds separated their animals all the time.



Jesus: Come!
Pastor Rick: To the people on his right, Jesus will say "Come!" They'll go into the amazing kingdom he prepared for them.



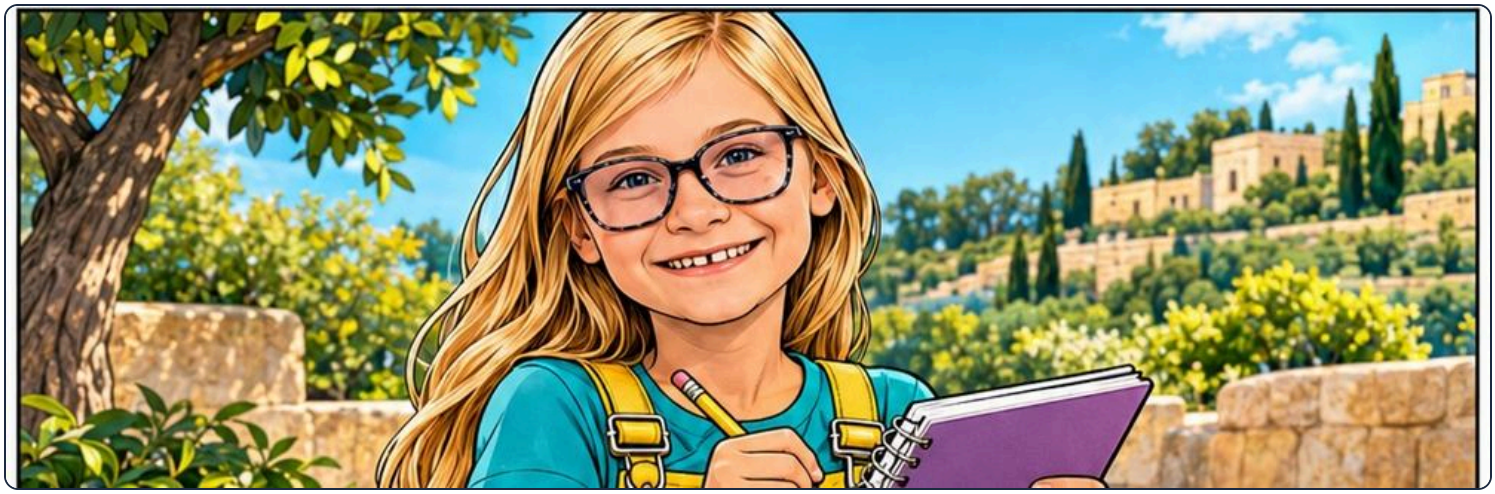
Pastor Rick: To the people on his left, he'll say "Depart," which means "go away." They'll be separated from God forever. Two groups. One way or the other.



Sam: What about babies? And little kids who are too young to choose?



Pastor Rick: I believe with all my heart that a child who dies before they're old enough to choose is safe with Jesus. He loves children.



Stop 3: How Can You Tell?

Maya: So how does Jesus decide? Is it about doing enough good stuff?



Baxter: Nope! Remember our very first stop? You can't earn it!

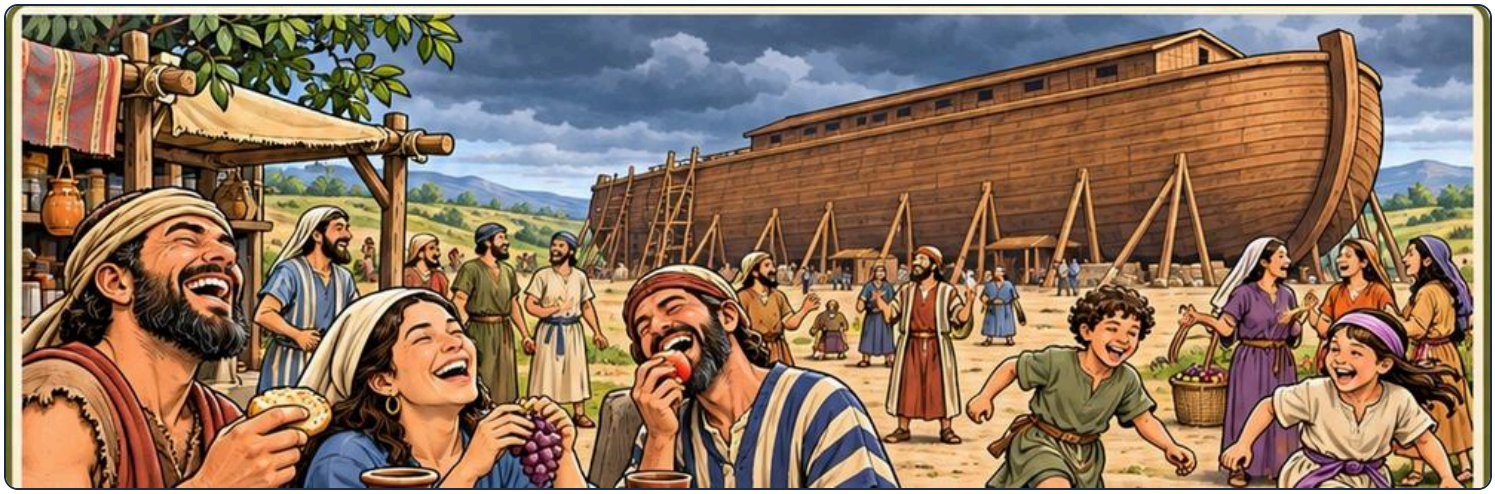


Pastor Rick: Right. What decides forever is whether you've chosen to follow Jesus. But Jesus said something interesting about the people on his right. They fed hungry people. They welcomed strangers. They visited people who were sick. And Jesus said whatever they did for people in need, they did for HIM.



Pastor Rick: When Jesus lives in your heart, your life starts to look like his.

Good deeds don't MAKE you a Christian. They SHOW that you are one.



Stop 4: Which Word Will You Hear?

Pastor Rick: Jesus said his return will be like the days of Noah. People were busy with their own stuff. They never looked up. Then the flood came.

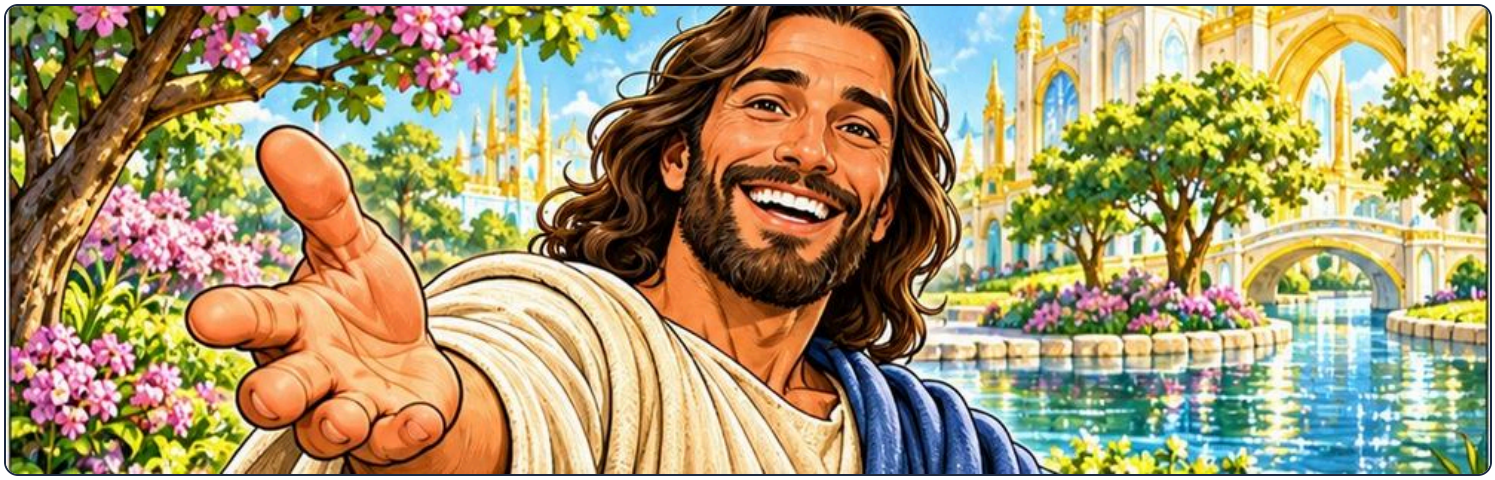


Pastor Rick: I call it living in a three-foot world: only paying attention to what's right in front of you.

Eli: Hey! ...Okay, fair.



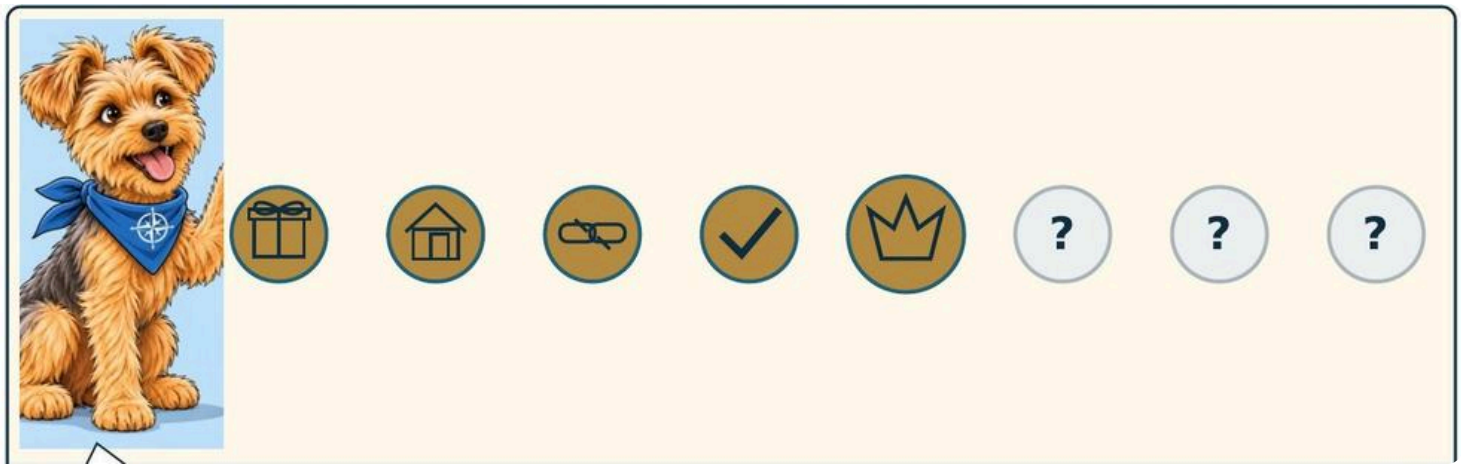
Pastor Rick: Jesus wants you to look up.



Jesus: Come to me.
Pastor Rick: When Jesus comes back, which word will you hear, "Come" or "Depart"? He's already saying "Come" to you right now.



Baxter: "Come!" is my favorite word. Usually it means a treat. When Jesus says it, it means forever with him!



REMEMBER IT! 1. Heaven is God's gift. 2. At home with Jesus. 3. Keep trusting Jesus. 4. Say yes to Jesus today. 5. Jesus will return as King. NEW!
Baxter: Say all five! Next stop: the devil gets locked up. Finally!

Your Tour Notes

Something I want to remember...

A question I want to ask...

A picture of what I learned...

Talk About It with Baxter



Who will return as King?



What would you like to ask Jesus?



Tell someone why Jesus' return gives you hope.

REMEMBER IT!



Jesus will return as King.

Say the truth in your own words. Then tell someone!

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Thanks for taking the tour with me. See you on the other side!



See you on the other side!

SEE YOU ON THE

OTHER SIDE!

1,000

TRUTH 6

A TOUR OF HEAVEN / ISSUE 6 OF 8



What are the 1,000 years?

Highway to Heaven, Mile Marker 1,000



That's a LOT of dog years!

by Rick Melick

Last Time on the Tour



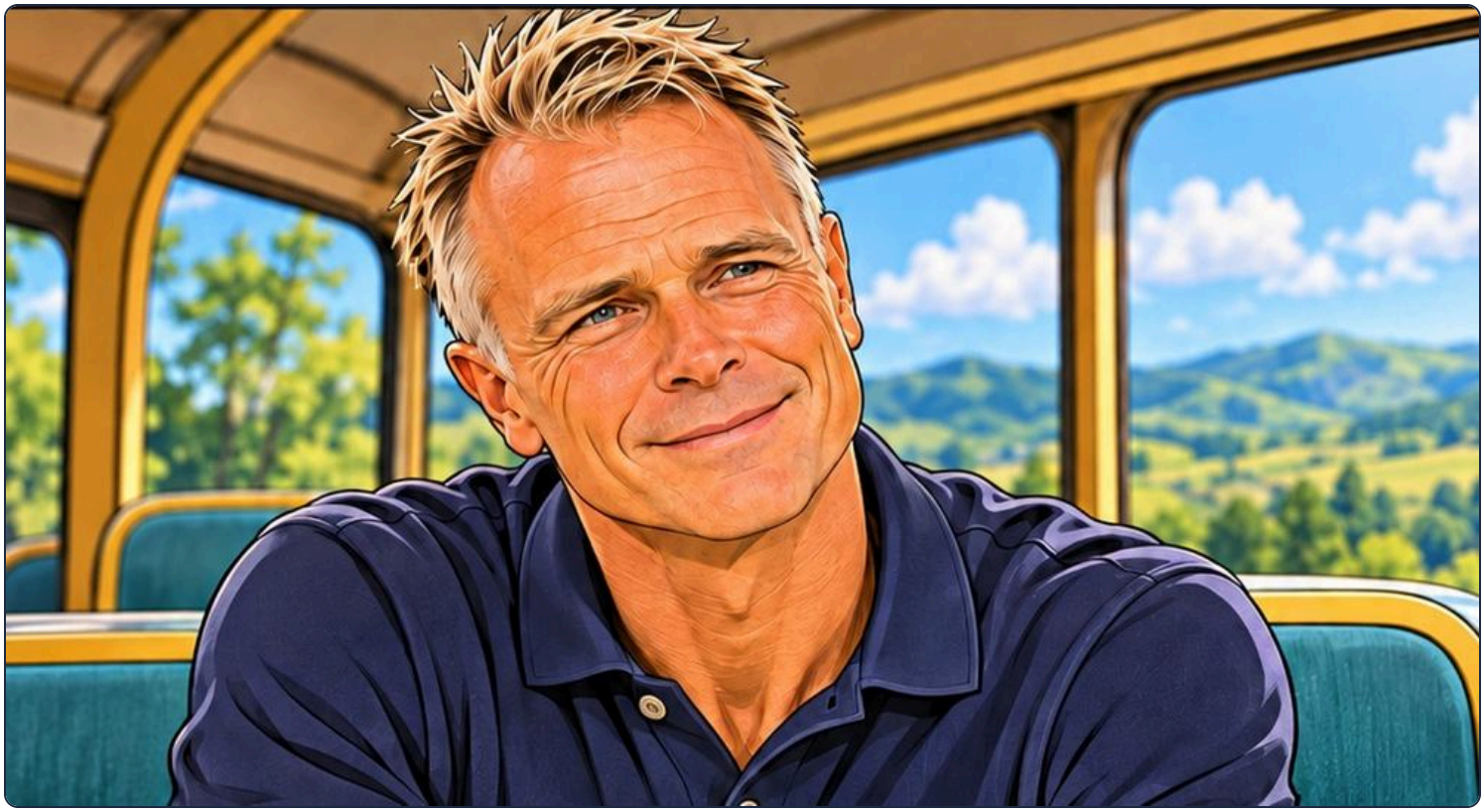
Jesus will return as King.

Eight stops. Eight truths to remember.

Read the panels from top to bottom. Take your time, ask questions, and enjoy the tour.



A Tour of Heaven, Stop 6.
Baxter: Good news, everybody! The serious stops are behind us. From here on, the story gets REALLY good.



Pastor Rick: Before we go on, let me tell you about another friend of mine who was very sick. I went to see her.



Friend: So... I leave this body behind?
Pastor Rick: Yep.



Friend: And I get to be with Jesus?
Pastor Rick: Yep. That's God's promise.



Friend: I am ready. I can't wait!



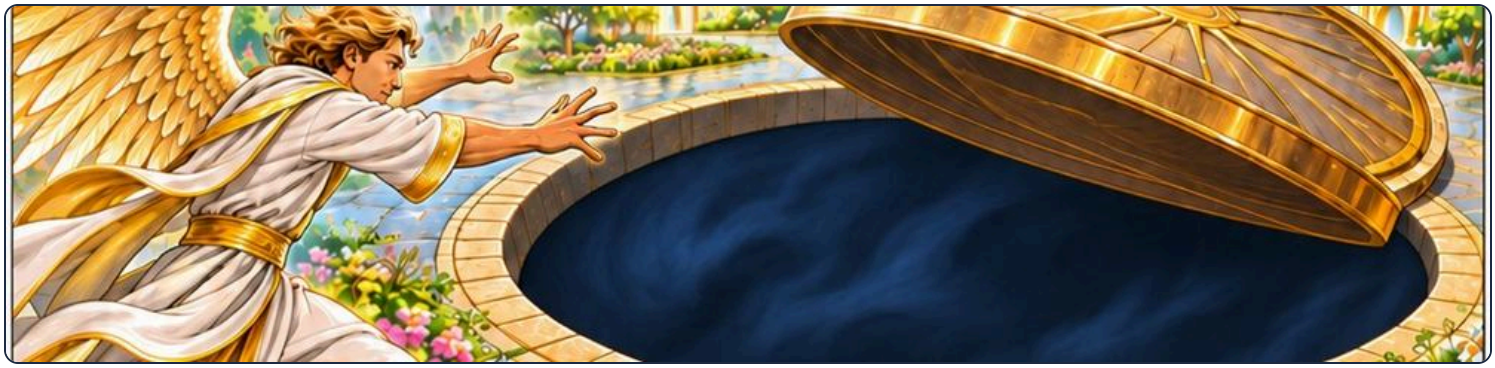
Sam: She wasn't scared at all.
Pastor Rick: When you know how the story ends, you don't have to be.



Stop 1: The Devil Gets Locked Up.
Pastor Rick: John saw this in a vision, in the book of Revelation. An angel came down from heaven with a key and a great big chain.



CLANK! CLANK!



SLAM!



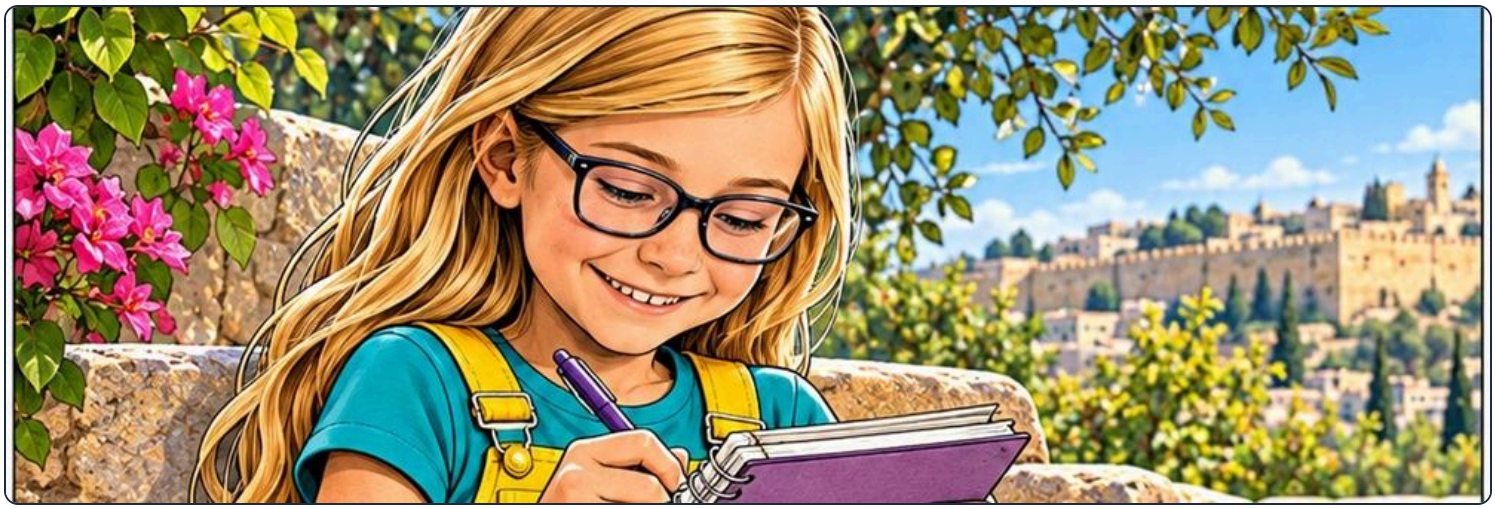
KA-CHUNK.
Pastor Rick: The angel locked Satan in a deep pit called the Abyss and sealed it shut for one thousand years.



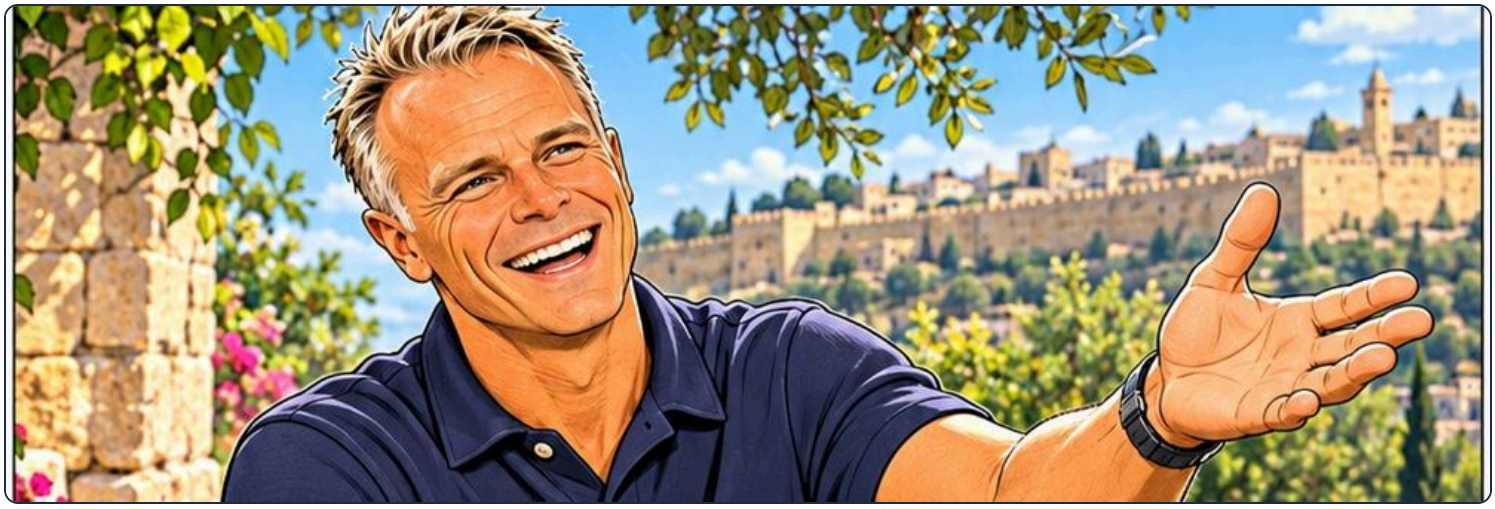
Eli: LOCKED UP! YES!



Baxter: Whoa fact! The Bible mentions the thousand years SIX times in Revelation 20. And a thousand years is about four times longer than the United States has been a country!



Maya: So what happens during the thousand years?



Pastor Rick: Some people call it the millennium. With Satan locked up, Jesus is King of the whole world!



Stop 2: Jesus Is King!

Pastor Rick: People who love Jesus will rule with him. The prophet Isaiah described wolves and lambs living together in peace. Some Bible teachers believe that happens during the thousand years.



Sofia: Streets so safe kids can play anywhere?

Pastor Rick: Nobody mean. Nobody in charge except Jesus.



Pastor Rick: I believe it's a real thousand years. Some Christians see it a little differently, and that's okay. The most important thing is that Jesus is King, and if you follow him, you'll be with him.



Baxter: A lion and a lamb taking a nap together? Maybe I'll make friends with a rabbit. (Probably not. But maybe.)



Stop 3: Jesus Wins!
Pastor Rick: At the end of the thousand years, Satan gets let out for a short time. He gathers a huge army and tries one last time to fight against God.



FWOOOSH!
Pastor Rick: It doesn't work. Not even close.



Pastor Rick: The devil is defeated forever. He'll never bother anyone again.



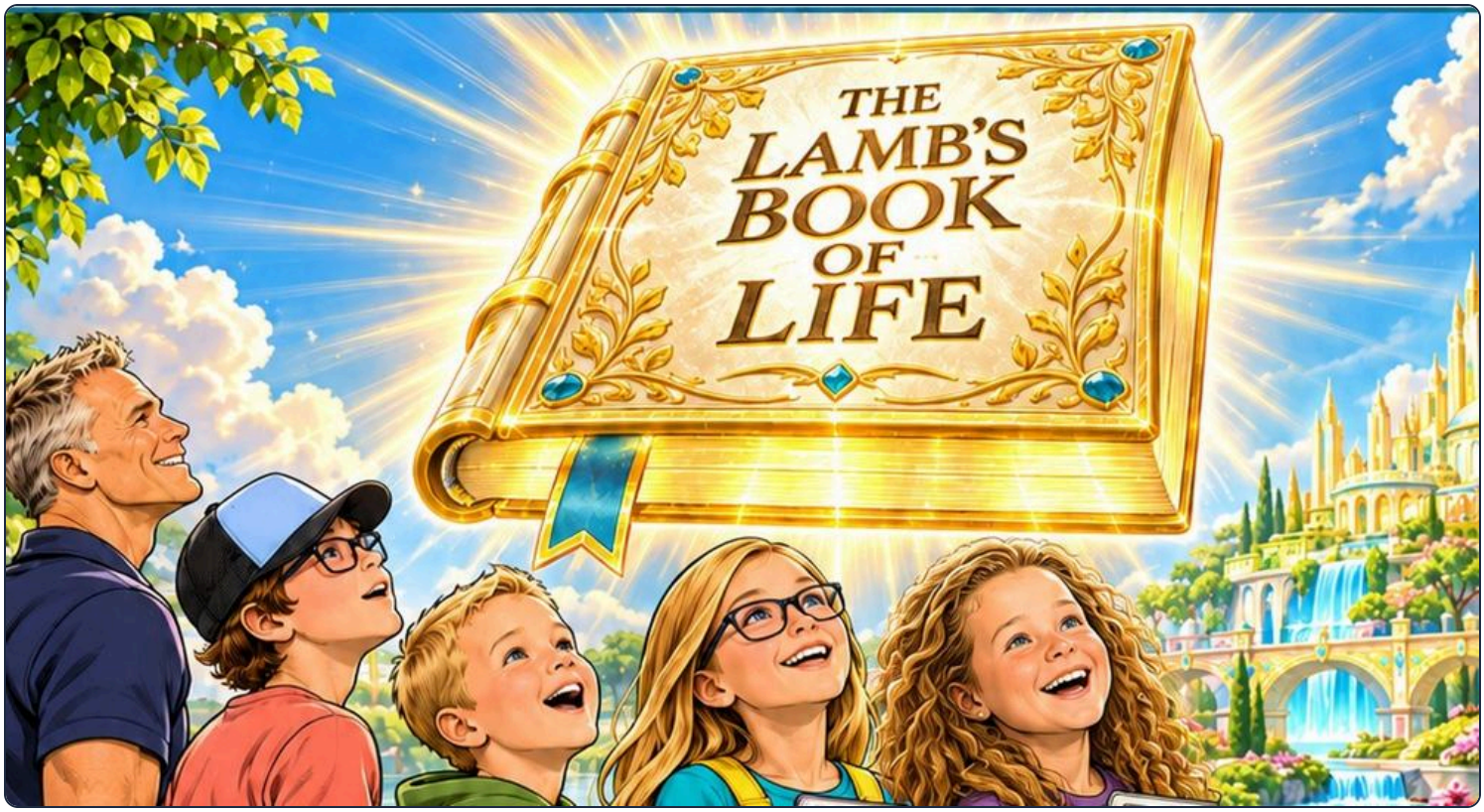
Pastor Rick: Lots of cartoons show the devil ruling hell like a king. Not true!



Pastor Rick: The devil doesn't rule anything. He is punished, forever. He's dangerous, but he is NEVER in charge. God is always in charge.

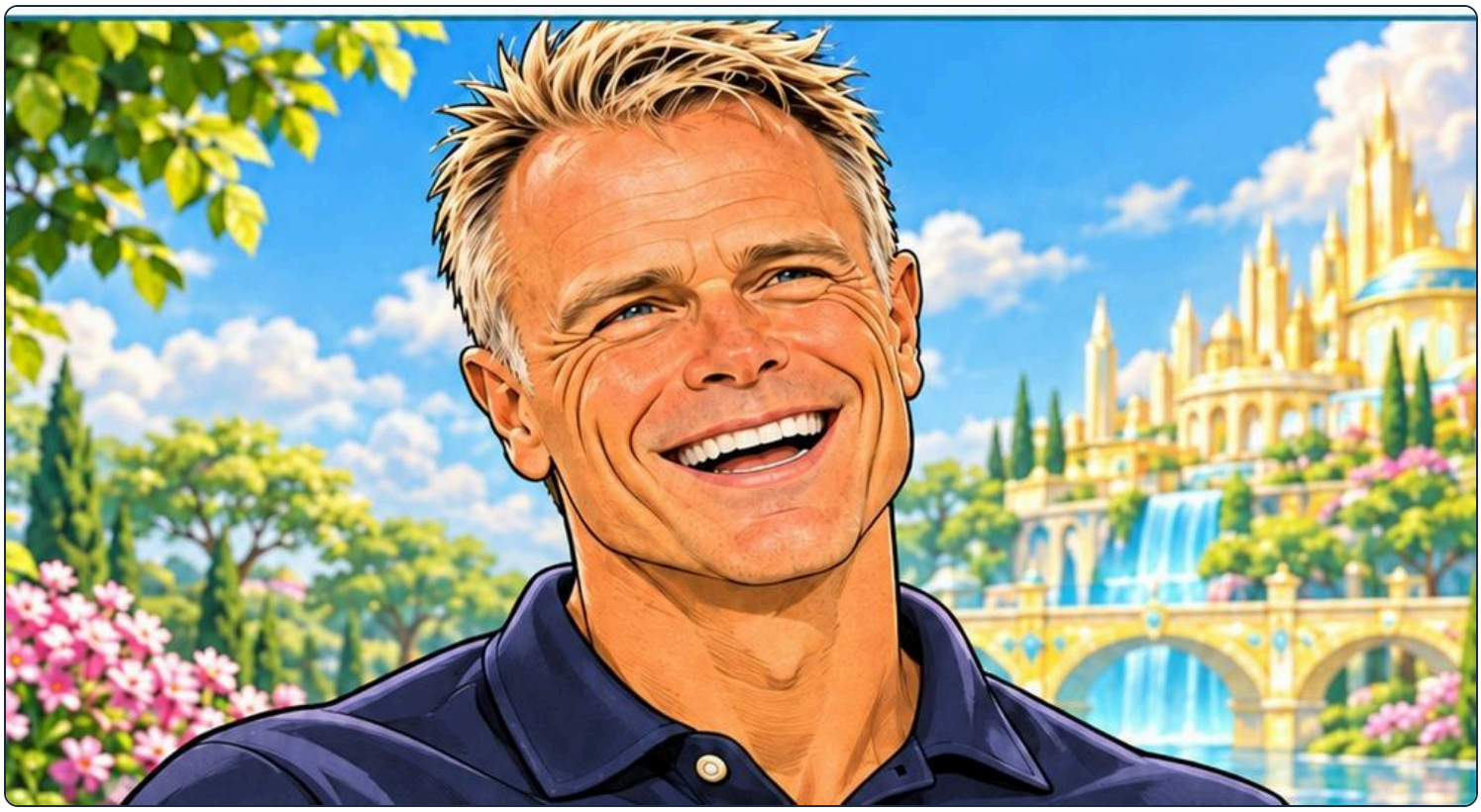


All Kids: JESUS WINS!



Stop 4: Is Your Name in the Book?

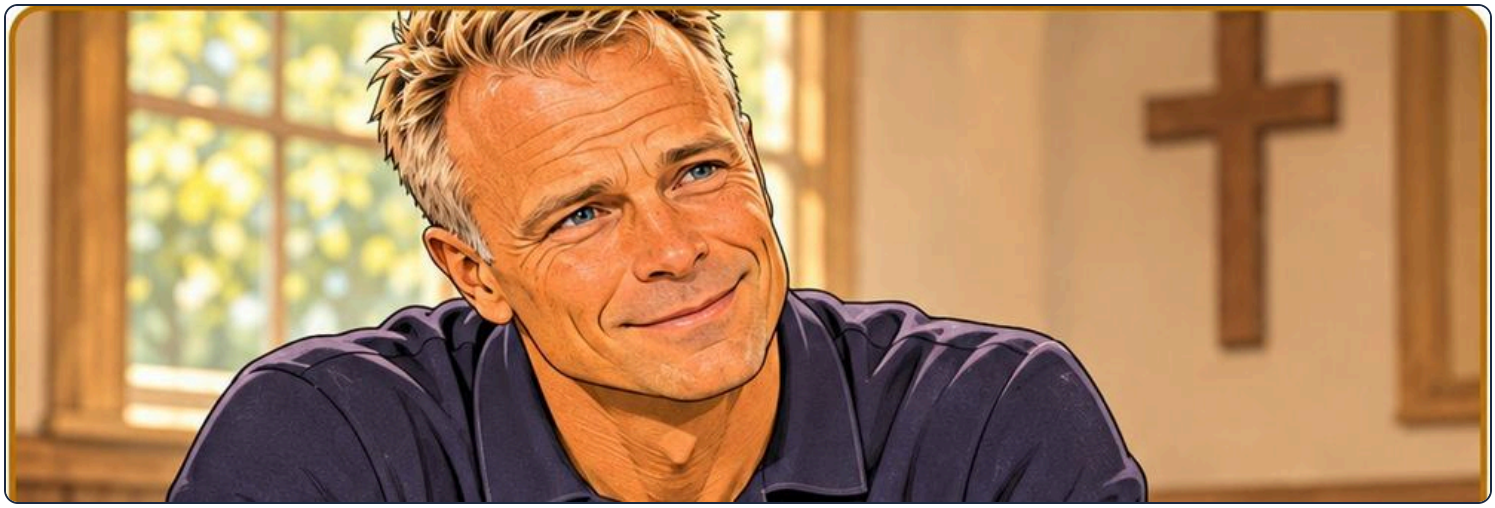
Pastor Rick: The Bible says God keeps a special book called the Lamb's Book of Life. "The Lamb" is a name for Jesus. Everyone whose name is written in it will live with God forever.



Pastor Rick: Which reminds me of a funny story.



Pastor Rick: Years ago, I was the pastor of a tiny country church. A church member's relative died, and I was asked to lead his funeral.
Treasurer: I know he was a Christian.



Pastor Rick: Well… he told people he didn't want to follow Jesus.
Treasurer: I KNOW he was a Christian.



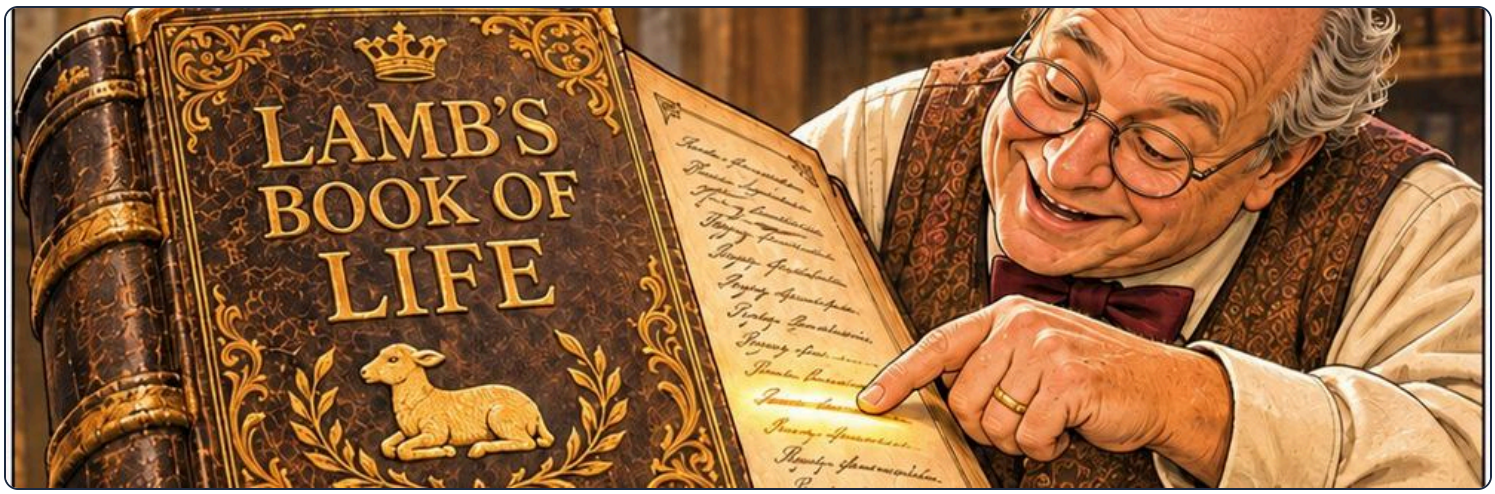
Pastor Rick: How do you know?



Treasurer: I've got the Lamb's Book of Life!
POOF (dust cloud)



Pastor Rick: Do you have the Ark of the Covenant back there too?



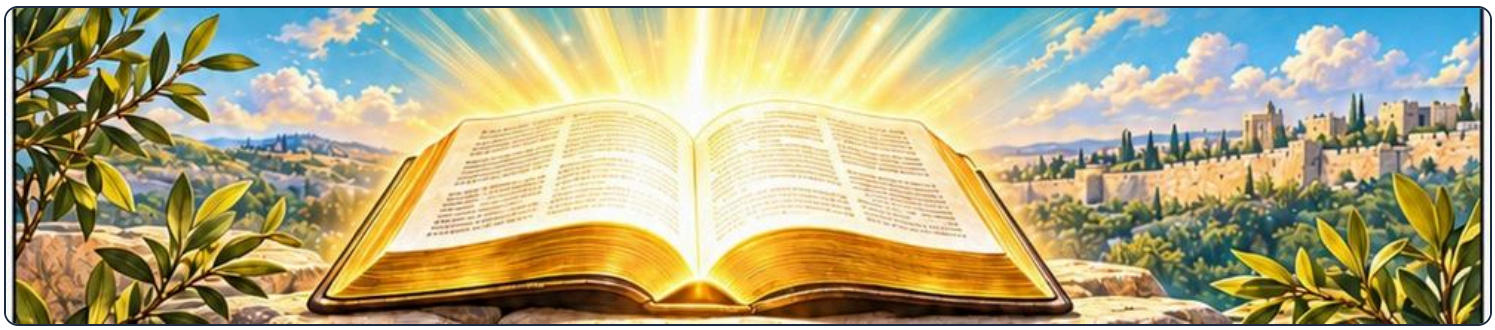
Treasurer: He was baptized here when he was eight years old. His name is in the Lamb's Book of Life!
It was the church's record book. (Pastor Rick wrote his own name in it later, just to be safe.)



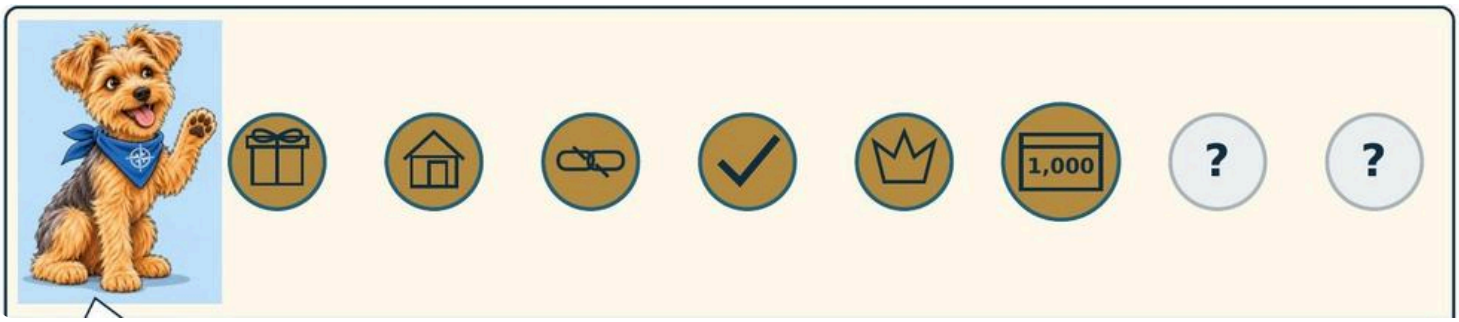
Maya: But that's not the REAL book, is it?



Pastor Rick: Nope. The real Lamb's Book of Life is kept by God. Your name isn't written there because of a church record. Your name is written in it the moment you decide to follow Jesus.



"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God. Believe in me also." John 14:1 (NIrV)



REMEMBER IT! 1. Heaven is God's gift. 2. At home with Jesus. 3. Keep trusting Jesus. 4. Say yes to Jesus today. 5. Jesus will return as King. 6. Jesus rules for 1,000 years. NEW!
Baxter: Say all six! Next stop: we finally see the city. And someone takes a VERY hot shower.

Talk About It with Baxter

How long does Revelation 20 say Jesus will reign?

What do you look forward to about a world Jesus rules?

Explain this week’s truth in your own words.

REMEMBER IT!



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See you on the other side!

SEE YOU ON THE

OTHER SIDE!

TRUTH 7

A TOUR OF HEAVEN / ISSUE 7 OF 8



What will the new earth be like?

Leaving the Light On



No more tears? No more RAIN? Sign me up!

by Rick Melick

Last Time on the Tour





Jesus rules for 1,000 years.

Eight stops. Eight truths to remember.

Read the panels from top to bottom. Take your time, ask questions, and enjoy the tour.



Pastor Rick: Joy loves HOT showers. So hot the whole bathroom turns into a cloud.
HSSSSSS



Pastor Rick: One Sunday morning I needed the mirror. I couldn't see a thing.



WIPE. HSSS. WIPE. HSSS.



A Tour of Heaven, Stop 7.
Pastor Rick: Trying to imagine heaven is a little like that mirror. Every now and then we catch a glimpse. Then it gets foggy again. Our eyes just can't see it clearly yet.



Pastor Rick: But someday they will. And the Bible gives us some AMAZING clues.



Baxter: This is the stop Pastor Rick was MOST excited about. All aboard for heaven!



Stop 1: Everything New!
Pastor Rick: At the end of the Bible, John saw a new heaven and a new earth. The old world, with all its sadness and sin, was gone.



God: I am making everything new!
Revelation 21:5



Pastor Rick: New bodies that never get sick or tired. New hearts that never want to do wrong. And a new world that's even better than the Garden of Eden!



Sofia: Will there be animals?
Pastor Rick: I think there probably will be! God made animals and called them good. It makes sense he'd put them in his perfect new world.



Baxter: I would like it noted that Pastor Rick said "probably." I'm choosing to hear "definitely."



Stop 2: The City of God.
Pastor Rick: Remember the city from our very first stop? Here it is up close. Twelve pearl gates, always open. Walls covered with jewels. Streets of gold so pure they look like glass.



Pastor Rick: A crystal-clear river flows right from God's throne down the middle of the street. And on both sides grows the tree of life, with fruit every month.



Eli: Fruit every month? So there's FOOD in heaven?
Pastor Rick: Looks like it!



Baxter: Whoa fact! The city doesn't need the sun or the moon, because God's glory lights it up. And there's no night there. Ever!



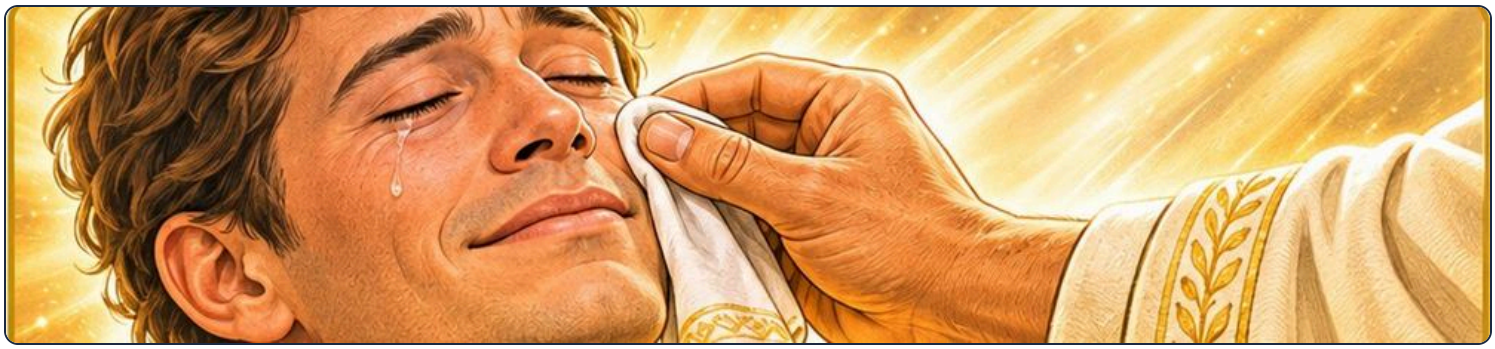
Pastor Rick: That's why this stop is called "Leaving the Light On." When you come home late, it feels so good to see the porch light on. It means someone is waiting for you.



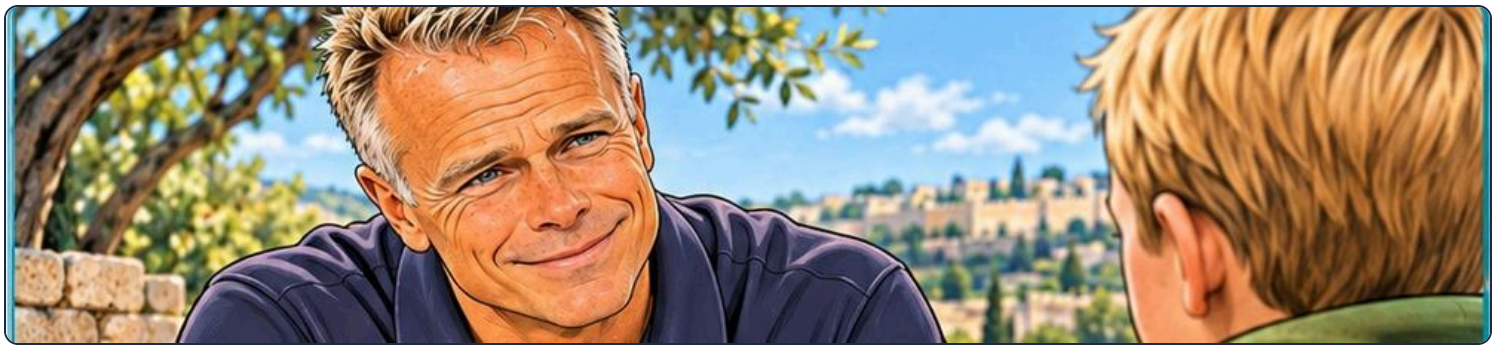
Pastor Rick: God is waiting for you. And his light is always on.



Stop 3: No More Tears.
Sam: My grandpa was really sick at the end. He was in a lot of pain.



"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or sadness. There will be no more crying or pain. Things are no longer the way they used to be."
Revelation 21:4 (NIrV)



Pastor Rick: No more hospitals. No more funerals. No more scraped knees or bad days. God himself will wipe away every tear. That's how much he loves you.



Sam: No more pain. I'm glad, Grandpa.



Stop 4: I Drive, You Ride.

Pastor Rick: One afternoon, Joy and I were driving to the grocery store. The sun was setting right in front of us.



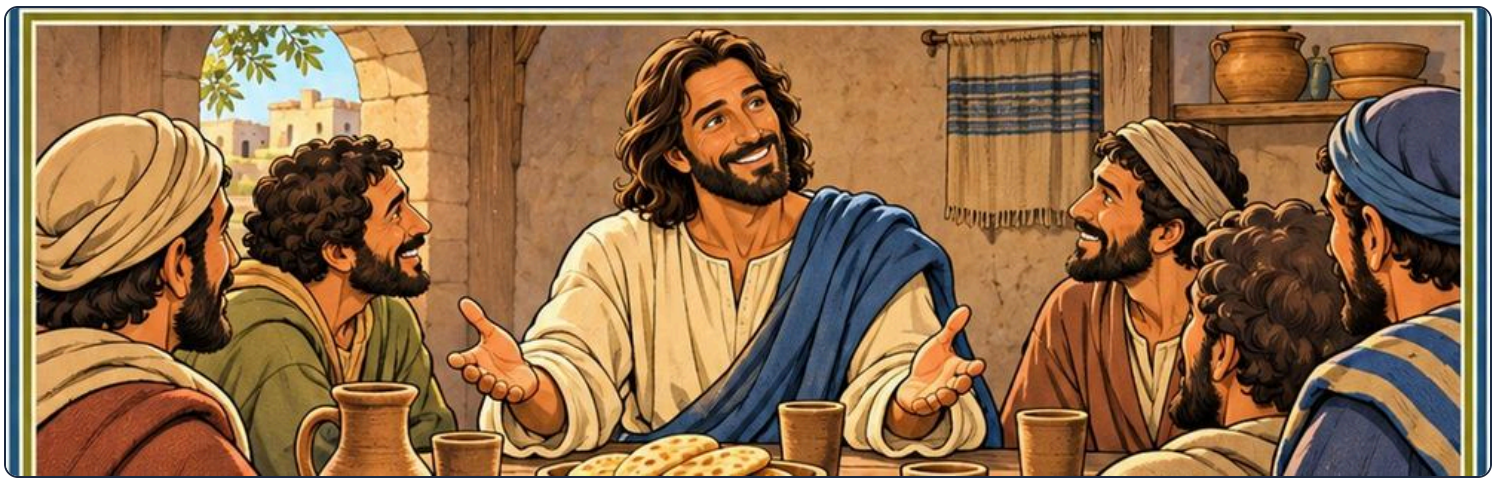
Joy: Stop! You have to stop! I can't see where we're going!



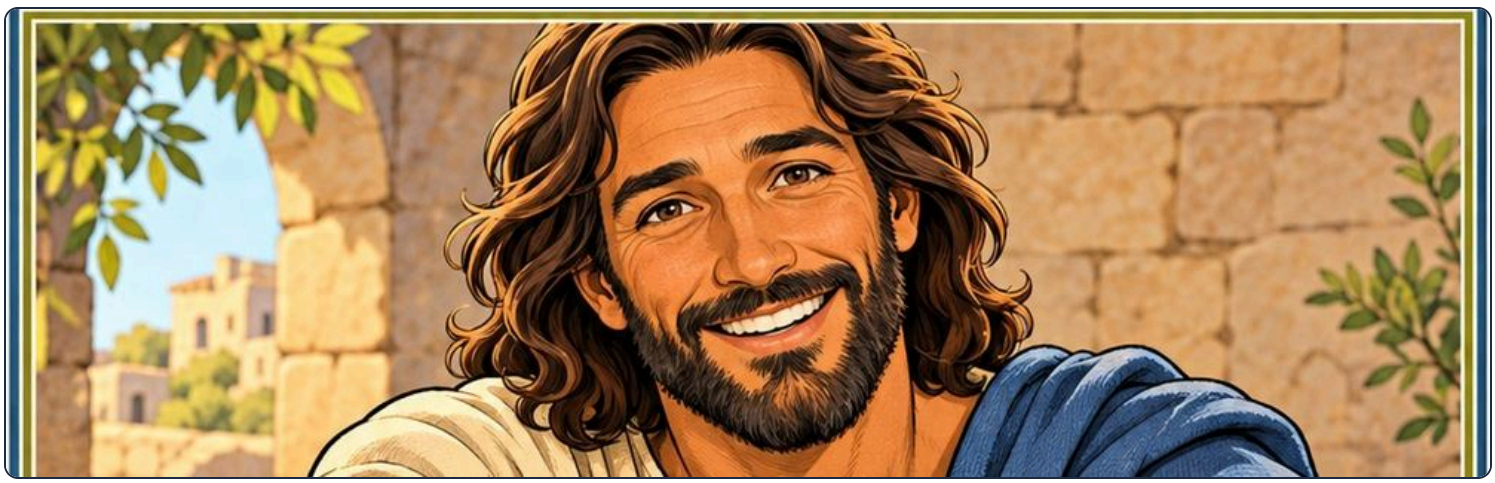
Pastor Rick: You don't need to see. I can see.



Pastor Rick: I drive. You ride.
Pastor Rick: Joy did not like that. I liked it a lot.



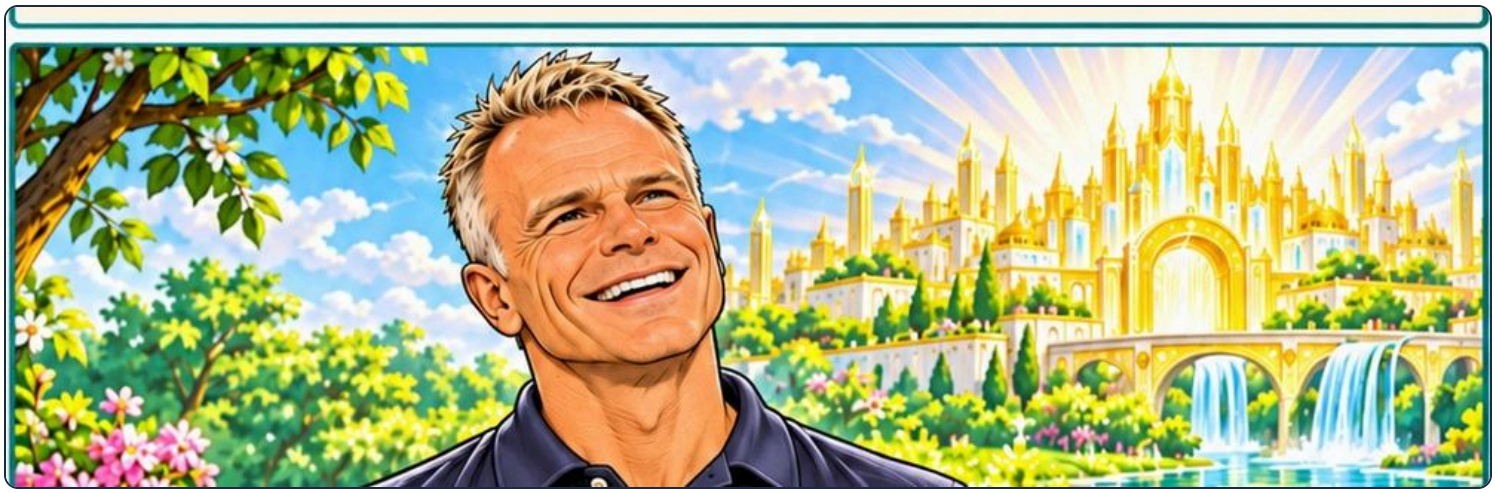
Pastor Rick: Jesus once told his friends he was going to prepare a place for them.
His friend Thomas said, in other words...
Thomas: Stop, Jesus! We can't see where you're going!



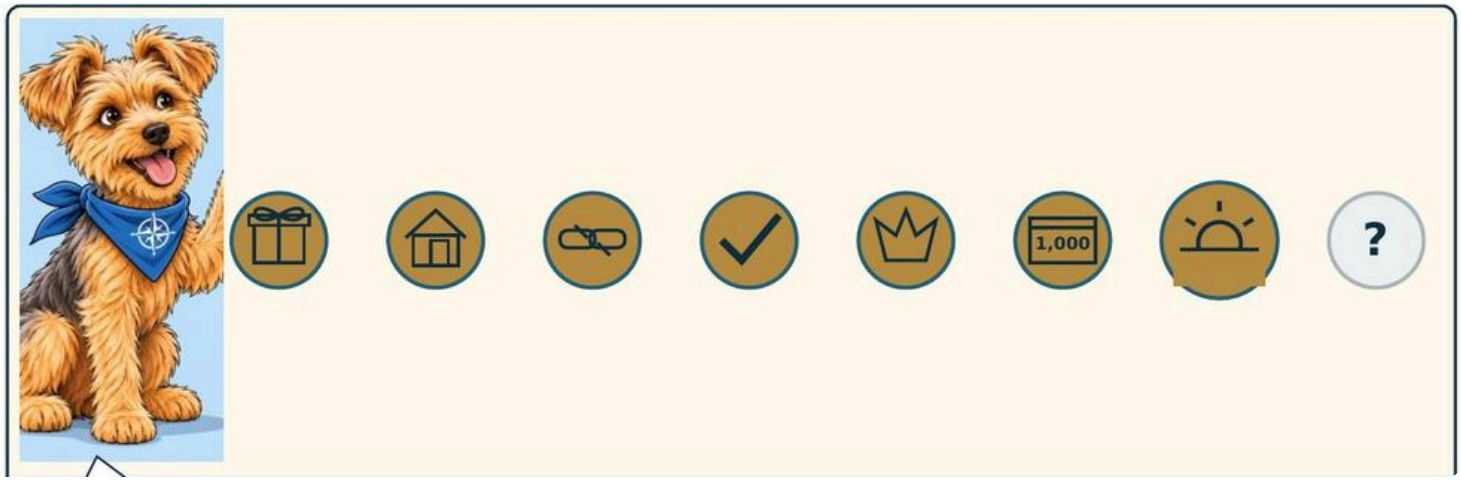
Jesus: I am the way and the truth and the life.
Pastor Rick: In other words: "You don't have to see. I can see. I'll take you there.
I drive. You ride."



Maya: So what's the best part of heaven? The gold? The pearls? The fruit?



Pastor Rick: We don't know everything about the place. But we know a lot about the Person. The very best part of heaven is being with Jesus.



REMEMBER IT! 1. Heaven is God's gift. 2. At home with Jesus. 3. Keep trusting Jesus. 4. Say yes to Jesus today. 5. Jesus will return as King. 6. Jesus rules for 1,000 years. 7. God makes all things new. NEW!

Baxter: Say all seven! One more stop. The last one is all about YOU.

Your Tour Notes

Something I want to remember...

A question I want to ask...

A picture of what I learned...

Talk About It with Baxter

What does God promise to make new?

What broken thing do you look forward to God making right?

Tell someone why you don’t need to fear the future.

REMEMBER IT!



God makes all things new.

Say the truth in your own words. Then tell someone!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Meet Pastor Rick!

Pastor Rick Melick is a pastor in Des Moines, Iowa. He loves telling stories (especially funny ones) and helping people of all ages find out how much Jesus loves them.

Pastor Rick's Fun Facts:

He has lived all over the country: California, Washington, Texas, Tennessee, Arkansas, and now Iowa.

He is a chaplain for the Iowa State Patrol. He helps state troopers and their families when life gets hard.
He once read the Gospel of John one chapter a week, every day, with a different colored pen each day. It took him 21 weeks to finish the whole book!
He's married to Joy, his best friend. She usually gets the last laugh.

Pastor Rick's big question is: "What will matter most to me five minutes after I die?" His answer is Jesus. He hopes it's yours too.

MEET BAXTER, YOUR TOUR GUIDE!

Hi, it's me, Baxter! I'm Pastor Rick and Joy's dog, and I'm totally real.
I weigh 13 pounds. That's 13 pounds of pure tour guide!
I'm a scruffy tan terrier mix. Nobody knows exactly what breed I am. I like to keep people guessing.
I do NOT like rain. Not even a little.
I DO like rabbits. And treats. Mostly treats.
My big sister, Daisy, is a 60-pound poodle. She's WAY bigger than me, but she likes to stay home, so I do all the touring!
Thanks for taking the tour with me. See you on the other side!



See you on the other side!

SEE YOU ON THE

OTHER SIDE!

TRUTH 8

A TOUR OF HEAVEN / ISSUE 8 OF 8



Will I still be me in heaven?

Now That I'm Here



Last stop, and it's all about YOU!

by Rick Melick

Last Time on the Tour



God makes all things new.

Eight stops. Eight truths to remember.

Read the panels from top to bottom. Take your time, ask questions, and enjoy the tour.



Pastor Rick: Joy and I work out together. But we work out a little differently.
Joy: ...and don't forget to take out the trash tonight!



Pastor Rick: How was it?
Joy: Hee hee! It was fun!



Joy: Hee hee! I have two different weights!



Pastor Rick: One arm will be pumped up and the other one shriveled!



Joy: It's not important to me!



A Tour of Heaven, Stop 8: the last stop!

Pastor Rick: She's there to have a good time, and it's working great for her. This tour is a little like that. Maybe you came just for fun. Maybe you worked hard and learned a lot. Either way, you made it to the last stop!



Baxter: The last stop is all about YOU. Who you'll be in heaven, and what you'll get to do there. I'm so proud of you!

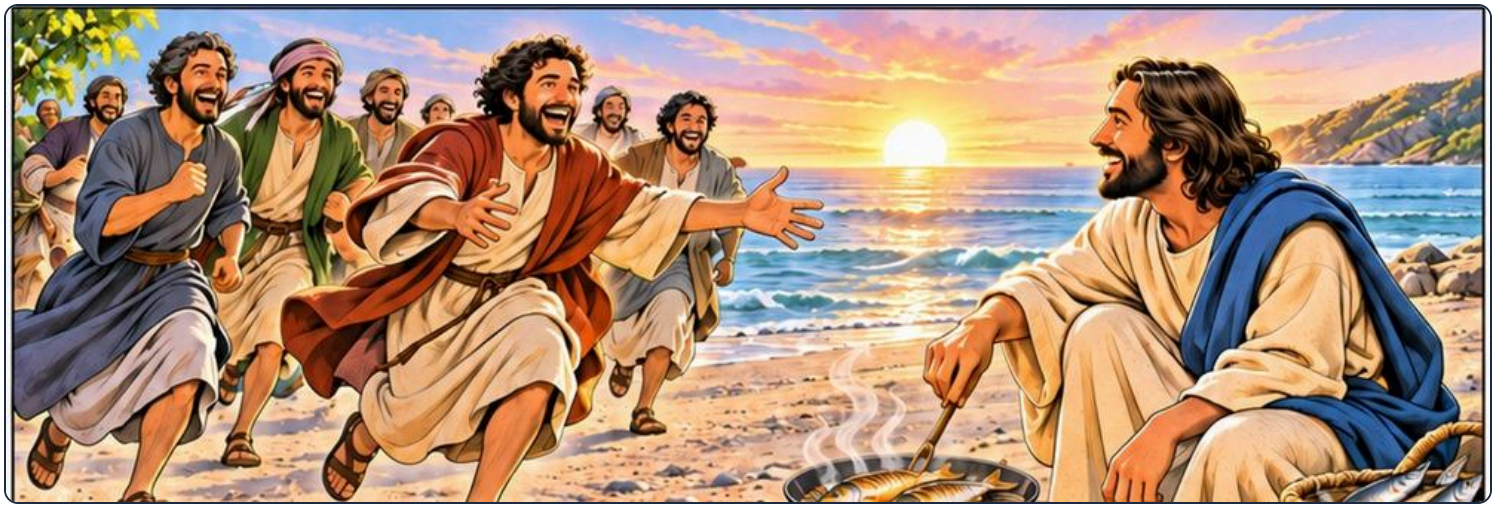


Stop 1: You'll Still Be You!

Maya: Will I still be ME in heaven? Or will I be, like, a glowing blob?



Pastor Rick: You'll still be you! God made you on purpose, and he's not going to turn you into someone else. People will recognize you, and you'll recognize them.



Pastor Rick: After Jesus rose from the dead, his friends recognized him. He ate breakfast with them. He was still Jesus!



Pastor Rick: Your personality will still be yours, minus the grumpy parts. The things you love will be even better. You'll be the very best version of you.



Eli: So I'll still be funny?
Pastor Rick: Funnier!



Stop 2: A Seed and a Plant.
Pastor Rick: Paul said our new bodies will be like what happens when you plant a seed.



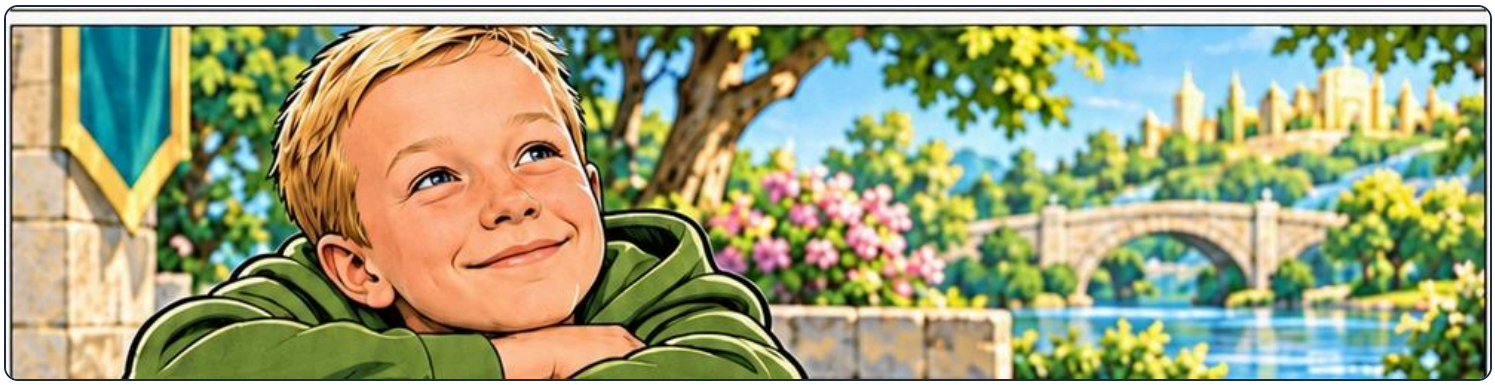
SPROING!
Pastor Rick: A seed is small and plain. But plant it, and it grows into something amazing. The plant looks totally different, but it came from that seed.



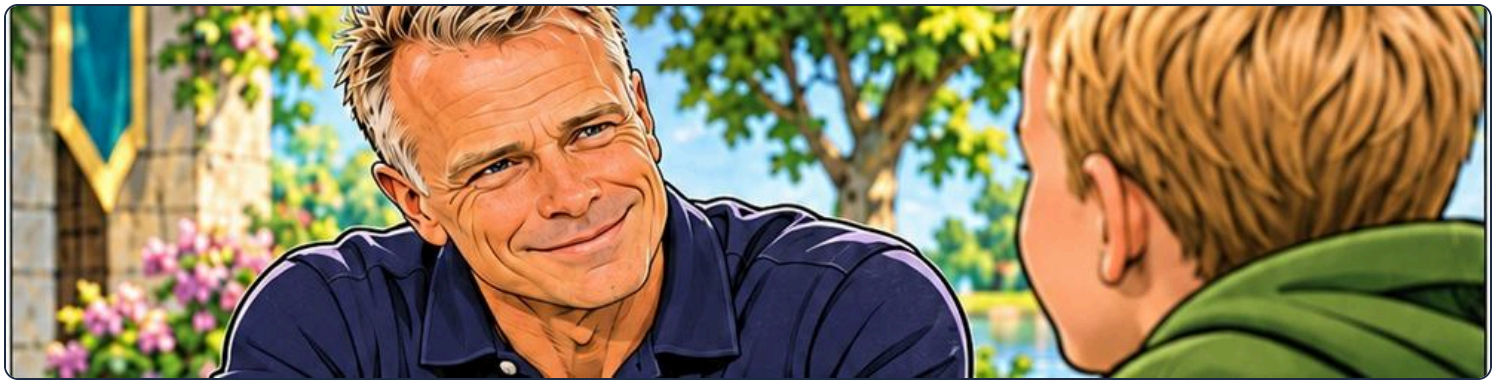
Baxter: Whoa fact! A giant sequoia seed is about the size of an oatmeal flake. It can grow into a tree more than 250 feet tall. If God can do that with a seed, imagine what he'll do with you!



Pastor Rick: That's what our new bodies will be like. Our bodies now get weak and wear out. Remember my bad knees? But our new bodies will be strong and glorious. They'll never get sick, never get hurt, and never die.

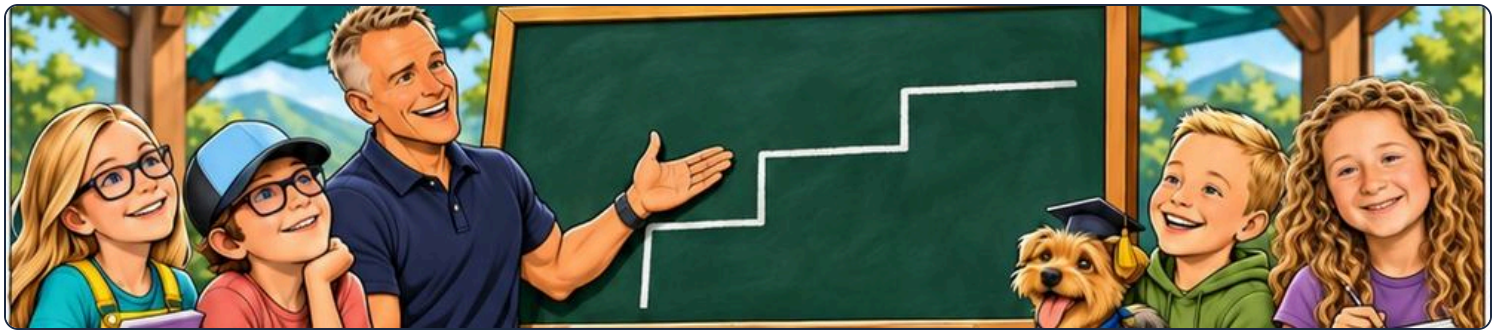


Sam: So my grandpa will get a new body too?

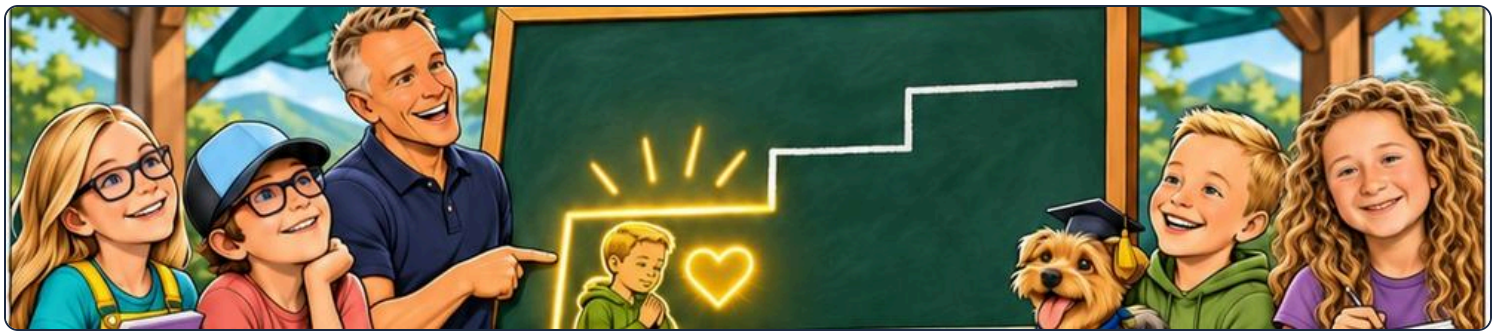


Pastor Rick: Jesus was the first one to get a new body when he rose from the dead. And because he did, everyone who belongs to him will too. Your grandpa included.

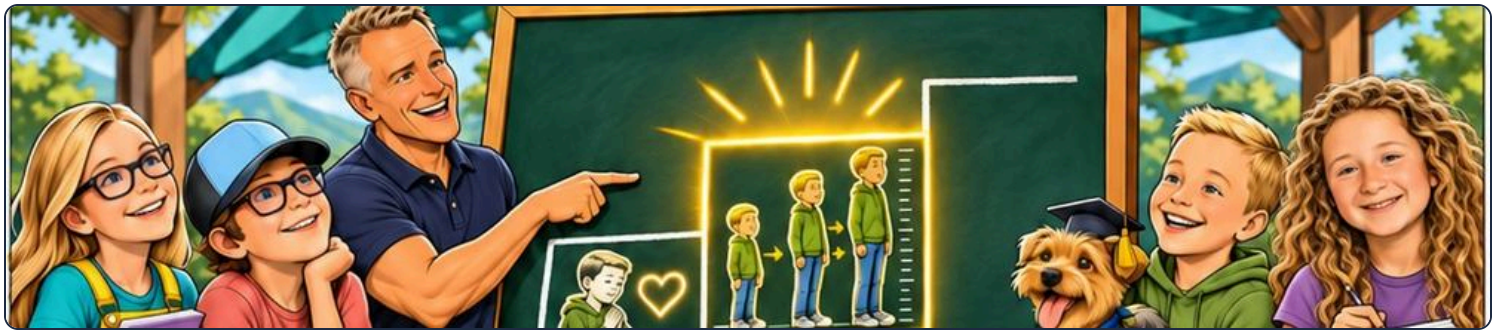




Stop 3: Getting More Like Jesus.
Pastor Rick: The Bible says someday we'll be like Jesus. It happens in three steps, with three big words.



1. SAVED (big word: justification). The moment you choose to follow Jesus, God forgives you and makes you his child.



2. GROWING (big word: sanctification). Your whole life, God's Spirit helps you become a little more like Jesus every day.



3. GLORIFIED (big word: glorification). In heaven, you'll finally be completely like Jesus. Forever!



Eli: Some days I don't feel like I'm growing at all.



Baxter: Babies start out crawling. Then one day they take a wobbly step, and before long they're running everywhere! That's growing. A little more every day.



Pastor Rick: And God never gives up on you.



Stop 4: What Will We Do Forever?

Eli: Please tell me it's not sitting on a cloud playing a harp forever.



Pastor Rick: Nope! The Bible tells us three amazing things we'll do.



1. We'll worship God, enjoying him with everything we've got!
2. We'll serve him. God will give us wonderful things to do.
3. We'll see his face. The best part of all.


"They will see his face. His name will be on their foreheads." Revelation 22:4 (NIrV)



The end of the tour. But not the end of the story!



Pastor Rick: Remember our big question from the very first stop? "What will matter most to me five minutes after I die?"



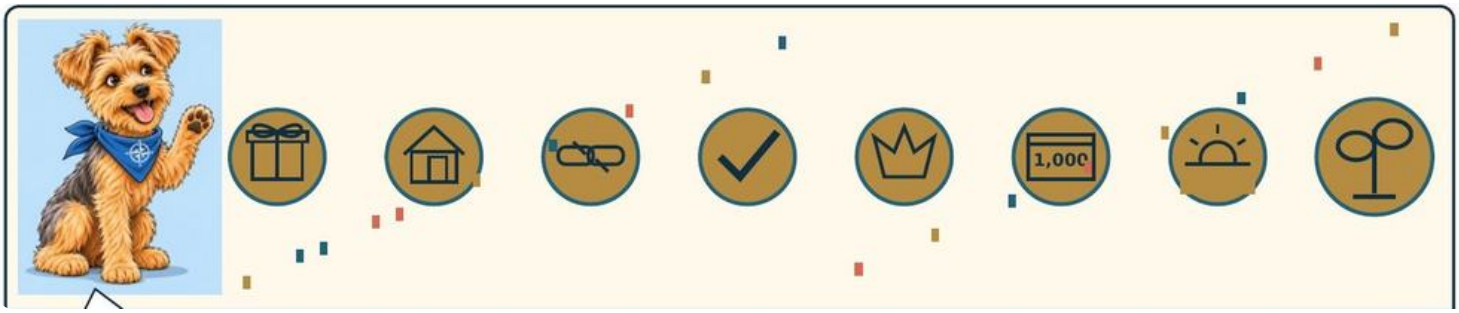
All Kids: JESUS!



Pastor Rick: Then let him matter most to you today.



Pastor Rick: If you haven't chosen to follow Jesus yet, you can do it right now. Remember the A-B-C: Admit you've sinned. Believe Jesus died and rose again for you. Choose to follow him. Then tell a grown-up who loves Jesus. They'll want to celebrate with you!



REMEMBER IT! ALL 8 TRUTHS: 1. Heaven is God's gift. 2. At home with Jesus. 3. Keep trusting Jesus. 4. Say yes to Jesus today. 5. Jesus will return as King. 6. Jesus rules for 1,000 years. 7. God makes all things new. 8. New bodies. Life forever! NEW!



Sam: Thanks, Baxter.
Baxter: Thanks for taking the tour with me! I had the best time.



Baxter: And remember what Pastor Rick always says...
SEE YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE!
THE END

Talk About It with Baxter

What did the seed teach you about a new body?

What do you hope you will still love doing?

Tell someone all eight truths—or as many as you remember!

REMEMBER IT!



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Say the truth in your own words. Then tell someone!

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- His grandkids live in Arkansas. He and Joy have a cabin there and love to go visit them when they’re not in Iowa.
- He’s a chaplain for the Iowa State Patrol. He helps state troopers and their families when life gets hard.

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I do NOT like rain. I DO like rabbits. And treats. Mostly treats.

My big sister, **Daisy**, is a standard poodle. She’s WAY bigger than me and super friendly. She loves to play outside, but she does NOT like riding in cars. So I do all the touring!



REMEMBER IT!
Eight truths for the journey



Heaven is God's gift.



At home with Jesus.



Keep trusting Jesus.



Say yes to Jesus today.



Jesus will return as King.



Jesus rules for 1,000 years.



God makes all things new.



New bodies. Life forever!