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.



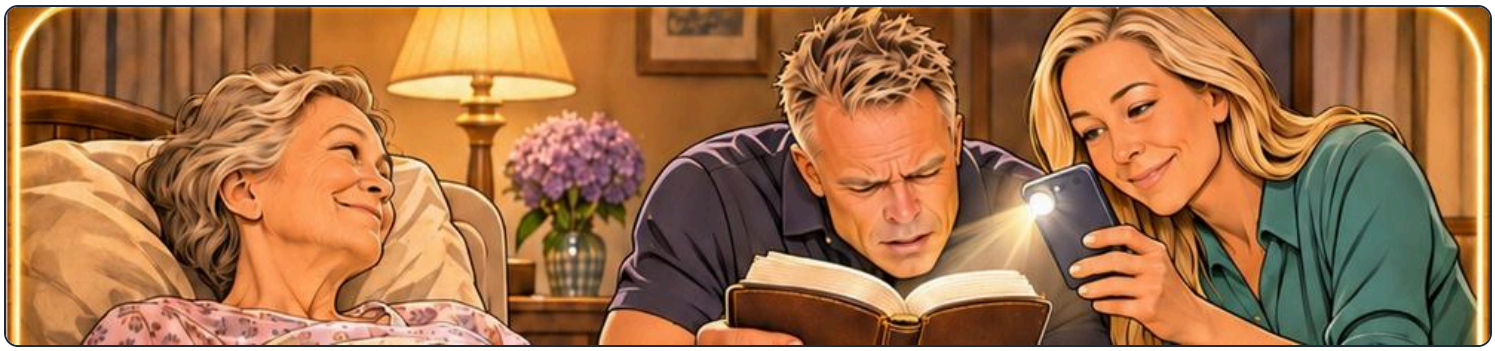
FWEEEEE (air leaking out)
**Eli:** …Oh.



**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.





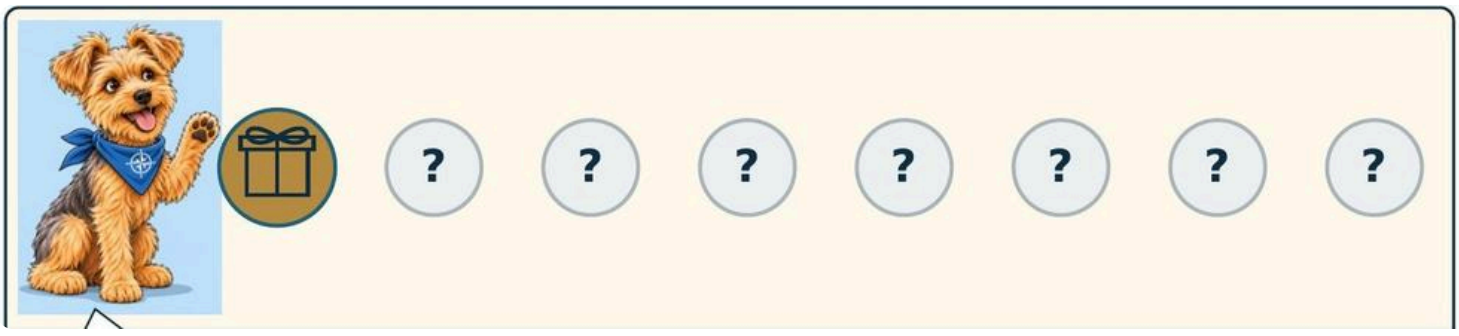

**Baxter:** Here's how you receive it. Easy as A-B-C!




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 parent 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.

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!