

## Discussion Questions for “Heaven is for Real” by Todd Burpo

### **Directions:**

- There are a total of twenty questions below provided as a study guide for “Heaven is for Real” by Todd Burpo.
  - Answering these questions will allow you to gain insight and make inferences about the plot. Please make sure you answer all parts of the question as some of these questions contain multiple parts.
  - Please bring these questions and your answers to class in the beginning of the school year so that you may use them as reference when you are writing your in-class essay.
  - *You will not be allowed* to use your laptop for this writing assignment.
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1.What do you think of the premise of "Heaven is For Real" and the story that Colton Burpo shares?

2. How does Colton's experience of heaven compare to what you imagine heaven to be like?

3.The book has been criticized for its accuracy and some have claimed that it is a hoax. What is your take on this?

4.Colton's father, Todd, is a pastor and the book is largely about his family's faith. How does the book address questions of faith and religion?

5.Some people have found comfort and hope in reading "Heaven is For Real," while others have dismissed it as a work of fiction. What do you think makes this book so polarizing?

6.Do you think the book has a broader message beyond the question of whether or not heaven is real? If so, what do you think that message is?

7.How does the book address the issue of death and the afterlife?

8.Have you read any other books or watched any other movies about near-death experiences or the afterlife? How do they compare to "Heaven is For Real"?

9. How do you think Colton's experience might change the way people think about death and the afterlife?

10. Would you recommend "Heaven is For Real" to others? Why or why not?

11. Have you read other accounts of those who have experienced heaven? If so, how does Colton's experience compare?

12. Does the way in which Colton reveals his journey—little by little, piece at a time, rather than all at once—make his story more, or less, credible for you?

13. In what way would you say that Colton's young age (he was four) influences his vision of heaven? Would it have been different had he been, say 34...or 64?

14. Do Colton's descriptions of heaven fit your own conception of heaven? If so, how. If not, why not?

15. What do you make of Colton's description of Jesus's blue eyes as and that he was seated on a horse?

16. In what ways does Colton's reporting shift from a descriptive vision of heaven to a more prophetic one?

17. Talk about the scriptural parallels between Colton's descriptions and predictions of heaven.

18. How do you explain the great popularity of this book? Why are people drawn to books about those who experience heaven? Why is the attraction so powerful? What are people seeking?

19. Some readers wish that Todd Burpo had devoted more time to his son's experience of heaven—that too much of the book revolves around the Burpo family's life and Colton's illness, rather than Colton's "Trip to Heaven and Back." Do you agree ... or disagree? Why?

20. What surprises you most about Colton's journey? What pleases or delights you most...or disturbs you? Overall, what is your reaction to "Heaven Is For Real"?