

038 Go Deeper Reflection Guide

GO DEEPER: WILL THERE BE PETS IN HEAVEN?

INTRODUCTION

In this deeply personal episode of Making Sense of Faith, Adam Hamilton invites us into one of faith's most tender questions through his own story of loss and hope. As you reflect on this conversation, use this guide to explore how your love for animals—and the questions that love raises—might reveal something beautiful about God's character and your own journey of faith.

3 REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Take a moment to consider what resonated most deeply with you from this episode:

1. Adam shares his profound grief over losing his dog Maggie, saying he'd never cried so hard for anything or anyone else. What does the depth of our love for animals reveal about how we're created to love and connect?
2. Think about a pet or animal that has been meaningful in your life. How has that relationship shaped your understanding of loyalty, unconditional love, or even God's character?
3. Adam acknowledges he doesn't know for certain if pets will be in heaven, but finds hope in the biblical evidence. How do you navigate questions of faith where certainty isn't possible but hope remains?

2 KEY INSIGHTS

1. God's Deep Care for All Creation *"Every forest animal already belongs to me, as do the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every mountain bird, even the insects in the field are mine."*

Question: How does knowing that God intimately knows and cares for every creature change your perspective on the value of animal life?

Reflection: Consider how God's attention to even the smallest creatures might reflect His attention to the details of your own life. What does this reveal about His character?

2. Love and Trust Point Beyond Ourselves *"My dog's never been inside your house before. He doesn't know all the things that are on the other side of the door. Here's the only thing he knows: my master's on the other side of the door, and if my master's in there, it must be okay."*

Question: In what areas of uncertainty or fear could you apply this kind of trust—knowing that your Master is already there?

Reflection: Think about how the unconditional trust of a beloved pet might model the kind of faith relationship God invites us into, even when we can't see what's ahead.

1 PRACTICE EXERCISE

The Gratitude and Hope Reflection

Find a quiet space and take 10 minutes for this exercise

- If you've had a meaningful relationship with a pet, spend a few minutes remembering specific moments of joy, comfort, or connection you shared
- Write down three qualities you loved most about this animal (loyalty, playfulness, comfort, etc.)
- Consider how these qualities might reflect aspects of God's character or love
- If you're currently grieving a pet, allow yourself to feel both the sadness and the gratitude
- Close by expressing gratitude—either for a current animal companion or cherished memories of one you've lost
- Whether or not you believe you'll see your pet again, thank God for the gift of that love in your life

QUOTES TO CONSIDER

"I don't know that I've ever cried so hard for anything or anyone else as I did that day."

"God, I would, I'd really love to see this little, this little animal of yours, my pet Maggie, I'd like to see her in heaven."

"They have some kind of soul. And I think that for a couple reasons... they tend to have some level of understanding."

CLOSING REFLECTION

Whether or not our beloved pets will be with us in eternity, the love we share with them reveals something profound about how we're created to love and be loved. Our questions about their eternal destiny aren't silly—they're expressions of deep love and hope. As you close this reflection time, consider how the tender questions of your heart might actually be invitations to trust more deeply in a God whose love extends to every creature He has made.

This reflection guide was created to accompany the Making Sense of Faith podcast episode "Will There Be Pets in Heaven?" For more resources like this, visit makingsenseoffaith.com.