



**Georgetown Township Public Library  
Book Discussion Guide**

*Heaven is for Real*  
Todd Burpo (2010)

**About This Book**

A young boy emerges from life-saving surgery with remarkable stories of his visit to heaven.

*Heaven Is for Real* is the true story of the four-year old son of a small town Nebraska pastor who during emergency surgery slips from consciousness and enters heaven. He survives and begins talking about being able to look down and see the doctor operating and his dad praying in the waiting room. The family didn't know what to believe but soon the evidence was clear.

Colton said he met his miscarried sister, whom no one had told him about, and his great grandfather who died 30 years before Colton was born, then shared impossible-to-know details about each. He describes the horse that only Jesus could ride, about how "reaaally big" God and his chair are, and how the Holy Spirit "shoots down power" from heaven to help us.

Told by the father, but often in Colton's own words, the disarmingly simple message is heaven is a real place, Jesus really loves children, and be ready, there is a coming last battle. (*From the publisher.*)

**From:** <http://www.litlovers.com>

**About the Author**

Todd Burpo is pastor of Crossroads Wesleyan, a wrestling coach, a volunteer fireman, and he operates a garage door company with his wife, Sonja, who is also a children's minister, busy pastor's wife, and mom. Colton, now an active 11-year-old, has an older sister Cassie and a younger brother Colby. The family lives in Imperial, Nebraska. (*From the publisher.*)

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## Discussion Questions

1. Have you read other accounts of those who have experienced heaven? If so, how does Colton's experience compare?
2. 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?
3. 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?
4. Do Colton's descriptions of heaven fit your own conception of heaven? If so, how. If not, why not?
5. What do you make of Colton's description of Jesus's blues eyes as and that he was seated on a horse?
6. In what ways do Colton's reporting shift from a descriptive vision of heaven to a more prophetic one?
7. Talk about the scriptural parallels between Colton's descriptions and predictions of heaven.
8. How do you explain the great popularity of this book? Why are people are drawn to books about those who experience heaven? Why is the attraction so powerful? What are people seeking?
9. 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?
10. 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*?

**From:** <http://www.litlovers.com>

**Resources for additional information about book discussion choices and authors:**

**Books & Authors** (Access through links to MeL Databases on Library's webpage.)  
<http://bna.galegroup.com/bna/>

**LitLovers.com**  
[www.litlovers.com](http://www.litlovers.com)

**Overbooked.com**  
<http://www.overbooked.com>

**Penguin.com (USA)**  
<http://www.us.penguinroup.com/static/pages/bookclubs/index.html>

**Reading Group Center**  
<http://reading-group-center.knopfdoubleday.com>

**Reading Group Guides**  
<http://www.readinggroupguides.com>

**Suggested print resources:**

*The Book Club Companion: A Comprehensive Guide to the Reading Group Experience*  
Diana Loevy  
**374.22 Loevy 2006**

*The Book Group Book: A Thoughtful Guide to Forming and Enjoying a Stimulating Book Discussion Group*  
Ellen Slezak (editor)  
**374.22 Book 2000**

*Good Books Lately: The One-Stop Resource for Book Groups and Other Greedy Readers*  
Ellen Moore and Kira Stevens  
**374.22 Moore 2004**

*Read It and Eat: A Month-by-Month Guide to Scintillating Book Club Selections and Mouthwatering Menus*  
Sarah Gardner  
**028.9 Gardner 2005**

*The Reading Group Handbook: Everything You Need to Know, From Choosing Members to Leading Discussions*  
Rachel W. Jacobsohn  
**374.22 Jacobsohn 1994**

*What Do I Read Next?* (Multi-volume set, annual editions)  
Gale Research Inc.  
**R 016.813 What**