

## Will we recognize our loved ones in heaven?

The short answer is “Yes.” Bear in mind that this is assuming that our loved ones are in heaven. One gets to heaven by believing upon the Work and Person of Jesus Christ (John 3:16, 5:24, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4). We trust that God knows those who are His. Some people may come to Jesus Christ the moment they hear and understand the gospel. Others may accept Him as God and Savior on the sick bed. Here are the Scriptures to support our assertion.

1. 2 Samuel 12:23: “*But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*” David fully expected to see his baby in heaven, and expected to recognize him when he got there.
2. Matthew 8:11: “*And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.*” We will enjoy fellowship with Old Testament saints, and will recognize them, even though we never met them before.
3. Matthew 17:3-4: “*And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”* The disciples recognized these Old Testament saints in their glorified state at the Transfiguration.
4. Luke 16:22-24: “*So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. “Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’”* In this case, there was a recognition of Abraham and each other by all parties, even including the rich man, who was in torment.

5. John 20:16,19-20: *“Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher). Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you.” When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.”* The Risen Jesus was recognized by those who knew Him before His death and resurrection.
  
6. 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18: *“For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.”* The Thessalonians were concerned about “missing out on heaven” and thereby being permanently separated from their loved ones. Paul writes this to allay their fears and comfort them with hope. If there was no recognition in heaven, his statement would not make any sense.