

House
to
House



Heart
to
Heart

*A publication
of the...*
churches of
CHRIST

Founder: Christ – Mt. 16:18

Place: Jerusalem – Isa. 2:1-3, Acts 2:5

Time: A.D. 33 – Dan. 2:44, Acts 2

Head: Christ – Eph. 1:22

Organization:

Christ as head – Eph. 5:23

Elders oversee local church –
Heb. 13:17, Titus 1:5

Deacons as servants –
Acts 6:1-6, 1 Tim. 3:8-13

Members compose body –
Col. 1:2

Name (group):

Church of God – Eph. 3:15

Body of Christ – Eph. 1:22-23

Churches of Christ – Rm. 16:16

Bride of Christ – Rm. 7:4

Name (individuals):

Disciples – John 15:8

Saints – Rm. 1:7

Brethren – Lk. 8:21

Children of God – Gal. 4:26

Christian – Acts 11:25-26

Creed: Jesus/Bible – Acts 8:37

Rule of Faith & Practice:

Word of God – 2 Tim. 3:16-17

Worship: Jn. 4:24

Sing – Eph. 5:19

Pray – Acts 2:42; 1 Thes. 5:17

Teach – Acts 5:42

Communion – 1 Cor. 1:23-26

Contribute – 1 Cor. 16:1-2

Mission: Save Souls – 1 Tim. 4:16

Warning: Be Faithful – 2 John 9

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A Decent Devil?

Allen Webster



"It is notable that nearly all the poisonous fungi are scarlet or speckled and the wholesome ones brown or grey, as if to show us that things rising out of darkness and decay are always most deadly when they are well dressed." — Ruskin

Some people think that if you believe in the devil, you never really graduated from childhood. Or as one put it, "Belief in a personal Satan is part of mankind's nursery furniture." Others believe in a quasi-devil who is really not as bad as everybody makes him out to be.

He's pictured as a red-suited, pointed-horned, long-tailed, fun-loving cartoon character in Hollywood films and *Saturday Night Live* skits. The Bible, however, is not unclear about his existence or evil intentions. It should be enough to say that Jesus acknowledged Satan and talked often of him (e.g., Mt 25:41; Jn. 8:44). *Satan* is found in the Bible 55 times (19 times in the Old Testament; 36 in the New Testament). *Devil* is found 59 times (all in the NT). Analyzing these texts gives us much detail about our enemy.

NATURE: WHAT IS SATAN LIKE? He is a slanderer (Job 1:7,8; Psa. 109:6). *Devil* means "slanderer" or "accuser." He slandered Job, but take heart, God defended him. When Satan accuses us as Christians before God (or to ourselves), we should remember that Jesus defends us as our Advocate in heaven. A faithful Christian's case is in good hands (1 Jn. 2:1,2; Rm. 8:31-39; Rev. 12:10)!

He is a counterfeiter of God (Mt. 13:24-30,36-43; 2 Cor. 11:13-15). He seeks to confuse us, and one of the easiest ways is to duplicate—with significant but hard to notice changes—God's creations. In the parable of the tares, the enemy (Satan) sows tares (a poisonous plant that looks like wheat) among the farmer's wheat (God's world). Satan is in the religion business! He has counterfeit gods, counterfeit religions, counterfeit Bibles, counterfeit churches, and counterfeit preachers. He might prefer that we all become atheists, but he is content with us being idolaters or participants in false religions. The only way to determine the difference between the genuine and the fake is to shine the light of God's Word upon it in careful examination (1 Thes. 5:21; 1 Jn. 4:1).

He is a liar, deceiver, and murderer (Jn. 8:44). Since Eden, he has been lying to us, and since he introduced death into the world, he has (indirectly) brought it to every single person who has lived here, starting with Adam and Eve (except Enoch and Elijah and those living presently). Paul warned, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3).

He is the ruler of this world (Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 1 Jn. 5:19) and the god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4). He has more followers presently than God does (Mt. 7:13,14). In fact, the only times the "good guys" have outnumbered the "bad guys" were when Adam stepped into the Garden and when Noah stepped off the boat. Nonetheless, when God gets ready to enforce His will, Satan will bow as will the knee of his every devotee (Rev. 22:2,3; cf. Rm. 14:11; Phil. 2:10).

He is our adversary (1 Pet. 5:8,9). The word *Satan* means "adversary." Though we do not see him, he is there laying traps for us (2 Tim. 2:24). Paul explained, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:11,12).

He is a destroyer (Rev. 9:11; Abaddon means "destruction.") It is his goal to wreck every couple's marriage, every person's health, every mind's sanity, every heart's peace, every maiden's virtue, every friendship's bond, every good work's capability, every servant's ministry, every church's harmony, every sermon's effectiveness, and every soul's destiny.

WORKS: WHAT DOES SATAN DO?

- 1 **He deceives** (Gen. 3:1ff; Mt. 16:21-23; 2 Cor. 2:11; 11:3,14; 2 Thes. 2:9; Rev. 2:9). (Think.)
- 1 **He insinuates doubt** (Gen. 3:1). Does God really mean what He says? Surely not, Satan says. (Believe.)
- 1 **He snatches away God's Word** (Mt. 13:19; Mk. 4:15) **and turns men from the Truth** (1 Tim. 5:15). He often does this by misusing Scripture (Mt. 4:6). Whenever the Word is being preached, he is ready to turn our attention from it by the crying of a baby or the color of the preacher's tie. (Concentrate.)
- 1 **He traps** (1 Tim. 3:7). Paul speaks of his *snare (pagis)*, which is literally a "trap fastened by a noose or notch" (2 Tim. 2:26). Metaphorically, it refers to "a trick." An alcoholic is a classic example of one snared and held in one of his traps. (Watch.)
- 1 **He wants to control the mind** (1 Chron. 21:1ff; Acts 5:3). Books, magazines, radio, television, the Internet, and conversation are all used as tools. (Discern.)
- 1 **He attacks bodies.** He did Job's (2:4-7). Paul called his "thorn in the flesh" a "messenger of Satan to buffet me" (2 Cor. 12:7; cf. Mt. 17:5-18; Lk. 13:16; Acts 10:38). At least we may safely say that he uses normal body afflictions to tempt us. (Endure.)²
- 1 **He destroyed Job's possessions** (Job 1:13ff). He can at least use normal disasters to tempt us. (Trust.)
- 1 **He hinders our spiritual work** (1 Thes. 2:18, *hinder, egkopto*, "to cut into, impede, detain." Galatians 5:7 uses the root (*anakopto*) which means a "roadblock" (the KJV margin has "who did drive you back"). (Persevere.)
- 1 **He seeks to make you proud** (1 Tim. 3:6,7). (Resist.)
- 1 **He persecutes** (Rev. 2:10). God's people are soldiers on the battlefield, but sometimes they *are* the battlefield. He uses others to deliver his blows, but he is behind all evil (Mt. 16:23; Lk. 22:3; Acts 13:10). If we obey God's Word only during the good times (cf. Job 1:9-11; cf. Mt. 4:8-10), then our faith is shallow (Mt. 7:24-27; 13:20,21). Faith that cannot be tested cannot be trusted (Jas. 1:1-8; 1 Pet. 1:3-9). (Withstand.)
- 1 **When we sin, he accuses and discourages you** (2 Cor. 2:6-11). Satan never gives up (Lk. 4:13). (Go on.)

In an ancient legend Satan summoned his top three aides to a planning session. One lieutenant, Rancor, said, "Let's convince them there is no God." Satan sneered, "That won't work. They know there is a God." Another aide, Bitterness, spoke up. "We'll convince them God does not really care about right or wrong." Satan toyed with the notion, but rejected it because he knew that too many already know He does care. Malice came with his idea. "We'll let them think there is a God and that He cares about right and wrong. But we will keep whispering 'there is no hurry, there is no hurry.'" Satan howled with glee and promoted Malice.

Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels, but people who reject Christ and believe Satan's lies will suffer there with him (Mt. 25:41; Rev. 20:11-15). Do *you* need to make preparation to avoid spending time with the devil? God requires faith, repentance, confession, and baptism (Acts 8:35-40). One must remain faithful to Christ in order to avoid returning to the devil's ways (2 Pet. 2:20-22; Rev. 2:10).

A decent devil? Hardly.

¹ Isaiah 45:7 (KJV) says that God creates evil, but means that He brings adversity on His people to test them (*evil ra'*, adversity, affliction, bad, calamity, sorrow, trouble).

² Interestingly, Satan disputed with Michael over Moses' body (Jude 9). What he wanted with it we cannot tell, but we can be assured that it was not just to give it a decent burial!

THINK ON GOOD THINGS

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

Hell's Good Points

Some say if you look close enough, you can find good in everything. If there is some good in everything, there must be some good in hell. Some people dislike certain spiritual things, and may be happy to learn that they will be absent in hell. This should ease their minds a little while they wait.

NO MORE PREACHING. In hell, there will be no long, irritating sermons. Preaching makes hell-bound people nervous. At every assembly, the preacher seems to be preaching right at them. All reproving, rebuking, and exhorting (2 Tim. 4:1-5) will be over in hell. There may be plenty of preachers there—the wrong kind—but they will not preach. There are no sermons in hell.

NO MORE CHURCH WORKERS. There will be no church workers in hell—you know, those people who bothered you with cards, letters, religious material, phone calls, and visits. They've "plagued" the world ever since the first century when they went everywhere "bothering" people (Acts 8:4). You told them you would visit "sometime" and maybe become a Christian "someday." You will not have to get up out of your seat and open the door for them anymore in hell. They will be gone "somewhere else" for good.

NO INTERFERENCE WITH YOUR LIFESTYLE. In hell no one will tell you how to live your life. No one will mention "sin." There will be no more calls to holiness by those "do-gooders" who thought they were better than you. You were right about being just as good as those hypocrites, too, by the way. You might notice they are there, too.

NO MORE INVITATIONS. There will be no more invitations to obey the Gospel and get your life right with God. Remember how you hated those invitations? Talk about pressure! It was hard, but you resisted every one of them. There were family appeals, especially from your wife or husband who never gave up. They even prayed for you at the church building, but you did not yield.

If you doubt you want these benefits, why not make some preparation to go to the other place. To be saved from sin one must believe in Jesus (Jn. 3:16), repent of sins (Lk. 13:3), confess Christ (Rm. 10:9,10), and be baptized for remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

—adapted from Roger Jackson

"...As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" —Ezekiel 33:11



THE BIRD CAGE



I May Have to Miss Your Sermon

One preacher announced that the next Sunday he would preach on heaven. That week he received a letter in the mail. It stated:

Next Sunday you are going to talk about heaven. I am interested in that place because I have had a clear title to a bit of property there for about 50 years. I am not holding it for speculation. It is not a vacant lot. For more than half a century, I have been sending materials up to the greatest Architect of the universe, who has been building a house for me which will never need remodeling or repairing because it will suit me and never grow old. Termites can never undermine its foundation, for it rests upon the rock of ages. Fire cannot destroy it; floods cannot wash it away. No lock or bolts will ever be placed upon the doors. No vicious person can enter the land where my dwelling stands.

It is almost complete and ready for me to enter in and abide in peace eternally without fear of being rejected. There is a valley of deep shadow between this place where I live and to which I shall journey in a very short time. I cannot reach my home in that city without passing through this valley, but I am not afraid because the best friend I ever had passed through the same valley long, long ago and drove away the gloom.

He has stuck with me through thick and thin since we first became acquainted 55 years ago. I have His promise in printed form never to forsake me or leave me alone. He will be with me as I walk through the valley of shadow, and I shall not lose my way when He is with me. I hope to hear your sermon on heaven next Sunday, but I have no assurance I shall be able to do so. My ticket to heaven has no date marked for the journey—no return coupon and no permit for baggage. Yes, I am ready to go, and I may not be here while you are talking next Sunday evening. But I will meet you in heaven.

Someone else said, "You're going to be dead a whole lot longer than you're going to be alive." Since this fact is true, to which side of the grave are we giving greater attention and energy?

"To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you..." —1 Peter 1:4

Pancho



Pancho was a well-known outlaw to Texans. A lesser-known story involves his near demise in a Mexican bar. A tough Texas Ranger had trailed him through the desert and caught up with Pancho in a small village. With both guns drawn, the ranger approached the criminal and ordered him to turn over the one million dollars he had recently robbed from a train. From the other side of the bar a small man said, "Señor, Pancho does not speak English. I am his translator." The ranger growled, "Tell Pancho I came to get the million dollars he robbed from the train. If he doesn't hand over the money, I'll fill him full of holes." The man translated. Frightened, Pancho told the interpreter the money was two miles outside of town buried thirty paces east of an old abandoned well. The translator turned to the armed ranger and said, "Pancho says, 'I'm not telling—go ahead and shoot.'"

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine..." —Prov. 17:22





The
HOMIE
PAGE

by Chuck Webster

Do Without Daddy?

Robert R. Taylor, Jr., in a book, *Christ in the Home*, relates the following story: "A few years ago I was getting ready to leave for a Gospel meeting. So many last-minute things had to be attended to in order that the local work might go on in my absence. Several things also needed to be taken care of at home. A long drive lay ahead for that Saturday afternoon and evening. My son was playing in the yard and was having trouble with one of his toys. He asked for help. My first reaction was to say, 'Son, I have so much to do and so little time in which to get it done. Can't that wait? Can't you fix it yourself?' Fortunately these thoughts were not translated into actual words, and I took time to help him with the problem. When I finished he said, 'Daddy, I don't know what I would do without you.'"

"...as a father pitieth his children..."

—Psalm 103:13

Thoroughbred or Nag?

Many marriage partners become frustrated with the way their spouse has turned out. One husband approached Dr. Howard Hendricks with a list of gripes about his wife. Hendricks "consoled" the guy with his Columbo-type tactics. He told the man he was surprised that a man of his intelligence would marry a woman with so many blatant faults. The man quickly defended his prenuptial decision by declaring, "She wasn't that way when I married her!" Hendricks retorted, "Then I guess it means you made her that way." The fault we often pin on our spouse can frequently be—at least partially—ours. As one old cowboy put it, "A man who treats his wife like a thoroughbred will never end up with an old nag." — *Panorama of Parenting*

"Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them" —Colossians 3:19

After working months with a fighting couple, the marriage counselor saw a ray of hope when the wife addressed her husband as "Hon." "There's still hope for this marriage if you can call him 'Hon,'" the skilled counselor pointed out. "Huh! I've been calling him that for years," said the wife. "Attila the Hun."

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine..." — Prov. 17:22

101,388 Hours

From the time children are born until they reach age 18, they are awake 118,260 hours (allowing eight hours for sleep a night). Out of that 118,000 hours, approximately 15,000 hours are spent in public school, and—if they never missed a Sunday or Wednesday church class—in their lives, 1,872 hours are spent in Bible classes. That leaves 101,388 waking hours that they are under parental supervision. Mothers and fathers, if our children go wrong, we cannot lay the greatest blame on public school teachers, church officers, or Bible teachers. School had them only 12% of the time; Bible teachers had them only 1.5% of the time, but we as parents have them 85% of the time. We have the greatest opportunity, the first duty, and the most responsibility. We cannot shift their care to school, daycare, Bible School, grandparents, or any other place.

How are we using those 101,388 hours? The average American child spends more than 24,000 hours in front of a TV by age 18—more than all hours in school and Bible class combined. (Of the parent's 85%, TV has 20%). Is this where we want our children to learn about life? Are the morals and ethics it interweaves into plots what we want for our offspring? Someone has said, "The most dangerous thing in most houses is the remote control." Let's turn it off and make some memories and take some pictures! Let's take time to talk to our children, teach them to love good books, take them places and let them face new experiences under our watchful eye, catch fish and fly balls, learn to mow grass and skip rocks, laugh and cry together, eat snow cones and ballpark hotdogs, go on church trips and to youth days, and a thousand other things during the precious—and fleeting—hours God gives us with our children.

"...father...seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life..." —Genesis 44:30

"I'm Afraid They Won't Take Baths"

Sometimes a parent will say, "I don't want to make my children go to Bible class or church services." Why not? "Because I am afraid if I do, when they grow up they may rebel against it, and won't go to church or read the Bible anymore."

It's funny how we get ideas about religious things we would think silly if applied to other areas. We might ask this parent, "Do you make them go to public school?" "Oh yes!," they would reply. Why? "It's good for them and they need an education." Do we not think Bible study is good for them? Do we not think they need a spiritual education? Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important. They can use these skills as long as they live, but the instruction they get from the Bible they will be eternally helpful.

What would you think of a person who said, "I'm not going to force my children to study geography because they may never look at a map again as long as they live." Or, "I'm not going to make my child go to math class because he hates math and if I make him go he'll probably never balance his checkbook or make any investments." Do we use this reasoning when talking about taking a bath? Do we say, "I'm not going to make my children bathe because if I make them take baths when they are little, when they grow up they may rebel against it and not ever take another bath as long as they live." Think about it—and bring your children Sunday!

"...a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" —Proverbs 29:15

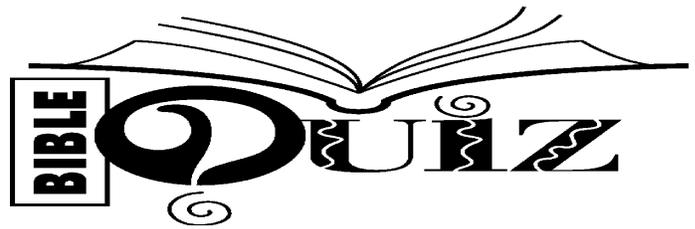
S-M-I-L-E

] My eight-year-old son, Noah, was discussing parent problems with his little friend. Of course, they had a lot of complaints. Dustin was overheard grumbling, "First they teach you to talk, then they teach you to walk, and as soon as you do it, it's 'Sit down and shut up!'"

] A cartoon in *Forbes* magazine shows a modern father talking with his young boy, giving him some fatherly perspective: "Remember, Son, these are your tax-free years. Make the most of them."

] A person with six children is better satisfied than a person with \$6 million. Reason: The man with \$6 million wants more.





Free Gift of God

In his Letter to the Romans, Paul declared that “the free *gift* of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (6:23). Similarly, the apostle wrote: “For by grace have you been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the *gift* of God...” (Eph. 2:8).

Many focus upon the term “gift” in these verses and conclude that redemption must be wholly dependent upon God, and that man is without responsibility in the matter of his salvation. What they fail to realize, of course, is the fact that a “gift” can be *conditional*, without there being any meritorious effort on the part of the recipient. Consider the following passages:

-] Jehovah promised to give the city of Jericho to ancient Israel (Jos. 6:1ff). Observe the use of the verb “given” in Joshua 6:2,16. Clearly, however, they did not receive the victory until *after* they had completed their obedience to the divine instructions for *taking* the city (6:20; cf. Heb. 11:30).
-] In a perilous voyage, when Paul and his shipmates were about to give up hope, an angel told Paul: “Fear not, Paul; you must stand before Caesar: and lo, God has *granted* [given] you all them that sail with you” (Acts 27:24). Yet, this gift was not unconditional, for Paul warned the soldiers, “*Except* these abide in the ship, you cannot be saved” (27:31). Though salvation is God’s gift, “Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). Obedience to the Gospel is essential for salvation.
-] Jesus taught that we are not to work primarily for the bread which perishes; rather we are to work “for the food which abides unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall *give* unto you” (Jn. 6:27). This context makes it clear that working the works of God (i.e., obeying His will), and receiving His gift of salvation, are not mutually exclusive propositions. They complement one another. Christ is the author of eternal salvation to those who *obey* Him (See Hebrews 5:9).

—Notes From *The Margin On My Bible*, Wayne Jackson

How Did He Know That?

Concerning the city of Tyre, at least six specific predictions were recorded in Ezekiel 26: (1) King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon would destroy the city (26:7-8); (2) Many nations would come against Tyre (26:3); (3) The city would be leveled and scraped clean—like a bare rock (26:4); (4) The city’s stones, timber, and soil would be cast into the sea (26:12); (5) The area would become a place for the spreading of nets (26:5); and (6) The city would never be rebuilt (26:14).

Each of these items came to pass exactly as Ezekiel said. Tyre, a coastal city of ancient times, had an island about one-half mile offshore. Within a few years of Ezekiel, Nebuchadnezzar besieged the mainland city (586 B.C.). When he finally defeated Tyre thirteen years later, the city was deserted—most inhabitants had moved to the island. Things remained that way for 241 years. Then in 332 B.C., Alexander the Great took the island city. This was accomplished by scraping clean the mainland city of its debris, and using those materials to build a land-bridge to the island. The city still stood, however. Tyre persisted for the next 1,600 years. Finally, in A.D. 1291, the Muslims thoroughly crushed Tyre, and the city has remained in ruins ever since. Aside from a small fishing community, nothing is left.

How can we account for Ezekiel’s precision? How could he look almost 1,900 years into the future and predict that Tyre would be a bald rock where fishermen would spread their nets? God must have told him!

—Brad T. Bromling

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____

Children in the Bible

Hints (in order): Jd. 8:30; Gen. 4:1; 9:18-24; 1 Sam. 17:12-14; Gen. 41:51-52; 4:25; 25:23-26; Jn. 11:16; Gen. 35:16-18; Lk. 15:11-32; 2 Kgs. 10:1; 2 Sam. 23:1; Ex. 7:7; Gen. 35:16-18; 25:25-26; 2 Chron. 11:21; 1 Chron. 25:5; Isa. 11:6; Job 1:5; Eph. 6:1; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14,15; Jd. 10:3-4; 1 Tim. 3:4; Mk. 13:12.

1. What judge had 70 sons? _____
2. Who is the first child mentioned in the Bible? _____
3. Who was Noah’s youngest son? _____
4. What king was the youngest of eight brothers? _____
5. Who was Joseph’s younger son? _____
6. Who is Adam’s youngest son mentioned by name? _____
7. Who were the first twins mentioned in the Bible? _____
8. Which disciple was probably a twin? (Hint: Didymus means “double.”) _____
9. Who died giving birth to Benjamin? _____
10. Was the prodigal son the older or younger son? _____
11. What wicked king of Israel had 70 sons? _____
12. Whose son was the “sweet singer of Israel?” _____
13. Who was older, Moses or Aaron? _____
14. Who was Jacob’s youngest son? _____
15. Who was born first, Jacob or Esau? _____
16. What king of Judah had 28 sons and 60 daughters? _____
17. What prophet had 14 sons and 3 daughters? _____
18. What prophet spoke figuratively of Jesus’ kingdom as a peaceful time when a child would lead wild beasts? _____
19. Who made sacrifices in case his children had sinned? _____
20. Which epistle advises, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord?” _____
21. What child did Lois and Eunice teach? _____
22. What little-known judge of Israel had 30 sons? _____
23. Who did Paul advise that a bishop (elder/pastor) must be able to control his own children? _____
24. Who predicted that children would sometimes turn against parents in times of persecution? _____

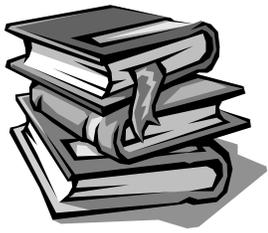
Which Church...

Hints (in order): Phil. 2:25; Acts 18:8; Acts 13:2; 16:9

1. Had Epaphroditus as a minister? _____
2. Had Crispus, former synagogue leader, as a member? _____
3. Was meeting when Paul and Barnabas were set apart by the Holy Spirit to do missionary work? _____
4. Where Paul received a vision asking him to found churches in Europe? _____

Answers to last month’s questions: *The Very Devil?* 1. The archangel Michael (Jude 9); 2. A roaring lion (1 Pet. 5:8); 3. 2 Corinthians 4:4; 4. A lake of fire / brimstone; (Rev. 20:10); 5. Satan (Jn. 14:30; 16:11); 6. Lies (Jn. 8:44); 7. Satan snatches it from the heart (Mt. 13:19); 8. A murderer (Jn. 8:44); 9. Disobedience (Eph. 2:2); 10. Matthew 12:24; 11. Gave loud scream (Mk. 1:23-26); 12. Paul (2 Cor. 6:15); 13. Lightning (Lk. 10:18); 14. David (1 Chron. 21:1); 15. Judas Iscariot (Lk. 22:3-4); 16. Peter (Lk. 22:31); 17. Ananias (Acts 5:3); 18. Sceva (Acts 19:16); 19. Saul (1 Sam. 16:14-23); 20. Throwing him into fire or water and making him foam at mouth (Mk. 9:17-29). *List the Three...* 1. Cain, Abel, Seth (Gen. 4:1,2,25); 2. Ham, Shem, Japheth (Gen. 5:32); 3. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Deut. 1:8); 4. Saul, David, Solomon (2 Sam. 2:4+1 Kgs. 1:43); 5. Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego (Dan. 3:13); 6. Peter, James, John (Mt. 17:1,2)

Send your answers in for an opportunity to win a new Bible, New Testament cassettes, or Bible Dictionary. We’ll grade and return all entries.



Recommended Reading on Church History

The New Testament is divided into four sections, 260 chapters, and 7,959 verses. The four sections are: Biography, History, Letters, and Prophecy. There are four biography books about Jesus' life (Matthew-John), one book on church history (Acts), twenty-one letters to churches and Christians (Romans – Jude), and one book of prophecy (Revelation). (The sequence is easy to remember: 4-1-21-1.) Christ is the central theme of every section, and every book, of the New Testament (cf. Heb. 10:7). In this issue, we want to focus on the background of the church history book of the New Testament—Acts of Apostles.

ACTS OF APOSTLES—HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST (28 chapters / 1007 verses)

The Book of Acts proposes to show the continuation “of all that Jesus began both to do and teach” (1:1). It contains the acts Jesus carried out after His ascension, through the Holy Spirit and His apostles, in establishing the church and saving lost souls. The Book provides a condensed history of the early church, an eyewitness account of the miraculous spread of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome. In the Book, one can follow the church’s growth from its birth to maturity. It grew from a small group in one city, to thousands in all the major cities of the Roman empire. The most important lesson to be learned in this book is how to become a part of the same church today. If we do what they did, we will become what they became (Christians, nothing more, nothing less). In Acts, they heard the preaching of the Word (Acts 2:36,37), believed in the Christ as God’s Son (Acts 8:37), repented of past sins (Acts 2:38), confessed Christ (Acts 8:37), and were immersed for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). In Acts, becoming a part of the church was equal to being saved from sin since God placed the saved in the church (2:47).

The author the Spirit used for the book is Luke. Called “the beloved physician” by Paul (see Col. 4:14), Luke was a doctor Paul met in Troas (16:8–11). He cared for Paul during the illnesses he suffered on his missionary endeavors. Paul’s references to Luke in 2 Timothy 4:11 and Philemon 24 portray Luke as Paul’s faithful traveling companion. The key verse in the book is 1:8, showing the threefold geographic description of the spread of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome. Acts is called the “Acts of the Apostles,” yet Luke traces only the work of Peter (chs. 1–12) and Paul (chs. 13–28).

Keys to Opening the Book of Acts:

Author: Luke

Key Verses: 1:8; 2:1-4,38,41,47

Key Chapter: 2

Date: About A.D. 62

Themes: The Early History of Christianity, the Growth of the Church, How to be Saved from Sin.

Key Words: Jesus, Spirit, Resurrection, Apostle, Church, Baptism

Take time this month to read the Book of Acts. If it would help, we have a study guide we will send you free of charge.



HOW MAY WE HELP YOU?

(CLIP AND MAIL TO THE ADDRESS ON THE BACK)

- YES!** I want to learn more about Jesus and the Bible. Please enroll me in the “Survey of the Bible” Study Course.
- I am interested in seeing the “Visualized Bible Study” Video Series.
- I would like a daily schedule for reading the entire Bible in a year.
- I would like to receive your weekly newsletter/bulletin.
- I would like to learn more about your Bible school.
- I would like a ride to Bible classes and/or worship services.
- I would like to learn more about your programs for: children/teens/college/singles/young couples/adults/seniors (circle one/more).
- I have a prayer request: _____
- I am interested in learning more about what God requires of me to be saved. Please have someone schedule a personal visit with me.

Name: _____ Address: _____
Phone: _____

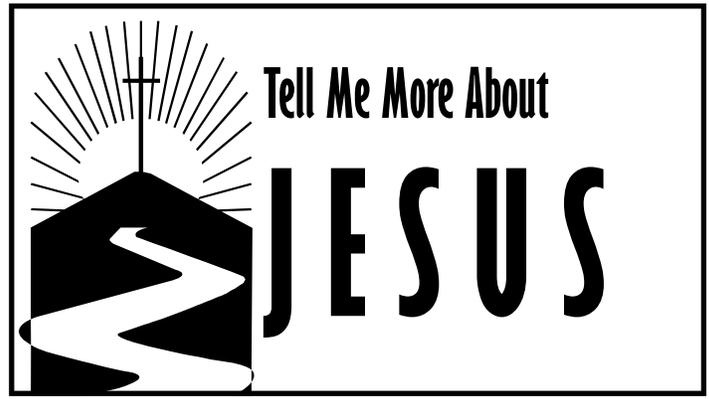
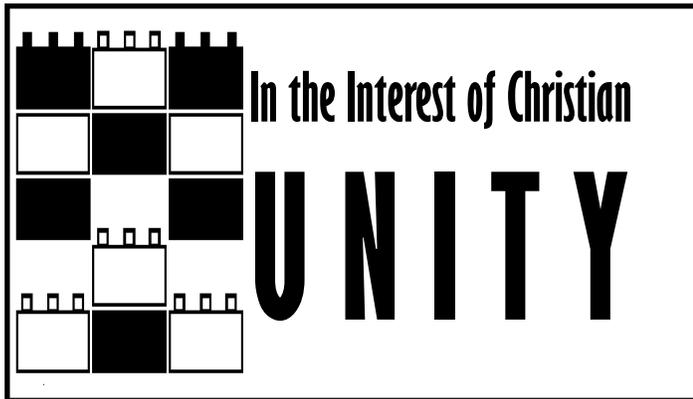
Featured Materials:

- Check the Bible subjects you want to study further (free):*
- This month’s packet (new booklet plus all below)
 - HTH Booklet: Wait Till the Honeymoon?
 - HTH Booklet: Shall We Gather at the River?
 - Fellowship of Love yWhat Did I Do to Deserve This?
 - The Godhead: One or Three? ySpecial Scriptures
 - A Great Return to the Bible yFamily Living
 - The Indwelling of the Spirit yRepentance
 - The Great High Priest yWhy Believe in Jesus?
 - Hope in Christianity yQue es la Iglesia de Cristo
 - Instrumental Music yCan God Really Forgive Me?
 - Have You Been Reading the Apostles Mail?
 - God’s Way of Salvation yWhat Color are Christians?
 - Restoring the Spirit of Christianity
 - But the Bible Doesn’t Say Its Wrong
 - Is Christianity a Cult? yOther: _____
 - Back issues of *House to House/Heart to Heart*

Please send me the NEWEST HTH Booklet: Full color, readable, interesting, and FREE!

Excellence (How to Have a Truly Successful Life)

~ As always, all materials / services are provided absolutely FREE as a ministry of the church! ~



Explaining More about the church of Christ...



You may have had the experience of attending some public gathering for the first time not knowing what to expect. This can be awkward and unnerving. This is one reason some are reluctant to attend the services of a church with which they are unfamiliar. This is understandable since some religious services have some very “out of the ordinary” activities. What about the church of Christ?

What is done in its worship assemblies? When we assemble each Sunday (the Lord’s day, Rev. 1:10), we simply try to recreate the worship services of the New Testament church in a modern age. We participate in the five acts of worship described in the New Testament.

- ◆ **Prayer**—There is an emphasis upon prayer in our assemblies. At the beginning, those who are sick and other prayer requests are made known. There will generally be four or five short prayers—one to open and close the assembly, and prayers of thanks during the Lord’s Supper and for financial resources which allow us to give. One man of the congregation leads each prayer (as Paul directed in 1 Timothy 2:1-8) and speaks clearly so each can hear.
- ◆ **Singing**—The entire congregation (not a group or choir) joins together in praising God in song (as required in Ephesians 5:19). There are usually about five songs during a service. A songbook is available to each and time given to find the song before it starts. All singing is a cappella. Many first-time visitors comment that they were most impressed (and most enjoyed) the song service.
- ◆ **Communion**—As was the practice of the New Testament church (Acts 20:7), the church of Christ partakes of the Lord’s Supper each Sunday. This consists of unleavened bread representing the sacrifice of Christ’s body and grapejuice (fruit of the vine) which reminds each of His shed blood (Mt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:23-28).
- ◆ **Teaching**—Just as on Pentecost, the day the church began (Acts 2:42), the assembly is instructed in God’s Word. No creeds are recited or personal opinions bound on the congregation. The preacher’s sermon is based carefully upon the Scriptures and is made relevant to people living today by thoughtful application and illustration. Each is invited to look up verses mentioned and write down points for further study at home. The preacher welcomes questions regarding anything preached after the service is over.
- ◆ **Giving**—The Lord’s work is financially supported, not by fund drives, requests from non-members, or special sales, but by the contribution of each Christian on the Lord’s day (1 Cor. 16:2). Visitors are not expected to give.

The entire service lasts about an hour. Visitors are welcomed warmly and are invited to participate as they feel comfortable, but may simply sit and observe if they so desire. They are not singled out, made to feel uncomfortable, or expected to stand and give any “testimony.”

The Christians who compose the church of Christ extend to you a warm welcome to attend worship services this Sunday. We think you’ll be impressed with worship conducted the way it was in the days of the apostles.

Who Crucified Jesus?

One of the Rembrandt’s most famous paintings is entitled, *The Three Crosses*. When one looks at it, he is immediately drawn to the center cross on which Jesus died. As one looks further at the crowd gathered around the foot of the cross, he is impressed by the facial expressions that depict so clearly the attitudes of the people involved in that awful crime of crucifying the Son of God.

It would be easy to miss the character in the lower edge of the painting almost hidden in the shadows. According to most critics, that figure is Rembrandt’s representation of himself. He recognized that by his sins, he helped nail Jesus to the cross.

It is easy to blame the Jewish leaders or Pilate or the Roman soldiers or the crowd who cried, “Crucify him.” It is simple to say that Christ died for the sins of the world. It is quite another to say that Christ died for *my* sins. It may make us feel better to point the finger at those who put Jesus on the cross, but it is a shocking thought that we can be as indifferent as Pilate, as scheming as Caiaphas, as callused as the soldiers, as ruthless as the mob, and as cowardly as the disciples. It isn’t just what they did—it was who nailed Him to the tree. I crucified God’s Son. I joined the mockery. I failed to register my objection. “...seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame” —Hebrews 6:6

Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?

Jesus was forsaken by the Father that we might never be forsaken. He went through darkness that we might have light. He experienced isolation and loneliness that we might never be left alone. If we reject Him, though, we will be in the place of eternal loneliness, eternal isolation (2 Thes. 1:9) On Judgment Day, Jesus will say, “Depart from me” to the unprepared (Mt. 25:41). No lost sinner in hell can ever ask, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” because they know why they are there (Mt. 23:37).

Jesus Left

His **purse** to Judas



His **clothes** to the soldiers
 His **body** to Joseph of Arimathea
 His **mother** to John
 His **peace** to His disciples
 His **supper** to His followers
 His **Gospel** to the world
 His **presence** with God’s children
 And a **crown** for me

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness...” —2 Timothy 4:8

Jesus Took After His Father—and His Mother