



HOUSE to HOUSE
HEART to HEART

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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 27 NUMBER 4



ABOUNDING GRACE

Allen Webster



Watch on youtube:

The hungry prodigal knew his rich father would not go to bed without supper that night. He *would*. The more he thought about it, it dawned on him that nobody on his father’s farm would fall asleep with a growling stomach. He *would*. Even his father’s servants had “bread enough and to spare” (Luke 15:17). He *did not*.

Since the father in the parable represents the Father in Heaven, we can draw some interesting conclusions from the phrase, “bread enough and to spare.”

God has never been stingy with His blessings. He “gives to all liberally and without reproach” (James 1:5; cf. 1:17).

Take bread, for instance. When Israel’s children needed some in the wilderness, they had all the manna they needed: “Let every man take for those who are in his tent” (Exodus 16:16). When a widow shared what she thought was her last meal with Elijah, God refilled her meal barrel and—no matter how much she

dipped out—it stayed full until the famine ended (1 Kings 17:15–16). When Jesus fed the 5,000, the famished people ate all they wanted and still had twelve baskets of leftovers (Matthew 14:20). When He opened His buffet to 4,000 another day, they too ate their fill and had seven baskets extra (Matthew 15:37).¹

When we think of man and see the magnitude of his sin, we can hardly understand how a single sinner can be saved; but when we think of God, and see the magnitude of His love, we can hardly see how a single one could be lost.

Have you considered how much God loved sinners? He “did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all” (Romans 8:32). He withholds no good thing from those who walk uprightly (Psalm 84:11).

What can we count on when we return to the Father from the far country? After all these years, is there still bread enough on God’s table of grace?

Isaiah issued this invitation twenty-seven centuries ago: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:7).

God offers abundant grace (2 Corinthians 4:15) and abundant mercy (1 Peter 1:3; Titus 3:5–6), yea, exceedingly abundant (1 Timothy 1:14). He is able to save to the uttermost those who come to Him (Hebrews 7:25). Peter said, “An entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom” (2 Peter 1:11). Paul concluded, “Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more”² (Romans 5:20).

Let us put this abundant grace to the test in a real world of really bad sinners. Did God live up to His promises?

The **publicans and sinners** were acknowledged as notorious transgressors of God’s Law. Yet when they came to Jesus, they always found grace enough and to spare (Luke 15:1–2). More than any other group, they satiated themselves with the Bread of Life (John 8:12; cf. Matthew 9:10–11; 11:19; Mark 2:15–16; Luke 5:30; 7:34).

Take the cases of the **sinful woman** whose reputation (quite literally) followed her (Luke 7:36–50) and **the woman who got caught in bed** with someone not her husband (John 8:1–11). Would grace cover such scandal? Yes! Both found that Jesus had grace enough to cover their fleshly—but forsaken—sins.

What about a **disappointment**—one of the inner circle who forsook the Lord with his eyes open, even after he had been warned? (Matthew 26:34). Peter was all these—he denied his Master three times the night the Friend of Sinners most needed a friend. He cursed and swore that he did not even know the Man (Matthew 26:72). Could grace cover such a high-handed misdemeanor? Yes, Jesus forgave Peter. But surely, he was on probation—counted second-rate, damaged goods. No, less than two months later, Jesus tapped him to be the keynote speaker at the greatest revival of all time (Acts 2). He featured him as the key character of the first half of Acts of the Apostles, used him to write two books, and placed him as an elder in a congregation (1 Peter 5:1–2).

Those on **whose hands God saw crimson stains** that matched His Son’s blood-type were told, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). About three thousand washed their hands in the fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel’s veins³ that day (2:41; Zechariah 13:1). Many others took Him up on His offer in coming weeks (Acts 2:47). It would be hard to imagine a case today that would equal that of the Pentecost sinners who had crucified the Son of God.

What about **moral delinquents**? Perverts, swindlers, and drunks are unwelcome at the Father’s banquet, right? Again, we find they are welcome—pro-

vided they are penitent. Paul wrote of some who had been fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, homosexuals, sodomites, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners (1 Corinthians 6:9–10). By God’s grace, they had been washed, sanctified, and justified (6:11).

No one has ever left God’s table still needing a snack of grace. Is your case a difficult one? Have your sins been shocking and frequent? Consider the One who made the earth, stretched out the heavens like a tent, has no bound to His strength, nor limit to His might.³ In six thousand years of history, He has never failed at anything—will His first failure be saving you? Will you prove too strong for omnipotence, boggle the mind of omniscience, or be unlovable for omni-benevolence? If He made you (Genesis 1:27), He can remake you (2 Corinthians 5:17). If He claims you (2 Corinthians 6:18), He can cleanse you (Acts 22:16). “His hand is not shortened, that it cannot save” (Isaiah 59:1).

Endnotes:

¹ Since Jesus knew all things, could He not have prepared just enough? Perhaps these nineteen baskets are in the Bible just to show us that God always gives extra.

² There is a beautiful play on words that is not seen in the translation. The first word “abound” (*pleonazo*) means “be more, increase.” The second “abound” is a different word (*hyperperisseuo*). It is a compound word made up of *hyper*, “over, above, beyond,” and *perisseuo*, “to superabound, be in excess.” Thus this word is an intensified hyperbole carrying the meaning, “to be beyond excess.”

³ William Cowper (1772). *The Hymns of Cowper. The Gospel Magazine, and Theological Review. New Series.* 2 (18): 312. June 1, 1867.

⁴ Charles H. Spurgeon, *Miracles and Parables of Our Lord.*



What TIME Is It?

A few years ago, there was a commercial that asked, "It is 10 o'clock; do you know where your children are?"

This commercial has always seemed to stick in my mind. I could not tell you what was being advertised, but I can tell you that it has a real application in lives today. For many today, the time in their lives is 10 o'clock, and soon their souls will be required. Perhaps we are nearing 10 o'clock. Do we know where we are?

The lifespan of a person is around 74 years. This fluctuates depending upon location or vocation. Moses wrote about the brevity of life: "It is soon cut off, and we fly away" (Psalm 90:10).

Man at best will not be here long, and truthfully, he is not guaranteed a moment. The clock may stop at any time. I can name a few friends who have passed before they really had a chance to begin to live. Some, unfortunately, had not made preparation for the life after this one and will be lost. So will we if we lay not up treasures in heaven.

Perhaps we think that we will live long enough to make things right. That is a great risk. The time to be saved is now

for each one of us. Someone has made a mathematical parallel of the lifespan with a 24-hour day. It is as follows; see what time it is in your life.

If you are 15 years old, it is 8:51 a.m.
If you are 20 years old, it is 11:08 a.m.
If you are 25 years old, it is 12:25 p.m.
If you are 30 years old, it is 1:25 p.m.
If you are 35 years old, it is 2:59 p.m.
If you are 40 years old, it is 4:16 p.m.
If you are 45 years old, it is 5:43 p.m.
If you are 50 years old, it is 6:50 p.m.
If you are 55 years old, it is 8:08 p.m.
If you are 60 years old, it is 10:00 p.m.
If you are 70 years old, it is *midnight*.

While we are not all 60 years old, I will repeat the earlier question. "It's 10 o'clock; do you know where you are?"

How many people have wondered where the time went? James 4:14 shows the brevity of life, "Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for little time and then vanishes away." It is my hope that you will make the most of today and look to God for salvation. —Daniel F. Cates



Parting with Tradition

Bayer Corporation stopped putting cotton wads in Genuine Bayer bottles. The company realized the aspirin would hold up fine without the maddening white clumps, which it had included since about 1914. "We concluded there really wasn't any reason to keep the cotton except tradition," said Chris Allen, Bayer's vice president of technical operations. "Besides, it's hard to take out." Longstanding traditions in the church often create more hardship than help.

—Citation: Ed Rowell, from the *Tennessean* (9-12-99)

"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ."

COLOSSIANS 2:8

Why People Go to Church

Some go to church to laugh and talk.
Some go there to smirk and balk.
Some go there to meet a friend.
Some go with time to spend.
Some go there to meet a bride.
Some go there a fault to hide.
Some go there for speculation.
Some go there for observation.
Some go there to doze and nod.
The wise go there to worship God.

"Worship God."

REVELATION 22:9

God's Plan for Saving Man

Divine Love: John 3:16
God's Grace: Ephesians 2:8
Christ's Blood: Romans 5:9
Holy Spirit's Word: Romans 1:16
Sinner's Faith: Acts 16:31
Sinner's Repentance: Luke 13:3
Sinner's Confession: Romans 10:10
Sinner's Baptism: Acts 22:16
Christian's Love: Matthew 22:37
Christian's Work: James 2:24
Christian's Hope: Romans 8:24
Christian's Endurance: Revelation 2:10



Fireflies

Two boys from the city were on a camping trip. Mosquitoes were so fierce the boys hid under their blankets to keep from being bitten. Then one of them saw some lightning bugs and said, "We might as well give up; they are coming at us with flashlights!"

"A merry heart does good."

PROVERBS 17:22



Just Trying to Help ...

A preacher was walking down the street when he noticed a small boy trying to reach a doorbell on a house across the street. The doorbell was too high for him to reach. The preacher walked across the street and, placing his hand kindly on the child's shoulder, leaned over and gave the doorbell a solid ring. Crouching down, the minister smiled and asked, "And now what, my little man?" The boy replied, "Now we run!"

"Rejoice always."

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16



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BEFORE WE JUDGE OTHERS



Heavenly Father,

Help us remember that the woman who cut us off in traffic last night is a single mother who worked nine hours that day and was rushing home to cook dinner, help with homework, do laundry, and spend precious time with her children.

Help us to remember that the pierced, tattooed, disinterested young man who cannot make change correctly is a worried 19-year-old college student, sweating his final exams that determine if he gets student loans next semester.

Remind us, Lord, that the scary looking man begging for money in the same spot every day (who really ought to get a job) is a slave to addictions that we can only imagine in our worst nightmares.

Help us to remember that the old couple walking annoyingly slow down the store aisle and blocking our progress are savoring the moments, knowing that, based on the cancer report she got back last week, this will be the last year that they go shopping together.

Heavenly Father, remind us each day that, of all the gifts you give us, the greatest gift is love. It is not enough to share that love with those we hold dear. Open our hearts to all humanity.

Let us be slow to judge and quick to forgive, showing empathy and love.

"Just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise."

LUKE 6:31

Just for Fun Word Search

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not **love**, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the **gift** of prophecy, and understand all **mysteries** and all **knowledge**, and though I have all **faith**, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Love **suffers long** and is **kind**; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but **rejoices** in the **truth**; bears all things, **believes** all things, **hopes** all things, **endures** all things.

Love **never fails**.

E	V	H	S	T	E	F	I	V	Y	N	V	E	R
E	S	E	I	R	E	T	S	Y	M	O	S	I	J
E	B	I	I	O	U	I	N	E	G	E	A	T	T
F	G	E	E	V	F	S	L	V	B	T	H	F	R
E	S	R	L	T	T	E	R	O	O	O	I	T	E
N	D	I	E	I	E	I	W	L	P	G	T	N	J
D	D	N	I	K	E	U	O	E	R	E	R	Y	O
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E	O	L	K	S	T	E	E	S	H	K	O	E	T
I	V	S	S	U	F	F	E	R	S	L	O	N	G

Can a Person Know he is Saved?

Although it may sound arrogant to say, “I know I am saved,” the Bible teaches that one can be confident of salvation.

The Christian can know that heaven awaits. John wrote, “This is the testimony: that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God” (1 John 5:11–13). Christians can know that they have eternal life!

Having confidence in salvation results from learning and submitting to God’s will. John wrote, “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments” (1 John 2:3). Thus, a Christian can be sure that he has salvation—that he knows the Father—if he obeys Christ.

Jesus told Nicodemus, “Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom

of God.” Nicodemus asked him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (John 3:3–5).

One is born again—born of water and Spirit—when he is baptized into Christ. His sins are washed away, and he is a new creature in Christ (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 2 Corinthians 5:17).

Thus begins a lifelong journey of the babe in Christ growing into a mature Christian (1 Peter 2:2; Galatians 5:22–23). No Christian is perfect. We still sin, but God forgives these mistakes as we confess and forsake them (1 John 1:8–10). God requires a forgiving attitude of Christians (Matthew 6:12–15); He is a forgiving Father for His children.

Salvation does not depend on how few sins or mistakes we make, but upon whether we accept God’s grace and are

obedient to Christ. As we continue to serve Christ, the Lord continues to forgive us. “This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:5–7). If we walk in the light, following the gospel, His blood continues to cleanse us of sin.

Many Christians have doubts because they are slow to mature. This often happens when a person does not give his whole heart to Christ. Jesus said, “Whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, will save it” (Luke 9:24). The person who tries to live as a Christian while not fully surrendering to Christ must decide to walk fully in the light. —Bob Prichard

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front.



Bible Quiz

VOLUME 27:4

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark. We will grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark “Patriarch Timeline” as a way of saying thanks for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State: _____
Phone: _____

Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

Answers to Previous Quizzes

V. 27:2 Starts with the letter “N”: 1. Naaman (2 Kings 5:1–14); 2. Nabal (1 Samuel 25:1–11); 3. Naboth (1 Kings 21:1–4); 4. Nadab (Leviticus 10:1–7); 5. Nahum (Nahum 1:1); 6. Nails (John 20:25); 7. Nain (Luke 7:11–17); 8. Naomi (Ruth 1:11–19); 9. Nathan (2 Samuel 12:1–15); 10. Nathanael (John 1:47); 11. Nazareth (Luke 2:39–51); 12. Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:8–10); 13. Needle (Matthew 19:24); 14. Neglect (Hebrews 2:3); 15. Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1:1 + 6:15); 16. Nehushtan (2 Kings 18:4); 17. Neighbor (Matthew 22:39); 18. Net (Proverbs 29:5); 19. Never (Hebrews 13:5); 20. New (John 13:34); 21. Nicodemus (John 3:1–12); 22. Night (Revelation 22:5); 23. Nimrod (Genesis 10:6–9); 24. Nineveh (Jonah 1:1–2+3:5–9).

V. 27:3 Starts with the Letter U. 1. Uncle (Genesis 29:10); 2. Unclean (Deuteronomy 14:7–8); 3. Uz (Job 1:1); 4. Urijah (2 Kings 16:10–11); 5. Understanding (Proverbs 3:5); 6. Ur (Genesis 11:31); 7. Unleavened (Genesis 19:3); 8. Urbanus (Romans 16:9); 9. Unequally, unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14); 10. Uriah (2 Samuel 11:3); 11. Unknown (Acts 17:23); 12. Undefined, unspotted (James 1:27); 13. Under the sun (Ecclesiastes 1:3, 9); 14. Uzzah (2 Samuel 6:7); 15. Usury (Deuteronomy 23:19, κιν); 16. Unstable (James 1:8); 17. Urijah (Jeremiah 26:23); 18. Upharsin (Daniel 5:25).

Answers to Previous Quizzes at housetohouse.com/answers

Starts with the Letter “O”

Directions: Find answers in the following passages: Exodus 16:16; 28:9–12; Numbers 11:5; Deuteronomy 3:1, 8; Judges 3:9–11; Ruth 1:14–15; 1 Kings 6:33; 16:22–24; Proverbs 23:22; Ecclesiastes 7:1; Nehemiah 6:2; Obadiah 1:1; Matthew 28:20; John 3:16; Acts 1:9–12; Romans 12:21; Ephesians 5:2; 2 Timothy 1:16; Philemon 1:10–17; Hebrews 1:9; 5:9; Revelation 1:8, 11. Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

- Prophet who spoke against Edom. _____
- Amorite king of Bashan. _____
- Temple doorposts made from this tree. _____
- Last letter of the Greek alphabet. _____
- King of Israel who built Samaria. _____
- Philemon’s slave Paul converted. _____
- Refreshed Paul when in prison. _____
- Food Israelites missed in the wilderness. _____
- Plain where Sanballat wanted to meet Nehemiah. _____
- Stone on the priest’s ephod. _____
- Ruth’s sister-in-law. _____
- First judge of Israel. _____
- Christ loved us and gave Himself for us, “an _____ and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.”
- God anointed Christ with the _____ of gladness.
- A good name is better than precious _____.
- Do not be _____ by evil, but overcome evil with good.
- God so loved the world that He gave His _____ begotten Son.
- Christ is the author of eternal salvation to all who _____ Him.
- “Teaching them to _____ all things that I have commanded you.”
- Amount of bread (manna) each was to take. _____
- Christ ascended back to heaven from the Mount of _____.
- Do not despise your mother when she is _____.

THE ISLAND APPROACH

Is it possible to simply be a Christian today, twenty centuries after Christianity started? Can we avoid being entangled and weighed down by all man-made innovations that have found their way into religion over the past 2000 years?

The answer is yes. It can be accomplished by taking an island approach to Christianity. What do I mean by that?

Picture an island filled with people who know nothing of Jesus. One day a chest washes ashore containing a Bible. The islanders read it with great interest. After careful study, they come to the point of faith, turn from their sins, confess faith in Jesus as God's Son, and are baptized into Christ. They worship God together and commit to the moral standards contained in the Scriptures.

Question: What denomination would these islanders be in? What "brand" of Christian? These are silly questions. They would not be a part of any denomination, sect, or party. They would simply be Christians.

Friends, if people on an isolated island can be Christians only, then why cannot we be the same in our communities?

The fact is, we can. However, it requires that we do what they did: open the Bible and unite on what it teaches, leaving behind those practices and doctrines that are not found therein.

—Steve Higginbotham

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me."

JOHN 17:20-21



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Recommended Resource



The Gospel Broadcasting Network is unique in the world of religious TV—commercial free, and they never ask for money! Sponsored by the churches of Christ, GBN is available on many cable systems, as well as through their smartphone apps, the Roku device, and at gbntv.org.

I want to learn more **about the Bible!**

If you knew for sure that the religious path you are on would not get you to heaven, would you change? If there was the possibility of a doubt, would you investigate? Why not request a personal Bible study today?

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Phone: _____ Email: _____

Prayer requests or comments: _____

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Where Was God When Disaster Struck?



What God Did for Just One Soul



7 Sins That Will Keep You Out of Heaven



Sin's Lens



I'm Not Ashamed to Own My Lord



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TYPES & ANTITYPES

MELCHIZEDEK as a type of CHRIST

God is amazing. No one else could put the shadow of future things into the past. Types and antitypes are examples of God prefiguring the future. Types are the shadows in the Old Testament of things that were to come (antitypes) in the New Testament. An example of this type/antitype relationship can be found in comparing the priesthood of Melchizedek to that of Jesus the Christ.

Compared to some of the other types of Christ (e.g., Moses, Joseph, David), little is known about Melchizedek. He is introduced in Genesis 14:18–20 and referred to in Psalm 110:4 and in Hebrews 7:1–6.



MELCHIZEDEK TYPE

Name means “king of righteousness.”

Was righteous among the heathen (GENESIS 14:18–20).

Was greater than Abraham (HEBREWS 7:7).

Was a priest outside the tribe of Levi (HEBREWS 7:5–6).

Was a king of peace (HEBREWS 7:2).

No record of descent, birth, or death. He is a priest continually (HEBREWS 7:3).

Received tithes of Abraham (GENESIS 14:20; HEBREWS 7:6).

JESUS THE CHRIST ANTITYPE

Is the “king of righteousness” because he purchased us with His blood, providing righteousness for us (HEBREWS 1:8).

Was righteous among sinners (HEBREWS 7:26).

Is greater than Abraham (EPHESIANS 1:20–23).

Is a priest outside the tribe of Levi (MATTHEW 1:2–3; HEBREWS 7:14).

Is the Prince of peace (ROMANS 14:17).

Is High Priest continually (HEBREWS 7:17, 28).

Receives our gifts today (1 PETER 2:5).



That’s How He Hurt *His Hands*

Many have seen little boys plucking flowers to give to their adoring mothers. A little known song recounts a story of a small boy who came running to his mother with tears streaming down his cheeks. He clutched a rose that he had picked as a gift for her.

The tears were because he had cut his hands on the thorny stems of the beautiful red roses. The song’s refrain says, “He was showing his love, and that’s how he hurt his hands.”

In my mental images of Jesus, I often think about His hands and how He used them to show love to others. With his hands, He cleansed a leper (Matthew 8:3). He placed His hands on the tongue and ears of the deaf mute, causing him to hear and speak. With His hands, He gave sight to the blind (Mark 8:23). He extended His hand to rescue Peter (Matthew 14:31). To a maiden asleep in death, His hand had the power of life (Mark 5:41).

At no time were those hands more precious or more loving than when they were nailed to the cross for you and me. Those bleeding hands, that bloody brow, and His stricken back were given as a sacrifice for my many sins.

Indeed, He was showing His love, and that’s how He hurt His hands.

—John W. Moore

“Look at My hands.”

JOHN 20:27

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All I Need

Steve Winger, a student from Lubbock, Texas, took a challenging class in logic. The teacher was known for giving demanding exams. The final exam was looming, and the professor mercifully told the class that each student would be permitted to bring a single 8.5 x 11-inch sheet of paper with as much information as he could put on it.

On exam day, the students came to class clutching their precious papers covered in information. Some had crammed lines and lines with a font so tiny that you had to wonder how they could read it.

Steve walked in with a blank sheet, bent down, and placed it on the floor next to his desk. A friend, a senior student who had an A in logic, came and stood on the paper.

The professor noticed the extra body in the room and asked what he was doing. Steve said, "You said we could bring what we could fit on a single piece of paper to help with the test. Well, this is my help, and he can fit on the paper!"

He had followed the instructions to the letter and was the only student to score an A.

Jesus is like that friend, standing beside us, supporting us, and guiding us.

—adapted from eSermons.com

"I will never leave you."

HEBREWS 13:5



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What do you look for in a church?

Are you looking for a church home? With a church building on every corner, how do we decide where to attend?

Some pick a church based on how close by it is, the programs it has for families, or where their friends go. Is there a better way—a more biblical way? Can we find a church that looks like the one in the New Testament?

Do you want help choosing a church? Do you have questions about what is taught and practiced where you attend?

Here is a test you can give a church before placing membership:

www.housetohouse.com/church

