

HOUSE to HOUSE Heart to Heart



"...from house to house...with gladness and singleness of heart..." (Acts 2:46).

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

If you have questions or comments please contact
us via email at: info@housetohouse.com

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Teach us to
number our days

that we may
apply our hearts unto

wisdom.

PSALM 90:12

Church? Why Bother?

Joe Slater and Allen Webster

You go to school to get an education so you can make a living. You go to work to make money to pay the bills. You go to the track for exercise and better health. You go to the mall to shop for clothes and to the grocery store to buy food. You go to the lake to fish, the ball game to cheer, and the golf course for fun. But church services? Why go there? Why get up early on one of your few off-days? Why go through the hassle of dressing up and getting the children ready? Why go to the trouble of finding parking space (preferably in the front) and pew space (preferably in the back)? Why sing, bow in prayer, put hard-earned money in the plate, take communion, and listen to the preacher's sermon?

Church? Why bother?

Some look upon church attendance as a bother—an unnecessary burden to be avoided when possible—a perfectly good hour wasted in order to keep a wife or a preacher or a parent off our backs. We go out of a sense of duty—we don't want to, but we have to. It is seen as a tolerable exercise in spiritual attainment—sort of like punching a spiritual clock or getting brownie points with the Maker. At best it is a time to socialize—see and be seen. To someone who understands worship, though, these four hours a week are different. It is not about me and what I want. It's about God and what He wants.

Church? Why bother?

"BOTHER" WITH WORSHIP BECAUSE GOD "BOTHERED" WITH CALVARY. If you had given your child to die for someone, would you expect him to be appreciative? If you loved someone so much that she never left your thoughts, would you be hurt if she considered it an inconvenience to come around you (cf. 1 Chron. 28:9)? If you were a judge who would soon handle an admittedly guilty person's case, would you expect him to show you respect in an appeal for leniency (Rev. 20:12-15)? Now put yourself in God's place. Stand at Calvary's cross and tearfully recall the pitiful cry of God's only Son—now beaten, bloodied, and bruised—as He said: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mt. 27:46). As He listens to that plaintive cry, one can almost picture the tears blurring His vision, the flush in His cheeks, and the quivering in the Almighty's chin. The Omnipotent One did not lift a finger; the Omniscient One did not say a word; the Omnipresent God fled the scene (Mk. 15:34). God endured that heartbreak so my sin-cursed soul could be saved. Is it a "bother," then, for me to attend a service in His honor? Is it too much to ask that I give praise and adoration to such a wonderful God? How can I help but say, "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. 9:15)?

"BOTHER" WITH WORSHIP BECAUSE GOD "BOTHERED" TO MAKE YOU. Despite evolutionary claims, sensible people still acknowledge to God: "Thine hands have made me and fashioned me" (Job 10:8). Unlike the animal creation, God made us in His own image¹ and after His likeness² (Gen. 1:26,27), demonstrating His unlimited power (Rm. 1:20) and boundless wisdom (Prov. 3:19). Consider how He made *you*. As an adult, your skeleton has 206 bones more durable than the best steel (cf. Job 10:11; Ecc. 11:5). A one square inch cube of bone will bear a weight of more than four tons. Ounce for ounce, bone is stronger than solid steel. Yet, bone will stretch ten times as much as steel. Your ear can distinguish over 2,500 different keys (a grand piano has only 88). It can catch up to 73,700 vibrations a second and is so finely tuned that it can hear the blood running through vessels. Your eye is the most perfect camera known to man. It can distinguish thousands of color variations, has its own light meter, wide-

angle lens, immediate focusing, and "living color" reproduction. It is both a microscope and a telescope. It can gaze into the heavens and see a star millions of miles away, or inspect the smallest grain of sand. It generally lasts a lifetime, reproducing the world before us with an incalculable number of images. Even Charles Darwin said, "That the eye...could have been formed by natural selection seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree." "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them" (Prov. 20:12).

David was "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psa. 139:14a) and "curiously wrought." The latter Hebrew phrase denotes something "woven or embroidered" and was used of the beautifully embroidered tabernacle curtain-door (Ex. 26:36). We are "fearfully and wonderfully made" by a fearful and wonderful God ("Who is like unto thee...glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?," Ex. 15:11). We agree with John: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. 4:11).

"BOTHER" WITH WORSHIP BECAUSE GOD "BOTHERS" TO SUSTAIN YOU. Imagine you were rich. After hearing of a starving, destitute family's need, you decided to give them a house, a weekly supply of food, a constant quantity of clothes, and whatever else they needed. Would you expect them to say "thanks?" God deserves our worship because He does this for us...and more. Every bite of food, every drink of water, every breath of air, every gravitational pull, every ray of sunshine, every drop of rain, every harvested fruit, every medical treatment, every thread of clothing, every square foot of house, every yard of land, every smile, laugh, and moment of peace and safety we have ever had is because of God. We depend upon Him for "life, breath, and all things" (Acts 17:25); He "upholds all things by the word of His power" (Heb. 1:3). Yes, we work to pay for these things, but who gave us health and strength to work? Who made the earth inhabitable? Who sends sun and rain for its crops? God, our Sustainer!

"BOTHER" WITH WORSHIP BECAUSE GOD "BOTHERS" TO SAVE YOU. If you are saved, it is only because of God's astounding grace (Eph. 2:8-10). If you are still in your sins, it is no fault of God's. His offer, and longsuffering patience to see it accepted, stands ready (2 Pet. 3:8). John heard a crowd of ten thousand times ten thousand angels, beasts, and elders say, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. 5:12). Since sin separates us from God (Isa. 59:1,2), and books us a reservation in Lucifer's Lakeside Inn (Rm. 6:23; Rev. 20:15), until Jesus came we were without hope of anything better than an eternity in hell with a sadistic Satan. God saw our predicament, and at great cost to Himself, provided a way for us to be snatched from Satan's grasp and ushered into the Master's Mansions (Jn. 14:1, 2). Jesus, His very own Son, took our place at the whipping post, the cross, and the hopeless grave. He carried the burden of our sins in His body as He hung upon that cross, where He poured out His blood as the price of our forgiveness (1 Pet. 2:24; Mt. 26:28; 2 Cor. 5:20). God did that while we were yet rebels (Rm. 5:8-10). He still waits at the window for the prodigal boy's figure to appear on the distant skyline (Lk. 15:20).

See you Sunday.

¹ *Imaginem*, "resemblance." ² Interestingly, this is the same word (*demuwth*) used of Adam's son being in his own "likeness" (Gen. 5:3).

THINK ON GOOD THINGS

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

A Merry Heart Doeth Good...

- ▶ If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is probably not for you.
- ▶ Never wrestle with a pig. You both get dirty but only the pig enjoys it.
- ▶ Money can't buy happiness. But it sure makes misery easier to live with.
- ▶ Always remember to pillage before you burn.
- ▶ The trouble with doing something right the first time is that nobody appreciates how difficult it was.
- ▶ Vital papers will demonstrate their vitality by moving to where you can't find them.
- ▶ One-seventh of life is spent on Monday.
- ▶ Drink varnish and you'll have a lovely finish.
- ▶ We can sympathize with a child who is afraid of the dark, but the tragedy of life is that most people are afraid of the light. —Stephen P. Waller



Of the People

Most of us have heard the famous phrase used by Lincoln in the Gettysburg Address: "Government of the people, by the people, and for the people." Many think that Lincoln invented this expression, but he did not. The phrase had been around for hundreds of years. In John Wycliffe's introduction to his translation of the Bible in 1382, these words are found, "This Bible is for the Government of the People, by the People, and for the People." Civil governments can only do so much. Civil authorities are ordained of God to assist in the governing of the secular and legal affairs of men (Rm. 13:1-6). But, the best government is self-government guided by God. Each of us must use the Bible as the standard which governs our conduct (2 Tim. 3:16,17). This is the finest government of the people, by the people, and for the people.



GOD'S PLAN FOR SAVING MAN

God's Grace	...Ephesians 2:8
Christ's Blood	...Romans 5:9
The Holy Spirit's Gospel	...Romans 1:16
Sinner's Faith	...Acts 16:31
Sinner's Repentance	...Luke 13:3
Sinner's Confession	...Romans 10:10
Sinner's Baptism	...1 Peter 3:21
Christian's Work	...James 2:24
Christian's Hope	...Romans 8:24
Christian's Endurance	...Matthew 24:13

Life Is What You Make It

- ▶ A blacksmith makes five dollars worth of iron into horseshoes and gets ten dollars for them.
- ▶ A cutler makes the same iron into knives and gets two hundred dollars.
- ▶ A machinist makes the same iron into sixty-eight hundred dollars' worth of needles.
- ▶ A watchmaker makes it into two hundred thousand dollar's worth of mainsprings; or into hair-springs and gets two million dollars, sixty times the value of the same weight of gold.

So it is with life and the opportunity given each of us when we are born. One person takes her time and talents and combines them to advance her earthly interests alone. Another takes the same opportunity, and through wisdom and the counsel of God's Word, shapes and molds his life for time and eternity. Wise people refine their character so that they are worth something to the world and useful to God. The world was made better and richer for their having lived.

It is up to you whether you will develop your life into a noble accomplishment, your character into a thing of beauty, and your talents into a source of glory to God. An aimless, drifting, purposeless life does not bespeak even the intelligent forethought of the ant, which harvests in the summer against the ravages of winter (Prov. 6:6). We may botch our lives with sin and uselessness until late in life, and then come to our senses. We might even patch up the broken pieces, but it is a sorry apology to leave in payment for a life of magnificent possibilities. "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" (Deut. 32:29). Life is what you make it—so don't waste it.

—Gayle Oler

Endurance

When the farmer's old mule fell into a deep, dry well, he decided there was no way to get him out so directed his boys to bury the mule. The problem was he refused to be buried! As the boys threw dirt on him, he simply shook it off. Before long, so much dirt had come down into the well that he just walked out. What was intended to bury him became the means by which he rose. All great men and women climb up through difficulties. If their lives had been easy, we would never have heard of them. Consider some great examples:



And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets; who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection (Heb. 11:32-25).

In overcoming, one develops the courage, strength, ruggedness, and determination needed to successfully serve God. Don't let Satan get you down. Keep climbing, growing, and developing. Count it a privilege to take up your cross daily. Be determined to endure until the end. Jesus told the apostles, "...ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Mt. 10:22) —Ken Tyler



The
HOMIE
PAGE
by Chuck Webster

Who Can You Trust Nowadays?

A young lady was approached by a little boy in swimming trunks, carrying a towel, who asked, "Do you believe in God?" She was surprised, but replied, "Yes, I do." Then he asked: "Do you go to church every Sunday?" Again she answered, "Yes." He asked: "Do you read your Bible and pray every day?" She replied, "Usually." Now her curiosity was aroused. At last the lad sighed and said, with obvious relief, "Will you hold my quarter while I go swimming?"

"...ye should do that which is honest..."
—2 Corinthians 13:7

Except Ye Become as a Little Child...

Some years ago, after a vigorous brotherly and sisterly disagreement, our three children retired only to be aroused at two o'clock in the morning by a terrific thunderstorm. Hearing an unusual noise upstairs, I went in to find out what was going on. A little voice answered, "We are all in the closet forgiving each other." —Robert C. Tuttle

"...Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" —Mt. 18:3

They Said It!

- ♥ God is the only third party in marriage that can make it work.
- ♥ A successful marriage demands a divorce...a divorce from your own self-love. —Paul Frost
- ♥ As you would have a daughter, so choose a wife. —Italian Proverb
- ♥ Choose a wife by ear rather than by eye.
- ♥ Don't marry him for money; you can borrow it cheaper. —Scottish Proverb
- ♥ Better be half hang'd, than ill wed.
- ♥ It is not marriage that fails, it is people that fail.—Harry Emerson Fosdick
- ♥ Chains do not hold a marriage together. It is threads, hundreds of tiny threads that sew people together through the years. —Simone Signoret

To Make Happiness a Reality in Your Home...

Realize happiness is a possibility. Happiness and tranquility in the home are not elusive dreams. Effort must be extended toward this reality, but it is possible—even in homes that have had serious trouble in the past.

Make happiness a goal. Remember, if we aim at nothing, we are sure to hit it. Set realistic and challenging goals for you and your family. Talk about them and write them down. Give them deadlines. ("By the end of two weeks, we want to be...")

Work at building a happy home. Happiness in the home does not come about by merely reading about it, talking about it, or just wishing for it. Rather, peace and tranquility come as a result of effort and work. Somebody said a successful marriage is 98% perspiration and 2% inspiration.

Pray for it. John 15:7 says that Christians may ask what we will (according to His will). Surely, we will (desire) happiness and harmony in our homes.

Avoid little quarrels. A famous judge once said, "Avoid little quarrels and the big ones will take care of themselves."

Learn and practice the grace of contentment. In our homes, let us learn to say with the apostle Paul, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Phil. 4:11). An old proverb says, "A contented mind is a continual feast." Understand that happiness is not tied to "things" (externals). Happiness in the home is inseparably tied to meaningful relationships maintained by each member losing himself in the interest, welfare, and desired good of the other members of the family.

Remember that love and happiness are inseparable. Joy and love are mentioned in the same passage in Ecclesiastes 9:9.

Conclusion: Nothing is more beautiful than the building and maintaining of a happy home. Such contributes immeasurably to its members having the exalted privilege of one day being at home with God in the home of the soul. —Wendell Winkler

Show Them the Way

Children are mirrors reflecting back the image of their parents. They usually mirror our church attendance, criticism, and attitudes. Children come into the world just as clean and pure and sinless and free from guile as they possibly can be. Adults teach them to hate, lie, cheat, gamble, and defraud. We don't usually do it by verbal instruction, but by bad example. Where do children learn bad language, for instance? Many of them hear mommy and daddy using those words. Most teens get their first drink of alcohol from their parents' refrigerators.

We need for them to come to love and fear God (Prov. 14:27). A Bible School teacher can't do this in two forty-five minute classes a week. God intended that children first learn obedience in the home (Eph. 6:1). No child can be obedient to God and disobedient to parents at the same time.

We have to set the proper example for them the rest of the week (Mt. 5:14-16). Imagine a parent who teaches a child that the Bible is the best Book in the world, that it tells us about God and our relationship and our responsibility to Him, and that we ought to love it more than any other book. Then that parent reads the newspaper more regularly than God's Word. Does the child know which one he loves most?

Another parent teaches a child that the church is a wonderful institution, that Jesus purchased it with His own blood, and that we ought to support it. Then that parent watches television instead of attending Sunday night services. Can the child see which one is loved most?

If a change is needed—for the sake of your children—make it now!


"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ"
—1 Corinthians 11:1

Socrates said over 2,000 years ago: "Could I climb to the highest place in Athens, I would lift my voice and proclaim: 'Fellow citizens, why do ye turn and scrape every stone to gather wealth and take so little care of your children to whom one day you must relinquish it all?'"





What Happened to the "Long Day" of Joshua 10?

 The "long day" of Joshua 10:12-14 is one of several miracles in the Book of Joshua and is unique in human history. "And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel" (Jos. 10:14). The chapter's emphasis is that the great victory that Israel achieved that day was because of Joshua's prayer and God's power.

The Book of Joshua describes the conquest of the promised land by the Israelites. The battle of Joshua 10 came as the result of a pact made between the Israelites and the Gibeonites. As Israel came to aid the Gibeonites who were under attack by the Amorites, Joshua sought the Lord's aid. God rained down huge hailstones on the Amorites, so that "they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword" (10:11). After the miraculous intervention of God, Joshua "said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon" (10:12). So "the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher¹? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day" (10:13).

Scientifically speaking, this miracle, as is true with all miracles, is difficult to explain. The nature of miracles is such that they are outside the normal course of things, and as acts of God are to be accepted whether or not they can be "explained." The problem with this particular miracle is that if the rotation of the earth stopped, it would not just have an effect at this battlefield, but would have catastrophic consequences for the whole earth. David said, "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psa. 24:1). Since God created the world, He certainly would have it within His ability to either stop or slow the rotation of the earth in such a gradual way that Joshua's "long day" might have been forty-eight hours rather than the normal twenty-four. The text does not demand a sudden "standing still" of the sun.

Other explanations of how God might have caused a long day include a miraculous tilting of the earth on its axis, or a miraculous refraction, or bending of the sun's rays so that daylight continued for many hours beyond a normal day. (The normal tilting of the earth's axis today produces twenty-four periods of sunlight near the north pole.) There are also old Egyptian, Hindu, and Chinese sources that suggest observation of a "long day" by ancient astronomers. While there likely are other good ways to visualize how God accomplished this miracle, one must remember that the "long day" of Joshua was unique. There has never been another day in history such as that one. That day was a demonstration of the omnipotence of God and His care for His people led by a godly man who remembered the power of prayer.

—Bob Prichard

¹The book of Jasher, an ancient book that is lost and unknown to us, has never been considered a book of inspired Scripture.

BIBLE

QUIZ

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____

Houses of Worship


Hints (in order): 1 Chron. 10:10; Acts 19:27-28; Rev. 21:22; Jd. 9:46-49; Ezek. 40-42; 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Kgs. 19:37; Rev. 11:1-2; 2 Chron. 36:7; Jn. 2:19-21

1. Gruesome object Philistines fastened in Dagon's temple: _____
2. Goddess had a notorious temple at Ephesus: _____
3. Why did John not see a temple in the New Jerusalem? _____
4. Whose temple did Abimelech burn while the people of Shechem were hiding inside? _____
5. What prophet exiled in Babylon received a vision of the Jerusalem temple? _____
6. Who is called to be the temple of God today? _____
7. What Assyrian emperor was assassinated by his sons while worshiping in his pagan temple? _____
8. Who had a vision to measure the Jerusalem temple? _____
9. Who carried away furnishings from the Jerusalem temple and put them in the temple at Babylon? _____
10. What was Jesus talking about when He spoke of destroying the temple and raising it up in three days? _____

Who Said It?

Hints: Gen. 13:7; 4:9; Mt. 22:21; Jn. 4:29; Phil. 1:21; Jn. 20:25; Est. 4:13; Ruth 1:16; Acts 2:38; Jn. 3:16

1. "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen?" _____
2. "Am I my brother's keeper?" _____
3. "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." _____
4. "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" _____
5. "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." _____
6. "Except I...see...the print of the nails...I will not believe" _____
7. "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews." _____
8. "Whither thou goest, I will go: and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." _____
9. "Repent, and be baptized everyone one of you for the remission of sins." _____
10. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." _____

 **Answers to last month's questions:** Curses: 1. The serpent (Gen. 3:14-15); 2. Baalam (Num. 22:1-6); 3. Canaan (Gen. 4:11); 4. Jesus (Mk. 11:21); 5. God (Gen. 4:11); 6. Jehoiakim (Jer. 22:18; 36:30); 7. Nature (Rm. 8:19-22); 8. Israel (Deut. 28:15-16); 9. It brought forth thorns/weeds (Gen. 3:17-18); 10. Abraham (Gen. 12:3); Multiple Marriages: 1. Solomon (1 Kgs. 11:3); 2. Lamech (Gen. 4:19); 3. Jacob (Gen. 29:15-25) 4. Gideon (Jd. 8:30); 5. Samuel (1 Sam. 1:1-2) 6. Esau (Gen. 26:24; 28:9); 7. Paul (Rm. 7:3) 8. Tamar (Gen. 38:6-10); 9. Woman at the well (Jn. 4:6-19) 10. The Sadducees (Mk. 12:18-25); 11. Ruth (4:10,13) 12. Michal (2 Sam. 3:13-16)

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.

Diary of a Bible



JANUARY: A busy time for me. Most of the family decided to read me through this year. They kept me busy for the first two weeks. They have forgotten me now.

FEBRUARY: Clean up time. I was dusted yesterday and put back in my place. My owner did use me for a few minutes last week. He had been in an argument and was looking up some reference.

MARCH: I had a busy day the first of the month. My owner was appointed leader of something and used me. I got to go to church services for the first time this year—Easter Sunday.

APRIL: Grandpa visited us. He kept me on his lap for an hour reading First Corinthians 13. He seems to think more of me than he used to.

MAY: I have a few green stains on my pages. Had some early spring flowers pressed in me.

JUNE: I look like a scrapbook. They have me stuffed full of newspaper clippings. One of the girls got married.

JULY: They put me in a suitcase today. I guess we are off on a vacation. I wish I could stay home as I will have to stay in this thing for a month.

AUGUST: Still in a suitcase.

SEPTEMBER: Back home again in my old place with a lot of company. The TV Guide, *Sports Illustrated*, and newspaper are on top of me. I wish I was read as much as they are.

OCTOBER: They used me a little today. One of them is very sick. Right now I am shined up and on the center of the table. I think the preacher is coming over.

NOVEMBER: Back in my old place. Was asked today if I was a scrapbook.

DECEMBER: They are getting ready for Christmas, so I'll be covered with wrapping paper and packages.

Don't Just OWN a Bible. Read it! "Blessed is he that readeth ..." —Revelation 1:3



HOW MAY WE HELP YOU?

(CLIP AND MAIL TO THE ADDRESS ON COVER)

- YES!** I want to learn more about the Bible. Please enroll me in a survey of the Bible study course.
- I would like a ride to Bible classes and/or worship services.
- I am interested in seeing the "Visualized Bible Study" Video
- 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 to learn more about your programs and activities.
- 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: _____

All materials/services are FREE of charge.

PLEASE SEND ME THE NEW HTH BOOKLET: FULL COLOR, READABLE, INTERESTING, AND FREE!

THE DAY THE PREACHER SAT NEXT TO THE ATHEIST (HOW DID THIS WORLD GET HERE?)

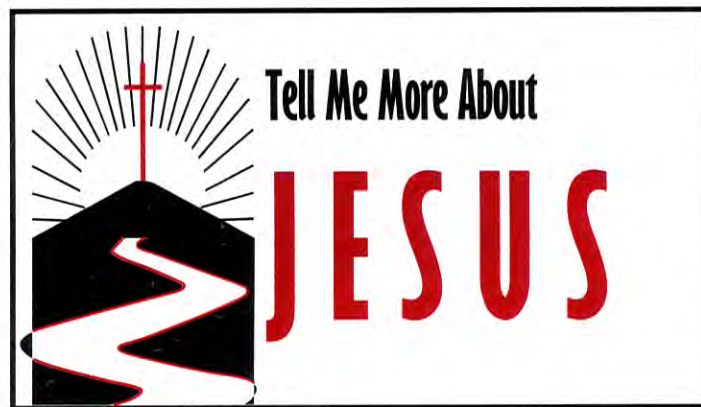
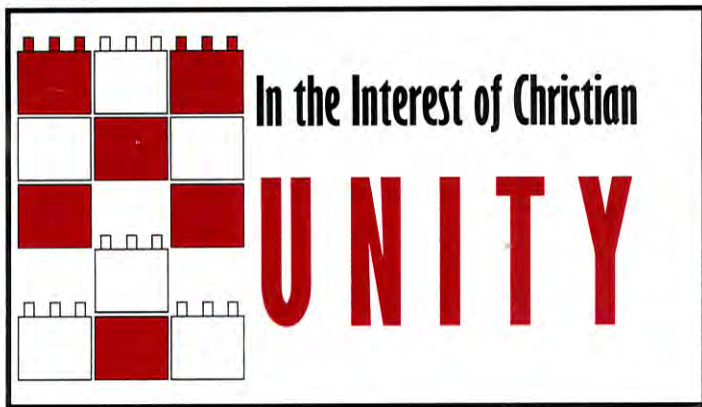
Featured Tracts:

Check the Bible subjects you want to study further (free):

- Send me this month's packet (booklet plus all below)
- HTH Booklet: A New Look at the Old Rugged Cross
- Daily Bible Reading Bookmark
- Guideposts for Young People (Bible Bookmark)
- Who Could Believe Such a Story? The Restoration Plea
- What Did I Do to Deserve This? Astrology
- Hope in Christianity Is There a Perfect Church?
- Is the Lottery Gambling? What About Cave Men?
- A Search for Moral Values On Growing Old
- Coping with Loneliness Homosexuality
- Pocket Bible Reference Booklet The Rapture?
- From Heaven or From Men? Accepting Bereavement
- What Must I Do to be Saved?
- Que es la Iglesia de Cristo

Other topic: _____

Back issues of *House to House/Heart to Heart*



Choosing a Church



Why do people place membership with a particular congregation? The responses we are given are varied: "It's a friendly church. The preacher is dynamic. The building is beautiful. They have great programs. They have a good youth group. There is so much activity and excitement there. They understand and accept me."

With a few exceptions, the same reasons could be given for joining a fraternity, a health club, or any professional organization. Is there a more valid criterion for selecting a congregation? Yes! Pleasing God must be our first priority in life (cf. Ecc. 12:13; Micah 6:8; Acts 10:35). Our greatest concern should be to select a local church where all members (especially leaders) are trying to be true to God's Word. If a congregation is not serious about staying true to the Book, then all the programs, hype, and enthusiasm amount to little more than momentary distraction.

How did Jesus evaluate the churches of Asia near the end of the first-century? His assessment of the church at Ephesus centered on its tolerance of wicked people and false teachers, hard work, perseverance in hardship, and action which had characterized their initial love (Rev. 2:1-7). Smyrna needed to stand up under the persecution of opponents and false religious figures (2:8-11). Pergamos was tolerating some members who were holding to false teachings (2:12-13). Thyatira was tolerating doctrinal impurity (2:18-29). In virtually every case, what was important to Jesus was whether these churches knew and defended the truth and whether they put the truth into practice in their own lives.

In our selection of a congregation, we need to find a church where the words of eternal life are revered and where Christ is in their midst (2:10). Little else really matters.

—John Tracy

Unity Prevents Problems...

Our church was without a building, as was another church nearby. We both ended up worshiping in a town building—our congregation met on the third floor, and the other church met on the second floor. The arrangement worked fine until one Sunday, when our congregation broke into song, "Will There Be Any Stars in My Crown?" Just as we finished that line, the second-floor congregation sang out, "No, Not One."

—Mary Jane Kurtz, "Lite Fare"

"...endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace...one Lord, one faith, one baptism..." —Ephesians 4:3,5

Blood on the Door Posts



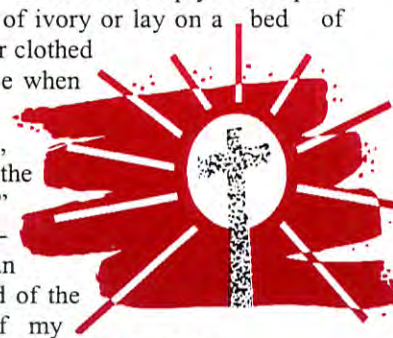
S i n

Humanly devised religions are numerous and varied. Based on human will and desire, their attraction is to the flesh. Christianity stands alone as the only religion with its origin in divinity, thus appealing to the spiritual aspect of man's nature.

Man's problem is sin. Sin is a universal malady, "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rm. 3:23). Since there is "not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not" (Ecc. 7:20), the whole world stands "guilty before God" (Rm. 3:19). creates a "great gulf" (Lk. 16:26) between God and man that cannot be spanned by man's own efforts. A lifetime of good works could not constitute even one plank on a bridge back to God.

Jesus is God's only remedy for sin. Thus, Christianity embraces an exclusive Savior. Jesus stepped in the gap to serve as the link between God and His offspring. God "hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 5:18). Therefore, those "who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13). Gospel obedience is God's means of reaching us with the blood of His Son. Consequently, the Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation" (Rm. 1:16). Jesus shed His blood in His death (Jn. 19:34). "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" (Rm. 6:3). Thus, baptism is the culminating act of the "obedience of faith" (Rm. 16:26) that unites man with Christ's blood. Therefore, eternal ruin awaits all those that "obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thes. 1:8).

Whether one was a king on a throne or a peasant in the field; lived in a mansion on a hill or an empty flat on poverty's row; reclined on a bed of ivory or lay on a bed of clay; was wrapped in purple or clothed in rags was of no consequence when God passed over Egypt (Ex. 12:13). All that mattered was, "Is the blood of the lamb on the door posts of my house?" When time gives way to eternity, the sole matter of human concern will be, "Is the blood of the Lamb on the doorposts of my soul?" Jesus Christ is God's exclusive cure for sin.



—Frank Chesser



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“Oh, I Wish I’d Spent More Time at the Office”

So much to do; so little time to do it. Competing interests vie for our time, making us feel like we’re in a pressure cooker. Even retired folks find their schedules too full!

Jesus, too, felt the pressure of time. “I must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work” (John 9:4). The Lord was keenly aware that less than six months after uttering these words, He would go to the cross to die for the sins of the world. Already His enemies had made several attempts on His life (e.g. Lk. 4:28,29; John 8:59). Though these attempts had failed, Jesus knew the dark night was rapidly approaching. Anything He would accomplish regarding His earthly ministry must be done right away.

Jesus knew what was important: “the works of him who sent me.” If you were to evaluate the way you’ve spent your life up to now, what would you say? Few, if any, of us would cry, “Oh, how I wish I had spent more time at my job!” We probably wouldn’t lament, “If only I had watched more TV!” More likely, we would bemoan the lack of time spent with our spouses and children; we would regret neglecting Bible study, prayer, and church attendance.

Jesus knew that the time to work for the Father is now. As my parents used to say, “Make hay while the sun shines!” No matter how young or old we are, the night is coming in each of our lives, too. Let us work while it is still day.

That brings us to another point: work lasts until the night comes. Jesus was busy for the Father right up to the end. Not until the very night before His crucifixion did the Lord say, “I have glorified you on the earth. I have finished the work which you have given me to do” (John 17:4). Retirement from our employment is fine, but the work of God is a different matter. God’s retirement plan is truly “out of this world!”

Let us realize what is truly important. Let us serve and obey God now, and let us keep working until God says it’s time to quit!

—Joe Slater