

HOUSE TO HOUSE

Heart to Heart



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

Volume 10, Number 4

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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

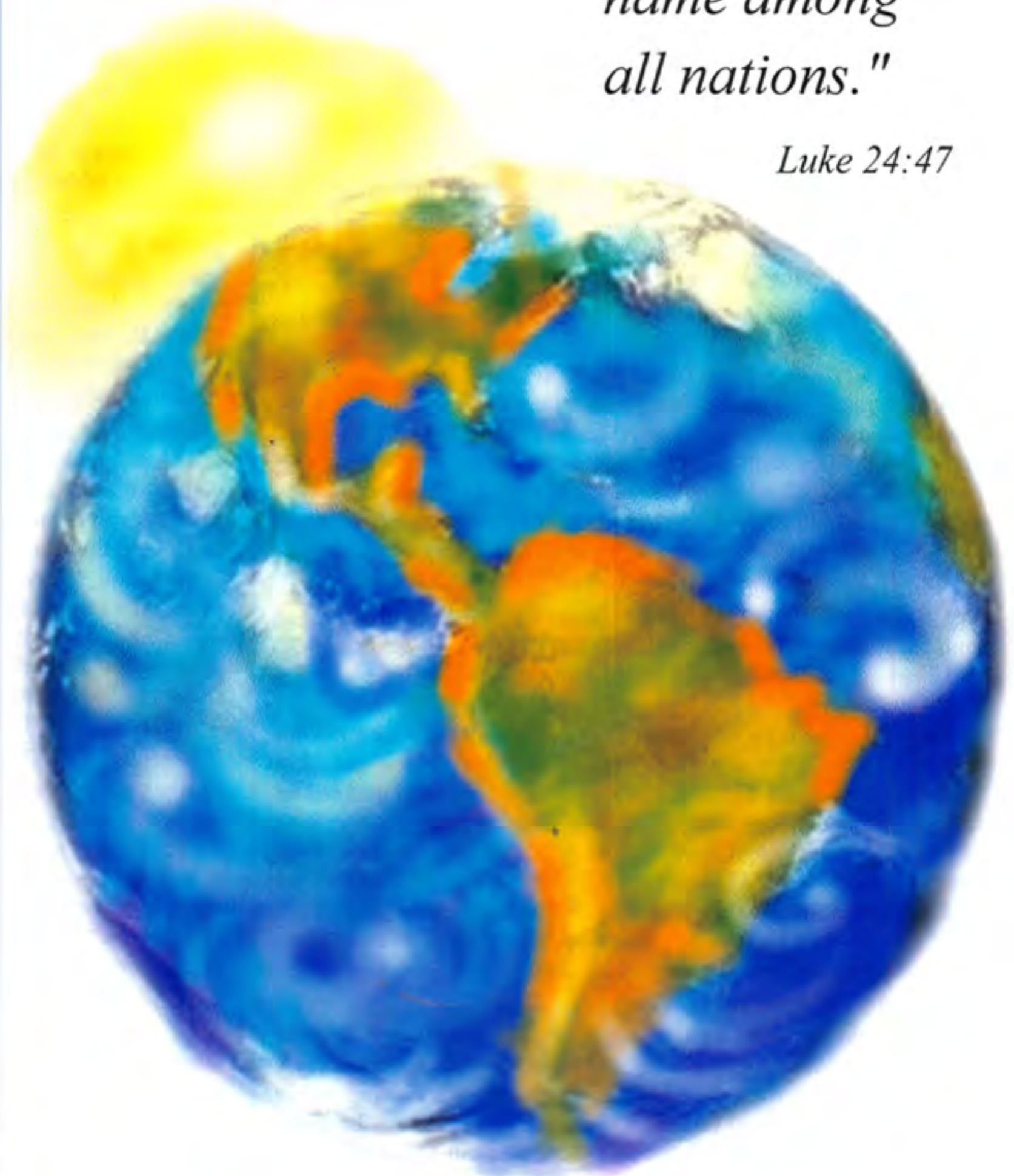
Warning: Be Faithful – 2 John 9

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*"Repentance
and remission
of sins should be
preached in his
name among
all nations."*

Luke 24:47



Have You Seen God?

Allen Webster

A five-year-old girl rushed up to her newborn brother in his hospital room and said, "Quick, what is God like?" She figured that, having just come from "Heaven," he might have some inside information. Alas, he merely made a gurgling sound and rolled his eyes. Little girls are not the only ones who want to know what God looks like. Philip once requested of Jesus: "Shew us the Father" (John 14:8). Many of us have the same desire.

Consider: "No man hath seen God at any time" (John 1:18). "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live" (Exodus 33:20). "Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape" (John 5:37). "God is a spirit" (John 4:24), thus "invisible" (Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17). He dwells in the light which no man can approach unto (1 Timothy 6:16).

Nonetheless, it pleased Him to whom nothing is impossible to manifest Himself at times in some visible form. In the form of a "man," He wrestled with Jacob (Genesis 32:24, 30). Abraham talked with Him (Genesis 18:22). Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders of Israel "saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone . . . they saw God, and did eat and drink" (Exodus 24:9-11). Moses, later, saw the "back parts" of God (Exodus 33:23). Yet, since the essence of God is spirit, and since our physical eyes cannot see spiritual beings, it remains true that in the absolute sense no man has seen God.

Still, we can "see" God. Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see¹ God" (Matthew 5:8). Jesus is not just saying that we will see God in heaven. A more literal translation is, "They shall be continuously seeing God for themselves."² If we do not see Him in the here and now, we have no promise of seeing Him at all.

How can we see the invisible? "By faith . . . as seeing him who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:27). We see God by looking for Him. Two men were discussing New York City. One said that New York was a wicked place filled with cheap sensations and morally degraded people with sin on every corner. The other said New York was a grand place filled with art museums, great music, and stimulating lectures. It is a little of both. We see what we have trained ourselves to see. "Two men looked out from prison bars, One saw mud, the other saw the stars!" In every sphere of life, in every day and hour of life, we should condition ourselves to "see God."

WE CAN SEE GOD IN CHRIST. Jesus told Philip that if he had seen Him, he had "seen" the Father (John 14:8-9; Hebrews 1:1-3). A person can see God in this world without ever laying eyes on a physical being. Those who see only with the eye, see very little. There were multitudes who looked upon Jesus and saw nothing but a man. To them He was as a root out of dry ground, without form or comeliness (Isaiah 53:2). They looked upon Him and trudged on their monotonous way without benefit. But there were others who saw Him with different eyes. As they looked into His face they became conscious of God. As they fellowshiped with Him they said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). And when He had gone home to heaven they still saw Him, as we can by reading of the life of His Son.

WE CAN SEE GOD IN NATURE. If an ordinary man goes out on a starry night, he sees only a bunch of pinpoints in the sky. An astronomer looks at the same sky and calls the stars and planets by their names. From the same sky, a navigator guides his ship safely to its destination. David looked at the same sky and saw the glory of God (Psalm 19:1-6). With the naked eye, we can see two or three

thousand stars on a clear night. Our "North Star," or Polaris, seems close, but scientists say that the light we see from that star started out from that star 407 years ago in the late 1600s. It had been on its way since about Shakespeare's time! Further, there are many stars we see that are as much as 3,000 light years away. The light we see tonight started out when David wrote Psalm 19. These stars could explode and we wouldn't know it for hundreds or even thousands of years.

Joel Chandler Harris saw in rabbits and foxes and opossums "Uncle Remus" stories that will live forever. We can look at the same animals and see the design and wisdom of God (cf. Proverbs 30:24-28). We can look at the human body and see God's wonderful wisdom. "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works . . ." (Psalm 139:14). "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20). Truly, "This is My Father's World."

WE CAN SEE GOD IN OUR BLESSINGS. Evidences of God's goodness are all around us. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17; cf. Romans 8:28-39; Hebrews 13:5-6). We can't take a breath, eat a bite, enjoy a smile, or warm by a sunbeam without acknowledging God's wonderful benevolence.

WE CAN SEE GOD IN THE BIBLE. The Bible shows us God picture; it tells us His story; it invites us to become His friend. "He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel . . . And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD . . ." (Psalm 103:7; Exodus 24:4). Without the Bible, we would be left to guess who the obviously powerful and intelligent being was who set this world in motion.

Do you want to see God? Sir Isaac Newton said: "I can take my telescope and look millions and millions of miles into space, but I can lay it aside and go into my room, shut my door, get down on my knees in earnest prayer, and see more of heaven and get closer to God than I can assisted by all the telescopes . . . on earth." James said, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (4:8). The only way is to have a pure heart (Psalm 17:15; 41:12; 42:1; 63:2; 140:13; Job. 42:5). Purity of heart cleanses the soul's eyes so that God becomes visible (Philippians 1:9-11). Sin obscures the truth (John 3:19-20; Matthew 13:13-16; 1 Corinthians 2:14-15; Titus 1:15-16; 1 John 3:6). Evil and ignorance often come in a package.

Further, the Master promised that if we would keep our hearts pure we "shall see God" in the next world (Job 19:26-27; 1 Corinthians 13:12; Hebrews 12:14). "It is not yet made manifest" (1 John 3:2) in a complete sense how our eyes will be changed so that we can see a spirit-being, but "we know that . . . we shall see him even as he is." His "servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face" (Revelation 22:3-4; cf. 5:13-14; 11:16-19; 2 Thessalonians 1:10).

Look for God today. You just may see Him.

Endnotes:

¹ *optanomai*, from which we get "optometrist," used 58 times in the New Testament.

² Future indicative tense in the middle voice

THINK ON GOOD THINGS

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

Habit

The only way to get rid of a bad habit is to stop it at once. If you try tapering off, this is the result. You drop the "H" and you still have . . .

A bit

You think you're getting over it by dropping a little bit of the evil thing, so you go on and drop the "A," but you still are . . .

Bit

That is to say, you are not getting on at all. You are deceiving yourself. You are just where you were. You are still bitten by the evil thing. However, you think you are progressing and so you drop the "B." But you still lack; you still have . . .

It

And "it" is the sting of habit. "It" has been the trouble all along. You are where you started. Even when you drop the "I" you still have . . .

T

Which stands for temptation. And temptation is a longer word to get rid of than habit. Better do the thing wholesale" and drop all the letters at once.

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" —1 Peter 2:11

► Why is it that opportunity always knocks, but temptation feels free to walk right in?

Kid Wisdom

A teacher was giving a lesson on the circulation of the blood. Trying to make the matter clearer, she said, "Now, class, if I stood on my head, the blood, as you know, would run into it, and I would turn red in the face." "Yes," the class said. "Then why is it that while I am standing upright in the ordinary position the blood does not run into my feet?" A little fellow shouted, "Cause your feet aren't empty."

"Rejoice with me . . ." —Luke 15:6

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	— Revelation 2:10



What Is God Telling Me?



What is God telling me with the problems He permits in my life? The problems we face will either defeat us or develop us, depending on how we respond to them. Unfortunately, most people fail to see how God wants to use problems for good in their lives. They react foolishly and resent their problems rather than pausing to consider what benefit they might bring.

Here are five ways God wants to use the problems in our lives:

1. God uses problems to DIRECT us. Sometimes God must light a fire under us to get us moving. Problems often point us in a new direction and motivate us to change our ways (Proverbs 20:30).

2. God uses problems to INSPECT us. People are like tea bags. If you want to know what's inside them, just drop them into hot water! Has God ever tested your faith with a problem? What do problems reveal about you? "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (James 1:2-3).

3. God uses problems to CORRECT us. Some lessons we learn only through pain and failure. It's likely that as a child our parents told us not to touch a hot stove, but we probably learned by being burned. Sometimes we only learn the value of something like health, money, or a relationship by losing it. "My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes. My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness" (Psalm 119:71-72).

4. God uses problems to PROTECT us. A problem can be a blessing in disguise if it prevents you from being harmed by something more serious. Last year a friend was fired for refusing to do something unethical that his boss had asked him to do. His unemployment was a problem—but it saved him from being convicted and sent to prison a year later when management's actions were eventually discovered. Joseph said ". . . ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good . . ." (Genesis 50:20).

5. God uses problems to PERFECT us. Problems, when responded to correctly, are character builders. God is far more interested in your character than your comfort. Your relationship to God and your character are the only two things you're going to take with you into eternity. "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope" (Romans 5:3-4).

Here's the point: God is at work in our lives—even when you do not recognize it or understand it. However, it is much easier and profitable when you cooperate with Him.

Internet Humor

My brother-in-law has a great e-mail address. It starts PS81_10b@, to represent the second half of the Bible verse Psalms 81:10, which states "Open wide your mouth and I will fill it." By the way, he's a dentist.

—submitted by Jeanne Warsing, February 2005 edition of *Reader's Digest*

"Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing . . ."
—Psalm 126:2

The



HOME PAGE

Great Things Little Children Learned the Hard Way

- ▶ No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize a cat.
- ▶ When your Mom is mad at your Dad, don't let her brush your hair.
- ▶ If your sister hits you, don't hit her back. They always catch the second person.
- ▶ You can't trust dogs to watch your food.
- ▶ You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.
- ▶ Never ask your 3-year-old brother to hold a tomato.
- ▶ Don't sneeze when someone is cutting your hair.
- ▶ Never hold a Dust-Buster and a cat at the same time.
- ▶ Don't wear polka-dot underwear under white shorts.
- ▶ The best place to be when you're sad is Grandpa's lap.



Well Said . . .

"If religious books are not widely circulated among the masses in this country, I do not know what is going to become of us as a nation. If truth be not diffused, error will be; if God and His Word are not known and received, the devil and his works will gain the ascendancy; if the evangelical volume does not reach every hamlet, the pages of a corrupt and licentious literature will; if the power of the Gospel is not felt throughout the length and breadth of the land, anarchy and misrule, degradation and misery, corruption and darkness, will reign without mitigation or end." —Daniel Webster

- ▶ Failure is frequently the path of least persistence.
- ▶ A child is a person who can't understand why someone would give away a perfectly good kitten. —Doug Larson

"Think on good things . . ." —Philippians 4:8

The Keeper of the Spring

Peter Marshall told of a town whose water supply came from a spring high up the mountain above it. The town paid a mountain man to keep the spring clean of leaves, limbs, and other debris. In an economy move, they decided to cut out the service. At first, no one noticed any difference. Gradually, however, the spring became polluted and the townspeople paid a terribly high price in sickness, misery, and death.

Christian marriage is "the keeper of the spring." Henry W. Grady, a journalist, decided to travel to Washington, D.C., to write a series of articles about "The Capitol of America." On the way, he stopped overnight at a farm home. That changed his entire outlook. He wrote, "The home is the capitol of America." The major ills of today's society can be traced to the breakdown of the home. Living together without marriage, "marriages" between those of the same sex, divorce, illegitimate children, and marital infidelity are all so commonplace they don't even make the news.

God planned the home for mankind's benefit and well being and His own glory (Genesis 2:18-25). He intended it to be "the keeper of the spring" for all humanity.

THE HOME WAS PLANNED FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE HUMAN RACE (Genesis 1:28) Humanity began by miracle but was to be continued by law. Of course, children can be produced outside marriage and even without the benefit of a home, but only by paying a price in unhappiness and incurring God's righteous wrath (Hebrews 13:4). The reproduction of the human race is intended as a blessing, not a curse (Psalm 127:3-5). Abortion, unwanted and unloved children, tears, shame, disgrace, and huge welfare rolls are the payment for removing "the keeper of the spring."

THE HOME WAS PLANNED FOR MEETING THE NEEDS OF MEN AND WOMEN. The deep-seated drives and hungers of mankind are God-given. There are physical needs (1 Corinthians 7:1-4), to be sure. From the dawn of time, God's blessing has been given to the marriage bed. But the needs of mankind are more than merely physical. They are deep and complex. No "one-night stand" or visit to a brothel can meet our deepest needs. Neither can two people living together in sin hope to find the long-term satisfaction God intended. The basic unhappiness many feel stems from the absence of "the keeper of the spring."

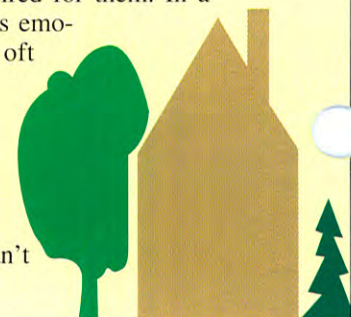
THE HOME WAS PLANNED FOR THE CREATION OF A CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER. In 1 Peter 3, Simon Peter discusses Christian character. In the first six verses, he discusses the subjection of godly women to their husbands. The most unhappy people in the world are those in whose lives there are no rules. In turn, husbands are to dwell with wives according to knowledge, giving them honor (3:7-9). To be a good husband, a man needs to learn much about himself, about woman, and about God. Sadly many have never learned and could care less that they do not know. For the blessing of living with a godly woman, a husband should be thankful. He should show it and say it. "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD" (Proverbs 18:22). Their lives thus shared, they are heirs together of the grace of life. A word of warning: failure to so live hinders prayer (3:9)! How we need "the keeper of the spring!"

THE HOME WAS PLANNED FOR THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN. Children must be trained (Ephesians 6:1-4; Proverbs 22:6). Some train their horses or dogs better than they train their children. Training requires love, patience, discipline, and time—lots of time! Think of all the values children must learn. They must learn that there are things that must be done on time and done right. They must learn the value of Christian virtues (Galatians 3:22-23; 2 Peter 1:5-8). Others may teach facts, but parents have the best opportunity to instill values. When lawlessness, destruction, lying, cheating, and stealing are all commonplace, we need to be "the keeper of the spring."

THE HOME WAS PLANNED FOR A SHARED LIFE AND AS A HAVEN OF SAFETY AND RECUPERATION. One's home should be his/her castle. We all need a place where we can go to be "refreshed." Bars, honkey tonks, and "happy hours" all grew out of people needing a haven but not having the home God desired for them. In a Christian home and in Christian companionship, there is emotional refreshment. Paul said, "Onesiphorus hath oft refreshed me" (2 Timothy 1:16). How we need it!

Let's all vote to bring back "the keeper of the spring."

A little girl had just finished her first week of school. "I'm just wasting my time," she said to her mother. "I can't read, I can't write, and they won't let me talk!"





What does the Bible say about Spouse Abuse?



The Bible condemns spouse abuse by demanding a lifestyle of love and compassion, which rules out violence in the home. Whether abuse is mental, physical, or verbal, abuse does not fit with the Christian lifestyle. No member of the home has a right to hurt other family members.

Paul tells husbands, "Love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it . . . So ought men to love their

wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church" (Ephesians 5:25, 28-29). If a husband loves his wife as Christ loved the church, he will not consider abusing his wife. Christ gave Himself for the church, and loves and nourishes it. As they follow His example, husbands will love and nourish their wives. Abuse denies love and diminishes the wife. As Adam received Eve, his wife, he said, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). A man who abuses his wife acts as if he hates his own flesh, because he and his wife share this "one flesh" relationship.

Paul wrote, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing" (Ephesians 5:22-24). Some men have, unfortunately, taken their position as head of the household as license to abuse wives and children. Submission does *not* give permission for abuse.

In the verse preceding his admonition to wives to "submit yourselves unto your own husbands," Paul wrote of "submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Ephesians 5:21). Neither the husband nor the wife is to "lord" authority over the other, but both are to mutually submit to one another in love. Submission does not allow or condone abuse, or protect an abuser from the consequences of his actions.

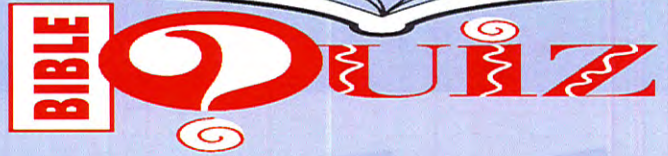
Peter amplifies the proper view of submission. "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear" (1 Peter 3:1-2). He adds that the Christian woman who adorns herself with a meek (strength under control) and quiet spirit may win her non-Christian husband (1 Peter 3:3-6). "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Peter 3:7). The godly husband who properly honors his wife will dwell with her in peace and love, and would never consider hurting her.

The church must help families learn to live in love and peace, without violence.

—Bob Prichard, P. O. Box 3071, Oxford, AL 36203



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Send us your answers (address on front). We'll grade and return all entries and randomly select one to receive a Bible, New Testament cassettes, or Bible Dictionary.

Name: _____

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Questions Taken from the King James Version

Starts with the Letter "V"

Find answers in Genesis 4:12; 27:1-33; Leviticus 11:13-14; Esther 1:9-22; Nehemiah 2:13; Proverbs 22:8; 31:10; Ecclesiastes 5:5; Matthew 27:34, 51; Mark 7:7; Luke 1:27; John 15:1; Acts 9:15; 28:3-5; Romans 1:26; Ephesians 4:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Peter 2:8; 1 John 5:4.

1. Cain's curse included being a _____ in the earth.
2. Following men's traditions makes worship _____.
3. One of the entrances into Jerusalem was the _____ Gate.
4. "He that soweth iniquity shall reap _____."
5. _____ Modest Queen of Ahasuerus, deposed
6. The _____ of the temple was rent (torn) when Jesus died.
7. Jesus will take "_____ on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."
8. _____ Isaac's favorite dish
9. The Lord said Saul was "a chosen _____ unto me."
10. Seeing Sodom's wickedness, _____ Lot's soul.
11. This is the _____ that overcometh the world, even our faith.
12. Homosexual activity is described as _____ affection.
13. "I am the true _____, and my Father is the husbandman."
14. Jesus was given _____ to drink mingled with gall on the cross.
15. Paul was bitten by a _____ while gathering sticks.
16. Jesus was born of the _____ Mary.
17. A _____ woman's price is far above rubies.
18. "Walk worthy of the _____ wherewith ye are called."
19. "Better is it that thou shouldest not _____, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."
20. _____ Type of unclean bird under Moses' Law

Bible Rulers

Find answers in 1 Samuel 31:4; 2 Samuel 5:4; 2 Kings 20:5-6; 22:1; Esther 2:16-17; Acts 12:20-23 (not in order).

1. _____ Smote by the angel of the Lord and eaten of worms.
2. _____ Reigned for 31 years after becoming king at age 8.
3. _____ King who married Esther.
4. _____ King who killed himself by falling on his sword.
5. _____ King who had fifteen years added to his days.
6. _____ King who told his son, "I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man."
7. _____ Reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.

Answers to Last Issue: Starts with the Letter "G": 1. Gabbatha (John 19:13); 2. Gabriel (Luke 1:26-38); 3. Gaius (3 John 1-5); 4. Galatia (1 Peter 1:1); 5. Galatians (1:6-9); 6. Galilee (John 6:1); 7. Gallio (Acts 18:12-17); 8. Gallows (Esther 7:9-10); 9. Gamaliel (Acts 22:3); 10. Garden (Genesis 2:15); 11. Gardener (John 20:15-16); 12. Galic (Numbers 11:5); 13. Gate (Matthew 7:13-14); 14. Gath (1 Samuel 17:4); 15. Gaza (Judges 16:1-3); 16. Gehazi (2 Kings 5:25); 17. Genesis 1:26; 3:1-6); 18. Gentiles (Galatians 3:14); 19. Gentle (2 Timothy 2:24); 20. Gerah (Exodus 30:13); 21. Gershon (Exodus 6:16); 22. Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-56); 23. Gideon (Judges 8:35); 24. Gilboa (1 Samuel 31:1-7); 25. Gilgal (1 Samuel 11:15); 26. Gilead (1 Samuel 17:1); 27. Glutton (Matthew 11:19); 28. Gold (Genesis 2:11-12); 29. Golgotha (Matthew 27:33-35); 30. Goliath (1 Samuel 17:50); 31. Gomorrah (Genesis 19:23-29); 32. Gopher (Genesis 6:14); 33. Gospel (Romans 1:16); 34. Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9); 35. Grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5).



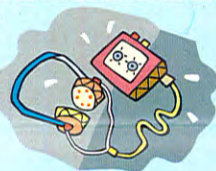
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“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” —2 Timothy 2:15



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In the Interest of Christian UNITY



Tell Me More About JESUS

Identifying Marks: Where did the Lord's Church Begin?



Jesus told Peter, “. . . upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). Note that Jesus stated, “I will build my **church**”—not churches.

With so many religious organizations in the world today, how does one identify that church—the one Lord promised to build?

We are able to identify something by the characteristics it possesses. For instance, imagine a parking lot filled with vehicles. Someone tells you the identifying characteristics of one automobile. Could you find the one described?

Let us say those characteristics are a Ford Explorer, blue, with Goodyear tires, and tinted windows. You locate an automobile with all of those characteristics except it had Michelin tires; is that the vehicle? No. Or, you found one that fits every description, except it does not have tinted windows; is that the automobile? No. All characteristics must be met to have *the* vehicle.

In the New Testament, we are given the characteristics that describe Christ's church. First, consider **the time and place of the establishment of the Lord's church**. The Scriptures teach that the church was established in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Prior to Pentecost, the kingdom (or the church) is mentioned in the Bible as being in the future. In Jesus' statement in Matthew 16:18 He said, “. . . I will build my church.” “Will build” is future tense; thus, the church had not yet been established. John the Baptist, Christ's forerunner, taught, “Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17). “At hand” meant it was near; it was not far off.

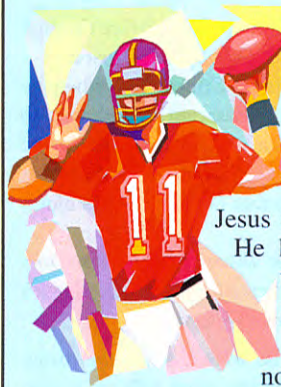
The Lord informed His disciples that the kingdom would come with power while some of them were yet alive. “There be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power” (Mark 9:1).

Hundreds of years earlier, Isaiah (2:2-3) and Micah (4:1-2) had prophesied of the going forth of “the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” Prophecy of the beginning place, Jerusalem, is also written in Zechariah 1:16, “Therefore thus saith the Lord; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it.” In this passage, “my house” refers to “the house of God, which is the church of the living God” (1 Timothy 3:15).

Following His resurrection and just before His ascension, Christ told His disciples, “ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you” (Acts 1:8). He told them to preach “in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47).

here? At Jerusalem (Acts 2:1-4). The prophecies regarding times and place of the establishment of the church had been fulfilled. After the Day of Pentecost, the church is always mentioned in Scripture as being in existence. Therefore, any religious organization that had its beginning at some other time or some other place cannot be the Lord's church. —Andy Cates, Cottondale, Alabama

Jesus, the Recruiter



Most college coaches recruit in about the same manner. They write letters and make calls and visits. They send overnight packages. They bring good players in for a visit and show them the advantages of coming to their particular school. They may also point out why they shouldn't go to other schools.

Jesus Christ once ran a “school;” and, of course, He had to recruit students. He was the most unusual recruiter who ever lived.

▶ He was unusual in that He wanted only twelve men (Matthew 10:1). He did not want a hundred or a thousand.

▶ He was unusual because He did not look at physical size or speed or prior experience. He looked at the heart (John 2:25).

▶ He was unusual because He recruited not for four years, but for a lifetime. He asked each to give the rest of his life to His cause (Luke 9:62).

▶ He was unusual because He recruited men that no one else seemed to want. The world could not see the value in these men (Acts 4:13).

▶ He was unusual because when He invited them for a visit it was a lowly place—not some grand facility (John 1:39).

▶ He was unusual because He chose men in spite of their flaws and their weaknesses. He wanted to teach and train them (John 1:42).

▶ He was an unusual recruiter because of what He offered them. Jesus said, “The foxes have holes and the birds of the heavens have nests, but the Son of Man hath not place to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20). Ultimately, He told them they would have eternal life.

▶ He was unusual in that He told the twelve the truth. Most coaches have to promise they are going to be there for years. Jesus told them that He would have to die and they would have to carry on (John 12:32-33). He told them there would be hardships and persecutions (Mark 13:9).

▶ He was unusual because of what He recruited them to do—to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15).

▶ He was unusual in that He told them He would be with them until the end of the world (Matthew 28:20). Many coaches are pretty well through with players when they graduate.

▶ He was an unusual recruiter in that no team ever achieved such success and became immortalized in the process (Colossians 1:23).

Only a Little Taller

It was said of Abraham Lincoln, “He was everybody, only a little taller.” Lincoln was a great person, but Jesus fits the description better. Nineteen centuries after His sojourn on earth, His shadow is larger than ever before. No one can measure His height and influence. —*The Book of Jesus*, Calvin Miller, p. 41



I Don't Have Any Clothes . . .

Daniel Defoe gave some good advice through his fictitious character Robinson Crusoe.

The first thing Crusoe did when he found himself on a deserted island was to make out a list. On one side of the list he wrote down all his problems. On the other side of the list he wrote down all of his blessings.

▶ On one side he wrote: *I do not have any clothes.* On the other side he wrote: *But it's warm and I don't really need any.*

▶ On one side he wrote: *All of the provisions were lost.* On the other side he wrote: *But there's plenty of fresh fruit and water on the island.*



And on down the list he went. In this fashion he discovered that for every negative aspect about his situation, there was a positive aspect, something to be thankful for.

Are you on an island of despair? Perhaps it is time to sit down and take an inventory of your blessings. Some of us may be long overdue in expressing our thanks to God.

Under all circumstances, we can say with the Psalmist: "Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness . . . To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever" (Psalm 30:4, 12).

Under all circumstances, we can resolve to, ". . . give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people" (Psalm 35:18).

Under all circumstances, we can count our blessings like David. "The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice! . . . For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance" (Psalm 21:1, 6).

Take an inventory of your blessings today and watch your worries fade away. Be thankful!

—Tom Moore