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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 19 NUMBER 3

A publication of the... Churches of Christ

Founder: Christ – Mt. 16:18
Place: Jerusalem – Isa. 2:1-3, Acts 2:5
Time: A.D. 33 – Dan. 2:44, Acts 2
Head: Christ – Eph. 1:22
Organization:

Christ as head – Eph. 5:23
Elders oversee local church –
Heb. 13:17, Titus 1:5
Deacons as servants –
Acts 6:1-6, 1 Tim. 3:8-13
Members compose body –
Col. 1:2

Name (group):
Church of God – Eph. 3:15
Body of Christ – Eph. 1:22-23
Churches of Christ – Rm. 16:16
Bride of Christ – Rm. 7:4

Name (individuals):
Disciples – John 15:8
Saints – Rm. 1:7
Brethren – Lk. 8:21
Children of God – Gal. 4:26
Christian – Acts 11:25-26

Creed: Jesus/Bible – Acts 8:37
Rule of Faith & Practice:
Word of God – 2 Tim. 3:16-17

Worship: Jn. 4:24
Sing – Eph. 5:19
Pray – Acts 2:42; 1 Thes. 5:17
Teach – Acts 5:42
Communion – 1 Cor. 1:23-26
Contribute – 1 Cor. 16:1-2

Mission: Save Souls – 1 Tim. 4:16
Warning: Be Faithful – 2 John 9

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There is inestimable value in possessing salvation (Matthew 13:44) and added value in being confident of that salvation. God desires all of His creation to be saved (2 Peter 3:9) and none of His children to be of a doubtful mind (Luke 12:29; Philippians 4:6; 2 Timothy 1:12).

Jehovah wants us to feel “no condemnation” (Romans 8:1) and “abound in hope” (Romans 15:13). He invites us to draw near with a true heart in “full assurance of faith” (Hebrews 10:22–23). He wants us to look for and earnestly desire—not dread or be anxious about—going to live with Him (2 Peter 3:12).

First John is a book of assurance. In it, God gives criteria by which we may clearly determine whether we are saved or lost. How can we have confidence?

ASSURANCE COMES FROM WHAT IS WRITTEN—NOT WHAT IS FELT.

John wrote, “These things *have I written* unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God” (1 John 5:13).

Humans are emotional beings. This is part of being made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26). Feelings allow us to live on a higher level than both wild beasts that live by in-

stinct and domesticated animals with their limited range of attachments and affections. Our emotions allow us a richer life, but they also open us to the pains of sadness, worry, embarrassment, and doubt.

Feelings cannot be trusted as a basis of assurance. We can never know we are saved—or that we are lost—solely by how we feel.

Feelings are uncertain. Assurance resting on feelings will come and go according to emotions, circumstances, and the chemical balances in our bodies. Assurance resting on the unchanging Word is accurate and steadfast (Psalm 119:89; 1 Peter 1:25).

Feelings can produce false concern. One may feel bad about his condition yet be wrong. Jacob mourned Joseph’s death when his son was alive in Egypt (Genesis 37:34). John wrote, “If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things” (1 John 3:20). Christians can “be of good cheer,” for it shall be even as it was told us (Acts 27:25).

Feelings can produce false confidence. One may feel good about his condition yet be lost. Paul was lost when he felt saved (Acts 23:1); the Pharisee in Jesus’ parable felt good about himself, but was not justified (Luke 18:11). Today one may say, “I know I’m saved because I have a good



feeling in my heart,” but the way of man is not “in himself” (Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12). God’s word is man’s guide (Psalm 119:105; John 8:32). Speculating is a good way to lose money; it is also a sure way to lose one’s soul.

CONFIDENCE DEPENDS ON THE SPIRIT’S TESTIMONY (1 JOHN 3:24)—NOT A MAN’S ASSURANCES.

Many feel safe simply because someone told them that they were saved. They have never taken time to search the Bible for themselves (Acts 17:11; Philippians 2:12). Yet men can be wrong, even if well-meaning (Matthew 7:21–23). John warned that “many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

Assurance should instead be based on the Holy Spirit’s testimony. Paul wrote, “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:16). Does this mean we should listen for a mystical inner voice acknowledging we are saved? No, we must not make the mistake of listening to our own spirit and mistaking it for God’s Holy Spirit.

How does the Spirit bear witness, then? He inspired the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21) and uses those written words as His instrument of conviction, conversion, and assurance (Ephesians 6:17; Acts 20:32). The Spirit testifies through the gospel what a child of God is. Then a man’s spirit testifies to whether or not he is in harmony with it.

What does the Spirit say is required to be a child of God? The Scriptures record how God took care of man’s sin problem at the cross (Romans 5:8–10; 1 John 4:9, 14), and how Jesus now invites all to be free of its shackles (Matthew 11:28–30).

Since salvation is found only in Christ

(John 14:6; Acts 4:12), to be saved each must become a Christian. How does one become a Christian? The book of Acts is the New Testament book of conversions. It shows a consistent plan of salvation presented by the preachers the Spirit used to present salvation to sinners.

The Ethiopian treasurer is one example of how to be saved (read Acts 8:30–40). Since God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34), what He requires of one, He requires of all. To state it another way, what He gave the treasurer He will give to you upon the same conditions. Each man’s spirit should thus compare the Spirit’s words in this case with his own situation. The treasurer

- Learned about Jesus from the Bible (8:35–36). Have I?
- Believed in Jesus as God’s Son (8:37). Have I?
- Repented of (turned from) sins. Have I? (While this account does not mention penitence, his repentance is implied in his request and is consistent with Peter’s answer to the sinners on Pentecost [Acts 2:38; cf. Acts 17:30; Luke 13:3].)
- Confessed Christ’s deity (8:37). Have I?
- Was baptized in water (8:38). Have I? (See ‘Biblical Baptism’ on page 7.)
- Went on his way rejoicing (8:39), indicating a change had taken place, and a new life had begun. Have I?

The Spirit testifies to our spirit through this account. If one answers “yes” to each question, then he has reason for assurance. If any answers are “no,” then one should not delay to complete his obedience (2 Corinthians 6:2).

It is not more complicated than that. Each person either is or is not God’s child. Since baptism puts one into Christ (Galatians 3:27) and washes away sin

(Acts 22:16), at immersion we receive salvation both from Him and in Him (1 John 5:11; Ephesians 1:3).

The last picture we have of the treasurer is of a joyful man (Acts 8:39). What made the man in the chariot happy? His spirit was in harmony with the Holy Spirit.

CONFIDENCE COMES FROM WALKING IN THE LIGHT—NOT FROM PAST SALVATION.

John says Christians must sincerely attempt to walk daily by Scripture (1 John 1:6–10). He then explains more specifically what this means, including such things as keeping His commandments (1 John 2:2–5; cf. 3:22, 24), walking as He walked (2:6), practicing righteousness (2:29), staying pure (3:3–10), loving “in deed and in truth” (1 John 3:14–19), and overcoming worldliness (5:2–4).

Note the “if” statements in the “even” verses of 1 John 1:6–10: “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. . . . If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. . . . If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

To have fellowship with God (assurance) we must

- Avoid walking in darkness (1:6). Some Christians have little confidence in salvation because they deliberately dabble in daily sin (Matthew 6:24; 1 Kings 18:21). Conversely, the happiest people on earth are sincere believers daily walking with their Lord.
- Avoid claiming sin does not affect us (1 John 1:8). Everyone struggles with temptation (James 1:13–14).
- Avoid not admitting/confessing our sins to God (1 John 1:10).

At the same time, Jesus does not expect His followers to live perfect lives. No Christian has ever been able to live completely without sin (Romans 3:23; Psalm 19:12–14). John, a Spirit-filled apostle, included himself in this statement (“If we say we have not sinned”).

Christians do slip, through weakness, time and again. It is only when we cease to try that we lose assurance of salvation (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:10–15; 9:27; 10:12; Galatians 5:4; 1 Timothy 1:19–20; 2 Peter 1:8–11; 2:20–22). When we fall, we need not despair and give up trying. God is anxious to forgive us as we struggle to live for Him.

Note the “odd” verses now: “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 cleanseth us from all sin.... If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:7, 9).

Jesus will help His followers to do “all things” that He requires (Philippians 4:13). As “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:3–4), we are in partnership with the divine Being. He is in this with us (1 Peter 5:10).

God is not out to get us, He is out to help us (Acts 26:22; Hebrews 4:16). He is “for” us (Romans 8:31). He wants us to succeed, not

fail ... to go on to victory, not defeat ... to be saved, not lost.

Still, some faithful Christians cannot shake the feeling that they are lost. Certain personality types (perfectionists, worriers) have difficulty accepting God’s unconditional love. Even though they intellectually know they have done what is required for salvation, and even though they strive to live right, and pray sincerely when they do not, they cannot rid themselves of a “lost” feeling. They fear death. They are not convinced that God really loves them, and that He has forgiven their sins.

Nonetheless, God will base judgment on His record, not on their feelings (1 John 5:20). Sin cannot be looked at logically; it must be

looked at theologically. As one said, “Every saint has a past; every sinner has a future.” Paul, possibly the most dedicated Christian ever, had haunting memories of those he had persecuted and killed (Ephesians 3:8; 1 Timothy 1:16). Yet, on balance, he was able to live a joyful life (Philippians 4:4), trusting that Christ’s grace was more than sufficient for his history of flaws (Romans 5:20).

Helen Keller remarked, “I do not want the peace which passes understanding, I want the understanding which brings peace.” God wants us to have both (Philippians 4:6). Obedient faith is the root; complete assurance is the flower.

To hear sermons by Allen Webster on this topic, go to www.HouseToHouse.com.

Don't GIVE UP

Babe Ruth struck out 1,333 times. But we remember him for his 714 home runs. Cy Young, one of the greatest pitchers, won 511 games. But few know he also lost more games than any pitcher (316).

Abraham Lincoln was badly beaten when he ran for the legislature. He then failed in business and spent seventeen years paying off the debt. He failed in an effort to get an appointment to the U.S. Land Office. He was defeated in his race for Senate, and again in his effort to be elected Vice-President. He had one setback after another, but eventually became the President of the United States. He was not a “quitter.” He had stickability.

Many Christians “believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away” (Luke 8:13). Like Israel we have a tendency to forget God (Jeremiah 2:32). In most communities, there are those who once were faithful but are not now. Maybe they do not attend classes, night services, or other meetings as they once did. They have ceased to participate in the work of the local church. Their light has gone out (Matthew 5:14–16). They have virtually quit. But a winner never quits, and a quitter never wins.

Let's be doers—not quitters! —Clarence DeLoach, Jr. (adapted for space)



“Be not weary in well doing.”

GALATIANS 6:9

He Had No Servants

Jesus had no servants, yet they called Him Master.

He had no degree, yet they called Him Teacher.

He had no medicines, yet they called Him Healer.

He had no army, yet kings feared Him.

He won no military battles, yet He conquered the world.

He committed no crime, but they crucified Him.

He was buried in a tomb, yet He lives today. —Author Unknown

“Follow me.”

LUKE 9:23



Home PAGE



Start Early, Do More

A neurologist at the Children's Hospital of Michigan has done research that reveals the great capacity of growing human brains to absorb information.

He discovered that by age 2, the infant's cortex is operating at adult levels. At age 4, that child's brain is twice as active as the adult brain and continues at that rate until 10, when it begins to slow down. By 16, it has slacked off to the pace at which it continues through adulthood.

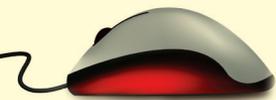
God's wisdom is seen in His stressing the importance of instilling in children the truths of His Word at an early age (Proverbs 22:6; Deuteronomy 6:4-7). By exposing them to a large quantity of Bible teaching in their early years, we can be instrumental in programming their "mental computers" so that they know the mind of God and think as He does.

As they reach adulthood, they can then choose to have good, honest hearts that will make them followers of the Lord (Luke 8:15). —Mike Mayes



"It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."

MATTHEW 18:14



For more material on the home and family, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, grandparents, and family finances, go to www.housetohouse.com.

If Eli Could Speak to Parents

First Samuel tells us of the life of Eli. He was the high priest of Israel. He loved God and was very sensitive to His word.

During his time, spiritual conditions were not good. People mocked God and lived immoral lives. Tragically, Eli's sons became ungodly. They were disrespectful to God in their worship and immoral in their conduct (1 Samuel 2:12-25).

For whatever reason, Eli failed to restrain and discipline his sons (1 Samuel 2:12-17, 29). Because of this lack of restraint, his children became careless and undisciplined, and they died as ungodly men.

We live in a very busy world. Many parents are so busy that they also fail to restrain their children. Thus many children have grown up to disrespect God in their worship and in the way they live.

If Eli were here today, in hindsight he might tell parents:

"Dedicate Yourself to God." Our dedication must come from within and not consist of just a few "noticeable" acts. Whether at home, work, or play, we should live like a child of God. Joshua knew his family could tell if his life was a fake. Therefore his faith was seen in his daily living: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

"Give Your Family the Attention They Deserve and Need." Helping our family see the joys of Christian living should be a supreme objective. Many good people fail to give children the spiritual nourishment they need. God instructed parents to "bring" their children up, not "send" them up (Ephesians 6:4).

"Restraint Is Necessary to Please God." Eli knew his sons were wrong and did nothing about it. Many homes today have this problem. Some parents listen more to some "noted psychiatrist" than to God. God's truth never changes (John 17:17; Malachi 3:6). Current fads may seem better, but what if the "expert" is wrong? Solomon said, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). Therefore parents take heed when God says, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." "The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness" (Proverbs 19:18; 29:15; Hebrews 12:11).

"You Will Pay the Price if You Fail." God tells us: "The way of transgressors is hard" and, "The wages of sin is death" (Proverbs 13:15; Romans 6:23). Eli's sons lived and died in rebellion to God. Their lives brought them misery and Eli heartache. The same destiny is true for everyone who fails to heed God's way. The price we pay will be here and in eternity.

Eli cannot speak to us today, but through the Bible, God still does (Psalm 119:160; 1 Timothy 4:16). We only have one opportunity to raise our children right. Let's do it God's way. —Ferman Carpenter, Austin, Texas

"Chasten . . . while there is hope"

PROVERBS 19:18



THE 3 DISPENSATIONS OF BIBLE HISTORY

Dispensation:
a period of time a
divine law is in force.

Dispensation	1	2	3
Dispensation	Patriarchal Age (Genesis 1–Exodus 20)	The Mosaic Age (Exodus 20–Acts 1)	The Christian Age (Acts 2–Revelation)
Time Period	Creation to Moses (approximately 4000–1500 BC)	From Moses to Christ (1500 BC–AD 33)	From Christ unto eternity (AD 33–end of time)
Characteristics	No specific day of worship No specific priesthood No specific place of worship Animal sacrifice No written law (law was spoken to fathers who passed down to descendants)	Sabbath worship (Exodus 20:8–11) Levites as priests (Numbers 3:5–13) Temple worship Animal sacrifice (Deuteronomy 12:1–14) Written law (Old Testament, given at Sinai, Exodus 20:1–17)	Sunday worship (Acts 20:7) All Christians compose priesthood (1 Peter 2:1–10) Worship in spirit/truth (John 4:23–24) Christ's sacrifice (Hebrews 9:22; 10:4; Acts 20:28) Written law (New Testament, James 1:25; Hebrews 7:19)
Covenant	Promise made (Genesis 12:1–3)	Promise restated (Exodus 19:3–8)	Promise fulfilled (2 Corinthians 1:20; Titus 2:11–12)
Major Figures	Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob	Moses, David, Isaiah	Jesus, The Apostles
Scope	Family	Nation of Israel	Universal

Bible QUIZ VOLUME 19:3

Send us your answers (address on front) to receive a FREE Bible bookmark. We'll grade and return your questions and enclose the Quick Scriptures: Salvation bookmark as a way of saying "thanks" for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____

Questions Taken from the King James Version

Answers to Last Issue: *Bible Events:* 1. Ark of Covenant (1 Samuel 4:4); 2. Great gain (1 Timothy 6:6); 3. Oxen, sheep (2 Chronicles 7:5); 4. Now (2 Corinthians 6:2); 5. Paradise (2 Corinthians 12:4); 6. Angels (2 Thessalonians 1:7); 7. Be baptized (Acts 10:48); 8. A god (Acts 14:11); 9. Earthquake (Acts 16:26); 10. Resurrection (Acts 17:32); 11. Air (1 Thessalonians 4:17); 12. Judgment seat (2 Corinthians 5:10); 13. Pentecost (Acts 2:1); 14. Basket (Acts 9:25); 15. Blinded him (Acts 13:11); 16. Fell out, window (Acts 20:9); 17. Speak to people (Acts 21:39); 18. He was a Roman (Acts 22:26); 19. He had appealed to Caesar (Acts 26:32); 20. Kill them (Acts 27:42).

Tell Me More about Jesus

Directions: Find the answers in Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2; Matthew 26:36; Mark 1; Luke 1:26–27; 2:42; 4:1–13, 17; 5:32; 22:57–62; John 11:14, 35; 18:1; 19:20; Acts 4:10–12; Galatians 2:20; 5:1; Philippians 4:13; Hebrews 2:9; 5:10; 1 John 1:7.

- How many times did the devil tempt Jesus after the forty day fast? _____
- What stone became the head of the corner? _____
- Micah prophesied that a ruler would come from where? _____
- Who foretold the birth of Jesus to Mary? _____
- How old was Jesus when He was left behind at the temple in Jerusalem? _____
- Paul said, "I am _____ with Christ, nevertheless I live."
- We are to stand fast in the _____ by which Christ has made us free.
- Jesus tasted of _____ for every man.
- Christ is a high priest after the order of _____
- When Jesus returned to the synagogue after His temptation, from which book was He asked to read? _____
- _____ In Mark 1, which of the following is not true of John the Baptist? A. He was clothed with camel's hair; B. Jesus baptized him; C. He baptized Jesus; D. He ate locusts.
- The title over Jesus' cross was in what three languages? _____
- After Jesus was arrested, who denied three times that he knew Jesus? _____
- Who gives us strength to do all things? _____
- Who did Jesus come to call to repentance? _____
- Where did Jesus go to pray before He was arrested? _____
- According to Romans 2:4, what does God's goodness lead us to? _____
- Isaiah predicted that Christ would be born of what? _____
- Jesus wept at the death of which friend? _____
- What cleanseth us from all sin? _____

27 books
 260 Chapters
 7,957 Verses
 180,552 Words
 838,380 Letters
 Smallest book: **3 John**
 Largest book: **Luke**
 Middle book: **2 Thessalonians**
 Middle chapters: **Romans 8, 9**
 Middle verse: **Acts 27:17**
 Shortest verse: **John 11:35**
 Longest verse: **Revelation 20:4**
 Longest chapter: **Luke 1**

—Information from BibleWorks software

New Testament Statistics

"Blessed is he that readeth."

REVELATION 1:3

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front of House to House / Heart to Heart.

Recommended Resource



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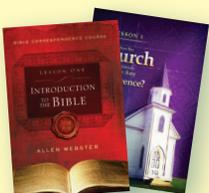
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Phone: _____

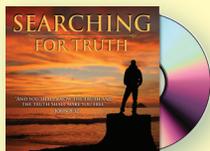
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New Tracts!



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Gambling: The Love of Money



Don't Pay the Tuition and Fail to Get the Diploma (Suffering)



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How to Get More Time Out of Your Day



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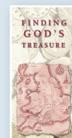
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Anger, Violence, and Murder



The Reason We Have Two Ears and One Mouth



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Lonely

Don't see the topic you need? Visit www.housetohouse.com for more subjects.

VOLUME 19:3



Consider Jesus

As confessed by those who saw Him —

John the Baptist: “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

Nathaniel: “The Son of God! . . . the King of Israel!” (John 1:49).

Nicodemus: “A teacher come from God” (John 3:2).

The Five Thousand: “This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world” (John 6:14).

Peter: “Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:69).

Thomas: “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28).

Paul: “The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (1 Timothy 6:15).

John: “Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth” (Revelation 1:5).

As professed by Jesus Himself—

“I am the bread of life” (John 6:35).

“I am the light of the world (John 8:12).

“I am the door” (John 10:9).

“I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11).

“I am the resurrection, and the life” (John 11:25).

“I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6).

“I am the true vine” (John 15:1).

“I am” (a declaration that He is eternal, that is, God) (John 8:58).

These statements were verified by His resurrection (cf. Romans 1:4).

A professed unbeliever H. G. Wells said, “I am an historian, I am not a believer, but I must confess as a historian that this penniless preacher from Nazareth is irrevocably the very center of history. Jesus Christ is easily the most dominant figure in all history.” —adapted from Mark Copeland

“I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God”

JOHN 11:27

Biblical Baptism Must Have

The Right Candidate:

a penitent believer (Acts 2:38; 8:36).

The Right Purpose:

salvation, forgiveness (Mark 16:16).

The Right Method:

immersion (Acts 8:38; Romans 6:1–4).

The Right Authority:

into the name of Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

Some have the right authority and purpose, but miss the candidate and method.

Others have the right method, authority, and candidate, but miss the purpose.

Still others may have the right candidate, method, and purpose, but miss the authority—preaching a different Jesus.



Toy Boat



Tom had just finished making a toy boat. He carried it to the river and let out the string tied to it. He admired how smoothly it cut through the water. Suddenly, a strong current took hold. Tom tried to pull his boat back, but the string snapped. He sprinted along the bank to catch it, but soon his boat drifted out of sight. He desperately searched until dark. Unsuccessful, he finally gave up.

Days later as he walked home from school, Tom passed a toy store and a boat caught his eye. He pressed his face against the window for a better look. Sure enough, it was his lost boat. He ran inside and told the manager, "Sir, that's my boat in your window. I made it myself."

The manager replied, "Sorry, son, but someone else brought it in this morning. If you want it, you'll have to buy it." Tom hurried home and counted all of his money; he had just enough. He rushed back to the store and purchased his beloved boat. As he walked home, he held it tightly to his chest and said, "Now you're twice mine. First I made you, and now I bought you."

—Good News Publishers, "The Boy Who Lost His Boat"

This story illustrates God's relationship with us. He designed, crafted, and breathed life into each of us. Sadly, people drifted from Him on the sweeping currents of sin. To bring us back, God paid a substantial price—He gave His own Son to die (John 3:16). With that sacrifice God now owns us twice. He made us and He bought us.



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