

House to House volume 15 NUMBER 2 WWW.housetohouse.com House to House to House WWW.housetohouse.com House to House Figure 15 NUMBER 2 WWW.housetohouse.com



I've never seen a photo, a video, a marble bust, or so much as a rock etching to show what Jesus really looked like

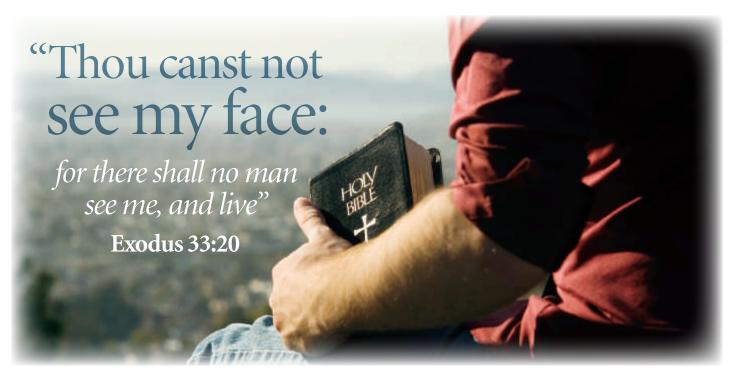
Yet I have no doubt that Jesus lived, and that He is the Son of God (John 20:30–31). I firmly believe that He is in heaven and that He will come back one day (Acts 1:9–11; John 14:1–2). No vision of Him is necessary right now.

• We do not need to see Him in order to believe in Him. We "walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). Faith is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).

- We do not need to see Him in order to be blessed by Him: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29).
- We do not need to see Him in order to love Him: "Whom having not seen, ye love" (1 Peter 1:8).

But I still want to see Him!

The Bible promises that one day we will. John wrote, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him" (Revelation 1:7). Not only will Christians see Him, but we will get to remain in His presence! "And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18). >>



What would it have been like to have lived two thousand years ago and to have seen Jesus? One who did see Him was an old man named Simeon. Simeon lived in Jerusalem and had been told by the Holy Spirit that he would not die until "he had seen the Lord's Christ" (Luke 2:26). When Joseph and Mary took baby Jesus to the temple, Simeon met them. The historian Luke records the scene: "Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke 2:28-30). One day we too will lay eyes on Him for the first time, and like Simeon it will be the highlight of our lives.

There is a sense in which we "see" deity now. We see Christ through His Word and His world (Psalm 19). We speak of seeing God in the face of a child, the flower of the field, the precision of the planetary orbits, and the complexity of DNA. Sir Isaac Newton said that he could take his telescope and look millions of miles into space. "But when I lay it aside, go into my room, shut the door, and get down on my knees in earnest prayer, I see more of Heaven and feel closer to the Lord than if I were assisted by all the telescopes on earth" (http://www.sermoncrafters.org/).

The New Testament holds out the hope for more than this—that we can

one day see God (Hebrews 12:14). Moses was once allowed to see the goodness, glory, and back of God (Exodus 33:17-23), but he was warned, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live" (33:20). The Bible makes it clear that "no man hath seen God at any time" (John 1:18; cf. Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:27). Job believed he would see God: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:25–26). Jesus promised us: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). John confirms that in heaven we will be allowed to see God's face (Revelation 22:4).

William M. Dyke became blind at age ten. Nonetheless, he grew into an intelligent, witty, and handsome young man. While attending graduate school in England, he became engaged to an English admiral's daughter. The admiral insisted that William have a new procedure to restore his sight. Hoping against hope, William wanted the gauze removed from his eyes during the wedding, so the first thing he saw would be his bride's face. As she came down the aisle, William's father unwound the bandages—not knowing if the operation was successful. When the last layer came off

William looked into his bride's face for the first time. He said: "You are more beautiful than I ever imagined."

Like this young groom, we will one day see our Beloved for the first time during a wedding (Revelation 19:9). We shall "look upon his face" (Revelation 22:3-4). When Jesus came the first time He had "no form nor comeliness" and "no beauty that we should desire him" (Isaiah 53:2). He visited earth from heaven in a form that most did not recognize (John 1:10-14). Yet when He appears the second time, Jesus will be more beautiful than any picture ever painted of Him or any thought ever imagined of Him. It will be worth the years of waiting to one day "see him as he is" (1 John 3:1-2).

During the time of William E. Gladstone, many people would travel across the Atlantic Ocean just to look on his face. Can you think of a more thrilling thought than that our eyes will look upon the face of God's Son who redeemed us from our sins?

What a day that will be,
When my Jesus I shall see;
And I look upon His face,
The One who saved me by His grace,
When He takes me by the hand,
And leads me through the Promised
Land;

What a day, glorious day that will be.

I'm Awfully Well for the Shape I'm In

There's nothing whatever the matter with me; I'm just as healthy as I can be. I have arthritis in both of my knees; And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze. My pulse is weak, and my blood is thin, But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

Arch supports I have for my feet, Or I wouldn't be able to walk on the street. Sleep is denied me night after night, And every morning I look a sight. My memory is failing; my head is in a spin, But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

The moral is, as this tale was to unfold, That for you and me who are growing old, It is better to say, "I'm fine," with a grin, Than to let them know the shape we're in.

—Author Unknown

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt" **COLOSSIANS 4:6**

How good is it that God above has never gone on strike, Because He was not treated fair or saw things He didn't like. If God If only once He's given up Said, "That's it, I'm through!" Should

"I've had enough of those on Earth, so this is what I'll do. I'll give my orders to the sun-

Cut off the heat supply!" "And to the moon—give no

Light, and run the oceans dry.

Then just to make things really Tough and put the pressure on, Turn off the vital oxygen, till every Breath is gone!"

You know He would be justified, if Fairness was the game.

For no one has been more abused or met with more disdain Than God; and yet He carries on, Supplying you and me With all the favors of His grace, And everything for free. Men say they want a better And so on strike they go,

But what a deal we've given

To whom all things we owe.

We don't care whom we hurt, to Gain the things we like; God should go on strike.

But what a mess we'd all be in, if

"He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things"

Finding Time for the Bible

- Put a Bible under your pillow to read each night before you go to sleep.
- Wake up ten minutes earlier each morning.
- Turn off the TV at 8:00 p.m. each night and read to your children.
- Read a few verses at mealtime when the family is together.
- Talk less to have a few more minutes to
- Keep a Bible in the kitchen, to read while waiting for food to cook or for water to boil, or near the phone, to read while on
- Carry a Bible in your purse or pocket, to read while waiting in line for doctors or when arriving early.
- Take a Bible on trips and read on a plane or in a hotel.

Don't just own a Bible—read it!

"Blessed is he that readeth" **REVELATION 1:3**



Tough Service

One Sunday morning, the preacher noticed little Alex standing in the church foyer staring up at a large plaque. It was covered with names and had small flags mounted on either side of it. The preacher walked over, stood beside the boy, and said quietly, "Good morning, Alex."

"Good morning, Preacher," he replied, still focused on the plaque.

"Preacher, what is this?"

"Well son, it's a memorial to all the young men and women who died in the service." Soberly, they just stood together, staring at the large plaque. Finally, little Alex's voice, barely audible and trembling with fear

"Which service . . . the 9:30 or the 10:30?" —Author Unknown

> "A merry heart doeth good" PROVERBS 17:22



How Families Grow Spiritually

You don't grow a Christian family by going through a daily ritual. But neither do you grow one without planning and definite cultivation. Here are some proven activities that help a family grow spiritually.

- Attending church together (Hebrews 10:25).
- Worship together in daily devotionals (1 Chronicles 23:30).
- Giving thanks to God at mealtimes (1 Timothy 4:4).
- Having fun together (Ecclesiastes 9:9).
- Expressing love and affection openly and freely (Proverbs 16:24).
- Undergirding and supporting each other's activities and interests (Philippians 2:4).
- Working together; accepting responsibility for doing chores and jobs around the house (Proverbs 20:11).
- Reaching out to others as a Christian family (Ephesians 4:28).

Lite Fare

A boy and a girl had a date. He thought she was a peach, and he became the



apple of her eye. They were soon plum crazy about each other, and in due time became a happily married pair.



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

Hast Thou Considered My Servant

Those are words that Jehovah spoke to Satan (Job 1:8). God went on to tell him that Job was unique, complete, upright, feared God, and was one who shunned evil. That is quite a commendation from the One who knows every single thing there is

to know about a person.

Most Bible students are quite familiar with the tragic circumstances that beset Iob and his family. Job's steadfastness and patience have been renowned worldwide throughout the ages. But here are three important things about Job as a father, and these things are seen before his children and livestock were taken from him.

As a father,

Job showed his children that his first devotion was to God Almighty, not material things. Possessing thousands of head of livestock helped make Job "the greatest of all the men of the east" (Job 1:3). Yet, as we noted above, the Lord God still referred to Job as "my servant" (Job 1:8). Job did not allow his stuff to crowd out, hinder, or diminish his devotion to the God of heaven. Dads, what do your children see as your number one commitment: stuff, or God? Believe me, they can tell what is number one without your saying a word!

As a father, Job recognized that his children made mistakes. Job offered burnt offerings on behalf of his grown children, saying, "It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts" (Job 1:5). There are some fathers who never seem to have anything good to say about their children, and they seldom, if ever, give them any support and positive exhortation. On the other hand, some dads are blind. They are

convinced that their "little Mary" and "Billy, Jr." could never do anything wrong, ever. They would never be deceptive, never be selfish. and never be disrespectful. There are many great children in the world. but no one is perfect. Dads need to accept the truth that all sin (Romans 3:23). Iob admitted that about his own children

As a father, Job showed his

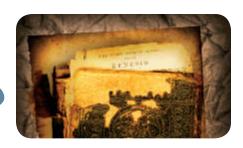
concern for the spiritual welfare of his children. It was on their behalf that he rose up early and offered burnt offerings to God. Don't you know that it makes a child, regardless of whether he is five or fifty, swell up with delight to hear and see that his daddy is doing something for his spiritual benefit! Dads, there is more to being a dad than putting food on the table and showing a child how to hit, throw, or kick a ball. The number one task of fathers is to bring up their children in the Lord's nurture and admonition (Ephesians 6:4).

We will always remember Job's endurance. But let's not forget what the Bible also shows us about him as a father before disaster struck his life.

—Roger D. Campbell, Cleveland, Tennessee



Can One Rely on the Bible?



Yes, absolutely. While we do not have an original copy of the Bible, it has been faithfully handed down from one generation to another.

Just as the writings of Shakespeare can be reproduced by comparing the many and varied copies of that author's work, so we can verify the Bible by comparing its manuscripts and translations. In fact, there are far more serious discrepancies among other works than among Bible manuscripts.

Compare the span of time and the number of manuscripts of the sacred text with other ancient writings:

■ The ancient classical history of *Caesar's Gallic War* was composed about 58–50 B.C. with the oldest known manuscript dating to about A.D. 850. Thus a gap of 900 years exists between composition and copies.

Only ten manuscripts of the history are known. Yet all scholars accept these as reliable history.

- The Roman History of Livy was written between 59 B.C. to A.D. 17, but its oldest known manuscripts were made about A.D. 300. Only 35 copies are known to exist. Yet it is accepted without question.
- The History of Thycydides, written 460–400 B.C., is reproduced from only eight manuscripts which were produced 1300 hundred years later (A.D. 900). Again, it is not disputed.
- The History of Herodotus (450–425 B.C.) is translated from only eight copies which were made from the original 1300 years later—about A.D. 900. It is accepted without question.

How do these compare with the New Testament? Revelation (its final book) was written by A.D. 96.

A span of only 250 years brings us to A.D. 350, the date of the widely accepted Bible codices. In addition, we have 4000 papyrus fragments written from A.D. 130 to A.D. 250. This puts us within 30 to 150 years of the book of Revelation. Further, practically from the time John penned the original autograph, early "church fathers" began quoting the New Testament (A.D. 90 to A.D. 160), and we have their writings.

There are literally thousands more copies of Sacred Scriptures which enable comparison, and give us assurance of a more accurate text for the New Testament, than there is of any text of Shakespeare. Jesus said, "My words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

—Flavil Nichols

To ask a Bible question or view previously answered questions, go to www.HouseToHouse.com.

Bible QUIZ

Send us your answers (address on front) to receive a FREE Bible bookmark. We'll grade and return your questions and enclose the God's Plan 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: Cases of Conversion: Which Chapter? 1. d; 2. g; 3. a; 4. c; 5. b; 6. h; 7. f; 8. e; Cases of Conversion: About Whom? 1.3000 on Pentecost; 2. Corinthians; 3. Saul of Tarsus; 4. Eunuch; 5. Samaritans; 6. Cornelius; 7. Philippian jailor; 8. Lydia.

Scram	hl	bd'	Titla	c· M	OW!	Tocto	ıment
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Dire	ections: Unscramb	le the letters below to discover a book of the New Testament.	—Lillian Skee
1.	STU IT		
2.	NOR SAM		
3.			
4.	IN THIS ACORN		
		N	
		n these three answers: Eunuch (Acts 8:26–40), 3000 on Pentec	ost

Directions: Chose from these three answers: Eunuch (Acts 8:26–40), 3000 on Pentecost (Acts 2:1–47), Jailor (Acts 16:23–34)

- 1. Baptism is for believers? ("If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.")
- 2. Baptism is for penitent believers? ("Repent, and be baptized every one of you.")
- 3. Baptism is a burial in water. ("They went down both into the water ... and he baptized him ... they were come up out of the water.") _____
- 4. Baptism in not to be delayed. ("And he took them the same hour of the night ... and was baptized.")

Take a moment and privately answer three important questions.

- 1. Does the Bible teach baptism is necessary for salvation?
- 2. Does scriptural baptism involve or require immersion?_
- 3. Have you been baptized in accord with Bible teachings? ____ (If not, and we can assist you, please let us know.)



How I Know the Bible Is the

Word of God

Suppose a vast building were to be erected, the stones for which were brought from the quarries in Rutland, Vermont; Berea, Ohio; Kasota, Minnesota; and Middletown, Connecticut. Each stone was hewn into final shape in the quarry from which it was brought. These stones were a variety of shapes and sizes—cubical, rectangular, cylindrical, and so forth—but when they were brought together every stone fit into its place, and when put together there rose before you a temple absolutely perfect in every outline, with its domes, sidewalls, buttresses, arches, transepts—not a gap or a flaw anywhere. How would you account for it? You would say: "Back of these individual workers in the quarries was the mastermind of the architect who planned it all and gave to each individual worker his specifications for the work."

So in this marvelous temple of God's truth which we call the Bible, whose stones have been quarried at periods of time and in places so remote from one another, but where every smallest part fits each other part, we are forced to say that back of the human hands that wrought was the Mastermind that thought.

—Dr. R. A. Tory

"The foundation of God standeth sure ..."

2 TIMOTHY 2:19

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- ☐ I have a Bible question:_
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- □ I want to see the *Visualized Bible Study* series (an in-home personal study). These popular videos have been seen by people of all religions all over the world.
- ☐ I would like a daily Bible reading schedule.

Tracts:

- □ **NEW!** Once Saved, Always Saved?
- □ **NEW!** How Parents Can Help Their Children Go to Heaven
- □ **NEW!** They Saw Him Alive!
- □ **NEW!** The Birds and Bees of the Gospel
- ☐ Is Being a Good Person Enough?
- ☐ What God Wants to Do to Every
- ☐ The Amazing History of Instrumental Music in Worship (Part 2). Early history in Baptist and Methodist churches
- ☐ Heaven Is Four Steps from Any Place on Earth (Part 3)
- ☐ How Men Can Stay Faithful to Their Wives
- ☐ When I Survey the Wondrous

- ☐ The Devil Loves to Fish in Troubled Waters
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- ☐ Odd Odds to Bet On
- ☐ Friends
- ☐ Simon Says
- ☐ A Decent Devil?
- ☐ A Christian TV Guide
- ☐ Back issues of House to House/ Heart to Heart

Churches of Christ Who Are These People?

With church buildings

located every few blocks and with nearly 1,200 different religious groups recognized by the IRS as tax exempt, one can easily live in a community and not know much about a particular church. In this article we are concerned about the church of Christ. One may have wondered, what is distinct about churches of Christ? What is their historical background? How many congregations and members do they have? Are they a worldwide organization? What is their message? How are they governed? How do they worship? What do they believe about the Bible?



Membership in Churches of Christ: In a book entitled *Where The Saints Meet*, Mac Lynn states that the total number of churches of Christ in the United States and her territories is about 13,410 with a total membership of 1,277,004. In a more recent work entitled *Churches of Christ Around The World*, Dr. Lynn states there are 13,908 congregations with 747,568 members outside of the United States and her territories. This would make a total of 27,318 congregations with a total membership of 2,124,572. At the present time, according to Dr. Lynn, there are 660 American missionaries in 121 nations.

The Spirit of the Movement: As is often the case, men have a tendency to alter the message of God. It started in the Garden of Eden when God said not to eat of the forbidden fruit and man violated this divine injunction. During the Israelites' history, they often changed the worship and mission that God had assigned. Evidence of departure in the New Testament can readily be seen in those who tried to bind ancient ceremonies and rituals upon the people of God. In our day, many churches have become burdened down with traditions of men, failing to fulfill Christ's plan for them.

The solution is to return to the Bible. Amos' question of long ago, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3) points to the necessity of having a standard to resolve differences. The spirit of churches of Christ is to return to the Bible. It is our desire to go back beyond denominationalism to the simplicity and purity of the first century. We believe

that the Bible and the Bible only will make Christians as God intended. Unity can be achieved by following the Bible. It is the safe and reasonable approach to take (Galatians 1:6–9; Revelation 22:18–19).

God's Organization:

Churches of Christ do not have the trappings of many modern-day organizational bureaucracies. There are no official boards—neither district, regional, nor international. Each congregation is self-ruled and is independent of all other congregations. There are no conventions, annual

meetings, official publications, or policy-setting groups. Each congregation is overseen by a group of elders who are selected from among the members and meet the qualifications outlined by Paul (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1). These elders are assisted by deacons, evangelists, teachers, and other Christian servants.

The Worship: Worship in churches of Christ is very simple. It tends toward participation as opposed to one being a spectator. Christians meet to sing a cappella, as is authorized by the nine verses in the New Testament that discuss the music the early Christians practiced. The Lord's supper is observed upon the first day of every week, just as was done in the first century (Acts 2:47). Christians further worship by giving as they have been prospered, studying the Bible, and praying.

Terms of Membership: The terms of membership are also outlined in the New Testament. They include faith in God (Hebrews 11:6) and in His Son (John 8:24); repentance of one's sins, as commanded of all men everywhere (Acts 17:30); confession of belief that Jesus is the Son of God (Matthew 10:32); finally one must be baptized to enter into God's family. Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38).

We encourage you to visit the church of Christ in your community and again experience the joy and simplicity as we attempt to go back to the Bible.

—Jerry Jenkins, Birmingham, Alabama





Caged

A boy with a rusty birdcage walked by a preacher.

"What are you going to do with that bird?" asked the preacher.

"Oh, I'm just going to poke sticks at it, shake the cage, throw

"Oh, I'm just going to poke sticks at it, shake the cage, throw water on it . . . fun things like that."

"What are you going to do after that?"

"I don't know; probably just feed it to the cats."

"How much do you want for it?" asked the preacher.

"Aw, you don't want it; it's just an old field bird. It doesn't sing or nothin'."

"How much?"

The boy thought awhile, and then said, "Two dollars." The preacher paid it. The boy grinned, and pocketed his money. Then he watched to see what the preacher would do with the bird. The preacher just opened the cage and turned it loose. The boy walked away, shaking his head over the craziness of some people.

The minister had something else in mind. Sin has "caged" each one of us and Satan has mankind in his grasp. Jesus asks, "What are you going to do with them?"

"I'm just going to have fun with them. I'm going to tease them. I'm going to bring heartache and pain into their lives." "And after that?"

"Well, when I get tired, I will take them to eternal destruction."

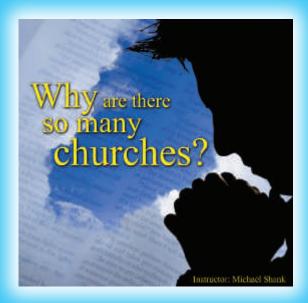
"I will buy them," says Jesus.

"You couldn't possibly want them! They will despise You, use Your name in vain and reject You. Then they will kill You."

"I will give my life."

Jesus paid the price, and set us free (Ephesians 1:7). Won't you accept His offer on His terms?

-Roger Campbell, Cleveland, Tennessee



With so many religious groups and doctrines, the American religious scene is confusing.

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