

House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 15 NUMBER 6

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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

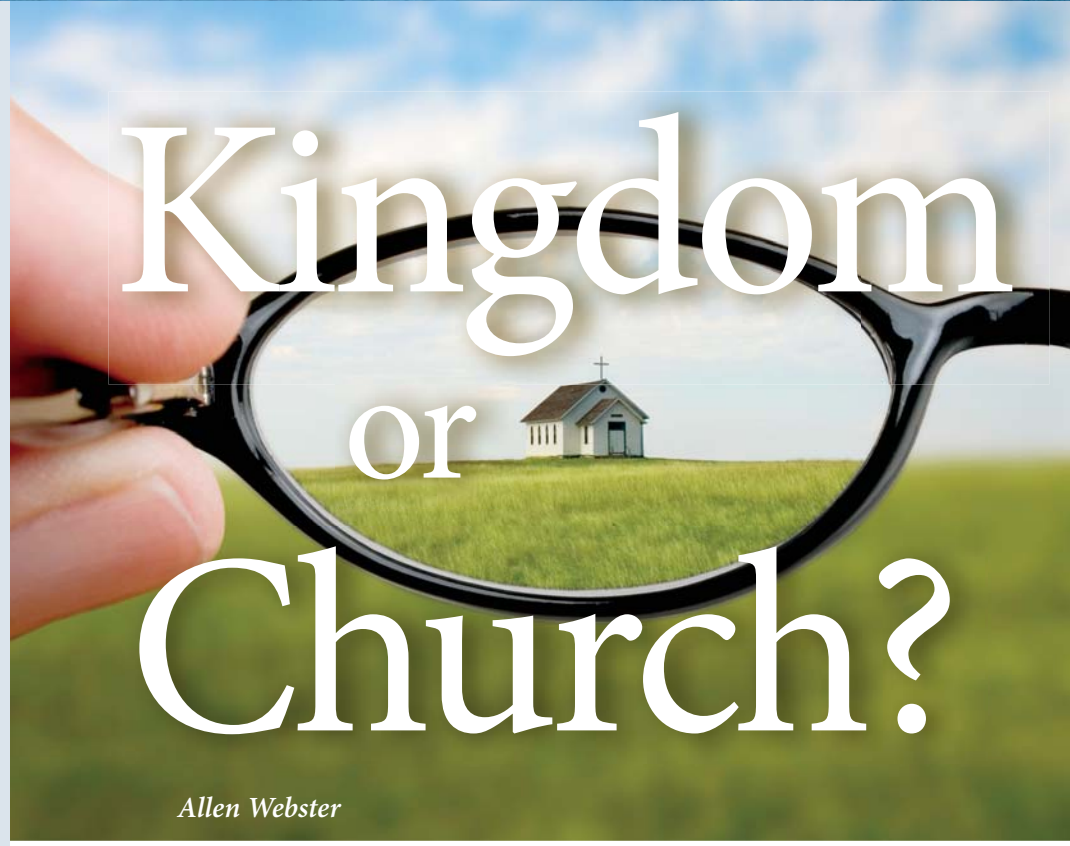
Creed: Jesus/Bible – Acts 8:37
Rule of Faith & Practice:
Word of God – 2 Tim. 3:16-17

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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Kingdom or Church?

Allen Webster

It may surprise you to learn that the church of the Bible does not have a proper name. By definition *church* (*ekklesia*) means “the called out” and refers to those who have been called out of the world into fellowship with God, by faith and obedience to the gospel (Hebrews 5:8–9; 2 Thessalonians 1:7–9).

I. KINGDOM REFERS TO THE CHURCH'S FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

The church is pictured in different ways, according to which aspect one is considering. It is called a body when one is considering the unity of its members. It is called a vineyard when one considers it is the place where God's servants work to grow the fruit of the Spirit. It is called a family when one considers its members' relationship to the Father and each other. It is called an army when one recalls that it engages

Satan's forces in a to-the-death battle for the souls of men. When its government is considered it is called a kingdom because it is a monarchy (ruled by a monarch or king).

This should not be confusing: I am a man, a son, a husband, a father, an American, a taxpayer, a fan, an employee, a writer, and a Christian. Likewise, the church is referred to by several designations in Scripture. Consider these descriptions:

- the churches of Christ (Romans 16:16).
- the church of the Lord (Acts 20:28 ASV).
- the church of God (1 Corinthians 1:2).
- the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12).
- the church of the living God (1 Timothy 3:15).
- the church of the firstborn (Hebrews 12:23). >>



And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom

II. THE TERMS ARE USED INTERCHANGEABLY.

Church and *kingdom* are used interchangeably in the New Testament. Jesus said, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:18–19). Obviously, He is talking about the same institution in back-to-back sentences, much like I might say, “You may borrow my van. Here are the keys to the Honda.”

Jesus promised to build His church and gave Peter the keys (terms of admission) of the kingdom. If the church and kingdom were different, Peter would have no right to use the keys of the kingdom on the church. It would be like using your Ford keys to try to drive my Honda.

If the kingdom has not yet been established, as many teach, then Peter lived the rest of his natural life and never got to use the keys at all. Why would Jesus give him useless keys? The kingdom or church was established on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus Christ. On that day Peter used the keys of the kingdom to let three thousand people into the door of the church (Acts 2:38–47).

III. THE KINGDOM AND CHURCH HAVE THE SAME IDENTIFYING MARKS.

It is hard to miss that the institutions are the same when carefully reading the New Testament. Consider:

- The church and the kingdom have the same head. Christ is the head of the church (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:23) and He is also the King of the kingdom (Acts 17:7; Revelation 1:5; 1 Timothy 6:15).
- They are entered into on the same conditions. Jesus said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). Men are born into the kingdom by being baptized in water according to the Spirit’s gospel. On Pentecost the Spirit led sinners, through the apostles’ message, to believe, repent, and be baptized for remission of sins (Acts 2:38). They were then added to the church (2:47). The same process by which a person entered the kingdom added him to the church.
- The kingdom and the church have the same subjects. Paul said that the saints had been translated into the kingdom (Colossians 1:13), which was also “the body, the church” (1:18).

- The church and the kingdom have the same seed. Jesus spoke of the word of God as being the “word of the kingdom” (Matthew 13:19) which produces subjects of the kingdom. When the same word was preached in Corinth (1 Corinthians 15:1–3), many of the Corinthians heard it, believed it, and were baptized (Acts 18:8). Paul addressed them as the “church of God” (1 Corinthians 1:2). If the church and the kingdom are not the same, then one seed was producing two different plants, which is a contradiction to both nature and revelation (Genesis 1:11; Galatians 6:7–8).
- They have the same laws. Peter wrote: “His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue” (2 Peter 1:3). If either the kingdom or the church had one thing that pertained to life or godliness which the other did not have, then the one lacking it would be imperfect, and Peter’s statement would not be true of both. Hence, they must have the same laws.

Someone designed a helpful chart comparing the identifying marks of the kingdom and the church, and in so doing, showed they are the same institution.

IDENTIFYING MARKS—KINGDOM/CHURCH

1. Beginning place/date	Isaiah 2:2–3/Acts 2:1–47
2. Boundary of territory	Daniel 2:44/Mark 16:15
3. Owner of institution	John 18:36/Matthew 16:18
4. Ruler of inhabitants	1 Timothy 6:15/Ephesians 5:23
5. Governing law	Isaiah 2:3/Acts 2:38–47
6. Christ gave keys	Matthew 16:19/Matthew 16:18
7. Terms of entrance	John 3:5/Acts 2:38–47
8. Membership	Colossians 1:13/Colossians 1:2
9. Its glory and exaltation	Isaiah 2:2–3/Ephesians 3:21
10. Memorial supper	Matthew 26:29/1 Corinthians 11:20
11. Reward of faithful	Matthew 25:34/1 Corinthians 15:58
12. Time of deliverance	1 Corinthians 15:24/1 Thessalonians 4:16

Since things equal to the same thing are equal to each other, it is easy to conclude that the kingdom and the church are the same institution.

Christ invites you to become a member of the greatest institution on earth (Matthew 11:28–30). Why not take Him up on it? ❖

Christianity and Science *Agree*

“I believe . . . that the soul of man is immortal and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this.” BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

For years many have erroneously thought science and religion contradict. It is true that many speculations and hypotheses of scientific men conflict with Bible truths. However, nothing scientifically found or proved differs from Bible facts. Yet so many—even learned people—think that science and the Bible are incompatible.

It was refreshing to read an article from one of the greatest scientists of the last generation. The article was entitled “Immortality” and was published in *This Week Magazine*, January 24, 1960. The author was Dr. Wernher Von Braun, at that time director of the Army Ballistic Missile agency.

This world renowned scientist maintained survival is based on ethics and not atoms. He scoffed at the idea that science had made religious ideas old fashioned. In fact, Dr. Braun said two factors move us: the last judgment, and faith in an immortal soul.

May I quote him? “But I think science has a real surprise for the skeptics. Science, for instance, tells us that nothing in nature, not even the tiniest particle, can disappear without a trace . . . Nature does not know extinction. All it knows is transformation. Now if God applies this fundamental principle to the most minute and insignificant parts of his universe, doesn’t it make sense to assume that he applies it also to the masterpiece of his creation—the human soul? I think it does. And everything science has taught me—and continues to teach me—strengthens my belief in the continuity of our spiritual existence after death. Nothing disappears without a trace.”

Young people, real men in science realize how little is known. They realize as they study this universe how infinite it really is. Christianity has been tried but not found wanting.

“Ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth.”

PSALM 115:15



Everything I Needed to Know about Life I Learned from a Jigsaw Puzzle

1. When things aren't going so well, take a break. Everything will look different when you return (cf. Mark 6:31).
2. Be sure to look at the big picture (John 4:35). Getting hung up on the little pieces only leads to frustration.
3. Don't force a fit (Philippians 2:4).
4. Perseverance pays off. Every important puzzle went together bit by bit, piece by piece (Exodus 23:29).
5. When one spot stops working, move to another (Ecclesiastes 11:6). But be sure to come back later (see #4).
6. The creator of the puzzle gave you the picture as a guidebook (2 Peter 1:3).
7. Variety is the spice of life. It's the different colors and patterns that make the puzzle interesting (Acts 10:34–35).
8. Working together with friends and family makes any task fun (Nehemiah 3:1–32).
9. Establish the border first. Boundaries give a sense of security and order (Proverbs 22:6).
10. Don't be afraid to try different combinations (Luke 5:4). Some matches are surprising.
11. Take time often to celebrate your successes—even little ones (Philippians 4:4).
12. Anything worth doing takes time and effort. A great puzzle can't be rushed (Galatians 6:9).



—As printed in *MercEmail*, Steve Higginbotham, Editor

“Blessed is he that readeth”

REVELATION 1:3

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



SMILE

“Rejoice with joy unspeakable”

1 PETER 1:8

The Sunday school teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt, when little Johnny interrupted: “My mommy looked back once, while she was driving,” he announced triumphantly, “and she turned into a telephone pole!”

STRESSED IS JUST DESSERTS SPelled BACKWARD.



Don't Just Tell Her You Love Her

Tell her why you love her. She knows you love her; she craves to know why.

Adding "because" at the end of "I love you" increases intimacy in your marriage. "I love you because you're so unselfish."

"Say so"

PSALM 107:2

Dads Matter

According to Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, a father's involvement with a child increases the child's IQ, the child's motivation to learn, and the child's self-confidence. In addition, children with involved dads are more likely to develop a sense of humor as well as an "inner excitement."



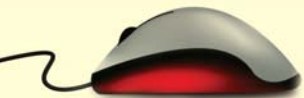
"Fathers . . . bring them up . . ."

EPHESIANS 6:4

Don't Say We Didn't Warn You

Our church fellowship hall has framed Bible verses on the wall—most of them extolling God's love and care. But at a recent wedding reception, another verse caught everyone's attention. Directly behind the cake table where the couple were cutting the first piece hung the warning: **Flee from the Wrath to Come!**

—Nancy Camp, White Sulphur Springs,
West Virginia



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

Burnt Biscuits

When I was a child, my mom liked to make breakfast food for dinner every now and then. And I remember one night in particular when she had made breakfast after a long, hard day at work. On that evening so long ago, my mom placed a plate of eggs, sausage, and extremely burned biscuits in front of my dad. I remember waiting to see if anyone noticed! Yet all my dad did was reach for his biscuit, smile at my mom and ask me how my day was at school. I don't remember what I told him that night, but I do remember watching him smear butter and jelly on that biscuit and eat every bite!

When I got up from the table that evening, I remember hearing my mom apologize to my dad for burning the biscuits. And I'll never forget what he said: "Honey, I love burned biscuits."

Later that night, I went to kiss Daddy good night and I asked him if he really liked his biscuits burned. He wrapped me in his arms and said, "Your Momma put in a hard day at work today and she's real tired. And besides—a little burnt biscuit never hurt anyone!"

You know, life is full of imperfect things . . . and imperfect people. I'm not the best at hardly anything, and I

forget birthdays and anniversaries just like everyone else. What I've learned over the years is that learning to accept each other's faults—and choosing to celebrate each other's differences—is one of the most important keys to creating a healthy, growing, and lasting relationship.

And that's my prayer for you today. That you will learn to take the good, the bad, and the ugly parts of your life and lay them at the feet of God. Because in the end, He's the only One who will be able to give you a relationship where a burnt biscuit isn't a deal-breaker!

We could extend this to any relationship. In fact, understanding is the base of any relationship, be it a husband-wife or parent-child or friendship. Someone said, "Don't put the key to your happiness in someone else's pocket—keep it in your own."

So please pass me a biscuit, and yes, the burnt one will do just fine.

—Author Unknown, submitted by Frances Shipp,
Weaver High School, Weaver, Alabama

"Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit"

ECCLESIASTES 7:8



What Is the Duration of Hell?



It is common in today's religious world to reject the biblical teaching of the reality of hell. Many claim that the old "eternal hell fire" is out of character for a loving God, and that when this life is over the unsaved will simply cease to exist.

This is an appealing doctrine to many, because it eliminates the possibility of punishment for sin. However, Jesus said that the wicked "shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Matthew 25:46). Paul wrote that those who do not know God and refuse to obey Him, "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thessalonians 1:9).

Hell, the ultimate abode of the wicked, is translated from the Greek word *Gehenna*. It differs from *Hades*, another Greek word rendered as hell in the King James Version. *Hades* is the abode of all

the dead, righteous and unrighteous, before the resurrection. The literal Gehenna, from which hell is derived, was a narrow gorge near Jerusalem that represented the worst of Jewish history. Years earlier they stained this valley with the blood of their own innocent children offered in sacrifice to the idol, Baal. In Christ's day, Gehenna was a continually burning garbage dump, the name of which He appropriated to describe the final abode of the wicked.

The Scriptures often describe hell as a place of unending punishment. Jesus spoke of the day when His angels would gather those who do iniquity and "cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:42). John described hell, saying, "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night" (Revelation 14:11).

Other passages describe hell as "outer darkness" (Matthew 8:12), a "furnace of fire" (Matthew 13:42), and "eternal fire" (Jude 7).

Jude said Sodom and Gomorrha, the wicked cities that were "giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7). The term *eternal* literally means "always being." Hell is just as eternal as heaven (Matthew 25:46). If the fires of hell burn out, then the light of heaven will go out on the same day. The good news is that hell can be avoided! Jesus died that we might be saved. We can all obey His gospel and dwell in heaven forever.

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

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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 Bible Reading Chart 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: *New Testament Bible Characters:*

1. Barabbas (Matthew 27:21); 2. Barnabas (Acts 4:36); 3. Luke (Colossians 4:14); 4. Apollos (Acts 18:24-26); 5. Barjesus (Acts 13:6-11); 6. Nicodemus (John 3:1-5); 7. Peter (Acts 2:1, 14); 8. Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52); 9. Lydia (Acts 16:14-15); 10. Lazarus (Luke 16:20); 11. Mary (Matthew 1:18); 12. Gamaliel (Acts 22:3); 13. Judas (Matthew 27:3-5); 14. Martha (Luke 10:38-42); 15. Pilate (Matthew 27:2); 16. Herod (Matthew 2:16); 17. Philip (Acts 8:35); 18. Joseph of Arimathaea (Matthew 27:57-58); 19. Andrew (John 1:40-42); 20. John the Baptist (Matthew 14:6-10); 21. Diotrophes (3 John 1:9); 22. Tertullus (Acts 24:1-2); 23. Trophimus (2 Timothy 4:20); 24. Malchus (John 18:10-11); 25. Theophilus (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1).

The Sermon on the Mount

Directions: Please find answers in Matthew 5:6, 8, 12, 14, 28, 32, 35, 39, 44; 6:6, 10, 22, 24, 26, 29, 33; 7:3, 6, 14, 15, 17, 21, 24, 29.

1. The pure in heart shall _____ God.
2. We are to hunger after _____.
3. The persecuted have a great reward waiting in _____.
4. The earth is God's _____.
5. The light of the body is the _____.
6. Who was compared to the lilies of the field? _____
7. What should you not throw before swine? _____
8. Which gate leads to life? _____
9. A good tree brings forth _____ fruit.
10. What is in the hypocrite's eye? _____
11. A city set on a hill cannot be _____.
12. A man who lusts has committed _____ in his heart.
13. Whosoever marrieth her that is divorced committeth _____.
14. What city is the "city of the great King"? _____
15. _____ your enemies.
16. We must seek first the _____ of God and his _____.
17. Beware of false _____.
18. To enter the kingdom of heaven, we must _____ the Father's will.
19. The wise man built his house upon the _____.
20. Jesus taught with _____, and not as the scribes.
21. We should pray in our _____ instead of on street corners.
22. Thy will be done on _____ as it is in _____.
23. No man can serve two _____.
24. Who feeds the birds? _____
25. When someone smites our cheek, what are we to do? _____

Jesus

Whose Son Is He?

“What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?” were questions Jesus asked some Pharisees during the last week of His life. Their answer to Him was, “The son of David” (Matthew 22:42). It is interesting that Jesus was the “Son of” at least five people:

Jesus was the Son of Mary. Before Mary had physical relations with Joseph, she conceived a child by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18, 20, 25). God sent Gabriel to her with this message: “And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS” (Luke 1:31). Thus the Bible identifies her as “Mary the mother of Jesus” (Acts 1:14). She was the chosen vessel through whom the Messiah came into the world (Isaiah 7:14; Galatians 4:4).

Jesus was the Son of man. Jesus asked His disciples, “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” (Matthew 16:13). This expression was a favorite of Jesus and simply pointed out His humanity and humility. Since He had an earthly mother, there was a human side to Him. He became flesh and dwelt among men (John 1:14); He “was made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:7). Since those He came to redeem were “flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same” (Hebrews 2:14). He temporarily became a man in order to offer an unblemished sacrifice to save sinners.

Jesus was the Son of God. Gabriel not only told Mary that she would have a Son (become a mother), but he also informed her, “that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). The opening words of the book of Mark are: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mark 1:1). How did Jesus respond when the high priest asked Him point blank, “Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” (Mark 14:61). He said, “I am” (14:62). “Son of man” emphasizes His humanity, “Son of God” emphasizes His deity. Jesus possesses the nature of God—He is part of “the Godhead” (Colossians 2:9). On numerous occasions, the Bible even refers to Jesus as “God” (John 1:1; Hebrews 1:8). That does not mean that Jesus is God the Father, but that He possesses the same divine nature.

Jesus was the Son of David. The Jews referred to the Messiah as “the Son of David” (Matthew 22:42). They knew that the prophecies of the Old Testament made it clear that the Messiah would be the descendant of David (2 Samuel 7:12–14; Psalm 132:11; Isaiah 11:1). The very first verse in the New Testament identifies Jesus as this “son of David.” “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David” (Matthew 1:1). Paul added that Jesus Christ our Lord, “was

made of the seed of David according to the flesh” (Romans 1:3; cf. 2 Timothy 2:8). Peter’s proclamation affirms: “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David . . . Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne” (Acts 2:29–30). Prophecy made, prophecy fulfilled—the promised Messiah must be an offspring of David and sit on David’s throne. Jesus came as the descendant of King David, and He now sits on his throne, ruling over spiritual Israel, the church (Luke 1:31–33).

Jesus was the Son of Abraham. Matthew 1:1 again says, “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” God promised Abraham that in him all families of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:3; cf. 22:18). This was nothing less than a promise that through his offspring the Messiah would come into the world. To say that Jesus was “the Son of Abraham” means that He was Abraham’s descendant and the fulfillment of this Old Testament promise. Galatians 3:16 makes this plain: “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, AND TO THY SEED, which is Christ.”

Each expression is unique, pointing out a special aspect of Christ.

—Roger D. Campbell, Cleveland, TN

Progress in Religion

C.S. Lewis observed, “We all want progress, but if you’re on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road; in that case, the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive.” Although Lewis was not a New Testament Christian, he made a good point here. It is certainly true that modern “Christianity” has lost its way.

To go forward, let’s go back. Let’s go back to the Bible. Let’s “redig the wells,” as Isaac did (Genesis 26:18–22). Let’s restore the law, as Ezra did (Ezra 7:10). Let’s speak as the oracles of God, as Peter did (1 Peter 4:11).

“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.”

JEREMIAH 6:16

Thoughts from the HEART

Do You Have a Passport?

Most believe that Paul was given a glimpse of heaven (2 Corinthians 12:1–4). If so, he saw and heard things that are reserved for the Christians' reward. We do know that he seemed the most eager of any New Testament character to leave the earth. When he contemplated heaven, he had "a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Philippians 1:23).



Do you want to go to heaven? Have you made preparations? You must have a passport signed by Jesus Christ. No other will do. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). The hope of heaven is available only to those who are "in Christ." John wrote, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord" (Revelation 14:13). Those who are outside of Christ, i.e., outside His spiritual body, the church (Ephesians 2:12–13; 5:23; cf. Galatians 3:27; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 John 1:7; Hebrews 5:9), need to make preparation so they will find a welcome at the gate of the eternal city.

Think of how wonderful it will be!

*Often I'm hindered on my way,
Burdened so heavy I almost fall;
Then I hear Jesus sweetly say,
Heaven will surely be worth it all;*

*Heaven will surely be worth it all;
Worth all the sorrows that here befall;
After this life with all its strife,
Heaven will surely be worth it all!*



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