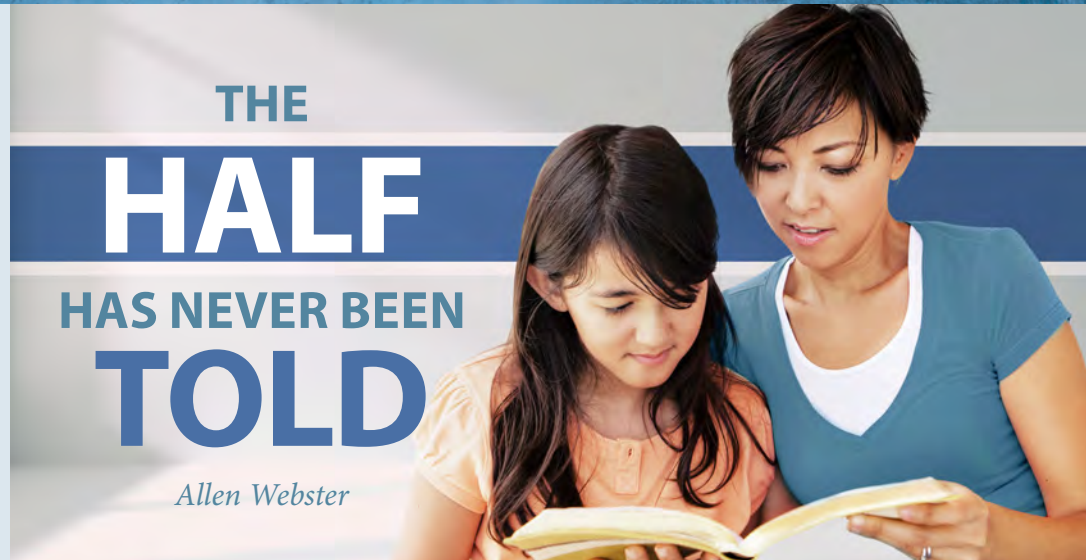


HOUSE to HOUSE
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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 23 NUMBER 1



THE HALF HAS NEVER BEEN TOLD

Allen Webster

The Queen of Sheba once travelled a thousand miles to visit King Solomon (1 Kings 10:1–13). She came not to form a political alliance, avoid a war, or open trade avenues, but out of simple curiosity. The report of Solomon’s kingdom was so great that she wanted to personally hear his wisdom and see his palace. She came armed with gifts, hard questions, and a skeptical attitude.

After he satisfactorily answered all her queries and showed her the organization of his officers, uniforms of his servants, spectacular palace, and the magnificent temple he had built God, there was “no more spirit in her.” She said, “Indeed the half was not told me” (10:7). We would say today, “I hadn’t heard the half of it.”

There are Bible truths that, though they seem exaggerated, eventually we will admit we did not know the half of it.

THE HALF HAS NEVER BEEN TOLD ABOUT ...

GOD’S LOVE

God’s amazing love has perhaps been the theme of more lessons and hymns than any other subject, but no one has ever fully described it. God’s love, like


Christ’s, “passes knowledge” (Ephesians 3:19). Though the Bible nowhere says, “God is hope” or “God is faith,” it does say, “God is love” (1 John 4:8). This sets Jehovah apart from all the imagined gods of heathen nations—gods of revenge, lust, fertility, war, and hate.

God shows love by meeting our needs (Matthew 5:45; James 1:17), blessing us with mates, children, and friends (Psalm 68:6; 113:9), and helping us in times of distress (Psalm 46:1).

Scripture’s most famous verse, John 3:16, has been called the greatest verse of the Bible. Here’s why:

- For God—the greatest Being;
- So loved—the greatest emotion;
- The world—the greatest number;
- That He gave—the greatest action;
- Only begotten Son—the greatest gift;
- Believes—the greatest requirement;
- Not perish—the greatest danger;
- Everlasting life—the greatest reward.

The best evidence of God’s love is Calvary (Romans 5:8). When sin covered the earth like waters cover the seas, God sent Jesus to die for you and me. Such love excels anything in man’s imagination.



God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain.” REVELATION 21:4

CHRIST'S SACRIFICE

Many golden-tongued orators have tried to explain that cross, but none has come close. There is no pulpit like the cross; no audience like the one at Calvary; no preacher like the One on the tree; no message like “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34).

From the Garden of Eden to the Cross of Calvary there is a red line of sacrifice, but none compares to the offering of Jesus (John 1:29). He is God’s unspeakable gift (2 Corinthians 9:15). This does not mean that we should not speak of it, but that it is higher than the mind can conceive; more than language can express.

Go with me to Calvary (Luke 23:33) and stand in that crowd. Lift your eyes.

- See His feet—those feet that once carried God’s message from village to village are now disfigured by a spike.
- Look up farther, see His stripped body (perhaps a loin cloth) publicly displayed on that busy thoroughfare. He despised the shame but endured it (Hebrews 12:2).
- Look again. See the stripes that ooze with blood and reopen with every move.
- Look at His hands—hands that healed the blind, touched a leper, hugged children—are now fastened to a tree, mangled with crimson-covered nails.
- Look up to the crown that sits on His head. Sharp thorns pierce and lacerate His scalp, which drips blood into His eyes.
- Look into those eyes—eyes that once shone with love are now wet with tears; eyes that twinkled with excitement blink against the agony of breathless exertion.

Jesus could have called angels for rescue, but He suffered those six hours that we might have eternal life (Isaiah 53:5–6).

SALVATION'S VALUE

From the outside, membership in Christ’s church seems inconsequential—just another social group or spiritual outlet like the religions and denominations that men have founded and frequent.

From the inside, kingdom membership is anything but mundane. It is the greatest privilege ever afforded man (1 John 3:1). Since God puts the people He saves into His church, only saved people can be members (Acts 2:38, 41, 47). Christians would sooner trade their lives than give up their membership (many have and more will).

Jesus gave twin parables to teach the same lesson: salvation is worth giving up everything to possess. The first is of a man who stumbles upon treasure hidden in a field. He gladly and quickly sells his property to purchase that field (Matthew 13:44). The second is of a jewel merchant searching for high-quality pearls. When he discovers a pearl of great value, he rushes to liquidate everything he owns and returns gladly to exchange all for it (13:45–46).

Like them, we must recognize true riches when we see them. The first man was not treasure hunting, but recognized a life-changing opportunity when he saw it. The other was searching and was willing to commit all to have something truly great.

How many today drive by a church building but never enter? How many have a Bible but never read it, or receive HTH or a tract but discard it?

How many even attend a service where salvation is offered, yet do nothing to possess it?

CHRISTIANS' JOY

A Hindu asked a Christian, “What medicine do you put on your face to make it shine so?” She said, “I don’t put anything on it.” He replied, “Yes, you do. All you Christians do. I see shining faces wherever I meet Christians.” She said, “Ah, now I understand. I will tell you what medicine makes our faces shine—joy in our hearts.”

Peter wrote of joy inexpressible (1 Peter 1:8); Paul of perpetual rejoicing and peace surpassing understanding (Philippians 4:4–7); and Jesus of abundant living (John 10:10). New Christians go on their way rejoicing (Acts 8:35–39; 16:30–34). They have constant access to grace (Romans 5:2). God hears their prayers (John 16:21–24) and grants their petitions (1 John 5:14–15). They exult in knowing God defends them (Psalm 5:11–12) and that all things work together for their good (Romans 8:28).

Describing God’s joy to non-Christians can be like describing a sunset to the blind or signing a Beethoven symphony to the deaf. Like the queen of Sheba, they may neither comprehend nor believe when Christians explain that true joy comes from nothing the eye can see, the hand can hold, or the bank can store. One who attains only material wealth may not realize until death how poor he actually was.

The best life comes through the unnatural choices of losing life, denying self, giving in, and seeking first God’s kingdom and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33; 10:39; Luke 9:23). Believers

fully live—physically and spiritually; others are only half alive (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:4).

The poorest Christian is among the world's richest persons, for "godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come" (1 Timothy 4:8). Any who leaves house, parents, brothers, wife, or children for the kingdom of God's sake receives a hundredfold in this present time, and in the world to come, life everlasting (Mark 10:29–30; Luke 18:29–30).

Christians look back and remember when their sins were forgiven (Acts 2:38); they look around with joyful purpose (Titus 2:12); they look ahead to an incorruptible, undefiled inheritance that never fades (1 Peter 1:3–10).

HELL'S HEAT

The greatest horror ever contemplated is not a Hollywood creation, a Stephen King novel, or a WWII prison camp. It was created by God for Satan and his angels. It begins with crushing words: "Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire" (Matthew 25:41). It never ends. Its smell is sulfur. Its inhabitants are wretched. Its sound track is wailing sobs, gnashing teeth, and pitiful pleas. It is a lake on fire with no beach; a life sentence and no death; searing thirst with no water; tormenting pain with no medicine.

John calls it "the second death" (Revelation 20:14). One born into the world but never into the kingdom dies both a natural and eternal death. One born physically and born again spiritually

(John 3:5), experiences only natural death. So, "born once, die twice; born twice, die once."

One man argued against hell, declaring, "I am seventy years old, have travelled the world, and have never seen such a place as hell, after all that's said about it." His seven-year-old grandson was listening, and asked this simple question: "Granddaddy, have you ever been dead yet?"

HEAVEN'S BEAUTY

When a Christian reaches heaven, sees its beauty and meets its King, he will surely say, "I thought the preacher exaggerated, but he did not know the half of it."

Its gates are pearls; its streets are gold; its singers are angels; its houses are mansions; its inhabitants are holy; its temple is God. The Creator made it. The Light of the World illuminates it. The Bread of Life is its food. The Water of Life satisfies its thirst. The Good Shepherd watches over it.

The Ancient of Days removes its tears and every impediment to joy. "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain" (Revelation 21:4; cf. 22:5).

Its foundations are garnished with precious stones (Revelation 21:19–21). Imagine the burst of color upon first glance: crystal (jasper), blue (sapphire), green (emerald), brown (sardonyx), red (sardius), yellow (topaz), and purple (amethyst).

Heaven's joy will last, not for a week (like a

vacation), a season (like summer), or a year (like the first of marriage), but for eternity (Matthew 25:46; John 6:47; 11:25; 14:1–3). Heaven is more than can be described with human words or understood by human minds (2 Corinthians 12:4).

Years ago, a peddler in a rickety wagon stopped at a widow's shack. "I buy relics," he announced. "I don't have anything," she replied. "How about that cannonball?" he asked. "Oh, my boys found that long ago. I keep it because I have good memories of them playing with it."

"I will give you twenty-five dollars," he said. Her eyes widened in surprise.

"I'll take it!" He counted out the money.

Knowing what had often been done during the war, he took an ax from the woodpile and chopped the ball open. Inside were gold nuggets! He was a generous fellow, so he gave her half, which later sold for seven thousand dollars.

Friend, the half has never yet been told of the blessings God intends for you. They are even now within your reach. Like the queen of Sheba, come and see for yourself (1 Kings 10:6; John 1:39).

Sources Used:

W. T. Allison, Unpublished sermon.
www.texsource.com/bible/sermons/131.pdf.

God's Plan for Saving Man

Divine Love: John 3:16

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





Two Gifts

"There are two lasting bequests we can give our children: One is roots. The other is wings." — Hodding Carter, Jr.

"That your joy may be full"

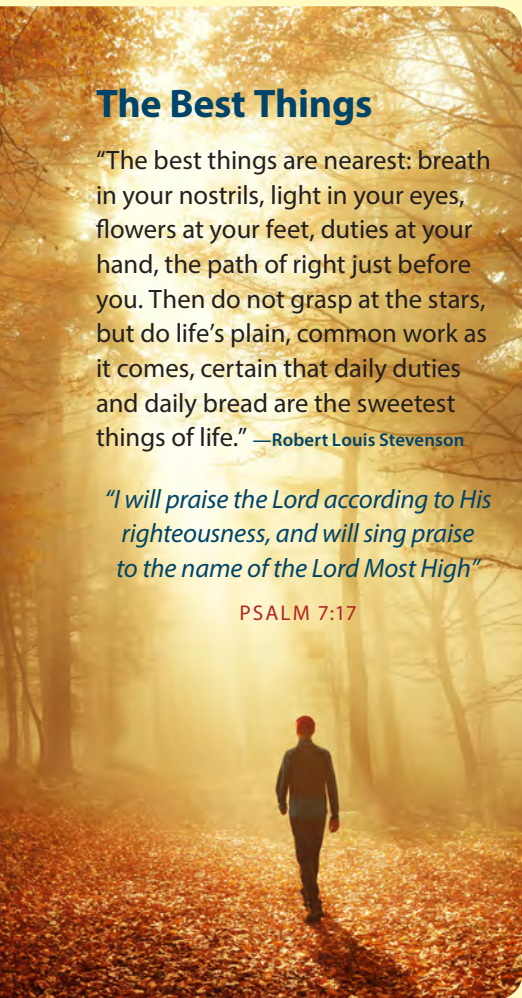
1 JOHN 1:4

The Best Things

"The best things are nearest: breath in your nostrils, light in your eyes, flowers at your feet, duties at your hand, the path of right just before you. Then do not grasp at the stars, but do life's plain, common work as it comes, certain that daily duties and daily bread are the sweetest things of life." —Robert Louis Stevenson

"I will praise the Lord according to His righteousness, and will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High"

PSALM 7:17



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

A Home Is...

A house with love inside.

Four walls glued together with the magic paste of tears and laughter, sorrows and joys and dreams.

A sanctuary, a friendly port for the lonely, a beacon for the wanderer.

Built with bricks and mortar and lumber and nails and concrete . . . and devotion and love and courtesy and courage.

As warm as the glow of a fire in the fireplace . . . as serene as a cat napping in the sun on a window sill.

A front door that has known many a happy greeting and a lot of sad farewells.

A nursery that has known a child's cry in the night . . . and a parlor that had heard a lover's sigh.



A boy's bedroom with pennants and posters on the wall, a ball glove in the corner, and music turned up loud.

A happy den full of talk and laughter, a kitchen where Thanksgiving feasts have been prepared, and a living room where games have been watched.

A bookcase filled with strange and wonderful tales, a carpet worn with the scuffle of little shoes, a lawn that has known bare feet in a summer sprinkle.

A home is many things . . . but most of all, a home is a house held together by a family's love. —Author unknown

"At home at my house"

LUKE 9:61

Walking the Dog



A woman was flying from Seattle to San Francisco. Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sacramento.

A flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft the plane would reboard in fifty minutes.

Everybody got off except one lady who was blind. A man had noticed her as he walked by and could tell she was blind because her guide dog lay quietly underneath the seat in front of her.

He could also tell she had flown this flight before because the pilot approached her and called her by name, saying, "Kathy, we are in Sacramento for

almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?"

She said, "No thanks, but maybe Buddy would like to stretch his legs."

All the people in the gate area came to a standstill when they saw the pilot walk off the plane with a guide dog for the blind! Even worse, he was wearing sunglasses. People scattered. Some not only tried to change planes but also airlines!

Takeaways: Always be kind to those with special needs, and remember, things are not always as the seem.

"A merry heart does good."

PROVERBS 17:22



30 NEW TESTAMENT VERSES to Learn Before You Die

Salvation through Christ

- 1 **John 6:35** Jesus is the bread of life.
- 2 **John 8:12** Jesus is the light of the world.
- 3 **John 11:25** Jesus is the resurrection and the life.
- 4 **Matthew 9:36** Jesus had compassion.
- 5 **Acts 2:22** Jesus worked miracles.
- 6 **John 3:2** Jesus was the greatest teacher (Matthew 5–7).
- 7 **Matthew 28:1–6** Jesus arose from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:1–4).
- 8 **Acts 2:33** Jesus ascended to God's right hand.

Man's response to God's grace

- 9 **Matthew 28:18** All power is given to Jesus.
- 10 **John 8:31–32** The truth sets free.
- 11 **Luke 16:13** No man can serve two masters; submit to God; resist the devil (James 4:7–8).

The Christian Life

- 12 **Matthew 5:16** Let your light shine; glorify God.

- 13 **Galatians 2:20** Be crucified with Christ as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1).
- 14 **Mark 10:43–45** The servant is the greatest.
- 15 **Matthew 6:33** Seek first the kingdom of God.
- 16 **Galatians 5:22–23** Add the fruit of the Spirit.
- 17 **Philippians 4:4–7** Rejoice in the Lord always.
- 18 **Matthew 6:19–21** Store up treasures in heaven.
- 19 **Ephesians 6:13–17** Put on the full armor of God; take the Spirit's sword and battle the devil.
- 20 **Hebrews 4:16** Harness the power of prayer (James 5:16).
- 21 **1 Corinthians 15:33** Keep good company.
- 22 **Colossians 3:23** Whatever you do, do your best.

Assurance and comfort

- 23 **Galatians 6:7–8** A man reaps what he sows.
- 24 **Romans 8:28** All things work for good for God's child.
- 25 **Romans 8:38–39** Nothing can separate us from the love of God.
- 26 **1 Peter 5:7** Cast your care on Jesus.
- 27 **Matthew 10:28** Fear nothing on earth (Acts 18:10; Philippians 4:6).
- 28 **Hebrews 13:8** Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.
- 29 **James 1:12** Blessed is the man who perseveres to the end (2 Peter 3:17).
- 30 **Matthew 25:34–36** There is a great day coming.

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front.

Bible Quiz

VOLUME 23:1

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark! We'll grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark "The Women in Acts" as a way of saying thanks for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).



Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State: _____
 Phone: _____

Questions taken from the King James Version

Answers to Last Issue

Noah's Boat: 1. 120 years (Genesis 6:3); 2. Grace (6:8); 3. Shem, Ham, Japheth (6:10); 4. Gopher (6:14); 5. 300 cubits x 50 cubits x 30 cubits (6:15); 6. Yes (6:16); 7. Yes (6:21); 8. All, God, did (6:22); 9. 7 (7:2); 10. 2 (7:2); 11. 7 (7:3); 12. 40 days and 40 nights (7:12); 13. 600 (7:11); 14. 8 (7:13); 15. God (7:16); 16. All, nostrils, died (7:22); 17. Mountains of Ararat (8:4); 18. Raven, dove (8:7–8); 19. Dove (8:9); 20. Olive (8:11); 21. Built altar, offered sacrifices (8:20); 22. Smiter (destroy) any more every living thing (8:21).

Women of the Old Testament

Find your answers in these verses: Genesis 3:20; 17:15; 19:15–26; 29:18; 38:13–30; Exodus 2:21; 6:20; Joshua 2:1; Judges 16:6; Ruth 1:4, 15–16; 1 Samuel 1:4–6, 20; 2 Samuel 11:2–3; 1 Kings 19:2; Esther 1:9; 7:3; Hosea 1:3

1. What does "Eve" mean? (Genesis 3:20) _____
2. Who married Abraham? _____
3. Jacob agreed to work seven years for _____.
4. Mother of Samuel _____
5. Housed spies sent by Joshua to spy on the city of Jericho. _____
6. Remained with her mother-in-law, Naomi, after Naomi's husband and sons died. _____
7. Mother of Moses _____
8. Wife of Moses _____
9. Tempted Samson to reveal the secret to his massive strength, which she used to betray him to the Philistines. _____
10. This brave Israelite woman became queen of Persia and used her influence to protect her people, the Jews. _____
11. The prophet Hosea was commanded to marry this woman, though she was a harlot. _____
12. This wicked queen wanted to kill the prophet Elijah. _____
13. After David looked upon her lustfully, he had an affair with this woman that ultimately led to her husband's death. _____
14. This woman was Ruth's sister-in-law. _____
15. This woman was turned into a pillar of salt because she looked back. _____
16. Daughter-in-law of Judah, by whom he had the twins Zerah and Perez _____
17. Modest queen of King Ahasuerus _____
18. Wife of Elkanah, rival to Hannah _____



Read It Like a Child

Children can say some of the most interesting things with perfect timing.

I remember one such incident while I was interning in the state of Washington. After a VBS session, a four-year-old boy from the congregation asked the preacher, “Were you on the ark?”

He replied, laughing, “No!”

The boy quickly responded, “Well, how did you survive the flood?”

Jesus calls us to be like children (Mark 10:13–16). The simple thinking of a child can open our minds to what is important in the kingdom. To think like a child is simply to trust God and His word. If we can view scripture in such an honest and open-minded fashion, then God can reveal Himself in new ways to us.

As we trust His word to mean what it says, we will grow in understanding as all children do. —Wade Smith

“Unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”

MATTHEW 18:3

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front.

Recommended Resource



The Gospel Broadcasting Network is unique in the world of religious TV—commercial free, and they never ask for money! Sponsored by the churches of Christ, GBN is available on many cable systems as well as through their smartphone apps, the Roku device, and at gbntv.org.

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More subjects:



Who Is Missing Out?



I've Got Friends in Low Places



How to Have A Great Spiritual Retirement



This Is Going to Sting a Little



The Holiness of God



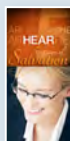
Noah by Numbers



Overcoming the Challenges Blended Families Face



Believe (5 steps of Salvation)

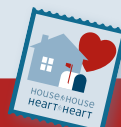


Hear (5 Steps of Salvation)



Pursuing the Elusive City of Gold

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A Sectarian and a Truth Seeker

A sectarian is one who defends everything his party holds or that will help his party, and opposes all that his party does not hold or that will injure the strength and popularity of his party.

The partisan takes it for granted everything his party holds is right, and everything the other party holds is wrong and to be opposed.

Hence the party lines define his faith and teaching. He sees no good in the other party. He sees no wrong in his own party, unless some one in his party should love truth and oppose an error of his party or defend a truth of the other party.

A truth lover and seeker always looks into whatever party he comes in contact with, and will first look to see what truth the party holds. All parties hold some element of truth. Usually each party holds and emphasizes some particular truth in a way of its own.

One seeking truth above all other things will search out first of all this truth and appropriate it as his own. A true lover of truth seeks out and appropriates as his own every truth he finds, no matter who holds or teaches it.

All truth is the heritage of the truth lover and seeker. He will approach every teacher and every system as holding and cherishing some truth that he desires to learn and hold. He will feel kindly toward all.

The love of truth is a spirit of kindness and love toward all, even to the holder of error. He loves the holder of truth because he receives truth and strength from him. He loves those in error because he sympathizes with them and desires to impart truth and strength to them. He knows, too, the more truth and strength he imparts to others, the more he has for himself.

A characteristic of truth is, the more we give away, the more we have to keep for ourselves. Imparting, giving away truth increases our own store.

The lover of truth, then, feels kindly toward all and approaches all, whether to gain or impart, in a spirit of kindness and love.

The effort to learn and gain truth from others opens their hearts to learn and receive truth from us. He who is most willing to receive truth from others is the most effective teacher of truth to others.

When we are receiving another's truth is a good time to remove his errors and impart to him truth. Jesus and the apostles acknowledged the truth others held, and made the acknowledgment of that truth often the occasion of correcting their errors and teaching other truths. — David Lipscomb, "A Sectarian and a Truth Seeker," *Gospel Advocate* (June 27, 1907): 409.

"Buy the truth, and do not sell it."

PROVERBS 23:23

The Opportunity of a Lifetime

In the year 2000, the CEO of an up and coming company offered to sell his company to Blockbuster for \$50 million dollars. The executives at Blockbuster not only rejected the offer but also nearly laughed this man out of their office. The company they turned down was Netflix. Today, Netflix is valued at over \$56 billion dollars. The executives of Blockbuster, who filed for bankruptcy in 2010, are probably not laughing now at their missed opportunity.

If one could spend \$50 million dollars to receive \$50 billion dollars in return, would he not do so?

But here's an even better question to consider. If one could spend his life in service to God, and in return receive Heaven for eternity, would he not do so?

— Steven Higginbotham, Knoxville, Tennessee

"Therefore, as we have opportunity"

GALATIANS 6:10



You're ready to be baptized when you know that only in Jesus Christ can your sins be forgiven and you can be returned to the presence of God (Ephesians 1:7).

You're ready to be baptized when you believe in Jesus as God in the flesh, the One appointed to die in our place, the Risen One who will come again (John 8:24; 2 Timothy 3:15).

You're ready to be baptized when you decide to abandon the old life of sin and live a holy life by imitating the Lord Jesus (Luke 24:46–47; Acts 2:38).

You're ready to be baptized when you are willing to publicly declare yourself to be one of Jesus' followers, even in the face of death (Romans 10:10; Revelation 2:10).

You're ready to be baptized when you understand that the reason for baptism is burial into Christ's death to wash away your sins with His blood (Romans 6:1–4; Acts 22:16).

You're ready to be baptized when you accept participating in the suffering of Christ in order that the gospel may be spread (1 Peter 2:9–12).

You're ready to be baptized when you are committed to showing sincere and earnest love to your Christian family (1 Peter 1:22).

—J. Randal Matheny, São José dos Campos, Brazil



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1/18



The End of Your Search for a

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