

HOUSE TO HOUSE

Heart to Heart



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

Volume 10, Number 1

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

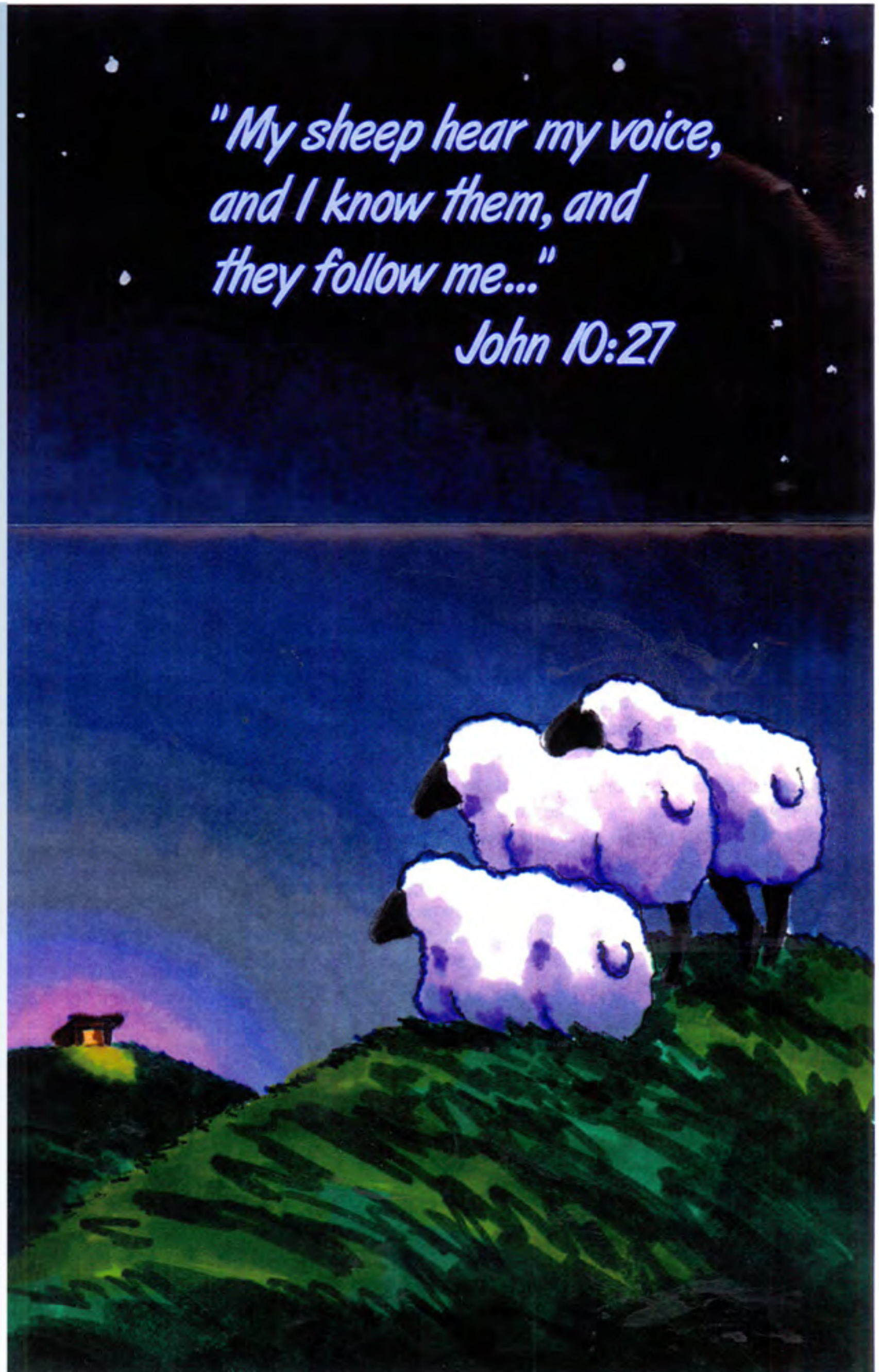
Warning: Be Faithful – 2 John 9

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*"My sheep hear my voice,
and I know them, and
they follow me..."*

John 10:27



This is Going to Sting a Little

Allen Webster

Nurses always say it . . . and they always *underestimate*. The needle looks a lot longer and feels a lot bigger on the receiving end. Why do we have to go through the “stings” of life? Why did they ever invent needles? Can’t they come up with a better way? After all, these are modern times. Men have walked on the moon. We can be on the other side of the world overnight. Yet they still haven’t figured out a way to take the “sting” out of medical practice. Needles are necessary.

Life has internal stings as well—broken hearts, crushed ambitions, crashed dreams. These usually smart for much longer than the kind nurses inflict. Do you ever wonder, “Why me, Lord? I’m a Christian. I walk the straight and narrow way. I try to avoid trouble and sin. But now I’ve been ‘stung.’ Why me?” There are things we may not fully understand until we get to heaven, but we do get some insights into this question from God’s Word. Do the “stings” of life have a positive purpose?

LIFE’S STINGS CAN CAUSE US TO “SOBER UP.” Our world runs from troubles like superman from kryptonite. The third biggest business in the world is entertainment (behind the U.S. Government and the Catholic church). America’s philosophy is “eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die” (Ecclesiastes 8:15; Luke 12:19, 20). “Get away from it all. Escape!” Those who don’t try to escape, try to hide. Millions try to escape life’s stings by “drowning them in a bottle” only to be “stung” by a different kind of bee (cf. Proverbs 23:32).

The world wants to laugh. It hates to mourn. Jesus said, “Woe to you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep” (Luke 6:25) and “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted” (Matthew 5:4). Jesus wept. He was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:2-5,7). We have no record that Jesus ever laughed out loud (once He “rejoiced in spirit,” Luke 10:21). He was angry (John 2:13-17; Mark 3:5), hungry (Luke 4:2), and thirsty (John 4:7; 19:28), but never laughing. We do, though, have a record of His tears (John 11:35; Luke 19:41-44; Hebrews 5:5-7).

It is altogether too easy for us to imbibe the world’s spirit if everything always goes our way all the time. Our roots tend to run horizontally as long as there is plenty of water. But we need the stability of a vertical root system. That’s why God sends dry spells. He wants serious-minded people in His family. Aged men are to be “sober, grave, temperate” (Titus 2:2). Aged women are to teach the young women to be “sober” (2:3). “The young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded” (2:6). The word sober (*sophronizo*) means “circumspect; sensible; mature.” Sorrows help us develop sober-mindedness.

I walked a mile with Pleasure, she chattered all the way,
But left me none the wiser for all she had to say.
I walked a mile with Sorrow, and ne’er a word said she,
But, oh, the things I learned from her when Sorrow walked with me.
—Robert Browning Hamilton

LIFE’S STINGS CAN CAUSE US TO “LOOK UP.” “Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth” (Ecclesiastes 7:3, 4). The word translated “is made better” (*yatab*) means “make well, sound, beautiful, happy, successful, or right” (Strong, 3190, 49). Sorrow can turn us to God. The person who is incapable of genuine tears is also incapable of real joy.

- ▶ “The soul would have no rainbow had the eye no tears.”
—John Vance Cheney
- ▶ “All sunshine makes a desert.” —Arab proverb
- ▶ “Into each life some rain must fall.” —Longfellow

The prodigal did not look back toward home until his money ran out (Luke 15). It was only after he knew the pangs of hunger and the stench of the pig pen that he decided that there was more to life than riotous living. Abe Lincoln is credited with saying, “I have often been driven to my knees by the sincere conviction that there was no where else to go.” So it is with many people. Bee stings make us look for the medicine cabinet. Life’s stings make us look for the Great Physician.

LIFE’S STINGS CAN CAUSE US TO “CHANGE UP.” Many have not considered the need to change and get right with God until stung with painful circumstances. The Philippian Jailer went to work one night totally unaware that in a few hours circumstances would bring him to consider suicide (Acts 16). But an earthquake came, and he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. He knew that the Romans would require his life for theirs and thought he would save them the trouble. But out of the darkness Paul’s voice came: “We are all here.” Thus, he had a change of heart and was receptive to the Gospel. Just minutes before, he was totally disinterested. Now he’s asking what he needs to do and quickly obeys it (16:31-34). What happened? He was “stung” with the unfavorable circumstances of life and it made him “change up.”

We may not fully understand the reason for the stings of life as they happen. But as the old song says, “Farther along, we’ll know all about it. Farther along, we’ll understand why. So cheer up, my brother, we’ll understand it all by and by.” “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Corinthians 4:17).

Not until each loom is silent and the shuttles cease to fly,
Will God unroll the pattern and explain the reason why
The dark threads are as needful in the Weaver’s skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver for the pattern which He planned.
My life is but the weaving between God and me.
I only choose the colors He weaveth steadily.
Sometimes He weaveth sorrow and I in foolish pride,
Forget He sees the upper and I the under side.

Remember, “The crown of all crowns was made of thorns” (cf. James 1:2-4).

Interestingly, the New Testament speaks of “stings” (*kentron*, used five times). By examining these, we find how to remove many of life’s “stings.” It is twice translated “prick” (Acts 9:5; 26:14). As one is pricked with a needle to be cured of many illnesses, one’s conscience must be pricked with the Gospel so he can be cured of the soul’s diseases. The other times it is translated “sting” (1 Corinthians 15:55, 56; Revelation 9:10). Paul explains that Christians avoid the sting of death, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (15:55-57).

Yes, this world is going to sting a little, but there’ll be no needles in heaven.

THINK ON GOOD THINGS

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

Revisionist History?

Below is a compilation of actual student bloopers collected by teachers from 8th grade through college.

- ▶ Socrates was a famous Greek teacher who went around giving people advice. They killed him. Socrates died from an overdose of wedlock. After his death, his career suffered a dramatic decline.
- ▶ Nero was a cruel tyranny who would torture his subjects by playing the fiddle to them.
- ▶ Writing at the same time as Shakespeare was Miguel Cervantes. He wrote Donkey Hote. The next great author was John Milton. Milton wrote Paradise Lost. Then his wife died and he wrote Paradise Regained.
- ▶ One of the causes of the Revolutionary War was the English put tacks in their tea. Also, the colonists would send their parcels through the post without stamps. Finally the colonists won the War and no longer had to pay for taxis.
- ▶ Delegates from the original 13 states formed the Contented Congress. Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin were two singers of the Declaration of Independence. Franklin discovered electricity by rubbing two cats backwards and declared, "A horse divided against itself cannot stand." Franklin died in 1790 and is still dead.
- ▶ Abraham Lincoln became America's greatest Precedent. Lincoln's mother died in infancy, and he was born in a log cabin which he built with his own hands. Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves by signing the Emasculation Proclamation. On the night of April 14, 1865, Lincoln went to the theater and got shot in his seat by one of the actors in a moving picture show. The believed assassin was John Wilkes Booth, a supposingly insane actor. This ruined Booth's career.
- ▶ Meanwhile in Europe, the enlightenment was a reasonable time. Voltaire invented electricity and also wrote a book called Candy. Gravity was invented by Issac Walton. It is chiefly noticeable in the autumn when the apples are falling off the trees.
- ▶ Beethoven wrote music even though he was deaf. He was so deaf he wrote loud music. He took long walks in the forest even when everyone was calling for him. Beethoven expired in 1827 and later died for this.

"A merry heart doeth good..." —Proverbs 17:22

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 |



A Scientist with a Song



Many years ago, I taught at a small Christian college in Florida. The school was small, and the faculty was young and inexperienced. It was a great inspiration, therefore, when the distinguished Christian Scientist, Dr. A.W. Dicus joined our number to serve as academic dean and give intellectual leadership to our faculty.

Dr. Dicus had already had an impressive career as the head of the department of physics at Tennessee Tech University. He was a distinguished scientist and renowned physics teacher. During the dark days of World War II when the developmental work was being done on the atomic bomb, Dr. Dicus is said to have sent more physicists into the Oak Ridge Laboratories than any other physics teacher in America.

However, Dr. Dicus did not find complete satisfaction in his work in the state university and decided to devote part of his life to Christian education. Though he had not yet reached the normal retirement age, he took an early retirement from Tennessee Tech and came to Florida on a modest salary to serve as academic dean at the small, struggling Christian college.

Through the years that I worked under Dr. Dicus, he was a great source of strength and inspiration. As a young teacher, I could go to him for counsel and encouragement. But I remember brother Dicus as more than a distinguished physicist turned college dean. I remember him as a disciple of Christ, a man of deep faith, and a man that expressed that faith in song. For it was brother Dicus, who wrote both the words and music for the song that is so popular in churches:

There is beyond the azure blue, a God concealed from human sight,
 He tinted skies with heavenly hue, and framed the world with His great might.
 There was a long, long time ago, a God whose voice the prophets heard;
 He is the God that we should know, who speaks from His inspired Word.
 Our God whose Son upon a tree, a life was willing there to give,
 That He from sin might set men free, and evermore with Him could live.

Whenever I hear a congregation singing these words today, and especially a group of young people, I think of brother Dicus and a lump comes in my throat. It is a source of spiritual strength to me to know that these great words of faith were written by a distinguished scientist. It is also a gentle reminder of the great debt of gratitude that every generation owes to those who have gone before. Brother Dicus died at about 90 years of age. But even though he is gone, he still lives on when we sing, "There is a God."

—Parkview Proclaimer, Odessa, TX


"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." —Genesis 1:1

Every Good Gift



A POOR MAN was given a loaf of bread. He thanked the baker, but the baker said, "Don't thank me. Thank the miller who made the flour." So he thanked the miller, but the miller said, "Don't thank me. Thank the farmer who planted the wheat." So he thanked the farmer. But the farmer said, "Don't thank me. Thank the Lord. He gave the sunshine, rain, and fertility to the soil, and that's why you have bread to eat." Regardless of how sophisticated, how advanced we may be scientifically, we still can't create; we still can't make a kernel of wheat. That has to come from God. God gives us the things we need in order to live on this planet. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights..." (James 1:17; Acts 17:24).


The



HOME PAGE



Pretty Flowers for You



I ran into a stranger as he passed by, "Oh excuse me please" was my reply.

He said, "Please excuse me too; I wasn't watching for you."

We were very polite, this stranger and I. We went on our way and we said good-bye.

But at home a different story is told, How we treat our loved ones, young and old.

Later that day, cooking the evening meal,
My son stood beside me very still.
When I turned, I nearly knocked him down.
"Move out of the way," I said with a frown.
He walked away, his little heart broken.
I didn't realize how harshly I'd spoken.

As I later lay awake in bed,
Troubling thoughts went through my head,
While dealing with strangers, courtesy I use,
But the family I love, I seem to abuse.

I went to look on the kitchen floor,
And found some flowers near the door.
Those are the flowers he brought for me.
He picked them himself: blue and yellow to see
He stood very quietly not to spoil the surprise,
I never saw the tears that filled his little eyes.

By this time, I felt very small,
And now my tears began to fall.
I quietly went and knelt by his bed;
"Wake up, little one, wake up," I said.
"Are these the flowers you picked for me?"

He smiled, "I found 'em, out by the tree.
I picked 'em because they're pretty like you.
I knew you'd like 'em, especially the blue."
I said, "Son, I'm very sorry for the way I acted today;
I shouldn't have yelled at you that way."

He said, "Oh, Mom, that's okay.
I love you anyway."
I said, "Son, I love you too,
and I do like the flowers, especially the blue."

**"Let your speech be always with grace,
seasoned with salt, that ye may know
how ye ought to answer..."**—Colossians 4:6

"Momma, Can We Cuss?"

First, let me tell you that the very question is so sad. The querist was a 10-year-old boy on the same football team as one of my sons. I did not hear him ask it, but his mom, who sat in a chair within ear shot of mine, was telling another mom about her conversation with the child. It was obvious that he saw raw language as a rite of passage into manhood. How profoundly misguided. But he didn't ask to cuss all the time—just on the way home from football. She said, "Sure."

Her answer is appalling for two reasons. First, it shows she has been brainwashed by situation ethics. The idea that something can be sinful (though I do not think she would be of such strong conviction of foul language) in one context but not in another is textbook situationism. Is stealing OK if one really wants those shoes and the department store will never miss a few dollars? Is assault acceptable if the antagonist is really annoying? So sad that the opportunity to discourage wrong behavior instead permitted it because of a self-(mis)guided standard (cf. Jeremiah 10:23). Her answer is also appalling because it reflects an erosion of morality by many in a position of great responsibility and authority with children—including parents, teachers, and coaches.

Her own language betrayed her weakness in this area. Are you picturing a lower class, redneck type? Think again, this woman and her husband are well-to-do, well-placed members of our community. They have a surface facade of decorum and sophistication but are betrayed by what comes from within. That is not to judge their hearts but simply to quote Jesus, who said, "That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:20-23).

So many of those involved with our boys' football have remarkably high moral standards. At this same scrimmage, my son reports of the team being led in not one but two prayers. The coaches have yet to say, even under the stress of a game situation, so much as one curse word. We are glad to have such role models for our son.

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers"

—Ephesians 4:29

Every Day is a Vacation with Her

I had never before seen the gentleman who uttered these words. He was in a wheel chair, so I yielded to him as we entered the men's room at the Sugarlands Visitor's Center near Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Just outside the door his wife was talking with another lady about his physical condition and their vacation, perhaps their last. As he came out, the lady said, "Mr. Jones, I sure hope you have a good vacation." In a somewhat labored but very discernible voice, he said, "Every day is a vacation with her!" How thoughtful and sweet! The smile on his wife's face betrayed her gratitude for the compliment.

If more husbands and wives spent more time saying such things to each other, fewer marriages would end in divorce. Selfishness is a stake driven into the heart of many marriages. Yet here was a gentleman, who may have had reason to feel sorry for himself, doing his best to make his wife feel better. I'm convinced this is a part of what the Good Book means when it states, "Husbands, love your wives . . ." (Ephesians 5:25).

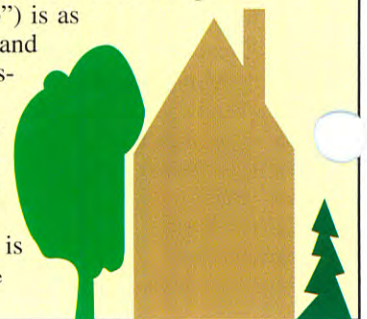
Marriage, home, and family are important parts of God's plan for the human race. Not only did God institute marriage, He regulates it through His Word (see Genesis 2:15-25; Matthew 19:3-9; Colossians 3:18-21) The Bible is still the best "Marriage Manual." While there are many ingredients in God's recipe for a good marriage, the "three Cs" are crucially important.

Commitment. Webster defines "commitment" as "an agreement or pledge to do something in the future." When a man and a woman pledge their love and loyalty to one another they become obligated to each other. Some who say "I do," don't! Commitment must be taken seriously. No marriage can succeed without it.

Companionship. Spending time together is critical. "Fellowship" (which Webster gives as a synonym for "companionship") is as important in the home as in the church. It gives strength and encouragement. Serious problems are not as likely if a husband and wife work hard at developing companionship.

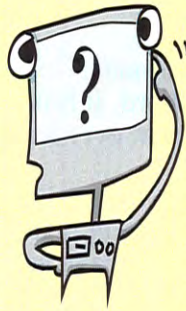
Communication. It isn't enough just to be together, however. That togetherness must include communication. All members of a family need to know they are loved, respected, and appreciated.

All of us need to occasionally hear, "Every day is a vacation with her (him)!" —Edward Anderson, Carthage, Tennessee





What Happened to the Ten Lost Tribes?



The fate of the lost ten tribes has been the stuff of lore and legend. Several fantastic theories have emerged over the years, trying to trace these "lost Israelites." Some claim, for instance, that the British royal house descended from lost Israelite royalty, and that Britain and its colonies, including America, are the heirs of God's promises and the present day ten tribes of Israel. The truth, however, is that the lost ten tribes were absorbed by conquering nations and ceased to exist as they intermarried with other peoples.

The twelve tribes of Israel formed the united kingdom of Israel that continued for one hundred and twenty years under Saul, David, and Solomon. At the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam took the unwise counsel of the young men and refused to lighten the tax load Solomon had placed on the people. The result was a revolt that gave Jereboam ten tribes that formed the kingdom of Israel, and left the kingdom of Judah, consisting of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, as well as most of the Levites, ruled by Rehoboam.

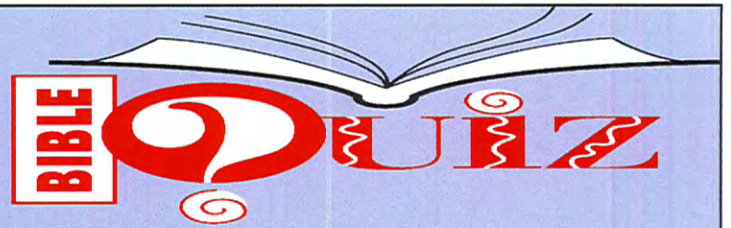
After the division, the northern kingdom of Israel began to practice idolatry. To prevent the people from going back to Jerusalem to worship, Jereboam set up golden calves at Dan and Bethel (1 Kings 12:26-29). Idolatry under infamous kings such as Ahab marked the history of the kingdom until 733 B.C. when the Assyrians occupied Israel and deported many of the residents (2 Kings 15:29). In 721 B.C., Israel's capital city of Samaria fell, and its inhabitants were also deported. "In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods" (2 Kings 17:6-7). God rejected them because of their idolatry, and the nations around them gradually absorbed them. They had already largely lost their identity as Israel because of their idolatry. The few people left in Samaria intermingled with other people the Assyrians imported, creating the Samaritans whom the Jews despised for being a mixed race.

In 597 B.C., the southern kingdom of Judah fell to Nebuchadnezzar, who deported many Jews, including Daniel and his friends. In contrast to the Israelites from the northern kingdom, however, they maintained their identity and faith in Babylonian captivity. After seventy years of captivity in Babylon, King Cyrus allowed them to return. He decreed, "The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem" (Ezra 1:2-3). Any faithful Israelites from the ten tribes would have returned to Judea along with those from Judah. The church is the true Israel of God today, a universal kingdom that knows no national boundaries (Daniel 2:44).

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



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

Name: _____

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Questions Taken from the King James Version

Starts with the Letter "H"

Find answers in Exodus 20:12; 2 Samuel 14:26; Psalm 9:17; 19:10; 46:1; Proverbs 4:23; 6:26; 13:15; 16:18, 20; Isaiah 6:1; Matthew 5:6; 24:36; John 14:2; Romans 10:17; Ephesians 1:22; 5:25-28; 6:17; Titus 2:4; Hebrews 6:11; James 2:25; 4:10; 1 Peter 1:4, 16 (not in order).

1. Absalom cut his only once a year _____
2. He that trusteth in the Lord _____ is he
3. The way of transgressors is _____
4. Rahab was a _____
5. A _____ spirit goes before a fall.
6. Jesus is the _____ of the church.
7. Faith comes by _____ the Word.
8. We must keep our _____ with all diligence.
9. A Christian's inheritance is reserved in _____.
10. The wicked, and nations that forget God, are turned into _____.
11. We must take the _____ of salvation to wear.
12. God is a very present _____ in time of trouble.
13. Isaiah saw the Lord _____ and lifted up.
14. "Be ye _____, even as I am _____."
15. Aged women were to teach young women to be keepers at _____.
16. God's Word is sweeter than _____.
17. Children are to _____ father and mother.
18. A faithful Christian can have full assurance of _____.
19. No one knows the day nor the _____ of Jesus' return.
20. Jesus said that in His Father's _____ were many mansions.
21. "_____ yourselves in the sight of the Lord."
22. Blessed are those who _____ after righteousness.
23. An adulteress will _____ for man's "precious life."
24. A _____ must love a wife as his own body.

Love, Love, Love, Love

Find answers in 1 Corinthians 13:3-8

"Love (charity) suffereth _____ and is _____; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily _____, thinketh no _____; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the _____; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."



Answers to Last Issue: Starts with the Letter "Q": 1. Quail (Exodus 16:12, 13); 2. Quartus (Romans 16:23); 3. Quaternion (Acts 12:4); 4. Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1); 5. Quarrel (Mark 6:19); 6. Quench (Ephesians 6:16); 7. Quick (Hebrews 4:12); 8. Quiet (1 Peter 3:4); 9. Quietness (Ecclesiastes 4:6); 10. Quiver (Psalm 127:5); 11. Quickly (John 13:27); 12. Quake (Matthew 27:51). **Kings and Things:** 1. Solomon (1 Kings 3:3); 2. The queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1); 3. Hiram (1 Kings 7:13-14); 4. King Hiram of Tyre (1 Kings 5:1); 5. Jereboam (1 Kings 14:1); 6. Abijah (1 Kings 14:2); 7. Obadiah, governor or overseer of King Ahab's household (1 Kings 18:3); 8. David was an old man and was so cold that he could not get heat to warm him. The idea was advanced that Abishag could lie in his bosom to warm him (1 Kings 1:1-3); 9. Nathan the prophet (1 Kings 1:10-21); 10. Joab (1 Kings 2:5-6).

Learn More!

“The most priceless possession of the human race . . .”

This is found at the beginning of *Halley's Bible Handbook*, written by Henry H Halley in 1962. He continues:

Everybody ought to love the Bible. Everybody ought to read the Bible. Everybody. It is God's Word. It holds the solution of life. It tells about the best friend mankind ever had, the Noblest, Kindest, Truest Man that ever trod this earth.

It is the most beautiful story ever told. It is the best guide to human conduct ever known. It gives a meaning, and a glow, and a joy, and a victory, and a destiny, and a glory, to life elsewhere unknown. There is nothing in history, or in literature, that in any wise compares with the simple annals of the Man of Galilee, who spent His days and nights ministering to the suffering, teaching human kindness, dying for human sin, rising to life that shall never end, and promising eternal security and eternal happiness to all who will come to Him.

Most people, in their serious moods, must have some wonderment in their minds as to how things are going to stack up when the end comes. Laugh it off, toss it aside, as we may, *that day will come*. And then what? Well, it is the Bible that has the answer. And an unmistakable answer it is. There is a God. There is a Heaven. There is a Hell. There is a Savior. There will be a Day of Judgment. Happy is the man, who, in the days of his flesh, makes his peace with the Christ of the Bible, and gets himself ready for the final take-off.

Free CD!

“The Evolution Illusion” is a remarkable computer CD which HTH has received permission to offer its readers for *free*!

Jerry Bergman, Ph. D., says of it: “This entertaining, informative, and colorful tour of a creation museum is an invaluable means of teaching young and old alike the evidence for the modern creation world view. A delight to tour, it is informative and up-to-date . . . presents the material in an interesting, lively and engaging manner . . . 700+ screens cover a wide variety of concepts, all of which are very useful in helping the viewers grasp the importance and the evidence behind the creation world view. **Highly recommended.**”

This “virtual museum” has exhibits on the Age of the Earth, Creation Vs. Evolution, Methods of Dating, Dinosaurs, and much more. To download your free copy, or request a free CD, simply visit

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(Reply immediately; supplies limited)

Was Darwin Wrong? YES!

The November 2004 issue of *National Geographic* asked the rhetorical question, WAS DARWIN WRONG? Their answer—provided in a 33-page-long feature story—was “NO! The evidence for evolution is overwhelming!” We think the evidence needs another examination. Go to www.ApologeticsPress.org for a well-researched, carefully documented review.

More!

About Us:

- I want to better understand the church of Christ. Please send the pamphlet “What to Expect When You Visit the Church of Christ.”
- I want to receive your weekly newsletter/bulletin.
- I want to learn more about your Bible school and programs.
- Please keep me informed of your classes, events, and activities.

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What subject most interests YOU?

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- NEW! Sowers of Discord.** This 12-page booklet is the last in the series examining “Seven Things a Loving God Hates” from Proverbs 6:16-19. Most of us have some difficulty maintaining peaceful relationships with all the others in our circle. What does the Bible say about peace, discord, and fellowship?
- NEW! Can a Christian Fall from Grace?** A comprehensive BIBLICAL look at an important question.
- A Lying Tongue**
- Scruples.** A study of what Romans 14 says about tolerating differing opinions among believers.
- Can We Let Our Conscience Be Our Guide in Religion?**
- Finding God's Treasure.** A guide to locating salvation by careful study of the Bible (based on Acts 8).
- How to Get a Good Night's Sleep**
- The Day the Preacher Sat Next to the Atheist** Interesting exchange on contrasting world views.
- A New Look at the Old Rugged Cross** The story that never grows old! (One of our most popular tracts)
- Married for Life.** How five couples reached their 50th . . .
- What Must I Do to Be Saved?**

—All materials/services are absolutely **FREE** of charge. We even pay postage!—

In the Interest of Christian

UNITY



Tell Me More About

JESUS

How Do I Choose a Church?



One radio station in Nashville does nothing but talk radio. As an avid talk radio listener, I am always interested in the questions and comments of those who call in. On one show, the host deals exclusively with e-mails that listeners have sent in. One that caught my attention the other day was a lady who asked, "How do I choose a church?"

The host suggested she consider looking at churches as communities, and that she simply needed to find one that had people who most suited her needs for friendship. While friendliness is important, this approach lacks much in the area of content.

"How do I choose a church?" is a fair question. The only way to answer it adequately is to appeal to Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16).

One needs to find a church that is founded by Jesus (Matthew 16:18). Jesus told Peter that He would build *His* church. Thus, the church is the possession of Christ. It is not man-made; it is the bride of Christ (Romans 7:4).

One needs to find a church that has only Christ as its Head (Colossians 1:18). Many man-made denominations have men who serve as living heads of the church. As the Head of the church, Jesus is the only authority (Matthew 28:18-20) to which a church can appeal for an answer about its work, function, and membership.

One needs to find a church that offers the biblical method for membership. The New Testament church did not "vote" on whether a person was allowed membership. The Bible teaches that Scriptural baptism adds one to the church (Acts 2:47). When one puts Christ on through faith (Hebrews 11:6), repentance (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38), and baptism (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:26-27), he is added to the church that Jesus died to establish (Acts 20:28). One must be in fellowship with God before he can be in fellowship with other Christians (1 John 1:6-10). It would be wrong to fellowship one who is in rebellion to God's commands (3 John 9-11).

One needs to find a church that chooses to wear a biblical name (Ephesians 3:14-16; cf. Romans 16:16). When a church wears a name that cannot be found in the Holy Writ, it is an offense to God. The "whole family in heaven and earth is named" for Jesus Christ.

One needs to find a church that has the proper mission (Ephesians 3:10). The primary mission of the church is evangelism (Matthew 28:19). Many churches have forgotten their work. While fellowships and friendships with other Christians are good, they are not good reasons to attend church. The church should be engaged in benevolence, evangelism, and edification, but teaching Christ and His Gospel is paramount (Matthew 28:19; cf. Romans 1:16).

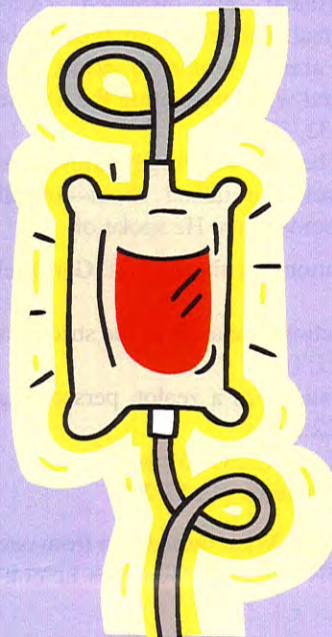
One needs to find a church that teaches sound doctrine (1 Peter 4:11). The only means of teaching sound doctrine is by directly appealing to Scripture in a "thus saith the Lord" manner (2 Timothy 3:16-17). If a church teaches things contrary to God's Word, one needs to find another church!

One must find a church that worships God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). God desires our worship, and we need to be absolutely certain that the worship is such a way that pleases Him.

There are many ways one could choose a church—from throwing darts at the churches listing of the Yellow Pages to asking a radio talk show host! There is only one right way—open up God's Word and examine what God desires of the church and then seek that model out and attend regularly.

—Johnny O. Trail

Today I Gave Blood



For several years, I have been giving blood from time to time because I have O+ that is so needed in emergency situations. Usually, I give blood either at the American Red Cross center on Washington Street or at the Huntsville Hospital where I go to visit church members.

Because I was in Kenya, Africa last year on a mission trip, I have been unable to give blood for one full year. Numerous times this past year I have been called to come and give blood only to have to tell them that I could not do so. Last Saturday, October 2, exactly one year had passed.

Today, I gave blood. In doing so, it made me think about my blood compared to the blood that Jesus gave on the Cross of Calvary. Think with me for a moment:

► I gave about a pint of my blood—Jesus "gave it all" (in the sense of the total sacrifice of His body for our sins).

► My blood was (hopefully) without any major defects since it will be used for surgeries and such—Jesus' blood was pure and sinless and was used to atone for the sins of all the world.

► I sat in a nice comfortable chair in a quiet, air-conditioned building with the best equipment used to ensure sanitary conditions as my blood came out—Jesus' blood was shed on an old rugged cross in the stifling heat with sinful men shouting for Him to die.

► My blood came out of my arm via a needle—Jesus' blood came out of wounds spread over His body as He had been inhumanely beaten, whipped, and abused prior to being nailed on the cross!

► After I gave blood, I sat around eating a snack and drinking something to give me energy to go back to my work and normal activities—Jesus' blood was shed so that He died and His body was later taken down and placed in a borrowed grave.

► I plan to give blood again in the future so that others can benefit in a medical emergency—Jesus gave His blood ONE TIME to fulfill the needs of the entire world until He comes again!

Today, I gave blood. Almost 2000 years ago, my Savior gave His blood and the world has never been the same since. I wish all my friends could appreciate the difference His sacrifice can make in their lives!

—Ron Williams, Huntsville, Alabama

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace..."

—Ephesians 1:7



What Really Changed Paul's Life?



All of Jerusalem “was disturbed” (Acts 21:30). Paul had been seized, dragged out of the temple, almost beaten to death, and falsely charged with desecrating the temple (Acts 21:30-32, 35).

However, when he was finally allowed to defend himself, he talked about—of all things—his conversion. He spoke of

- ▶ his “education” at the feet of Gamaliel (22:1-3),
- ▶ his “convictions” relative to the strictness of the law (22:3),
- ▶ his “dedication” as a zealot, persecuting the church (22:3-5),

- ▶ his “immersion” for the remission of sins (22:6-16); and,
- ▶ his “commission” as one sent to the Gentiles (22:17-21).

Question: What really changed Paul's life? What turned him from one religion to another? What redirected his energies? Why was he converted?

Answer: He saw **Jesus!** On the road to Damascus, his associates saw the same light Paul encountered, but only Paul was temporarily blinded. Why? Paul was the only one actually to see the Lord in His glory; and, well, it changed his life forever (Acts 22:6-9; 9:7).

Even so, when you and I study the Old Testament, we are encouraged to anticipate a Savior. When we study the New Testament, we are introduced to Jesus as that Savior. If we are baptized into Him (Gal 3:26-27) and allow Him to live in us (Gal 2:20), like Paul, it will make all the difference in our lives...and our eternity.

Christ in you is the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27).

—Dan Winkler, Nashville, Tennessee