

# HOUSE TO HOUSE

## Heart to Heart



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

Volume 11, Number 4

### 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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## Three Tears from a Savior's Eye

Allen Webster

*Big boys don't cry.* So we tell little boys when they fall. Then they read in their Bibles that Jesus wept. Does that mean He was a “sissy”? No. One has to consider the reason for the tears. Are they tears of weakness or strength? Of fear or compassion? Jesus was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief (Isaiah 53:3), and He wept on three occasions. Each time He left us the right example.

### JESUS WEPT AT LAZARUS' TOMB (JOHN 11:35)

The shortest verse of the Bible says a lot! It tells us that the Great Physician had good bedside manners. Jesus knew that people generally do not care how much you know until they know how much you care. He knew that Mary and Martha needed somebody to care about their pain. They had lost a brother and their hearts were breaking, so, even though He was about to resurrect Lazarus, He wept<sup>1</sup> with those that wept (Romans 12:15; Job 30:25).

Jesus illustrated the Jewish proverb:

Among those who stand, do not sit;

Among those who sit, do not stand;

Among those who laugh, do not weep;

Among those who weep, do not laugh.

We should be ready to weep with those who weep. A little girl was late coming home from school one day. Her mother paced the floor until she finally arrived about fifteen minutes late. She opened the door and said, “How many times have I told you to come directly home from school! I was worried sick! Don't you ever make me worry like that again!” The little girl looked up with with tears and said, “No, Mommy, you don't understand.” “What don't I understand?” her mother said angrily.



# Three Tears from a Savior's Eye

Continued from page 1

The girl responded, "Today was Show and Tell and Jamie brought a china doll her grandma gave her." Her mother interrupted, "I don't care how nice a doll Jamie had, you don't stay to play . . . you come straight home!" "No, no, Mommy, you don't understand," the daughter replied. "Understand what?" her mother said slowly. "When we were walking home, some boys were mean to us. Jamie dropped the doll and it broke on the sidewalk. And I stayed to help Jamie." Her mother smiled and said, "Oh honey, that is so sweet that you stayed behind to help Jamie fix her doll, but you still need to come straight home." "No, no, Mommy!" the girl said again. "It was broken so bad we couldn't fix it! I stayed to help Jamie cry."

O that we would have a heart like that. God does not want us to raise the dead or piece back together shattered china dolls, but He wants us to be Christ-like in the presence of the broken . . . and to help them cry.

Jesus weeping at Lazarus' grave shows that He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Hebrews 4:15; Psalm 35:13-14). He cares when we hurt (1 Peter 5:7). He understands how we feel, because He was one of us (John 1:14).

Henry the Eighth, wandering disguised one night in London, was met at the foot of a bridge by night watchmen. They did not believe he was the king, so they shut him up without fire or candle in the Poultry Compter. Upon liberation, he granted thirty chaldrons of coals and some bread for all night prisoners in the Compter. Experience brings sympathy.

This world would be better if, instead of putting others in their place, we more often tried putting ourselves in the place of others. Those who have felt affliction, doubt, sickness, and temptation are more apt and better equipped to console those in similar conditions (2 Corinthians 1:3-4; 1 Peter 3:8). Christians are tenderhearted (Ephesians 4:32) and have been known to cry upon occasion in funeral homes and hospitals. *This tear of Jesus was a tear of sympathy.*

## JESUS WEPT OVER JERUSALEM (LUKE 19:41-45)

This was the most glorious public moment of Jesus' life. He was ushered into the city with a hero's welcome. Everyone is singing His praises (literally), yet . . . He breaks down in passionate sobs.<sup>2</sup> Like the psalmist, rivers of waters ran down His eyes because they kept not the law (Psalm 119:53, 136, 158; cf. Jeremiah 13:17). Like Paul, there was great heaviness and continual sorrow in His heart for His kinsmen according to the flesh (Romans 9:2-3).

He had done all He could to get them to believe, yet they persisted in doubt. He had come that they might be enlightened, but they chose darkness (John 1:11). He wanted for them the abundant life, but they wanted eternal death (John 10:10). The city He had just entered was on God's "hit-list" (Matthew 24:4-34), and Sodom and Gomorrah got off easy by comparison (24:21). These voices now shouting, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Luke 19:38), would soon scream, "Crucify him, crucify him, His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matthew 27:25; Mark 15:14).

Jesus still weeps for lost cities and impenitent souls. He longs for men to mourn over their own sins (Matthew 5:4), so He won't have to. A legend from the Middle Ages tells of a young woman who was expelled from heaven and told that she would be readmitted only when she brought back the one gift God valued most.

- ▶ She brought back a blood drop from a dying martyr.
- ▶ She collected coins a destitute widow had given the poor.
- ▶ She found a Bible used by a powerful preacher.
- ▶ She returned with dust from the shoes of missionaries who served long years in a distant land.

Each time she was turned away. One day she watched a man horseback come to a fountain where a small boy was playing. Seeing the boy, he was reminded of his own childhood innocence. Then, looking into the fountain, he saw his hardened face. He was overcome by sins and began to weep penitent tears. She took one of those tears to heaven whereupon the door opened wide<sup>3</sup> (2 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 55:7; Ezekiel 18:21; 2 Kings 22:19).

The lost die daily unprepared for what awaits them. Many never give the afterlife an afterthought. We must make them think. Jesus let His tears drive Him to Calvary; ours must drive us to tell of Calvary (Mark 16:15). *This was a tear of sorrow.*

## JESUS WEPT IN GETHSEMANE (HEBREWS 5:5-7)

Hebrews 5:5-7 reveals a detail about that night in the Garden that neither Matthew, Mark, Luke, nor John gives us. It says, "when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard." *Jesus wept in Gethsemane the night He was arrested.*

This was not silent, personal grief, but loud, public crying. The disciples—had they been awake—could have heard it at the stone's-throw distance.<sup>4</sup> This episode shows Christ's humanity. He did not want to suffer Calvary's humiliation, pain, and separation (Hebrews 12:2). He prayed that God would find some other way to save man, but there was no Plan B (Mark 14:32-35; Luke 22:40-44).

Americans take 33,000,000,000 aspirins a year.<sup>5</sup> Jesus knows every headache. Sixty-to-ninety percent of medical office visits are for stress-related symptoms.<sup>6</sup> Jesus knows every stressor (Ecclesiastes 8:16; Luke 10:40; 21:34). Countless pillows are wet each night with heartache's tears, and sleep flees from dread of the future. Jesus sees every tear and understands every fear. We can cast our cares upon Him, for He cares (1 Peter 5:7). He understands because He has been there. Augustine of Hippo said, "God had one Son on earth without sin, but never one without suffering." Everybody has problems; the wise ones let their troubles drive them to the Garden of prayer. *This was a tear of struggle.*

Man is the only creature God made that can cry. No other experiences sorrow to the extent that we do. But God is there to comfort (Psalm 23:4; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7; 2:4; 7:2-11). Big boys sometimes cry—for Christians never outgrow being children (of God).

### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> The root of the word weep here (*klaio*) means, "to sob, or wail aloud." It does not just mean to become teary-eyed or weep silently (*dakruo*).

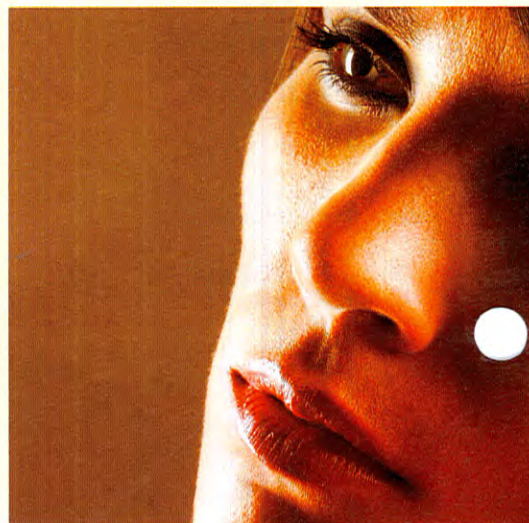
<sup>2</sup> The word is *klaio* again.

<sup>3</sup> Don McCullough, "Jesus the Judge," Preaching Today, Tape No. 129.

<sup>4</sup> Strong, *ischuros*, means "forcible; boisterous, mighty" and crying, *krauge*, could be translated "an outcry" (it comes from a root, *krazo*, meaning, "to croak as a raven; scream aloud; shriek, exclaim").

<sup>5</sup> *Reader's Digest Book of Facts*.

<sup>6</sup> *Harvard Business Review* (11-12/94).



# Dart Throwing

Sally related an experience she had in a Bible class taught by Professor Smith. He was known for elaborate object lessons. One day, Sally walked into the classroom and knew they were in for a fun day. On the wall was a big target; on a table were many darts.

Smith told the students to draw a picture of someone they disliked or someone who had made them angry in the past. Sally's friend drew a girl who had stolen her boyfriend. Another drew a picture of his little brother. Sally drew a former friend, with a great deal of detail, even drawing pimples on the face. Sally was pleased with the effect she achieved.

The class lined up and began throwing darts. Some threw with such force that the targets ripped apart. Sally looked forward to her turn, but was disappointed when the teacher said they were out of time.

As she sat down, thinking about how angry she was because she did not have a chance to throw at her target, the professor began removing the target from the wall. Underneath was a picture of Jesus.

A hush fell over the room as each student viewed the mangled picture of Jesus. Holes and jagged marks covered His face and His eyes. Smith said only these words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

No other words were necessary—the tear-filled eyes of each student focused only on the picture of Christ.

—from Mikey's Funnies



## 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

# Cancer is so limited

When Dan Richardson lost his battle with cancer, the following piece was distributed at his memorial service.

Cancer is limited

It cannot cripple love,  
It cannot corrode faith,  
It cannot eat away peace,  
It cannot destroy confidence,  
It cannot kill friendship,  
It cannot shut out memories,  
It cannot silence courage,  
It cannot invade the soul,  
It cannot reduce eternal life,  
It cannot quench the Spirit,  
It cannot lessen the power of the resurrection.

You cannot deny that you have the disease, but you can deny despair from taking control. Wherever you are, whatever your circumstances, call for God's daily delivery of wisdom, strength, and grace.

Each morning, slam the door on despair. If you don't, it will slip in and rob you. And you'll soon find a peace missing.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." —John 14:27

## Look What Has Come to the World!

An English writer has said, "The early Christians did not go around saying, 'Look what the world has come to.' Rather they went out with great joy and said to all men, 'Look what has come to the world!'"

There is a great difference between these two attitudes. Yes, the world is in bad shape—but read the second chapter of Romans and you will find that the world was in an awful condition in Paul's time. The unique Gospel of Jesus Christ offers the solution to man's problems. Look! See what has come into the world—God's revelation of Himself in all His power, wisdom, and love through Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son. This is indeed glorious news! This is a message which we cannot keep to ourselves, but we must tell everybody about it. No wonder Christians are radiant with joy. They have found the treasure all are seeking. They have seen what has come into the world in the advent of Jesus Christ, and they are working for the advancement of His kingdom until He comes again.

"In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." —1 John 4:9

## Understanding the Christian Viewpoint

A Christian feels supreme love for One whom he has never seen, talks familiarly every day to Someone he cannot see, expects to go to heaven on the virtue of Another, empties himself in order to be full, admits he is wrong so he can be declared right, goes down in order to get up, is strongest when he is weakest, richest when he is poorest, and happiest when he mourns. He dies so he can live, forsakes in order to have, gives away so he can keep, sees the invisible, and knows that which passeth knowledge. —adapted from A.W. Tozer

"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." —1 Corinthians 1:27





The  
**H O M E**  
**P A G E**

## Erma's Legacy

Her writing career spanned three decades, from the mid-1960s through the mid-1990s.

She wrote 12 books and received 16 honorary doctorate degrees. But three years before she died of cancer in 1996, popular humorist Erma Bombeck told an ABC TV interviewer that no matter how many columns she had written, her legacy would be her three children. "If I did a bad job with them," she said, "then everything else [I] do isn't very important."

Bombeck had riches and fame and the goodwill of millions of readers, but she realized that her top priority was taking care of her children.

Although no parent can be guaranteed that his or her child will turn out to be a godly model citizen, those of us who are parents must start with Erma's attitude. Our motivation is to provide spiritually, physically, and emotionally for our children. They will be our legacy. This means introducing them to the Savior, providing spiritual guidance, praying for them, and encouraging them to find mentors who can guide them in godly living. Sometimes it is a battle. Often it is expensive in time and toil. But the value of a child overshadows it all. —Dave Branon

"Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well." —2 Kings 4:26

## You Gotta Know Where to Look . . .

When my grandson asked me how old I was, I teasingly replied "I'm not sure." "Look in your underwear, Grandma," he advised. "Mine says I'm four."

For more material on the home and family, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, grandparents, and family finances, go to [www.housetohouse.com](http://www.housetohouse.com).



# The Ground That Wasn't There

As a teenage smart aleck, I often thought I was above the laws of God, man, and physics. One night, two friends and I took the 1940 Cadillac of a friend's father for a joy ride (we stole a car).

Both of my buddies had driven before, even though they, like me, were only 14. But I had not—and this car needed coordination between the clutch, brake, and accelerator pedals, as well as a "reach-out-and-search for" shift lever. I guess I did pretty well when it was my turn to drive—at least I drove this mobile weapon three blocks, even if it was entirely in first gear. Fortunately, the front room of a lovely couple's home stopped me before I hurt anyone. I didn't stay for introductions.

Running for my life, I headed for the woods. Leaping over a railing on a municipal stairway, I glimpsed a large bush in front of me and leaped for its sanctuary. Unfortunately, the bush was growing out on the ledge of an embankment—the ground I assumed was there wasn't. After a few seconds of aerobatics and forty feet of empty air, I hit the ground in a heap. As you can see, I lived. But that's another story.

What I thought was a firm foundation and a sanctuary was actually an illusion. So it is with so many in the world today. They believe all they have to do is take shelter in their things, their careers, their families, their diversions, their hobbies, their clubs, their portfolios, or in themselves. There they can hide from the laws of man and God. Fools they are! These foundations are gossamer fabric. —adapted from John Gillmartin

"Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God standeth." —2 Timothy 2:19

## Marriage is good for you

Did you know that a higher percentage of married people wake up each morning satisfied with life than their single counterparts? According to the *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 40 percent of married people wake up feeling good about their lives—as compared to fewer than 25 percent of singles.

Waking up feeling good affects your whole day. People who are satisfied and happy in their marriages tend to be happy and satisfied in their jobs, friendships, and parenthood.

Here's another eye-opening fact. Having fun with your spouse is good for your physical health. Pleasant experiences improve the functioning of the body's immune system for up to three days!

A negative event has the opposite effect—but only for the day on which the event occurs. So what can you do today to add to the fun factor in your marriage? Consider these fun enhancers:

- ▶ Clip articles or cartoons you know he/she would like. Mail them.
- ▶ Forget that quick "hello" peck. Next time give your spouse a real kiss!
- ▶ "Kidnap" your mate. Without warning, announce that for the next hour, you have fun plans.
- ▶ Share a milk shake with two straws.
- ▶ Play your favorite board game.
- ▶ Give each other back rubs.

Together make your own "fun list." Post it by your bed so you will see it the first thing in the morning. It will help you continue to wake up feeling good. Remember marriage is good for your mental attitude, and a fun marriage is even good for your health.

"Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth." —Proverbs 5:18

## Grandparent Humor

A grandmother was surprised by her 7-year-old grandson one morning. He had made her coffee. She drank what was the worst cup of coffee in her life. When she got to the bottom, there were three of those little green Army men in the cup. She said "Honey, what are these army men doing in my coffee?" Her grandson said, "Grandma, it says on TV, 'The best part of waking up is soldiers in your cup!'"





## Is Illness the Result of Sin?



God placed Adam and Eve in a perfect environment in Eden. He put them into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it, saying, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day

that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:15-17). Adam and Eve had everything needed for perfect health, but when they sinned, corruption, including illness, entered the world.

God told Eve, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children". And to Adam He said, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat of the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground" (Genesis 3:16-19).

Adam and Eve, our ancestors, were perfect in health until their fall, but since then mankind has been subject to all sorts of maladies. When they lost access to the tree of life in the Garden, they died spiritually, and their bodies began to decay. Sin brought all these consequences into the world.

It is not the case, however, that everyone who experiences an illness does so because of his or her personal sin. Certainly many lifestyle choices open us up to disease and illness, but many illnesses come upon us despite our best efforts to live healthily and faithfully to God.

"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:1-2). The disciples expressed a common misconception of the day—that all illness, and especially one as serious as blindness, resulted from sin. But "Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:3). After Jesus healed him, he worshiped Jesus as God's Son (John 9:35-38).

Jesus, the Great Physician, has prepared a place for His servants (John 14:1-5) where illness will be no more. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4). There will be no need for hospitals in heaven, because all that was lost in the fall of man will be restored. Having obeyed Christ, we will be forgiven of our sins, and we will live eternally in the presence of the Lord.

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



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.

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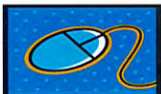
Questions Taken from the King James Version

## Starts with the Letter "R"

Find answers in Genesis 8:7; 22:13; 25:20; 29:9-29, 32; Exodus 1:11; 15:4; Numbers 6:2-5; Joshua 2:1; Judges 14:12; Ruth 1:4; 1 Samuel 15:23; 1 Kings 11:43; Proverbs 22:1; 31:10; Matthew 5:22; 16:18; 23:7; Mark 15:19; Luke 6:23; 15:22; 20:17; 24:46; Acts 17:30; Romans 5:10; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 12:28; James 5:16; Revelation 1:1 (not in order).

1. \_\_\_\_\_ A title of respect signifying master
2. \_\_\_\_\_ A term of reproach Christians are not to use
3. \_\_\_\_\_ The younger daughter of Laban, wife of Jacob
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Woman of Jericho: assisted the spies of Israel
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Caught in the bushes; substituted for Isaac
6. \_\_\_\_\_ One of Pharaoh's treasure cities
7. \_\_\_\_\_ A bird Noah sent out from the ark
8. \_\_\_\_\_ A Nazarite was forbidden to use on his head
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Isaac's wife
10. \_\_\_\_\_ As the sin of witchcraft
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Israelites crossed; Pharaoh's army drowned in
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Used to smite Jesus on head during trial
13. \_\_\_\_\_ Solomon's foolish son, king
14. \_\_\_\_\_ All men everywhere must (means change)
15. \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus was, on the third day after crucifixion
16. \_\_\_\_\_ Son of Jacob and Leah, a tribe in Israel
17. \_\_\_\_\_ Last book of the Bible; filled with symbolism
18. \_\_\_\_\_ We should serve God with this and godly fear
19. \_\_\_\_\_ A good name is rather to be chosen than great
20. \_\_\_\_\_ Samson challenged the Philistines to answer his
21. \_\_\_\_\_ The fervent prayer of a this man availeth much.
22. \_\_\_\_\_ What the prodigal's father put on the son's hand
23. \_\_\_\_\_ The daughter-in-law of Naomi
24. \_\_\_\_\_ Virtuous woman's price far above this
25. "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this \_\_\_\_\_ I will build my church"
26. "Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your \_\_\_\_\_ is great in heaven"
27. "The stone which the builders \_\_\_\_\_, the same is become the head of the corner"
28. "In whom we have \_\_\_\_\_ through his blood"
29. "We were \_\_\_\_\_ to God by the death of his Son"

**Answers to Last Issue: Starts with the Letter "O":** 1. Oak (2 Samuel 18:9); 2. Obadiah (Obadiah 1:1); 3. Og (Deuteronomy 3:1, 8); 4. Olive (1 Kings 6:33); 5. Omega (Revelation 1:8, 11); 6. Omri (1 Kings 16:22-24); 7. Onesimus (Philemon 1:10-17); 8. Onesiphorus (2 Timothy 1:16); 9. Onions (Numbers 11:5); 10. Ono (Nehemiah 6:2); 11. Onyx (Exodus 28:9-12); 12. Orpah (Ruth 1:14-15); 13. Ossifrage or Ospray (Leviticus 11:13); 14. Othniel (Judges 3:9-11); 15. Offend (James 3:2); 16. Offering (Ephesians 5:2); 17. Oil (Hebrews 1:9); 18. Ointment (Ecclesiastes 7:1); 19. Ox (Proverbs 15:17); 20. Overcome (Romans 12:21); 21. Only (John 3:16); 22. Obey (Hebrews 5:9); 23. Observe (Matthew 28:20); 24. Olivet (Acts 1:12); 25. Old (Proverbs 23:22); 26. Omer (Exodus 16:16); 27. One (John 17:20-21).



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## What's Left After 2000 Years?

Two thousand years ago, a little old man sat in a cold prison cell, writing on a piece of parchment. The government which imprisoned him was one of the most powerful the world has ever known. It ruled from India to Spain and from the Sahara desert to distant Britain. The prison house was made of stone and built to last forever. One day the dungeon was opened, and the apostle Paul was taken up and led out the Appian Way a short distance from Rome where his head was severed from his body. His spirit, released from this prison house of the flesh, went home to be with the Lord whom he loved and served. That government has already passed into history. That prison house has crumbled back to dust. The name of the executioner is forgotten. The body of Paul has long since returned to dust. But the words Paul wrote on that parchment have been alive through almost two millennia. They have brought comfort, hope, and inspiration to untold millions of earth inhabitants. —George DeHoff

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." —Matthew 24:35

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- Send me this month's packet (all materials)

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- Enroll me in a Free Survey of the Bible Home Study Course. *Pressure-free . . . work on your own at home.*
- I want to see the *Visualized Bible Study Video Series*. 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! How to Rescue Wandering Sheep**  
 Jesus, the Good Shepherd, wants every wandering sheep rescued. Here's how we can help get them safely back into the fold.
- NEW! How to Face Your Golgotha**  
 Jesus faced the greatest challenge of His life in Gethsemane. He set the perfect example for us when dealing with the great problems we may have to face.
- Abortion Wrongs.** We hear about "abortion rights." This booklet examines its "wrongs," including the common arguments for abortion (woman's right to her body, rape, incest, child abuse).
- Was Joan of Arc Really Noah's Wife?**
- A Proud Look.** Part of series on Proverbs 6:16-19.
- A Thief Who Has Robbed us All**
- When Jesus was a Boy**
- Can God Really Forgive Me?**
- You Can't Get to Heaven Alone**
- How to Get More Time Out of Your Day**
- Let Every Man Be Slow to Speak**
- Married for Life.** How Five Couples Reached Fifty Years
- Que es la Iglesia de Cristo**     **Church. Why Bother?**
- God's Lamb in the Devil's Zoo**     **Lonely?**
- Why I Quit Going to the Beach**
- Back issues of *House to House/Heart to Heart*

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



# Four Thieves of the Crucifixion



(1) **The thief who regretted (John 12:6).** Oh the advantages Judas had! He had been selected by Jesus to be an apostle, was entrusted by his peers with the position of treasurer, and observed many of the Lord's miracles (Matthew 11:5). It was this Judas who betrayed the Lord for money. His betrayal turned to regret (Matthew 27:3), but rather than look forward to forgiveness, he only looked back and hanged himself. True repentance means more than feeling sorry for a wrong. It is the desire to change and do better (2 Corinthians 7:10).

(2) **The thief who was replaced.** It was customary to release a prisoner at the Passover. Thus Pilate offered the crowd either Jesus or Barabbas. They requested the notorious murderer and robber released rather than Jesus (Matthew 27:15–16). Barabbas had someone else (Jesus) take his punishment for him. Barabbas could say that Jesus died in his place. Of course, we can say it, too! (2 Corinthians 5:20–21).

(3) **The thief who rebelled.** At first both thieves crucified with Christ spoke against Him (Matthew 27:41–44), but only one kept on doing it (Luke 23:39). This thief remained impenitent because he forgot God, ignored death at hand, and justly deserved what he was receiving (Luke 23:40–41). This man died in a state of rebellion in spite of the rebuke and repentance of the other thief and a Savior close at hand.

(4) **The thief who repented.** This thief had a change of heart (Luke 23:40–43). In his agony he looked to the Savior and admitted his sinfulness and Jesus' innocence (Luke 23:41–42). His repentance did not bring escape from death but did bring relief and fellowship with Jesus in the next life (Luke 23:43). He did what the Lord asked him to do, and in that sense he is an example to us.

All of us are represented by one of these thieves. Have you let Jesus down? Have you allowed Jesus to take your place? Are you rebellious? Have you repented? Which are you? —Gary Puryear

"Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself." —Colossians 1:20

## The Way That Is Safe and Cannot Be Wrong



Several years ago we lived in Savannah, Georgia. It was a new experience for us to watch huge freighters entering the Savannah River to travel fifteen miles inland to the state docks. It did not seem possible that the massive ships could achieve such a feat. However, we learned that a channel had been dredged for safe passage. And as long as the captain steered the vessel in the channel, there was safety. It was not necessary for him to know all the hidden dangers; it was only essential to possess knowledge of the safe way.

This principle is applicable in the study of the New Testament. Jesus taught men to enter the "strait gate" and walk in the "narrow" way (Matthew 7:13–14; cf. Proverbs 14:12). We should seek out the way that is infallibly safe and cannot be wrong in religion. We suggest studying the following

aspects of this way. It cannot be wrong to

- ▶ Accept the Holy Scriptures as being the inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:3, 21).
- ▶ Believe in God and in His Son Jesus Christ (Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24; Matthew 16:16).
- ▶ Teach sinners to repent of sins (Acts 17:30–31; 2 Peter 3:9).
- ▶ Be baptized for the remission of sins, having confessed one's faith in Jesus (Romans 10:10; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:35–39).
- ▶ Be immersed in water instead of being sprinkled (John 3:23; Romans 6:3–4; Colossians 2:12).
- ▶ Have an obedient faith instead of a faith-only religion (Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:8–9; James 2:14–26).
- ▶ Wear the name of Christ (Christian) rather than names that honor men/movements (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16; Romans 16:16).
- ▶ Sing praises without adding instruments (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12; 13:15).
- ▶ Partake of the Lord's supper upon the first day of every week (1 Corinthians 11:23–30; Acts 20:7).
- ▶ Be faithful in attendance to the periods of worship (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24–25; James 4:17).
- ▶ Be pure in heart and live a faithful Christian life (Matthew 5:8; Hebrews 12:14; Revelation 2:10).

We need to possess the wisdom of following the safe way wherein is assurance and security. Why take a risk when the safe way can be learned by all who choose to do so? Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). The infallible Word of God provides us the infallibly safe way that cannot be wrong (John 12:48).

—Raymond Elliott, Prattville, Alabama