

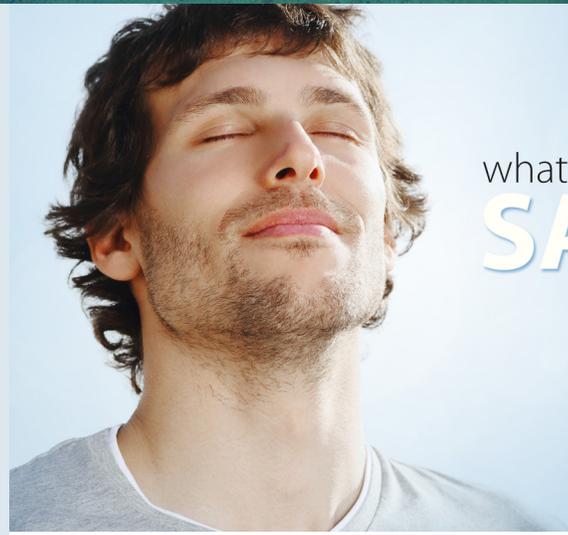


HOUSE to HOUSE
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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 20 NUMBER 3



what **SAUL SAW** when he couldn't see

Allen Webster

Note: The Bible records the conversion of Saul to Christianity three times (Acts 9, 22, 26). Please take time to read these with this article. Saul of Tarsus later became better known as Paul the apostle (Acts 13:9). The names are used interchangeably here.

The apostle Paul's eyes have been the subject of much speculation. Many believe his "thorn in the flesh" was poor eyesight (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). This is based on the willingness of the Galatians to pluck out their eyes for him (Galatians 4:15).

On the road to Damascus, a great light shined upon Saul and in the light he saw Jesus. After this vision "he was three days without sight" (Acts 9:9). Christ then sent Ananias to heal him and teach him the gospel (9:17-18).

During these three dark days, Saul "saw" a lot he had never seen with his eyes open. The eyes of his understanding were opened (Ephesians 1:18).

What did Saul see when he couldn't see?

SAUL SAW THAT JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD.

Prior to this trip, Saul flatly rejected Jesus' claim to deity, being firmly convinced He was another imposter in a long line of usurpers. Saul left Jerusalem an intellectual skeptic, a hater of Jesus, and an enemy of every Christian (Acts 26:10-11).

Saul made an amazing transformation practically overnight. He left home a Jew-

ish Pharisee and returned a Christian missionary. He flipped from the church's fiercest opponent to its greatest proponent. He switched from arguing against Jesus as the Christ to defending His deity in the same synagogues (Acts 9:20).

How can Saul's remarkable change be explained? When a prominent Pharisee suddenly turns his back on his religion, family, education, career, peers, and nation, there must be a reason.

This conversion is a great puzzle to skeptics. They advance three dubious theories to explain it:

- "Saul was a liar who made up the vision entirely." What motive would Saul have? People lie for money, but this made Paul poor (1 Corinthians 4:11). People lie for popularity, but this made Paul unpopular (4:12-13). People lie for prestige, but this made others think Paul was a "fool" (4:9, 13). People lie to avoid pain, suffering, and death, but this caused Paul all three (1 Corinthians 4:9; 2 Corinthians 11:24-25; 2 Timothy 4:6-8).
- "Saul was deceived by the apostles who had invented the legend of Jesus' resurrection." Legends take time to develop, but Jesus' resurrection was taught immediately—within fifty days (Pentecost) (Acts 2:24, 32). Paul's writings show an independent thinker and an educated scholar unlikely to gullibly follow un-

trained fishermen and tax collectors (Acts 4:13). Paul said he received his doctrine directly from Jesus (Galatians 1:11–16) and did not even meet the apostles for three years (1:17–18).

- “Saul went insane with guilt for killing Stephen.” Worldly Festus, who saw religion as superstition (Acts 25:19), first made this accusation. He interrupted the apostle, asserting that much learning had made Paul “mad.” Paul calmly pointed to his speech as evidence of his sanity: “I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness” (Acts 26:25). Paul’s writings are not those of a madman, but reflect a structured, logical, disciplined mind. The quarter century he spent as a missionary shows a focused purpose that defies insanity. His social relationships (he mentions about a hundred coworkers) show one respected by peers and capable of functioning successfully in a complex world.

Christianity’s explanation is more plausible. Saul changed because he saw the resurrected Jesus. When Jesus identified Himself (Acts 9:5), Saul, “trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” (9:6). The blasphemer had become a worshipper. After the empty tomb and the New Testament itself, Saul’s conversion may be the greatest proof of Christ’s deity.

SAUL SAW THAT HE SHOULD HELP PEOPLE INSTEAD OF HURT THEM.

Judaism in Saul’s time was violent. Christians were arrested (Acts 4:3; 5:18). Murderous plots were contemplated (5:33). Stephen was brought up on false charges and stoned by an angry mob (Acts 7:58–60). There was

a great persecution against the church at Jerusalem (Acts 8:1). Christians were chased from city to city (Acts 9:1–2).

Saul joined in wholeheartedly. He gave his consent to the murder of Stephen and others (Acts 7:58; 26:10). He breathed out “threatenings and slaughter” against the disciples and “made havoc of the church” (Acts 9:1; 8:3). He dragged Christians—men and women—to prison. He punished them often in synagogues and “compelled them to blaspheme.” He was “exceedingly mad” and persecuted near and far (Acts 26:11).

During his three days in darkness, Saul came to see that his violent religion was wrong. He should love people, not hate them (John 13:34–35). He should help them, not hurt them (Galatians 6:10). He should free them, not incarcerate them (Luke 4:18). Once Saul became a Christian, he never lifted a finger against those of any other religion. He taught and persuaded but never coerced or persecuted. He was willing to spend and be spent for others, even if he was not loved in return (2 Corinthians 12:15).

Christianity is a peaceful religion. It is based on the “gospel of peace” (Romans 10:15). Jesus, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), never raised a violent fist against another, even when assaulted (1 Peter 2:23). He never owned a sword; He never smote an enemy; He never sued a foe. His true followers today imitate His peaceful behavior (1 Peter 2:21–22). While Christians “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 1:3), they do so with words, not weapons. Evangelism is done by teaching and reason (Matthew 28:19), never by threat or violence. Christians seek to follow peace with all (Hebrews 12:14; Romans 12:18).

Any religion that teaches followers to hate “unbelievers” and to force conversion by threat of physical harm does not deserve a seat at the table in the marketplace of ideas. A few have marched under a false flag and committed violence in Christ’s name. The Spanish Inquisition and the Crusades come to mind. Yet these never did so at His behest, and they will face His gavel at the last tribunal (Matthew 25:31–33).

SAUL SAW THERE IS LIFE AFTER DEATH.

Before Damascus, Saul held to the Pharisees’ party line that the disciples had stolen Jesus’ body (Matthew 28:13). After Damascus, he taught, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?” (Acts 26:8).

The empty tomb transformed Jesus from a martyr to a Savior. Without it, Christianity is a fraud and Christians are, at best, deluded—of all men most miserable (1 Corinthians 15:12–19). With it, Christians are also guaranteed a resurrection (15:22).

Paul emphatically stated that “Christ is risen from the dead” (1 Corinthians 15:20). He believed the tomb was empty because he knew its former occupant. He saw Him; he heard Him; he conversed with Him.

Every other religion lacks what Christianity has—a living Savior, an eternal High Priest ministering for His people in heaven.

SAUL SAW THAT ONE RELIGION IS NOT AS GOOD AS ANOTHER.

Saul’s religion was popular—thousands of people throughout the world adhered to it. It was monotheistic and based upon objective revelation. It was more than a thousand years old. He was comfortable with it; he was trained in it; his family were members of it; his career and livelihood were tied to it. If anyone ever had good reason to stay in a religion, it was Saul. Yet it lacked one thing—it no longer pleased God. The whole point of religion is to pay homage to the Creator (Ecclesiastes 12:13), to be saved from sin, and to go to heaven at death (Romans 3:23; 6:23).

Saul’s sins could not be forgiven under Judaism. Moses’ Law had been nailed to the cross (Colossians 2:14) and replaced by the gospel (Hebrews 8:6–7). The Law no longer justified (Romans 3:20) but brought a curse upon those who failed to keep even one statute (Galatians 3:10; James 2:10). Salvation now comes only through Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12), so Saul needed to change to Christianity to go to heaven.





Thankfully, we enjoy both freedom of religion and speech. Yet equal access to every religion does not mean that every religion is equally valid. We must be discerning (Hebrews 5:14). Only Christianity has Christ as High Priest and Mediator (Hebrews 4:14–16; 9:24–28; 1 Timothy 2:5). Christ’s blood—the only antidote for sin—is found only in His body, the church (Ephesians 1:3, 7, 22–23).

One religion today is not as good as another. A Christless religion is not as good as Christ’s religion (Colossians 1:18). A cult is not as good as the church (Colossians 2:8). A church teaching false doctrine is not as good as one teaching truth (John 8:31–32). A church that hurts people is not as good as one that helps people (Galatians 6:10). A dead church is not as good as a live church (Revelation 3:1). We should not be satisfied with less than the religion Jesus established, which is the church of the New Testament.

SAUL SAW THAT CONVERSION IS NOT AN IMMEDIATE MIRACULOUS EXPERIENCE.

On the Damascus road, Saul had an unrivaled religious experience. He saw the risen Savior! His conversion process began there, but like Jesus’ resurrection, it was not completed until the third day. Why would Jesus wait three days to send Ananias to Saul?

Christianity is a taught religion (Matthew 28:19; John 6:44–45), and a person is not taught until he understands facts and assimilates meaning. To believe, Saul needed time to process what he had seen and heard. To repent, he needed to think of the persecutions he had perpetrated and be deeply saddened over them (2 Corinthians 7:10). To convert, he needed to count the cost of a decision (Luke 14:28–32). God

does not favor rash decisions (Proverbs 4:26; Psalm 119:59). Trembling and astonished on that roadside, he was in no condition to make such a life-altering decision.

Christ usually dawns upon sinners as a sunrise rather than coming upon them as a thunderstorm. In reading Scripture, hearts open gradually to His love, as a rosebud opens to the warmth of the sun. Lydia’s conversion (Acts 16:14–15), different from Saul’s (since his involved preparing him to be an apostle, cf. Acts 1:22; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:8), is a typical conversion. She saw no blazing glory; she heard no heavenly voice, but the Lord opened her heart through the power of the gospel as Paul preached (Romans 1:16).

SAUL SAW THAT FAITH, PENITENCE, PLUS BAPTISM REMOVES SINS.

Seeing is believing, and Saul saw Jesus alive. Yet the Bible does not indicate that Saul was saved on the road to Damascus. If so, for seventy-two hours, he was the most miserable “saved” man there ever was (Acts 9:9, 11). He did not rejoice, as other saved sinners did (Acts 8:39; 16:34). He had no peace with God (Romans 5:1; Colossians 3:15). He was penitent. He fasted. He agonized as he ... remembered the innocent people he had hurt ... thought of the sorrow and pain he had caused families by driving them from home ... remembered the spouses he had separated and the parents he had taken from their children ... thought of the faithful Christians he had compelled to blaspheme their Savior. He allowed not a morsel nor a drop to pass his lips. Normally going without sustenance for so long would be exhausting; but Saul did not sleep. He prayed ... and prayed ... and prayed.

Are these the actions of a saved man?

Jesus had told Saul that there was something he “must do” (Acts 9:6), so he waited to learn what that was. Upon arrival at the house on Straight Street, the preacher Jesus sent did not congratulate Saul on his newfound salvation or announce to him that he had successfully prayed through. Instead, Ananias asked Saul what he was waiting for: “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). One could say, then, that Saul’s sins were removed not on the road, but in the pool (cf. Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21).

After his baptism, he ate. He fellowshiped. He taught (Acts 9:19–20). His agony was over; his sins were forgiven; he was at peace; he was now a Christian.

For a man who couldn’t see, Saul saw a lot.

Killing Time

A. W. Tozer wrote, “When you kill time, remember that it has no resurrection.” The Bible urges us to redeem time (Ephesians 5:16; Colossians 4:5). No one understood the use of time better than our Lord. He declared, “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4).



Now That’s Love

Recently in Japan, a man and his nine-year-old daughter were caught in a terrible blizzard. Their car disabled, they began to walk to where they were going. As the storm intensified, the father wrapped his coat around his daughter and hunched over her against a concrete wall to shelter her from the cold. They were found the next morning and rushed to a hospital where the father was pronounced dead. The daughter survived with no injury. A father dying to save his child—now that is love!

—The Gospel Power, Vol. 20, Issue 3

“Greater love hath no man.”

JOHN 15:13

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



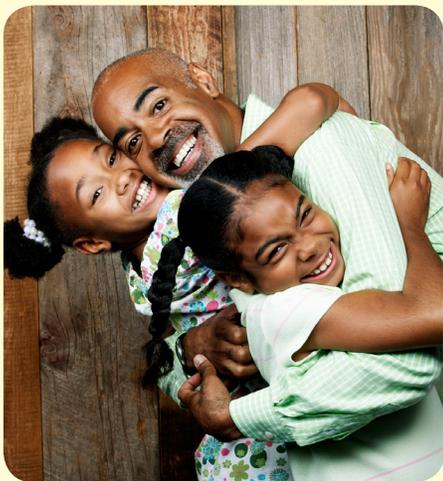
A Daily Allowance

When our son Chris was eight years old, his weekly allowance was never enough. One day he read aloud the nutrition information from a bag of potato chips. "Look, Mom," he said, "even the USDA recommends daily allowances."

—Barbara H. Davis, *Ladies' Home Journal*

"It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."

MATTHEW 18:14



Heredity

"Heredity: An omnibus in which all our ancestors ride, and every now and then, one of them puts his head out and embarrasses us." —Oliver Wendell Holmes

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



A Few Parenting Secrets

Don't get hung up on a job that keeps you away from home. Fewer things can lead to fewer hours of work. Keep in touch with your children. Cut away the heavy social schedule, so you can be at home to supervise (Deuteronomy 6:1–9; Proverbs 22:6).

Don't get strung out. Stay away from liquor, sleeping pills, and drugs. Be normal, be "square" (Ephesians 5:17–18; Proverbs 20:1).

Bug them a little. Use strict but loving discipline. Don't let them ride out the storm. Give them an anchor (Proverbs 13:24; 23:13).

Be dignified. Keep the dignity of parenthood. Don't dress, act, or talk like the teens do. Children need a loving parent, not an adult who acts like a peer (Proverbs 19:18).

Take the world off their shoulders. Share your children's problems. Let them know that your love for them is constant, and make your home a peaceful harbor (Psalm 119:9–16; Galatians 6:2).

Light them a candle. Show your children a living faith (Titus 2:7–8).

Shake things up when needed. Punish them when they first go wrong. Tell

them why and convince them that more severe punishment will come if they disobey again in the same manner. Don't punish them out of anger (Proverbs 13:1; Ephesians 6:4). When you punish your children in anger, you usually provoke them to anger.

Call their bluff. Stand firmly on what is right, even when your children threaten to run away or drop out of school (Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 15:5).

Be honest with them. Tell the truth at all times. Praise your children when you can, but criticize when you must. Never keep your children in doubt of where you stand on important matters (Romans 12:9; Colossians 3:9; Ephesians 4:29).

Keep your cool. Don't lose your head in every crisis. Children need confidence and a steady hand (Galatians 5:22–23; Ephesians 6:4).

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man; so are the children of the youth."

PSALM 127:3–4

TIPS for Bible Study

1. Environment

Time: It is important for Christians to set aside time each day for prayer (talking with God) and reading the Bible (letting God talk to us). We should select a time when we are fresh and relaxed, and preferably the same time each day so as to form a habit.

Location: We should pick a well-lit place where we can spread out and take care to prevent technology (text/email alerts), sound (TV/radio), and people distractions. We should have paper, pens, and high-lighters at hand. If we use an electronic Bible, we should use the note-taking and Bible-marking features.

2. Context

When was this text written? Is it part of the Old or New Testament? Under which dispensation does it fall?

Who wrote it, who is speaking, and who is being spoken to? This information gives insight into meaning.

① In this example we see that it is a Revelation of Jesus, written by John, to the seven churches of Asia. ②

Where was it written? Finding where a book was written and under

what circumstances can help with interpretation.

④ Here, John is on the island of Patmos, suffering "tribulation" or difficulty (most believe imprisonment by the Roman government).

What is the purpose? It is important to look at a book's original purpose. What was the author communicating to the original readers?

⑤ Here, John writes to encourage Christians who are about to face severe persecution.

3. Interpretation

Let the text speak. We must never force the Bible to say what we want it to say. The Bible is our perfect guide (James 1:25), but only when we let the text guide us to its meaning rather than looking for verification of something we already believe.

Let Scripture interpret Scripture. If we run across a difficult passage, we should look at other passages on the same topic. The Bible also often defines terms. For instance, Hebrews 11:1 defines *faith*.

Remember that one New Testament Scripture will never contradict another New Testament Scripture, so use the Bible to help in interpretation.

The Book of REVELATION

Greetings to the Seven Churches

① The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: 2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. 3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

② ④ (John) to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; 5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that

loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

⑤ 7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

The Alpha and Omega

⑥ 9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Notes

As you learn, highlight, underline, and keep notes in your Bible. These can be valuable to you later when you review a passage.

4. Resources

Study Helps. Many Bibles come with cross-references, introductions, devotionals, and other study helps. While these are often good resources, it is important to remember that they are not part of Scripture, so they are subject to error and bias. Trust the text of the Bible, and always weigh carefully what men write (Acts 17:11).

Bible QUIZ

VOLUME 20:3



Send us your answers (address on front) to receive a FREE Bible bookmark. We'll grade and return your questions and enclose the "The End Times" bookmark as a way of saying thanks for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Questions Taken from the King James Version

Answers to Last Issue: The "Lost" Parables: 1. Tax collectors, sinners, Pharisees, and scribes (Luke 15:2); 2. 1 (15:4); 3. Put on his shoulders (15:5); 4. 9 (15:8); 5. Heaven, sinner (15:7); 6. Silver (15:8); 7. 2 (15:11); 8. The younger son (15:12); 9. He went to a far country (15:13); 10. He wasted it (15:13); 11. There was a mighty famine (15:14); 12. Feeding swine (15:15); 13. The pig's food (15:16); 14. Compassion (15:20); 15. Sinned, son (15:21); 16. Servant (15:17-19). 17. Robe, ring, shoes, fattened calf (15:22-23); 18. Alive, lost (15:24); 19. Elder brother (15:25-28); 20. In the field (15:25); 21. He was angry (15:27-28).

Who Did It?

Directions: Find the answers in Genesis 4:8; 5:27; 6:13-16/7:11; 9:20-21; 10:8-9; 11:29/20:12; 17:1-11; 20:1/26:6-7; 25:29-34; 28:10-12; 29:21-26; 31:19; 34:1-2; 37:3; 39:1-9; 43:34; 2 Samuel 13:1-22; 2 Kings 5:1-14; 22:1-2.

- Who killed his own brother in a fit of rage? _____
- What man lived to be 969 years old? _____
- What man completed a large boat when he was 600 years old? _____
- Who was the first man in the Bible to plant a vineyard and get drunk? _____
- Who was a mighty hunter before the Lord? _____
- What man married his own half sister? _____
- Who dreamed that the sun and the moon and 11 stars bowed down to him? _____
- To whom did God give the covenant of circumcision? _____
- Who led the Israelites into Canaan after Moses' death? _____
- Who wrongly thought that Abraham's and Isaac's wives were their sisters? _____
- Who sold his birthright for a bowl of stew? _____
- What man saw a vision of a ladder up to heaven? _____
- Who tricked Jacob into marrying his older daughter? _____
- Who stole the household gods of her father? _____
- Who violated Jacob's daughter, the sister of Simeon and Levi? _____
- Who violated Absalom's sister Tamar? _____
- What man received a coat of many colors from his father? _____
- What man's wife tried to commit adultery with one of her slaves? _____
- What son of Jacob received special treatment from his brother in Egypt? _____
- What boy became king of Judah when only eight years old? _____
- What man was cleansed of leprosy simply by dipping in a river? _____

Indestructible **Book**



The empire of Caesar is gone; the legions of Rome are decaying in the dust; the avalanches that Napoleon hurled upon Europe have melted away; the pride of the Pharaohs is fallen; the pyramids they raised to be their tombs are sinking every day in the desert sands; Tyre is a rock for bleaching fishermen's nets; Sidon has scarcely left a wreck behind; but the word of God still survives. All things that threatened to extinguish it have only aided it; and it proves every day how transient is the noblest monument that man can build, and how enduring is the least word that God has spoken. Tradition has dug for it a grave, intolerance has lighted for it many a fire; many a Judas has betrayed it with a kiss; many a Peter has denied it with an oath. Many a Demas has forsaken it, but the word of God still endures. —John Cumming

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

ISAIAH 40:8

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front of House to House / Heart to Heart.

Recommended **Resource**



Todd Clippard has committed to reading the Bible daily and sharing his thoughts on each day's reading with you. A missionary, he brings a global perspective to his writing, while remaining down-to-earth. Join us each day in the reading, and share your thoughts as well. To check it out, go to chaptertochapter.com.

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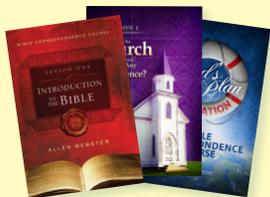
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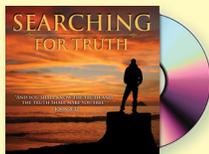
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Tract The God of Second Chances

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Sweat the Small Stuff



Launch Out with Jesus



In the Way He Should Go



Why Not Be a Prodigal Part 1



How to Face Your Golgotha



5 Animals You Won't Meet In Heaven



What to Do With Wandering Sheep



3 Tears from a Savior's Eye



Why Not Be a Prodigal Part 2

Don't see the topic you need? Visit www.housetohouse.com for more subjects.

HEAR HIM

“Hear Him.”

The God who said this made the worlds, rules among the armies of heaven, hurled angels down to hell for disobedience, and had His voice shake the earth. The God who holds the destinies of all the nations in his hand, who “weighs the hills in a balance, and handles the isles as a very little thing,” in connection with the revelation of His Son, to all the nations of the earth, with all the majesty of His authority, says,

“Hear Him.”

Give Him audience, regard Him, bow to Him, follow Him, be guided by Him, honor and obey Him forever.

“Hear Him.”

If a man receives the revelation God makes of His Son, or, rather, if he receives His Son from the revelation He has made of Him, and bows in submission to Him in accordance with the command to,

“Hear Him,” confesses with the mouth before men, what he believes in his heart, that “Jesus Christ is the Son of God,” and submits to the divine test of loyalty in the requirement to be buried with his Lord in baptism, while that great formula is uttered over him, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” he gives the highest assurance in his

power to give, that he is changed in heart. He shows that he loves God and will serve Him, and is bound by the strongest obligation that ever did or ever can bind a human being, to love and serve God.

The authority that requires this submission is the highest and most binding that can rest upon a human being; and, if it does not govern, control, and restrain the person, no authority can.

—adapted from Ben Franklin, Gospel Preacher

“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”

MATTHEW 17:5

Blessed Unity

There is too much division in the religious world. God wants all to unite under the banner of the cross and with the gospel of His Son. Paul wrote that we should endeavor “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3). By doing so, we can be

- **Children in one family**
– One Father (John 20:17).
- **Disciples in one school**
– One Teacher (John 13:13–35).
- **Sheep in one flock**
– One Shepherd (John 10:16).
- **Members of one body**
– One Head (Ephesians 4:15).
- **Stones in one building**
– One Foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11; 1 Peter 2:5).

The Gospel in *Five Seconds*

The gospel is the good news that Christ died for our sins (1 Corinthians 15:1–5). It is the total message of God’s power to save all who will hear, believe, and obey it (Romans 1:16).

The gospel is contained in the second law God gave. “If the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second” (Hebrews 8:7; cf. 8:8–13; 10:9).

The gospel commands a second birth (John 3:3–8). The new birth involves obeying the commands the Spirit has given in the word, including baptism (1 Peter 1:22–23; 1 Corinthians 4:15; James 1:18–22).

The gospel promises a second coming of Christ. He shall appear “the second time” (Hebrews 9:27–28; Mark 13:32; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:14–18).

The gospel warns of a second death (Revelation 20:12–15). The second death involves the disobedient being cast into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone (Revelation 21:8). If we overcome Satan we will not “be hurt of the second death” (Revelation 2:11).

The gospel contains a second law of pardon. God gives a second chance for those who fall (Acts 8:12–24). —Jerry Sparks



Please recycle House to House by giving this copy to your family or friends.

