

HOUSE TO HOUSE

Heart to Heart



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

Volume 11, Number 3

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

If you have questions or comments please contact
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You Should've Seen What Happened Sunday!

Allen Webster

The view from the pulpit is often interesting. People are so used to watching unresponsive TV and computer screens that they forget preachers can see them! After a while, the unexpected becomes commonplace, and he is able to keep his composure though “the walls come tumbling down.”

When Christians gather for worship on the Lord’s Day, something special happens. Their common bond is strengthened as in concert they pour out their gratitude to their Savior. It is a time of worship (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1–2), rejoicing (Psalm 118:24), examination (2 Corinthians 13:5), and fellowship (Acts 2:42–47). It is the week’s beginning and the week’s highlight—nothing else done in the next six days equals it. We understand why Paul delayed a journey for seven days so he could worship the Lord on the Lord’s day with the Lord’s people (Acts 20:6–7).

People of all ages are usually present: babies, children, teens, young adults, families, empty-nest couples, senior saints, widows, and widowers. Each comes to express a common love for an uncommon God; each feels a universal thirst for eternal truth. While worship is formal and congregational, it is neither cold nor impersonal—it is “in spirit” (John 4:24). Personalities are involved, and that can make it interesting. This past Lord’s day we had an uncommon service. You should have seen what happened . . . ▶▶▶

You Should've Seen . . .

Continued from page 1

A BABY CRIED. Occasionally someone frowns when a child cries during services, but most of us smile. Parents recognize the need to take a child out to avoid disturbing others, but we don't want them to feel self-conscious. We are glad it happens! What if no baby had cried Sunday? It would have meant there were no babies there, for all babies cry. No church wants to be *that* quiet—a tomb is quieter than a nursery, but who wants to worship in a cemetery! A church without children is a church with its best days behind instead of ahead. If no babies had cried Sunday, it might also have indicated that parents saw no need to train the next generation in the Lord's way (Ephesians 6:4). Good parents want children to learn about God from their first Sunday on planet earth (cf. Matthew 18:1-3; 19:13-14). They do not want them to be able to remember the first time they came to worship. We know they'll eventually learn to be quiet, but for now we're glad to hear them.

A SISTER LEFT EARLY FOR WORK. In a perfect world, all businesses would close on the Lord's day so that every person could exalt the name of God in worship (Psalm 34:3). It will be that

She could
have slept
in . . .

way in heaven, but it is not that way on earth. Christians are sometimes forced to make decisions. This sister had to be at work before the service ended . . . what to do? She could have skipped the service and told others that she "had to work." She could have slept in, had plenty of time to get ready, left in time to avoid traffic, and got a bite to eat before her shift. But she chose to get up early, be in Bible class, sing God some songs, open her heart to Him in prayer, thank Him for Christ's sacrifice during communion, give Him part of last week's check, and listen to His Word. She sat toward the back so as not to disturb others when she got up a few minutes before the sermon ended. Few saw her sermon on priorities (Matthew 6:33; Colossians 3:1-2)—but the preacher did.

PAGES RUSTLED. As the messenger preached the word (2 Timothy 4:2), hearers "searched the scriptures to see whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). Far from offending him, it was music to his ears. Jesus found "the place where it was written" (Luke 4:17), and so should we. We joke that our favorite words in a sermon are "in conclusion," but we find most Christians thirsty for the Word (1 Peter 2:2) and hungering after righteousness (Matthew 5:8). They bring their Bibles, read their Bibles, mark their Bibles, memorize their Bibles, and live by their Bibles.

A SISTER NODDED. No one except the preacher probably noticed, but a faithful sister nodded in agreement with a sermon point. She would not speak out to say "amen" like her husband (1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:11), but she encouraged the preacher just as much without saying a word. Nods also help others in the audience to know that the sermon is expressing both the preacher's convictions and those of other Christians.

A CHILD DREW A PIC-TURE.

Any parent knows that "out of the mouths of babes" come profound statements. Often a little child has led God's people (cf. Isaiah 11:6). Most churches can point to some young people whose example is worth imitating by those much older (1 Timothy 4:12). Last Sunday a child was interested enough to draw a picture of what the preacher was talking about (cf. 1 Timothy 3:15). There is nothing so unusual about that—when a Power Point presentation is made, little eyes are always paying attention, and little hands are often copying those words down. They may not yet fully comprehend the concepts, but the seed is planted, the foundation is laid, the base color is on the canvas. One day fruit will ripen, the structure will stand, and the painting will be perfected. And these very notes may become fresh classes and sermons for another generation of children. Some in pulpits now still occasionally use notes written with childish letters on yellowing paper. These have been born again into lessons for those who were not born when the notes were first taken. The truth never ages; it only needs recycling.

A CHRISTIAN WORSHIPPED FOR THE FIRST TIME.

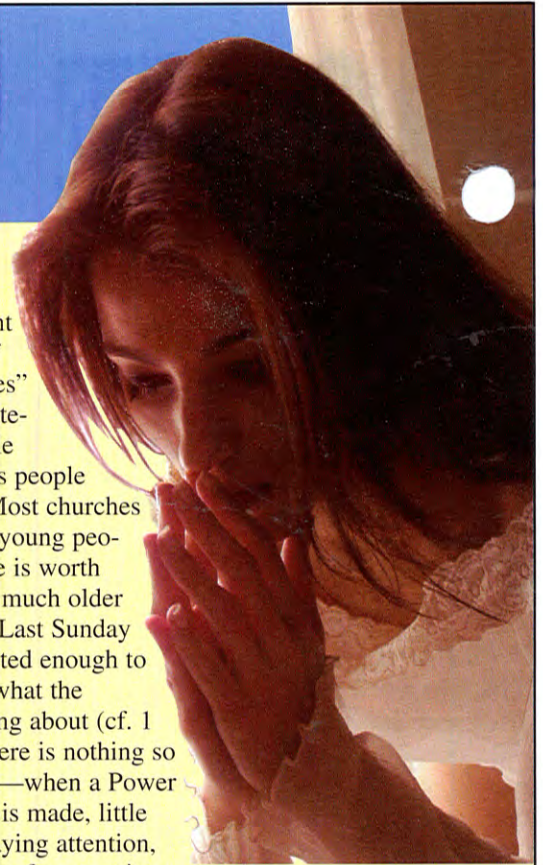
Baptized on Tuesday, a young man offered God acceptable worship for the first time Sunday. God cleansed him from sin, set him in the church, and watched with interest as he bowed his soul in adoration (Acts 22:16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; John 4:24). If the Lord delays His return, and the new Christian's days are prolonged, that is probably only 1 of 10,000 times he will offer public worship to his Creator (John 4:24; Hebrews 10:25), but it will likely never mean more to God or him than this first service. It was a beautiful step on a long journey, a first note in a grand symphony.

THOSE FROM "EIGHT TO EIGHTY" COMMITTED TO READ THE BIBLE.

About this time each year we encourage each member to read through the Bible. On Sunday, more than a hundred agreed to do so. The youngest is just under eight years old and will read the Bible for the first time. Perhaps this is the first of fifty or more times this mind will have the cleansing Water of Life purify its recesses. The oldest is past eighty and may be reading it for the last time (Hebrews 9:27; James 4:14).

TEARS FLOWED. Christian love often finds itself expressed in tears, as it did with Jesus and the early Christians (Luke 19:41; Acts 20:37). God's Word touched good and honest hearts, souls responded Sunday to the Lord's invitation. Joyful tears flowed over "one sinner that repenteth" (cf. James 5:16, 19-20).

What's going to happen this Sunday? Come and see!



Giving 101%

Here's an interesting little mathematical formula. If:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W
X Y Z

is represented as:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
21 22 23 24 25 26,

Then

H-A-R-D-W-O-R-K

$8+1+18+4+23+15+18+11 = 98\%$,

and

K-N-O-W-L-E-D-G-E

$11+14+15+23+12+5+4+7+5 = 96\%$,

but

A-T-T-I-T-U-D-E

$1+20+20+9+20+21+4+5 = 100\%$,

AND look how far the love of God will take you:

L-O-V-E-O-F-G-O-D

$12+15+22+5+15+6+7+15+4 = 101\%$.

Therefore, one can conclude with "mathematical certainty" that: while Hard Work and Knowledge will get you close, and Attitude will get you there, it is the Love of God that will put you over the top!

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." —2 Corinthians 13:14

GOD'S PLAN FOR SAVING MAN

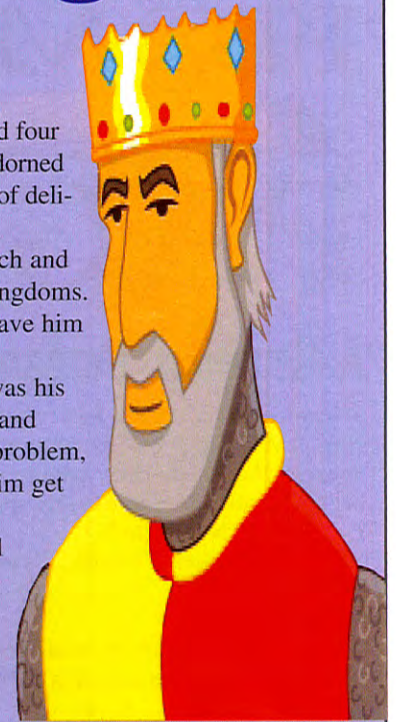
God's Grace	— Ephesians 2:8
Christ's Blood	— Romans 5:9
The Holy Spirit's Gospel	— Romans 1:16
Sinner's Faith	— Acts 16:31
Sinner's Repentance	— Luke 13:3
Sinner's Confession	— Romans 10:10
Sinner's Baptism	— 1 Peter 3:21
Christian's Work	— James 2:24
Christian's Hope	— Romans 8:24
Christian's Endurance	— Revelation 2:10

Born Again

An irate subscriber stormed into a newspaper office waving the current edition, asking to see "whoever wrote the obituary column." When referred to a young reporter, he stormed, "You can see I'm very much alive, and you've put me in the obituary column! I demand a retraction!" Replied the reporter, "I never retract a story. But I tell you what I'll do. I'll put you in the birth column and give you a fresh start."

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

The Rich King's Four Wives



Once upon a time there was a rich king who had four wives. He loved the fourth wife the most and adorned her with rich robes and treated her to the finest of delicacies. He gave her nothing but the best.

He also loved the third wife very much and was always showing her off to neighboring kingdoms. However, he feared that one day she would leave him for another man.

He also loved his second wife. She was his confidante and was always kind, considerate, and patient with him. Whenever the king faced a problem, he could confide in her, and she would help him get through the difficult times.

The king's first wife was a very loyal partner and had made great contributions in maintaining his wealth and kingdom. However, he did not love the first wife. Although she loved him deeply, he hardly took notice of her!

One day, the king fell ill and knew his time was short. He thought of his luxurious life and wondered, "I now have four wives with me, but when I die, I'll be all alone."

Thus, he asked the fourth wife, "I have loved you the most, endowed you with the finest clothing and showered great care over you. Now that I'm dying, will you follow me and keep me company?"

"No way!" replied the fourth wife, and she walked away without another word. Her answer cut like a sharp knife right into his heart.

The sad king then asked the third wife, "I have loved you all my life. Now that I'm dying, will you follow me and keep me company?"

"No!" she replied. "Life is too good! When you die, I'll remarry!"

His heart turned cold. He then asked the second wife, "I have always turned to you for help, and you've always been there for me. When I die, will you follow me and keep me company?"

"I'm sorry, but I can't help this time!" replied the second wife. "At the very most, I can only walk with you to your grave." Her answer struck him like a bolt of lightning. The king was devastated.

Then a voice called out: "I'll go with you. I'll follow you no matter where you go."

The king looked up and saw his first wife. She was very skinny as she suffered from malnutrition and neglect. Greatly grieved, he said, "I should have taken much better care of you when I had the chance!"

In truth, we all have the four wives in our lives:

- ▶ Our fourth wife is our **body**. No matter how much time and effort we lavish in making it look good, it will leave us when we die.
- ▶ Our third wife is our **possessions, status, and wealth**. When we die, these will go to others.
- ▶ Our second wife is our **family and friends**. No matter how much they have been there for us, they can't go with us past the grave.
- ▶ Our first wife is our **soul**. We often neglect it in pursuit of wealth, power, and pleasures of the world. However, our soul is the only thing that will follow us wherever we go. Cultivate, strengthen, and cherish it now, for it is the only part of us that will follow us to the throne of God and continue with us throughout eternity.

—adapted from eSermons.com

The

HOME PAGE

A Generous Husband

Several men are in the locker room of a golf club. A cell phone on a bench rings and a man engages the hands-free speaker function and begins to talk. Everyone else stops to listen.

MAN: "Hello."

WOMAN: "Honey, it's me. Are you at the club?"

M: "Yes."

W: "I am at the mall now and found this beautiful leather coat. It's only \$1,000. Is it OK if I buy it?"

M: "Sure, if you like it that much."

W: "I also stopped by the Mercedes dealership and saw the new 2006 models. I saw one I really liked."

M: "How much?"

W: "\$60,000."

M: "OK, but for that price I want it with all the options."

W: "Great! Oh, and one more thing ... The house we wanted last year is back on the market. They're asking \$950,000."

M: "Well, then go ahead and give them an offer, but just offer 900,000."

W: "OK. See you later! I love you!"

M: "Bye. I love you, too."

He hangs up. The other men are looking at him in astonishment. Then he asks: "Anyone know who this phone belongs to?"

"Rejoice evermore" —1 Thessalonians 5:16

Become More Desirable

QUESTION: If you were looking for a new spouse, which ONE thing would be most important? Of the 3,878 participants who took the survey, they responded as follows:

- ▶ 11% Chose Good Looks
- ▶ 17% Chose Money
- ▶ 26% Chose Intelligence
- ▶ 43% Chose Sense of Humor

It looks like 43% of us could increase our attractiveness to our spouse with a little effort.



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

The Importance of Fathers

In a recent issue of *In Character*, James Q. Wilson talks about yet another reason having a father in the home is so critical for the future of our society: "After holding income constant, boys in father-absent families were twice as likely as those in two-parent ones to go to jail, and girls in father-absent families were twice as likely as those in married families to have an out-of-wedlock birth. What all of this means for the rest of society is evident on the evening news programs. Boys without married fathers populate our street gangs, and these gangs are responsible for an inordinately high level of violence. We rely on the police to control gangs, but the important, and often absent, control is that exercised by fathers.

"A boy growing up without a father has no personal conception of what it means to acquire skills, find a job, support a family, and be loyal to one's wife and children. Research on the link between unemployment rates and crime has shown that the connection is very weak. The connection between crime and father absence is much higher. Boys in single-parent families are also more likely to be idle rather than in school or unemployed and to drop out of high school. These differences are as great for white families as for black and Hispanic ones and as large for advantaged children as for disadvantaged ones."

—<http://www.incharacter.org/article.php?article=46>

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: and **he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers**, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." —Malachi 4:5-6

"Be" Before Them . . .

Statistics show that entire families who begin the day with hot food, encouraging words, and affection do their respective tasks more efficiently during the time they are apart.

The unfortunate ones who leave each other after a quarrel do not fare as well. Unhappy or stressed students make poorer grades in school and do not get along with others as well as children who leave home with a positive attitude. It is the responsibility of parents to instill in their children positive attitudes, as well as a depth of love and forgiveness that make for peace in families. This is best done by example. Be before them what you want them to become.

—Frances Parr

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works"

—Hebrews 10:24

Another Reason to Kiss Your Spouse

Kissing releases endorphins, those feel-good chemicals in your brain. The saliva also washes away bacteria that causes cavities, and one French kiss tones all 34 facial muscles to keep you looking young. Plus, you burn two calories per minute!

"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine."

—Song of Solomon 1:2

Epitaph Adjustment

A new widow requested the epitaph "Rest in Peace" for her husband's tombstone. When she later found he had left his fortune to his mistress, she attempted to get the engraver to change the carving. This was impossible; the words were chiseled and could not be changed. "In that case," she said, "please add, 'Till We Meet Again.'"

"But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul" —Proverbs 6:32

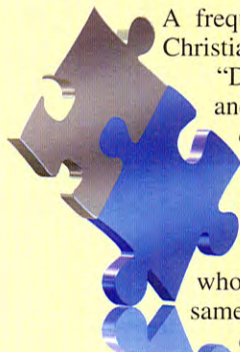
Presidential Wisdom

"There are men and women who make the world better just by being the kind of people they are. They have the gift of kindness or courage or loyalty or integrity. It really matters very little whether they are behind the wheel of a truck or running a business or bringing up a family. They teach the truth by living it." —James A. Garfield, 20th U.S. President





Is the church of Christ a Denomination?



A frequent follow-up question to “Are you a Christian?” is “What denomination are you?”

“Denomination” is not found in the Bible, and the idea is based on sectarianism and division. “Denomination” is not simply an incidental name, but a choice to be divided from other believers who do not share the same sectarian doctrines. Religious denominations are divisions among people who may all claim to follow the same Lord and same Bible but cannot agree because of their denomination.

As Jesus prayed for His apostles before His arrest, He said, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:20–21). Jesus wanted unity among His apostles, and everyone who would believe the apostles’ teaching (whether through their preaching or writings). This unity is not possible as long as the denominational system exists.

The denominational system has developed with various creeds, manuals, handbooks, hierarchies, and systems of organization, which have grown more complex over time. Years ago many people understood that the denominational system was a violation of God’s will and sought to leave the denominations so that they could restore the “undenominational” church of Christ of the New Testament. By being just Christians, without being associated with any denomination, they believed they could better serve God. That is why the churches of Christ are undenominational. We have no creed but the Bible, no denominational or church hierarchy over the local congregation, and no authority for faith and practice other than the Bible. We are not “Church of Christ Christians,” but simply Christians.

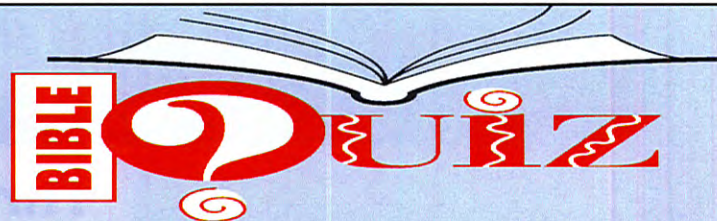
“Seeds” of denominationalism were in the church at Corinth. Paul wrote, “It hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:11–12). Some were not satisfied to be Christians only, but wanted to be “Paulite Christians,” or “Apollosite Christians,” or “Cephasite Christians.” Paul asked, “Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” (1:13). They had divided the church into arguing factions. Paul emphasized the seriousness of the situation by saying he was glad he had only baptized a few at Corinth, so few could claim to follow him instead of Christ (1:14–16). Of what denomination were Peter and Paul? None! They were just Christians.

The church of Christ, if it truly is the church we read of in the New Testament, cannot be a denomination.

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



To ask a Bible question or view previously answered questions, go to www.HouseToHouse.com.



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: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Questions Taken from the King James Version

Starts with the Letter “L”

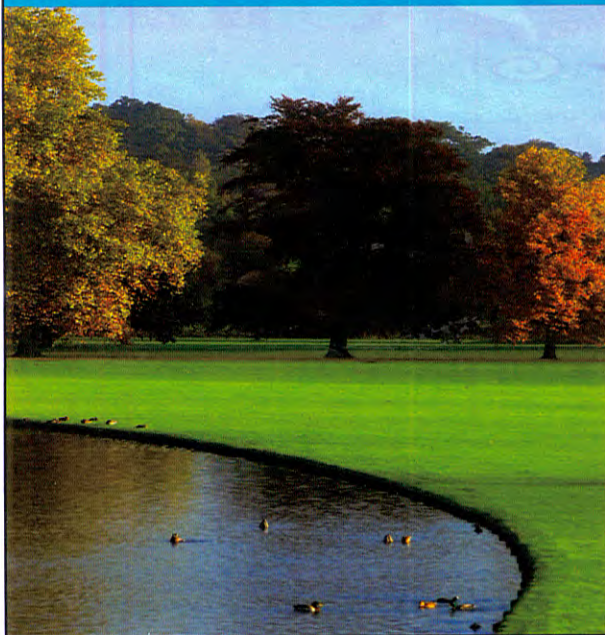
Find answers in Genesis 4:19; 13:12; 28:10–12; 29:16–17; Numbers 11:5; Judges 15:14–15; 2 Kings 5:1–7; Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 31:1; Lamentations 1:1–10; Matthew 3:4; 5:28; 22:37; Mark 5:9; Luke 3:16; 5:27, 29; 16:19–25; 19:10; 23:38; John 1:29; 8:44; Acts 16:1–2, 14–15, 40; 23:10+24:7; Galatians 5:19–21; Colossians 4:14; 1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Timothy 1:5; Revelation 3:14–22; 19:20 (not in order).

1. _____ What Jacob saw ascending up in a dream
2. _____ The first man to take two wives
3. _____ Christians here rebuked for being lukewarm
4. _____ A “work of the flesh” (means exciting lust)
5. _____ One language used for Jesus’ accusation on cross
6. _____ Beggar described in a parable of Jesus
7. _____ Laban’s oldest daughter; married Jacob
8. _____ Material worn by John the Baptist
9. _____ One food Israel missed after leaving Egypt
10. _____ Name of demon Jesus cast out in Gadarenes
11. _____ Where Samson killed 1000 men with a jawbone
12. _____ King instructed by his mother to write proverbs
13. _____ Disease Naaman the Syrian had
14. _____ Another name for Matthew
15. _____ The devil is the father of _____
16. _____ Timothy’s grandmother
17. _____ Timothy’s (Timotheus) home
18. _____ Pitched his tent toward Sodom; lost everything
19. _____ “The beloved physician”
20. _____ Woman of Thyatira; first European convert
21. _____ Roman captain who rescued Paul
22. Hell is described as a _____ of fire.
23. John called Jesus the _____ of God.
24. _____ Jeremiah wrote this Bible book after Jerusalem fell
25. God’s Word is a _____ unto our feet.
26. Men should not look on women to _____ after them.
27. John felt unworthy to loosen Jesus’ shoe _____.
28. “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal _____.”
29. Jesus came to seek and save the _____.
30. “Thou shalt _____ the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”

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).



Learn More! For More Info!



Three Gardens and Three Trees

What's the Bible all about? What's its major theme? If you were to write a "Cliff Notes" on the Bible, and be as brief as possible, what would you say about it?

Well, at least one concise way to sum up the story of the Bible requires only five words. They are: Three Gardens and Three Trees.

Think about it.

- ▶ The Garden of Eden and The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (The Fall of Man)
- ▶ The Garden of Gethsemane and The Cross of Christ (The Sacrifice for Man)
- ▶ The Garden of God (Heaven) and The Tree of Life (The Eternal Salvation for Faithful Men)

This concise summary hits the beginning, middle, and end of human history and addresses its most pivotal moments. Three gardens and three trees—that's the story of the Bible in a nutshell.

—Steve Higginbotham, Glasgow, Kentucky

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- ▶ Grace and Law—Guy N. Woods
- ▶ Have You Counted the Cost if Your Soul Is Lost?—Wendell Winkler
- ▶ O What a Savior!—Allen Webster

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- I have a Bible question: _____
- I am interested in knowing more about what God requires for salvation. Please have someone schedule a personal visit with me.

I want to learn more about the Bible!

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____

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

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- I would like a daily Bible reading schedule.

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Tell Me More About JESUS

The Way to Heaven



Most people when asked will say and honestly believe that they are going to heaven, but it is important to be absolutely sure!

There is a way that seems to be right but is not:

- ▶ “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 16:25).
- ▶ “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hear-kenneth unto the counsel is wise” (Proverbs 12:15).
- ▶ “All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits” (Proverbs 16:2).
- ▶ “I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth” (Acts 26:9).

There are many false ways:

- ▶ *Universalism is the wrong way:* “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat” (Matthew 7:13–14).
- ▶ *Calvinism is the wrong way:* “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall” (2 Peter 1:10).
- ▶ *Denominationalism is the wrong way:* “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:4–6).

There is only one way to Heaven.

- ▶ *Christ is the only way:* “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).
- ▶ *His word tells us how to go to Heaven:* “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath One that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48; note also, Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:1–4).
- ▶ *We must obey:* “His Lord saith unto him, well done, good and faithful servant; thou has been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Matthew 25:21). —Randy Kea, Atlanta, Georgia

Standing Beside Us

Steve Winger from Lubbock, Texas, was taking a challenging class in logic. The teacher was known for exacting exams. The final exam was looming, and the professor mercifully told the class that each student would be permitted to bring in a single 8.5 x 11 inch sheet with as much information as they could put on that one sheet for help during the test.

On exam day, each student came to class clutching his precious piece of paper with as much information as possible. Some students had crammed lines and lines of font so tiny onto that single sheet that you had to wonder how they could read it. But Steve walked in with a single blank sheet and a friend who was a senior student and who had an “A” in logic. Steve bent down and placed that single, blank sheet of paper on the floor next to his desk. His expert friend stood on the paper.

The professor noticed the extra body in the room and asked what he was doing. Steve piped up, “You said we could bring in what ever we could fit on a single piece of paper for help on this test. Well, this is my help and he can fit on the paper!” He had followed the instructions to the letter and was the only student in that class to score an “A” since he had his expert friend standing beside him.

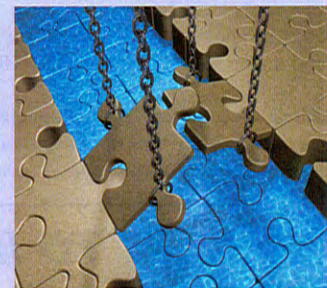
Jesus is our friend, standing beside us and supporting us.

—eSermons.com

“Ye are my friends . . .” —John 15:14

The Second Gospel Sermon

Genesis 12:3 is the second recorded Gospel sermon.



It is the second piece in God’s spiritual puzzle of redemption. It looks backward to man’s problem in Genesis 3:6 and forward to God’s remedy in Calvary. It looks backward to man’s separation from God in Genesis 3:6 and forward to man’s reconciliation to God in Christ and the cross. It looks backward to man’s despair in Genesis 3:6 and forward to man’s hope in the blood of God’s Son. It looks backward to the beginning of sin in Genesis 3:6 and forward to the closing of Christ’s work for sin in John 19:30. God preached the Gospel to Abraham in Genesis 12:3 just as surely as Peter preached the Gospel on Pentecost in Acts 2. The only difference is that Genesis 12:3 looks forward to an event to be accomplished, and Acts 2 looks backward on the accomplishment of the event. Genesis 12:3 is the gospel in promise, and Acts 2 is the gospel in fact. —KneeMail, Frank Chesser, Montgomery, Alabama (Mike Benson, editor)

“And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, **preached before the gospel unto Abraham**, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.”

—Galatians 3:8-9



Discoveries of a Lifetime



Some have discovered cures for dreaded diseases. Some have been given credit for discovering countries. Some have changed the world through discovering scientific laws. Think of the discoveries relating to transportation and communication. Discoveries in the space program have taken us to new heights. No doubt there will be other discoveries if time continues (James 4:15).

You may have made some interesting discoveries, too. You might have found some arrowheads while digging or while walking in a field. You may have found old coins, discovered valuable antiques, or come across an old book, long out of print. These may enrich our lives but none are "discoveries of a lifetime." These are the discoveries of a lifetime that anyone can find.

FINDING THE LORD: Joseph and Mary found Jesus (Luke 2:45-46). Philip told Nathanael that he had "found him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth" (John 1:45). We sing about "finding a friend in Jesus" and "finding my Lord and He is mine." Jesus is above all (John 3:31). He is the friend of sinners. Never did a man speak or live like Him (John 7:46; Hebrews 4:15). Paul says the Lord can be found and He is not far from any of us (Acts 17:27). Jesus is the discovery of a lifetime!

FINDING THE LAW OF GOD: During Josiah's reign, the book of the law was discovered (2 Kings 22). Of all places, it was found in the house of the Lord! Friend, have you found the law of God? It is a map from earth to heaven. It is God's power to save (Romans 1:16). Your life would be greatly blessed by seeking out the law of the Lord.

FINDING THE CHURCH OF THE LORD: The Lord compared the kingdom of heaven to finding a treasure or a pearl which one would sell all he had to obtain (Matthew 13:44-46). The church was designed by God (Daniel 2:44; Ephesians 3:10), built by Christ (Matthew 16:18), bought by Jesus (Acts 20:28), and will be saved by the Lord (Ephesians 5:23). It is the group for which the Lord will return and present to the Father at the end (1 Corinthians 15:24).

FINDING HEAVEN: Wise people in ancient times looked for a city which had foundations whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11:10). How sad to not find heaven at the end of the way!

Friend, these things are life's greatest discoveries. You can anchor your life and soul and hope in these precious things. They will not pass away.

—Vance Hutton, Double Springs, Alabama