

HOUSE TO HOUSE

Heart to Heart



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

Volume 9, Number 6

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

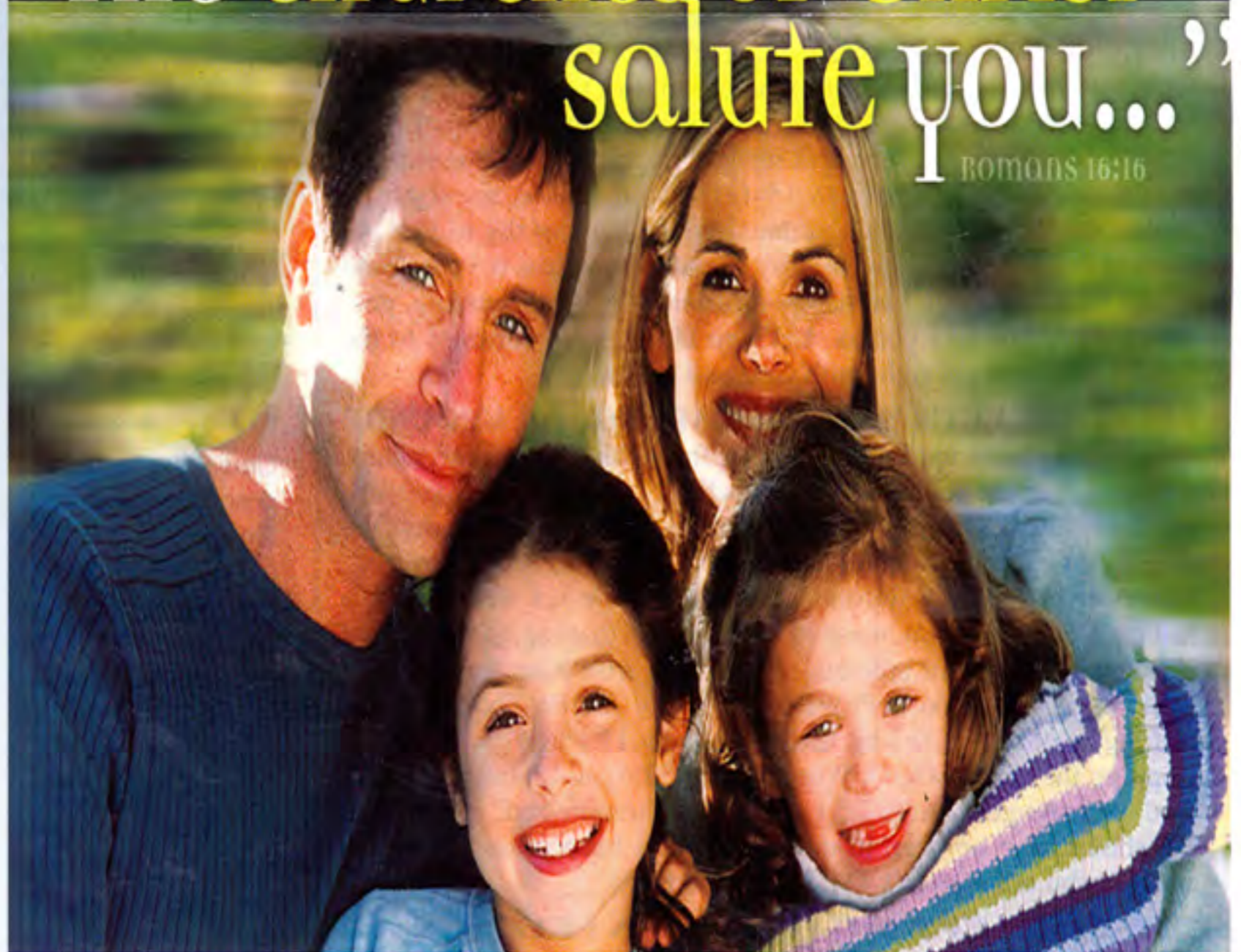
Mission: Save Souls – 1 Tim. 4:16

Warning: Be Faithful – 2 John 9

Unchanged ...



‘The churches of Christ
salute you...’
ROMANS 16:16



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for 2,000 years!

A New You in the New Year!

Allen Webster

This sounds like a commercial line from a weight loss clinic, a fitness club, a hair salon, or a skin cream company, but it's not. It's about making decisions about spiritual well-being. Are you satisfied with "you" at the beginning of a new year? This is the time of year we generally look at ourselves and make resolutions for self-improvement. We often write them down or tell someone so we'll feel some pressure (encouragement) to stick to them. As you think about "a new you for the new year," please consider these common clichés and their spiritual applications.

THIS YEAR, LET'S "PUT OUR HAND TO THE PLOW." The Christian life is compared to running a race (Hebrews 12:1, 2), winning a fight (1 Corinthians 9:27), sailing a sea (2 Timothy 4:6, "departure," *analysis*, literally means "to loose the ropes of a ship and let it drift way"), and plowing a field. Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). A farmer who looks back while plowing will have crooked rows. A Christian who looks back longingly to the life he has left behind will find that he strays from the "strait and narrow way" (Matthew 7:13, 14). This year, let's keep our eyes focused on the pearly gate of "the city laid foursquare" (Revelation 21), and never look back at the devil's glittering trinket jewels.

THIS YEAR, LET'S "PUT OUR NOSE TO THE GRINDSTONE." We use this phrase to refer to applying oneself to a dreaded task. Is there a spiritual duty we need to do which we have been putting off? Perhaps it is obeying the Gospel. Have I believed, repented, confessed, and been immersed for the remission of my sins (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27; Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21)? Perhaps I need to make a public confession of sin, but have dreaded humbling myself and asking for prayers (James 5:16). Perhaps I have offended a brother and have put off getting things straightened out. It's time to do it (Matthew 18:15-18). "Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend" (Proverbs 6:3). It could be the grindstone of a bad habit—drinking, smoking, cursing, gossiping—that I need to break. Let's go ahead, "put our nose to the grindstone," and get right with God and others.

THIS YEAR, LET'S "PUT OUR EARS TO THE GROUND." We use this phrase to refer to listening for feedback from associates. It comes from the practice the Indians had of listening for approaching horses or buffalo by literally putting an ear to the ground. We are wise to listen to the constructive criticisms of those who love us. "Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning...he that regardeth reproof is prudent...A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool" (Proverbs 9:9; 15:5; 17:10). Those "dull of hearing" were criticized by Jesus (Matthew 13:15). This applies to stopping the ears to God's Word (Psalm 58:4) and refusing to hear God's messengers (Acts 7:51, called "uncircumcized" ears here). We should also be open to those who have been offended by our actions who come to talk (Matthew 18:15-18).

THIS YEAR, LET'S "PUT OUR MIND IN GEAR." If you had a daydreaming employee or student under you, you might tell him to "get his mind in gear," which means "concentrate on the task at hand." The young Solomon was told to serve God with a "willing mind" (1 Chronicles 28:9). God says that we must "renew our minds" (Romans 12:2, "renew," *anakainosis*, literally "renovate"), because they can become "faint" (Hebrews 12:3, *ekluo*, "relaxed").

If we have just been going through the motions of worship and Christians living, it's time to "put our mind in gear" and get serious about serving God with all our heart, soul, and mind.

THIS YEAR, LET'S "PUT OUR SHOULDER TO THE WHEEL." If a weight is small, a man might move it with the strength of his wrist; if it is of medium weight, it might require the strength of his arm; but if it is heavy, he will have to put his shoulder to it. We use the phrase "put your shoulder to the wheel" to mean "give this project your full strength." Christianity is not to be approached with "wrist" or "arm" strength, put with all the force of the "shoulder." Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy soul, and with *all* thy mind" (Matthew 22:37). During this year, let's give "all diligence to make our calling and election sure" (2 Peter 1:10, "diligence," *spoude*, "speed, by implication, dispatch, eagerness, earnestness").

THIS YEAR, LET'S "PUT OUR BACK TO THE WALL." One with his "back to the wall" realizes the gravity of a situation. He has but one option—fight. Christians need to appreciate the gravity of the situation in which they daily exist. We are in a free-for-all-no-holds-barred-winner-take-all fight for our souls. We are not playing war games or firing blanks. This is for real. Nobody gets out of this world alive physically (until Jesus comes), and few get out alive spiritually (Matthew 7:13, 14; Ephesians 2:1). This may be the year that determines my destiny. Am I taking my battle with Satan seriously (1 Peter 5:8)? Have I strapped on my armor (Ephesians 6:11-18)? Will I survive? Will my family?

THIS YEAR, LET'S "KEEP OUR FEET TO THE FIRE." A man whose feet are held to the fire tends to become enthusiastic! To put a person's "feet to the fire" is to make him/her responsible for his/her actions. God does hold us responsible for our actions. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). Jesus even spoke of each word we use being significant: "...every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matthew 12:36, 37).

God likes enthusiastic people. Phinehas was given a covenant of peace because he was "zealous for his God" (Numbers 25:13). Dorcas was loved by many because she was full of good works (Acts 9:36). God redeemed and purified us that we might be "a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). We "are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). God wants us to "consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works" (Hebrews 10:24).

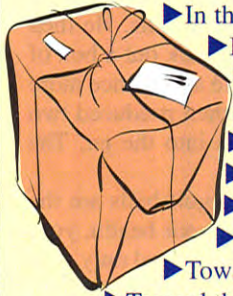
THIS YEAR, LET'S "KEEP OUR EYES ON THE PRIZE." A man with his eyes on a prize has it as the object of his heart, the apple of his eye. He wants nothing more; he will settle for nothing else. Paul had his eyes on the prize of heaven: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13, 14). May our eyes, too, stay on the prize until we hold it in our hands.

A "new you" for the "new year"? There's no better time to start than today!

THINK ON GOOD THINGS

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

What Is Christianity?



- ▶ In the home it is kindness.
- ▶ In business it is honesty.
- ▶ In society it is courtesy.
- ▶ In work it is fairness.
- ▶ Toward the unfortunate it is pity.
- ▶ Toward the weak it is help.
- ▶ Toward the wicked it is resistance.
- ▶ Toward the strong it is trust.
- ▶ Toward the fortunate it is congratulations.
- ▶ Toward the penitent it is forgiveness.
- ▶ Toward God it is reverence and love.

"...suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil" —1 Corinthians 13:4, 5

ALCOHOL IN THE USA:

Alcohol costs 35 billion dollars more a year than the taxes bring in. Each year in this country, it is involved in:

- ☒ 64 percent of the homicides;
- ☒ 30 percent of the suicides;
- ☒ 20 percent of the fatal private aircraft accidents;
- 50 percent of the fatal automobile accidents;
- ☒ 58 percent of the fire deaths;
- ☒ 45 percent of the drownings;
- ☒ 55 percent of the child abuse cases.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" —Proverbs 20:1

KIDS IN CHURCH:

- ▶ A Sunday school teacher asked her children, as they were on the way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."
- ▶ After a sermon one Sunday, Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That preacher said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, and I wanted to stay with you guys."
- ▶ 3-year-old, Reese: "Our Father, Who does art in heaven, Harold is His name. Amen."
- ▶ A little boy was overheard praying: "Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."

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 |



Five Fingers of Prayer

The fingers on your hands can help you remember who to pray for:



1. Your thumb is nearest to you. Begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is a "sweet duty."



2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct, and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, ministers, and our elders. They need wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.



3. The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our secular leaders. Pray for our president and congress, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion.



4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger, as any piano teacher will explain. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble, or in pain. They need our prayers day and night. We cannot pray too much for them.

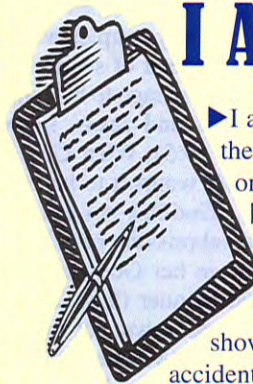


5. Last comes the little finger; the smallest of all. This is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, "The least shall be the greatest among you." Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively. Should you find it hard to get to sleep tonight, just remember the homeless family who has no bed to lie in.

—Glen Hitchcock

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men" —1 Timothy 2:1

I Asked God...



- ▶ I asked God why I wasn't rich. He showed me a man with the wealth of a thousand kings, who was lonely, and had no one to share it with.
- ▶ I asked God why I wasn't beautiful. He showed me a woman more beautiful than any other, who was ugly because of her vanity.
- ▶ I asked God why He'd allowed me to become old. He showed me a boy of 16, who lay dead at the scene of a car accident.
- ▶ I asked God why I didn't have a bigger house. He showed me a family of six, who had just been evicted from their tiny shack, and had to live on the street.
- ▶ I asked God why I had to work. He showed me a man who couldn't find a decent job because he'd never learned to read.
- ▶ I asked God why I wasn't more popular. He showed me a socialite with a thousand friends, who all left the moment the money and parties were gone.
- ▶ I asked God why I wasn't smarter. He showed me a natural-born genius, serving life in prison for making ill use of his knowledge.
- ▶ I asked God why He put up with a thankless sinner like me. He showed me His Bible. He showed me His Son.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God" —Psalm 42:11

The



HOME PAGE

What Would Happen?

...if the truant fathers of America began spending time with their children?

It wouldn't eliminate world hunger, but it might save some families from sinking below the poverty line. It wouldn't bring peace to the Middle East, but it just might keep a few kids from trying to find a sense of belonging with their local street-corner gang. It might not defuse the population bomb, but it just might prevent a few teenage pregnancies.

If these fathers were to spend more time with their children, it just might have an effect on the future of marriage and divorce. Not only do boys lack a sense of how a man should behave; many girls don't know either, having little exposure themselves to healthy male-female relationships.

If that would happen, the next generation of absentee fathers might never come to pass (Christophre N. Bacorn, *Dear Dads: Save Your Sons*, p. 13).

"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment..."
(Gen. 18:19a).

Respect for Fathers

THREE BOYS were talking as they walked to school. The first boy said, "My dad wrote a poem that was published, and he got \$50 for it." The second boy boasted, "My dad wrote a story and got \$100 for it." The third boy responded, "That's nothing. My dad writes a sermon every Sunday, and it takes four men to collect all the money."

A Mother's Love

President Lyndon B. Johnson had this reply after receiving a particularly lavish introduction: "I wish my mother and father might have been here to hear that introduction. My father would have enjoyed it, and my mother would have believed it."

"For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother"
—Proverbs 4:3

The Mayonnaise Jar and the Coffee Cup

When things in your family life become too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the story of the mayonnaise jar and the coffee cup.

A professor stood before his philosophy class on the first day of the semester. As class began, without a word, he picked up a large, empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. As he shook it lightly, the pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked again if the jar was full. The students again said it was. He then took out a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand fit in the crevices. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a hesitant "yes." He then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured their entire contents into the jar. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor, "this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things—your God, your family, your spouse, your children, your health, your friends, and your favorite passions—things that, if everything else was lost and only they remained, would still make your life full. The pebbles are the other things that matter, like your job, your house, and your car. The sand is everything else—the small stuff.

"If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for things that are important. Pay close attention to things that are critical to your happiness. Take your wife out to dinner. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Maybe even play another 18. There's always time to clean the house and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first, the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One student raised her hand to inquire what the coffee represented. He smiled and replied, "I'm glad you asked. It just shows you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend."

"Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established" —Proverbs 4:26

"Let's see a Marriage Canceler"?

It's no secret that many couples find the wedding knot to be a slip knot. It's no secret that nearly half of couples launching onto the sea of matrimony end up sailing into a storm. It's no secret that many who once perceived their spouse as "Mr. Right" or "Miss Right" now see him/her only as "Mr/Miss Right Now." In many marriages, the difference in courtship and marriage is like the difference between the pictures in a seed catalog and what eventually comes up.

Many couples who could salvage their relationship with a little work, just throw it away. Instead of seeing a marriage counselor, they go to a marriage "canceler." God intends a marriage to be something better than what it has become for many. In the words of Genesis and Jesus, husband and wife are to become "one flesh" (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5). What God has joined with a yoke, man must not divide with a chasm (19:6). He wants it to last (Malachi 2:14; Romans 7:2).

God has not left us without insight about marriage maintenance. It requires a mutual submission of self to the interests of the other (Ephesians 5:21)—the wife to her husband in her God-appointed way (5:22-24) and the husband to his wife in his God-directed manner (5:25-29). The motivation for this maintenance must come ultimately from sacred vows, not from subjective viewpoints. Jesus links His teaching on marriage and divorce (Matthew 5:31-32) to His teaching on the necessity of carrying out sacred oaths made to and before God (5:33-37).

We have often heard, "Put your money where your mouth is." We would do well to "put our marriages where our mouths were" on the day we made our vows before God and let our "yes" be "yes" (Matthew 5:37).

Heaven's Helmsman

A SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER asked her class to draw pictures of their favorite Bible stories, and was puzzled by Jimmy's drawing of people on an airplane. So the teacher asked Jimmy which Bible story his picture was meant to represent. "The flight to Egypt," he answered. "I see," replied the teacher. "And that must be Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus. But who's the fourth person?" "Oh, that's Pontius, the pilot."





Do Christians Become Angels When They Die?

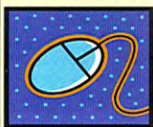
No. It is sometimes said in funerals, especially if the funeral is for a small child, "There is now another angel in heaven." There is no evidence in Scripture, however, that any person becomes an angel upon death; in fact, the Scriptures teach otherwise. The myth that departed humans become angels is very popular with today's entertainment industry, and numerous movies and television programs depict this theme. Often a person supposedly goes to heaven, but must come back to earth to perform some good deed, to earn his "angel wings," or some such thing. These ideas from man's imagination may make good stories, but they do not come from God's revelation!

God created angels, separate and apart from human beings. The psalmist said, "Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts...for he commanded and they were created" (Psalm 148:2, 5). Not only did God create the angels, He created them before the foundation of the world. Job 38 speaks of the creation of the world, when "the sons of God (or angels) shouted for joy" (Job 38:7). Jeremiah wrote, "Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee" (Nehemiah 9:6). Angels compose that heavenly host that worships God.

We know that men, good and evil, can and do die. Jesus told the story of Lazarus the beggar in Luke 16. "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom" (16:22). Lazarus died, but he was still Lazarus, and did not become an angel. Instead, it was angels that carried him to Paradise. Paul's greatest chapter on the resurrection is First Corinthians 15. He writes, "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:51-53). The change the Bible teaches is resurrection. If men became angels at death, it would not be resurrection, but reincarnation.

Angels are a distinct creation of God. They are neither divine, nor human, nor animal. The first chapter of Hebrews emphasizes that Jesus as God was above the angels. Christ "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Hebrews 1:3-4). But because of His love for man, "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). God has plans for His children in eternity, but it will not be necessary for men to become angels to carry out those plans.

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



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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Questions Taken from the King James Version

Starts with the Letter "Q"

Find answers in Exodus 16:12, 13; 1 Kings 10:1; Psalm 127:5; Ecclesiastes 4:6; Matthew 27:51; Mark 6:19; John 13:27; Acts 12:4; Romans 16:23; Ephesians 6:16; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 3:4 (not in order).

1. Bird sent to satisfy Israel's hunger in wilderness _____
2. A Christian at Corinth _____
3. A company of four Roman soldiers _____
4. The _____ of Sheba visited Solomon with hard questions.
5. Herodias had a _____ against John the Baptist.
6. Faith allows us to _____ all the fiery darts of the wicked.
7. The Word of God is _____ and powerful.
8. A meek and _____ spirit is of great price to God.
9. "Better is an handful with _____, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit."
10. Happy is the man that hath his " _____ " full of children.
11. Judas was told, "That thou doest, do _____."
12. When Jesus died "the earth did _____, and the rocks rent."

Kings and Things:

Find answers in 1 Kings 1:1-3, 10-21; 2:5, 6; 3:3; 5:1; 7:13, 14; 10:1; 14:1, 2; 18:3.

1. Who "loved the Lord" but sacrificed and burnt incense in high places?" _____
2. Who "came to prove" Solomon with hard questions? _____
3. Who was "cunning to work all works in brass"?
4. Who is called "a lover of David"?
5. What prophet did Abijah's mother take him to see when he was sick? _____
6. What "governor" feared the Lord greatly? _____
7. What problem did King David have that his servants offered Abishag as a solution? _____
8. Who advised Bathsheba to tell David about Adonijah's attempt to become king? _____
9. Whose head did David tell Solomon not to let go down to the grave in peace? _____

—John Gaines, Pensacola, Florida

Answers to Last Issue: Starts with the Letter "Z": 1. Zacchaeus (Luke 19:2, 3); 2. Zacharias (Luke 1:13); 3. Zadok (2 Samuel 8:17); 4. Zamzumim (Deuteronomy 2:20); 5. Zarephath (1 Kings 17:9, 10); 6. Zaretan (Joshua 3:16); 7. Zeal (John 2:17); 8. Zealot (Luke 6:15); 9. Zebedee (Matthew 4:21, 22); 10. Zebulim (Genesis 19:29; Deuteronomy 29:23); 11. Zebulun (Numbers 1:9); 12. Zechariah (Ezra 5:1); 13. Zedekiah (1 Kings 22:11); 14. Zelophehad (Numbers 26:33; 27:1-11); 15. Zeresh (Esther 5:10-14); 16. Zerubbabel (Ezra 3:2-8); 17. Zion (2 Samuel 5:7); 18. Ziba (2 Samuel 19:2-17); **Ephesus and Ephesians:** 1. They had left their first love (Revelation 2:4). 2. darkness, light, light (Ephesians 5:8). 3. in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). 4. spoke, tongues, prophesied (Acts 19:6); 5. inheritance (Ephesians 1:13,14). 6. That we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (Ephesians 6:11). 7. Deeds of the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:6). 8. Tyrannus (Acts 19:9,10). 9. Apollos (Acts 18:24). 10. Ephesians 4:11.



The Bible and the TV Guide

On the table, side by side: the Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
 One is well worn, but cherished with pride (not the Bible, but the TV Guide).
 One is used daily to help folks decide. No, not the Bible; it's the TV Guide.

As pages are turned, what shall they see? Oh, what does it matter, turn on the TV.
 Then confusion reigns, they can't all agree. Oh, what they shall watch on the old TV?
 So, they open the book on which they rely (no, not the Bible, it's the TV Guide).

The Word of God is seldom read, maybe a verse e'er they fall into bed
 Exhausted and sleepy and tired as can be, not from reading the Bible; from watching TV.
 So, then back to the table, side by side; it's the Holy Bible and the TV Guide
 No time for prayer, no time for the Word. God's Plan of Salvation is seldom heard.
 Forgiveness of sin, so full and free, is found in the Bible...not on TV.



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

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In the Interest of Christian

UNITY

Some or Sum?



Biblical unity is based upon common teaching and practice (1 Corinthians 1:10). Common teaching and practice comes about by following a common standard (John 12:48). The common standard is complete allegiance to God's Word—all of it.

Obedying God involves doing the "sum" of what He said rather than "some" of what He said. The Psalmist declared, "The sum of thy word is truth; and everyone of thy righteous ordinances endureth forever" (Psalm 119:160, American Standard Version).

The New King James Version says, "The entirety of your word is truth..." Some who claim belief in the Bible as completely inspired (2 Timothy 3:16) adopt a "cafeteria-style" approach to it in which they pick the parts they like and put them on their theological food trays, while rejecting other portions that fail to please their fancy.

Jehoiakim had this attitude. He listened to Jehudi read the Word of God as recorded by Jeremiah, and upon hearing the prophecy of Babylonian captivity, took the scroll, cut it with his penknife and cast it into the fire (Jeremiah 36:23). Jehoiakim wanted only *some* of God's Word, instead of the *sum* of God's Word.

Obedience is doing *all* that God said (Matthew 28:20). One of the most dangerous words in the English language is "partial." After a big snowstorm, for instance, the news may report that streets have been *partially* cleared. Those few patches of snow and ice are still treacherous. In fact, the cleared spots can cause us to be too confident about our ability to navigate.

To partially obey God is to *disobey* Him. In First Samuel 15, Saul tells God he has obeyed Him—well, almost. God had commanded that everything from the Amalekites be destroyed, but Saul spared the life of King Agag and some of the animals. Saul blamed his soldiers but the problem was Saul's own pride. He had only partially obeyed God. God was displeased; He took the kingdom from Saul and gave it to David.

Jesus' mother once gave some good advice that we should still follow today: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (John 2:5). Paul told the Ephesian elders that he had not shunned to declare the "whole counsel of God" unto them (Acts 20:27). Preachers today, too, must preach God's whole counsel, not just the parts that may be popular in the current generation (read 2 Timothy 4:2-4).

A small church just getting started couldn't afford a sign to go in front of their building. The furniture store in town got a new sign about that time and gave the church their old one. It even lit up at night! They painted over it and put it out front. After some years, though, the paint began to peel. It said, *The church of Christ meets here.* And where the paint had peeled off it read (underneath): *Easy Terms.* We must never make easier terms than Jesus gave! He said, "Take up the cross, and follow me" (Mark 10:21).

"Sum" is much better than "some."



Tell Me More About

JESUS

The Most Valuable Gift



You are not going to teach second grade without teaching reading! One story my class and I read is called, "The Legend of the Bluebonnet." In this story, the Comanche Indians are suffering through a terrible drought. The main character is named "She-Who-Is-Alone." She is alone because her parents died during the drought.

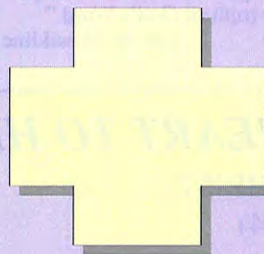
The people are quite desperate for help. They are told the way for rain to come upon the land is for the "most valuable possession" to be sacrificed in a fire. Though the people want help, there are still those whose selfishness keeps them from sacrificing to save the

land. This little girl has a doll that was made by her late mother. It means the world to her, but she sacrifices the doll for her people. Rain comes, and the land is saved!

Sounds familiar, doesn't it? When we as a people were most desperate, God "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16). God gave His most prized possession—an "unspeakable gift" (2 Corinthians 9:15). He sacrificed Jesus to give us life and hope. Peter wrote, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18, 19). Paul added, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Thank you, Father.

What is It?



Perspective makes all the difference. The way we view what surrounds us often depends on what we have learned and experienced. The following imaginary episode illustrates this principle.

Imagine God standing in front of a classroom of men and women. He draws on the blackboard a vertical line over a horizontal line. "What do you see?" He asks.

"The intersection of two streets!" answered an engineer.

"No! It's a geometrical figure made up of four right angles," argued a mathematician.

"Of course not!" said a historian. "It's a cross, ancient Rome's apparatus of torture."

At this, a Christian said, "That's a cross—Christ's instrument of love!" For the Christian, what really matters is the love of God in Christ Jesus.

"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross..." —Ephesians 2:16



“What Kind of People Go to Your Church?”



Some might ask this question as they consider attending our worship services. It is natural for us to enjoy being around people like ourselves, so some look for a church filled with folks much like themselves. Some organizations are designed to include people who are alike with similar backgrounds, abilities, education levels, or wealth.

God's church is NOT designed with these things in mind. Jesus came to break down the barriers that often divide people in society and bring us together in Him. Paul said, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:27-28). We also

find, "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Ephesians 2:14). So when you visit us you will meet some people like you—and some who are not just like you.

On any given Sunday, you may find black people, white people, brown people, and those of other backgrounds. You will find some who are financially prosperous and some who don't have much money. You will find some who didn't finish high school and some with advanced degrees. You will find old people and young people. You will find people with "white collar" jobs and "blue collar" jobs. You may find people who are originally from all parts of the nation. Some of us have very outgoing personalities, and some of us are more quiet. We have many varying likes and dislikes and many different strengths and weaknesses. We realize that we still have a long way to go in learning to reach out and accept those who are different. That's because we are human and still imperfect. But we know that is what God wants us to do.

What is it that holds a diverse group together with all these differences? It is a common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and a common respect for the authority of His Word. God created us vastly different from each other, but we all want to be more like Jesus. We all realize that we are saved by the blood He shed on the cross, and we have a common destiny of eternal life with Christ in heaven! We sometimes sing a song that describes that kind of unity in these words, "A common love for each other, A common gift to the Savior, A common bond holding us to the Lord, A common strength when we're weary, A common hope for tomorrow, A common joy in the truth of God's Word."

—Brent Missildine

Young men and maidens,
old men and children. Let
them praise the name
of the LORD.



Psalm 148:12-13

Please Join Us Sunday!