

HOUSE TO HOUSE

Heart to Heart



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

Volume 10, Number 6

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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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“Continue in prayer,
and watch in the same
with thanksgiving”

—Colossian 4:2

Is It Time to Update?

Allen Webster

"...ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls . . ." —Jeremiah 6:16

Times change. The new quickly becomes old, the modern is ancient, today's technological breakthrough quickly becomes yesterday's news, the popular is lost in "the latest," and the up-to-date is soon out-of-date.

Truth never changes. It reads the same today as it did yesterday and as it will tomorrow. It is "once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). Those who would change it are "accursed" (Galatians 1:6-9) and find that it will meet them in judgment unchanged (Revelation 20:12).

Secular man thinks he has outgrown the ancient Gospel. The idea that there is an absolute standard is to him obsolete. The concepts of sin and spiritual death are replaced by "if it feels good, do it" and "live for today." He doubts that blood is needed for forgiveness and scoffs at the virgin birth, sinless life, sacrificial death, and miraculous resurrection of Christ. He thinks these are but myths of a bygone era,

WHEN WILL MAN OUTGROW THE GOSPEL?

WHEN HE OVERCOMES SIN. The only way man could have outgrown the Gospel is to have conquered sin. He has not. Read this morning's front page. Listen to today's news reports. Look around at what people are saying and doing. Sin is still in business. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) was true in Paul's day and is true today. Sin is still the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4), which can include violating one's conscience (Romans 14:23), omitting a duty (James 4:17), and, generally, "all unrighteousness" (1 John 5:17). Peter, for instance, names five germs that disease the soul (1 Peter 2:1).

- ▶ **Malice:** bitterness toward someone; concealed anger in the heart; to desire ill or harm to come to a person.
- ▶ **Guile:** to catch as a fish with bait. Craftiness; deceit; trickery.
- ▶ **Hypocrisy:** to put on a mask and act out a part. One's face and heart do not send the same message.
- ▶ **Envy:** to be jealous of what others have and to wish they did not have it; unhappy for good to come to someone else.
- ▶ **Evil Speakings:** Slander; unkind words about someone.

Do you recognize any of these from your place of employment, marketplace, community, Hollywood, or corporate America?

Since God is the one who determines sin and not man, what behavior is sinful will not change. Men may change what they consider sin or what they call it, but it will not alter what it really is. Forgiveness is still the most basic spiritual need that man has (Romans 3:23; 6:23). The only way one can be forgiven is through the Gospel (Romans 1:16).

WHEN MAN CONQUERS TEMPTATION. The Gospel provides power to overcome temptation (Ephesians 6:17), and man still needs its power. Humans have not conquered the desires of the flesh—far from it! We are prone to give in to the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17). We'll never overcome temptation without the Word (Hebrews 4:12).

WHEN MAN'S SOUL NO LONGER NEEDS FOOD. The American Medical Association says in an average lifetime a person will eat:

- ▶ 50 head of cattle;
- ▶ 2,400 chickens;
- ▶ 310 pigs;
- ▶ 26 acres of grain; and,
- ▶ 50 acres of fruit and vegetables.

All of this cannot appease one craving of the spirit! For that, we must feed on "soul food," which is the Word of God. The Gospel fills those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). Peter says, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Peter 2:2-3). (Sincere means "unadulterated, nothing added.") The Bible is often compared to food:

- ▶ Water (Revelation 21:6);
- ▶ Honey (Psalm 119:103);
- ▶ Milk (Hebrews 5:12-14).

As food, it has the power to nurture, sustain, and cause to grow. It is rich in nutrients!

How often do we feed our stomachs compared to how often we feed our souls? If we feasted upon food only as often as we feasted upon the Word of God, would we survive physically (cf. Matthew 4:4; Psalm 119:165; Jeremiah 15:16)? Someone pointed out that birds can go nine days without food, dogs 20, turtles 500, snakes 800, and fish 1,000. A person can survive 60 or more without food, but most of us would be incapacitated if we went even a whole day without nourishment. Yet some don't eat God's Word, except on Sundays. No wonder we are weak spiritually. We need to feed on of the Word everyday (Acts 17:11)!

If men could invent a substitute suitable for "soul food," he would not need the Gospel, but he has not.

WHEN MAN NO LONGER NEEDS A MAP TO HEAVEN. Men have sought to invent their own ways to heaven, but these maps will only get one lost. The wise king observed, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Ecclesiastes 7:29). Jesus spoke against this practice in His day: "For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mark 7:8-9). If we follow the road of "faith only," the avenue of "merit and self righteousness," the lane of "direct operation of the Spirit," or the path of "once saved always saved," we miss the narrow road that leads to life (Matthew 7:13-14).

WHEN SATAN IS DEFEATED. The devil is still "a roaring lion," walking about "seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). Man is still in danger; therefore, he needs God's protection. If men were able to defeat Satan without spiritual weapons, then they would no longer need the truth, but they cannot (Ephesians 6:13-17). No one is strong enough to conquer the evil one's temptations without an "it is written"—not even Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11).

"The word of the Lord endureth forever" (1 Peter 1:25). Only the true Gospel of Christ leads to heaven (John 14:6). We can choose to heed it or harass it, to read it or reject it, respect it or ridicule it. But the same ancient Gospel is our only hope of a ticket through the pearly gates.

THINK ON GOOD THINGS

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

Missed the Point!



A young minister decided to use a visual demonstration for his Sunday sermon. He placed three worms into jars. The first worm was put into a container of alcohol. The second worm was put into a container of cigarette smoke. The third worm was put into a container of good clean soil. At the conclusion of the sermon, he reported these results:

- ▶ The first worm in alcohol: Dead.
- ▶ The second worm in cigarette smoke: Dead.
- ▶ The third worm in good clean soil: Alive.

So the minister asked the congregation, "What can we learn from this demonstration?" A little old woman in the back quickly raised her hand and said, "As long as you drink and smoke, you won't have worms!"

"... abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" —1 Peter 2:11

Get Healthy—Go to Church?

A *Wall Street Journal* article (May 3) reported on the results of a study that stated, "a growing body of scientific evidence shows that Americans who attend religious services at least once a week enjoy better-than-average health and lower rates of illness, including depression. Perhaps most importantly, the studies show that weekly attendance confers a significant reduction in mortality risk over a given period of time."

According to the *Journal*, "The panel reported that the studies showed a 25% lower mortality rate for those who attend religious services at least weekly . . . Religious services . . . boast various features that can be beneficial to health—meditation, a social network, a set of values that discourage smoking, infidelity, and other unhealthy behaviors."

As the medical professor who chaired the panel concluded, "After seeing the data, I think I should go to church."

Hey, that's what we've been saying all along.

"... Worship God" —Revelation 22:9

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 |



One Thousand Marbles

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday morning. I love the quiet solitude of being first to rise, the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. The first few hours of a Saturday morning are most enjoyable. Recently, I shuffled toward the kitchen with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday turned into one of those lessons that life hands you ever so often.



I turned on my radio to listen to a Saturday morning talk show. I heard an older sounding chap with a golden voice talking about "a thousand marbles" to someone named "Tom." I was intrigued and sat down to listen.

"Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well, but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work 60-70 hours a week to make ends meet. Too bad you missed your daughter's recital." He continued, "Let me tell you something, Tom, that has helped me keep a good perspective on my own priorities."

That's when he began to explain his theory of a "thousand marbles." "You see," he said, "I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about 75 years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about 75 years."

"I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3,900 which is the number of Saturdays the average person has in an entire lifetime. Stick with me Tom, I'm getting to the important part. It took me until I was 55 to think this through in detail, and by then, I had already used over 2,800 Saturdays. I figured that if I lived to be 75, I had about a thousand Saturdays left to enjoy."

"So I went out and bought 1,000 marbles and put them in a large, clear plastic container here in my workshop next to the radio. Every Saturday since, I take one marble out and throw it away. By watching my marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life. There is nothing like watching your time on earth run out to help get your priorities straight."

"One last thing before I sign-off and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the last marble out of the container. I figure if I make it until next Saturday then God has blessed me with a little extra time to be with my loved ones. It was nice to talk to you Tom. I hope you spend more time with your loved ones. Have a good morning!"

You could have heard a pin drop when he finished. I had planned to do some work that morning, then go to the gym. Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife with a kiss. "C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast."

"What brought this on?" she asked with a smile. I said, "It has just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. Hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out?" I said, "I need to buy some marbles."

"... redeeming the time ..." —Ephesians 5:16

▶ "You really shouldn't say 'I love you' unless you mean it. But if you mean it, you should say it a lot. People forget."

—LightSinger

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." —1 Corinthians 13:13

The

HOME PAGE



The Last Thing He Did

When I was growing up at the Lincoln congregation in Huntsville, Alabama, one of the elders was a man named Roy Jacks. He was a good Christian man who served the Lord throughout his lifetime. He and Lucille were married for 77 years and they brought up their children in the Lord.

Brother Jacks died last week at the age of 99 after suffering two heart attacks. Living to the age of 99 and being married for 77 years are both remarkable feats in life, but I want to tell you something that was noteworthy about his death.

When it became obvious that his health was deteriorating, his wife and children were called to his bedside. While they were all together, they had prayer. The amazing thing is that Brother Jacks led the prayer himself! He knew the power of prayer (1 John 5:14-15; James 5:13-16; Matthew 7:7-8), and prayed often. Shortly after that prayer, he went into a comatose state, and six hours later he passed from this life. *The last thing he did was lead his family in prayer!*

What will be the last thing we do with our families? It will likely be what we have done with them all along. "The family that prays together, stays together." Think about it.

—adapted from Ricky Phillips, Florence, Alabama

Do I look like the type of person . . . ?

Bill Bouknight tells the story of a little boy who was trying to raise some money by collecting old bottles, going door-to-door in his neighborhood. When he came to the home of a woman who was the "town grouch," the little boy asked, "Do you have any coke bottles?" "No," she replied with a scowl. Then he said, "Do you have any old whiskey bottles?" "Young man," the woman replied, "Do I look like the type of person who would have old whiskey bottles?" The little boy studied her for a moment and then asked, "Well, do you have any old vinegar bottles?" Isn't it tragic that some people go through life so negative and sour and bitter? Don't become the "old grouch" in your family. Smile. Love. Laugh.

"Rejoice evermore" —1 Thessalonians 5:16

To Have and To Hold

Our daughter Ireland will sometimes start crying for no apparent reason. We check her diaper. Fine. Try to nurse or feed her. Nope. See if her gums hurt. They're fine. Take off or put on clothes. Doesn't matter. Pick her up and hold her. That's the answer.

Over the past 50 years numerous studies have been made regarding babies and human touch. Babies who are held less often tend to be weaker and sicker. Those who receive a lot of cuddling thrive in comparison. With premature babies, physical touch can often make the difference between life and death. Researchers have come to the conclusion that this is not just a "want" of a baby; it is a basic need right up there with food.

Over the years, Athena and I have visited a nearby retirement home. We visit the elderly and listen to their stories. We let them tell us about all the people in the photographs that line their room. What lights up their faces more than anything else is when I hug them and hold their hands during our visit. They crave physical contact.

I don't think the need for touch disappears when we are no longer infants and suddenly reappears when we are aged. Too often, we suppress that need, thinking it makes us weak or less independent. Some say, "I don't really like to be touched or held." I don't think they were born that way. I believe every human needs lots of touching.

Physical closeness is a common thread in all the blissful relationships I have witnessed. A happy couple consists of two people who realize the basic need to be held *often*. I wasn't a hugging sort of person when I married. But everything that I read and all that I witnessed indicated that I needed to hug my wife if I wanted a blissful relationship. So from day one of our marriage, I gave the formulaic hugs and kisses, not because my heart felt like it, but because my head knew it was right. Within months of frequent hugs and cuddles with Athena I began to appreciate the warmth and closeness. Now it is hard to pull us apart.

Hugs, holding hands, and lots of cuddles are not just for babies and grandparents. For some relationships, the human touch can mean the difference between life and death.

—Michael Webb <http://www.50secrets.com>/edited for space

"... they brought young children to him, that he should touch them ..." —Mark 10:13

Is it a sin to live together without marriage?

Society is rapidly accepting the idea that a man and a woman can live together without being married, but what does God think? According to the Bible, a man and a woman living together unmarried are classified as "living in fornication." Fornication is a broad word meaning, "every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse." A couple engaged in sexual union is either married or sinning; there is no middle ground. The Bible says, "... to avoid fornication, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband" (1 Corinthians 7:2). One must cease fornication and be forgiven of it in order to go to heaven (Revelation 21:8; 1 Corinthians 6:9).

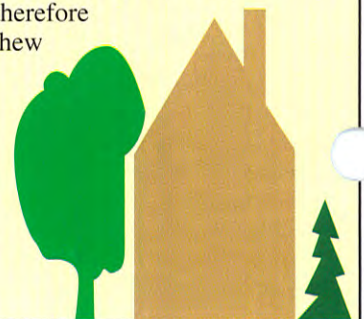
Since God instituted marriage in the first place (Genesis 2:24), this question is not merely cultural. The Bible gives no set ceremony as to what must be said or done as one enters a marriage; every culture is free to set up a system to recognize a couple has become husband and wife. In our country the law says that a couple must obtain a license and appear before one recognized by the state as authorized to perform marriage ceremonies. Each person entering marriage must comply with the law of God and with the laws of the land (1 Peter 2:13-15; Romans 13:1-2). If the state does not accept a marriage without a license and ceremony, then neither does God. We might also point out that there are "marriages" that the state recognizes that God will not (Matthew 19:9; Romans 7:1-4).

Jesus said to the Samaritan woman at the well, "thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband" (John 4:18). She had met the requirements of the state five times, but not the sixth. This teaches that we must comply with the laws of the land and that mere cohabitation does not constitute a marriage. If sexual union makes a marriage, then Jesus erred in saying, "He whom thou now hast is not thy husband." If sexual union makes a marriage, then everyone who employs the services of a prostitute is married to her. God must join two together for them to be married. Jesus said, "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6). God only joins those who meet His requirements.

God in Our Families

Happy moments, praise God (James 5:13).
Difficult moments, seek God (Psalm 63:1).
Quiet moments, worship God (Psalm 4:4).
Painful moments, trust God (Psalm 7:1).
Every moment, thank God (Psalm 100:4).

—Via The Green Plain Proclaimer





How often should the church partake of communion?

Paul tells us that on the night He was betrayed, Jesus took bread, "and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (1 Corinthians 11:24-26).

Jesus instituted this supper to be done in remembrance of Him. Paul said, "as often" as Christians partake of this memorial supper, they "show the Lord's death till he come." There is no question that the church should partake of the Lord's Supper, but how often? Is the frequency of communion just a matter of opinion?

It would be strange if the Lord instituted a memorial and gave no guidance as to how often it should be done. The Jews received explicit instructions as to when they were to observe the Passover, Pentecost, and other memorials. The New Testament is clear that the early church assembled each first day of the week [Sunday] for worship. First Corinthians 14:23 speaks of the whole church "come together into one place" and Hebrews 10:25 warns against "forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." The first day of the week was the time for the early church to assemble and partake of communion.

Paul came to Troas "and upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7). The verse before states, "we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days" (Acts 20:6). Thus Paul and his group had waited a full seven days at Troas so that they could meet with Christians on the first day of the week, "when the disciples came together to break bread." Their stated purpose in coming together was "to break bread," meaning to partake of the Lord's Supper. The writings of many ancient writers such as Pliny, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and others show that the universal practice of the early church was to meet each first day of the week to partake of the Lord's Supper.

But was it every first day? When God told the Jews to "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8), they understood that it was every Sabbath day that was intended, even though God did not specifically say to remember every Sabbath day. A man who violated only one sabbath was stoned to death (Numbers 15:32-36). When Paul wrote, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him..." (1 Corinthians 16:2), didn't he mean that each first day of the week Christians were to give? Each first day of the week [the day of the Lord's resurrection, and the day the church was established], is the day Christians are to observe communion. No other day or frequency is authorized by command or example of Scripture.

—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 "U"

Find answers in Genesis 15:7; 2 Samuel 6:3-11; 11:1-27; Job 1:1; Psalm 1:1; Daniel 5:1, 25; Mark 14:14-16; 16:14; Luke 16:10; 22:1; Acts 10:28; 11:3; 17:23; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 2 Corinthians 9:15; Ephesians 4:3; Philippians 4:7; 1 Timothy 2:12; Hebrews 7:26 (not in order).

- "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the _____."
- The risen Jesus criticized His disciples for their _____.
- The Jews criticized Peter for eating with men who were _____.
- Peter learned he should not call any man common or _____.
- Christ "is holy, harmless, _____, separate from sinners."
- The peace of God "passeth all _____."
- We are to endeavor to keep the _____ of the Spirit.
- He that is _____ in the least is unjust also in much.
- The Athenians had an altar to the "_____ GOD."
- Passover was also called the Feast of _____ Bread.
- "Know ye not that the _____ shall not inherit the kingdom of God?"
- "Thanks be unto God for his _____ gift."
- _____ Belshazzar saw this word written on a wall.
- Christ instituted the Lord's Supper in an _____ room.
- Job was a perfect and _____ man.
- Abraham was from _____ of the Chaldees.
- _____ was Bathsheba's husband; murdered by David.
- "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to _____ authority over the man, but to be in silence."
- _____ Place of Job's residence.
- _____ touched the ark of the covenant and died.

Starts with the Letter "Y"

Find answers in Ecclesiastes 12:1; Matthew 11:29-30; Romans 6:13; Titus 2:4, 6; 2 Peter 3:8

- A thousand _____ is with God as one day.
- "Neither _____ ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God . . ."
- Jesus promised that His _____ was easy and His burden light.
- "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy _____."
- Aged women are commanded to teach the _____ women to be sober, to love their husbands, and to love their children as older men are to teach young men to be soberminded.

Answers to Last Issue: Starts with the Letter "A": 1. Aaron (Exodus 6:20; 7:1, 7); 2. Abaddon (Revelation 9:11); 3. Abana (2 Kings 5:12); 4. Abba (Mark 14:36); 5. Abel (Genesis 4:8); 6. Abigail (1 Samuel 25:14-42); 7. Abishag (2 Kings 1:1-4); 8. Abishai (2 Samuel 21:16-17); 9. Abner (2 Samuel 3:8-27); 10. Abraham (Genesis 22:1-19); 11. Absalom (2 Samuel 14:25-15:2); 12. Apollos (Acts 18:24-25); 13. Annas (John 18:12-24); 14. Acts of Apostles; 15. Adam (Genesis 1:26/2:19); 16. Adultery (Galatians 5:19/Matthew 19:9); 17. Ant (Proverbs 6:6-8); 18. Ahab (1 Kings 16:29-31); 19. Ahasuerus (Esther 2:16); 20. Ahithophel (2 Samuel 15:12); 21. Ai (Joshua 7:2-5); 22. Alabaster (Matthew 26:7); 23. Antioch (Acts 11:26); 24. Amnon (2 Samuel 13:1-18); 25. Amram (Exodus 6:18-20); 26. Anakims (Deuteronomy 2:11/Joshua 11:21); 27. Andrew (John 6:8-9); 28. Angels (Matthew 4:11); 29. Abstain (1 Peter 2:11); 30. Abundant (John 10:10); 31. Adversary (1 Peter 5:8); 32. Alpha (Revelation 1:8); 33. Angry (Psalm 7:11); 34. Modest apparel (1 Timothy 2:9).



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Only One Book Left

It is said that when David Livingstone started his trek across Africa, he had 73 books in 3 packs, weighing 180 pounds. After the party had gone 300 miles, Livingstone was obliged to throw away some of the books because of the fatigue of those carrying his baggage. As he continued on his journey his library grew less and less, until he had but one book left—his Bible. —Today in the Word, April, 1989, p. 28

WHY FOUR ACCOUNTS OF JESUS' LIFE?

There were three prevailing cultures in first century Palestine. It is not surprising, therefore, that there should be a Gospel narrative directed to each of these populations. The Gospel of Matthew is intended to influence the Jews. It emphasizes the fact that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah of Old Testament prophecy; thus, there is a significant appeal to the text of the Hebrew Scriptures. Mark, a close companion of Peter, penned a narrative adapted to the Roman mind; he stresses the urgency with which Christ "served" His heavenly Father. The concept of servitude was keen in the Roman world. Luke's Gospel account was fashioned for the Greek culture, and its aim is to highlight the human nature of the Lord Jesus. In Greek thought, "man" was exalted. The book of John is altogether unique. It is cosmopolitan in appeal and provides strong evidence that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. Thus, there is an emphasis on the "signs" (miracles) Christ performed.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" —2 Timothy 2:15

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Address: _____

Phone: _____

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

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- Did Jesus make intoxicating wine?** A interesting question, a scriptural answer. (It may surprise you!)
- Salvation. Who Needs It?** A study of the conversions in Acts.
- Slow to Anger**
- The Advantage of Disadvantage**
- Back issues of *House to House/Heart to Heart*

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In the Interest of Christian

UNITY

Why does the church of Christ put so much emphasis on “Christ”?



A key New Testament passage is **Matthew 16:16-18**: “And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

CHRIST IS THE FOUNDATION

He said, “*Upon this rock, I will build my church . . .*” (Matthew 16:18). Christ is the Rock and the rejected cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20).

CHRIST IS THE BUILDER

He said, “*Upon this rock, I will build my church . . .*” (Matthew 16:18). Religions invented by men are worthless (Psalm 127:1). Churches of men will be rooted up, according to the Lord (Matthew 15:13).

BOUGHT BY CHRIST

He said, “*Upon this rock, I will build my church . . .*” (Matthew 16:18). Christ “purchased” it with “his own blood” (Acts 20:28). We are redeemed by His blood (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:13-14; Romans 5:8-9). Jesus gave Himself for the church (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25-26).

WEARS NAME OF CHRIST

A bride wears the name of her husband; the church is Christ’s bride (2 Corinthians 11:2; John 3:29; Ephesians 5:27; Isaiah 56:5; 62:2). Paul said “the churches of Christ salute you” (Romans 16:16). Its members wear His name—“Christian” (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). Wearing His name gives honor to Christ (Colossians 3:17). Salvation is found in no other name (Acts 4:12).

PREACHES THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

Only His truth can make one free (John 8:32). The Gospel is truth; it has the power to save lost souls (Romans 1:16). Preaching saves (1 Corinthians 1:18-21).

WORSHIPS ACCORDING TO CHRIST’S TEACHINGS

True worship is in spirit and truth (John 4:24), which means according to the pattern of the New Testament of Christ. That pattern authorizes singing, giving, communion, prayer, and teaching (Ephesians 5:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; 16:1-2; Acts 2:42).

CONCLUSION

How could we fail to emphasize Christ!? Let’s all emphasize only Christ and His Church! Let all submit to only that which is commanded by Christ (Philippians 2:10).



Tell Me More About

ESUS

The Parable of the Three Trees



Once three trees in the woods discussed their dreams. The first said, “Someday I hope to be a treasure chest filled with gold, silver, and precious gems. I’d like to be decorated with intricate carving so everyone would see my beauty.”

The second said, “Someday I will be a mighty ship. I will take kings and queens across the water and sail to the corners of the world. Everyone will feel safe in me because of the strength of my hull.”

The third said, “I want to grow to be the tallest and straightest tree in the forest. Seeing me on top of the hill, people will look up and think of the heavens and how close to them I reach. I will be the greatest tree of all time. People will always remember me.”

After years of praying their dreams would come true, a woodsman came upon the trees. As he cut the first tree, he said, “This is a beautiful tree. I’ll sell the wood to a carpenter.” The tree was happy because he knew a carpenter could make him into a treasure chest.

At the second tree, the woodsman said, “This is a strong tree. I’ll sell it to the shipyard.” The tree was happy because he knew he was on his way to becoming a mighty ship.

When the woodsman came to the third tree, the tree was frightened because he knew that if he was cut down his dreams would never come true. He wept as the woodsman indeed cut him down.

- ▶ The first tree arrived at the carpenter’s shop and was made into a feed box for animals! This was not at all what he had prayed for.
- ▶ The second tree was made into a small fishing boat. His dreams of being a mighty ship and carrying kings had come to an end.
- ▶ The third tree was cut into pieces and left alone in the dark.

Years went by and the trees forgot their dreams. Then one day, a man and woman came to the barn. She gave birth and placed her baby in the hay of the feed box. The man, a carpenter himself, wished he had made a crib for the baby, but this manger would have to do. Little did the tree know that it now held the greatest treasure of all time.

Some years later, a group of men got in the fishing boat. One was tired and fell asleep. While out on the water, a great storm arose. The tree did not think it was strong enough to keep his passengers safe. The men woke the sleeping man. He stood and said, “Peace.” The storm stopped! The tree then knew he carried the King of kings.

Someone finally came to get the third tree. It was placed on a man’s back and carried through the streets as people mocked and shouted. Eventually, they stopped and the man was nailed to the tree and raised in the air to die at top of a hill. When Sunday came, that cross became the tree people would always remember because Jesus had been crucified on it.

“**The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree**” —Acts 5:30



Want to Wear a Crown?



IN THE ANCIENT athletic games, a fragile, leafy crown was awarded the winner.

This garland—called the victor's crown—was a collection of pine, wild olive, parsley, ivy, or celery leaves. In the Isthmian Games, the prize was a pine wreath. With this crown came instant fame, high acclaim, and the life of a hero. Winners were immortalized, much as they are today. These wreaths were taken home with great pride. But in a few days they would wither and discolor.

Making a striking comparison, inspired authors contrasted these earthly crowns with the imperishable crown of Christ—Heaven's Heisman. What can be said about God's eternal crown?

- ▶ It is an unfading crown of glory (1 Peter 5:4).
- ▶ It is a crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8).
- ▶ It is a crown of life (James 1:12).
- ▶ It is an incorruptible crown (1 Corinthians 9:25).

When we stand before Christ, each of us will long to hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." The Master's approbation, His approval, is all that will matter. Then Christ will take an incorruptible crown, shining in all its glory, the emblem of God's approval for a race well run, and place it upon each winner's head.

Of course, to win the crown we have to get in the race! Are you running the Christian race? Do you want to wear a crown?

—adapted from Steven J. Lawson, quoted in KneEmail, Mike Benson, editor