

House to House



Heart to Heart

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Volume 13 Number 1

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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

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Can God Really Forgive Me?

Allen Webster

God could never forgive me.
I've done some awful things."

How many times has that thought passed through the synapses of human brains? Does it frequently lodge in your "gray matter"? When you are alone at night with just your thoughts, are they thoughts of despair, hopelessness, and frustration?

The private thoughts of a prodigal boy in a pigpen in the far country give us some hope (Luke 15:11-32). That boy was an invention of the Master storyteller to share a message about forgiveness . . . about a Father's all-encompassing, incomprehensible love . . . heaven's sermon of hope when the devil preaches despair.

That hungry prodigal knew his rich father would not go to bed without supper that night. *But the son would.* Pondering this thought, he realized that nobody on his father's farm would fall asleep with a growling stomach. *But he would.* Even his father's servants had "bread enough and to spare" (Luke 15:17). *But he didn't.*





Forgive me?

Continued from page 1

Since the father in the parable represents the Father in the Bible, we can draw some interesting conclusions from the phrase “bread enough and to spare.” God has never been stingy with His blessings. He “giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not” (James 1:5; cf. 1:17).

Take bread, for instance. When Israel needed some in the wilderness, they had all the manna they wanted: “Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man” (Exodus 16:16). When a widow shared with Elijah what she thought was her last meal, God refilled her meal barrel, and no matter how much she dipped out, it stayed full until the famine ended (1 Kings 17:15–16). When Jesus fed five thousand men (besides women and children), the famished people ate all they wanted and still had twelve baskets left (Matthew 14:20). When He “opened His buffet” to four thousand another day, they, too, ate their fill and had seven baskets extra (Matthew 15:37).

When we think of man and see the magnitude of his sin, we can hardly understand how a single sinner can be saved; but when we think of God and see the magnitude of His love, we can hardly understand how a single one could be lost.

Have you considered that God loved sinners better than He loved His own Son? *How can you say that*, you ask? He “spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all” (Romans 8:32), but He spares sinners. He poured His wrath upon His Son and made Him (the Innocent) the substitute for sinners, that He might lavish love upon us (the guilty) who deserved His anger.

Since God freely gives us all things (Romans 8:32) and withholds “no good thing . . . from them that walk uprightly” (Psalm 84:11), what can we count on when we make the journey back to our Father from the far country?

With God, there is grace enough and to spare. No one has gotten up from God’s table still needing a snack of grace. Is your case a difficult one? Have your sins been shocking and frequent? Are your spiritual diseases strange and complex?

Consider that He who made the earth and stretched out the heavens like a tent has no bound to His strength nor limit to His might.¹ In six thousand years, He has never failed at anything—will His first failure be saving you? Will you prove too strong for omnipotence, too clever for omniscience, or too unlovable for omni-benevolence? If He made you (Genesis 1:27), He can remake you (2 Corinthians 5:17). If He claims you (2 Corinthians 6:18), He can cleanse you (Acts 22:16). His “hand is not shortened, that it cannot save” (Isaiah 59:1).

After all these years, is there still bread enough on God’s table of grace? Isaiah issued this invitation twenty-seven centuries ago: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:7).

It still stands. God offers “abundant grace” (2 Corinthians 4:15) and “abundant mercy” (1 Peter 1:3; cf. Titus 3:5–6), yea, “exceeding abundant” (1 Timothy 1:14). He is able “to save them *to the uttermost*” that come to Him (Hebrews 7:25). Peter said, “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you **abun-**

dantly into the everlasting kingdom” (2 Peter 1:11). Paul concluded: “Where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound” (Romans 5:20).

Let’s put this plenteous grace to the test in a real world of really bad sinners. Did God live up to His promises?

▶ Those on **whose hands God saw crimson stains** that matched His Son’s blood type were told, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). Three thousand of them washed their hands “in the fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel’s veins” that very day (2:41; cf. Zechariah 13:1), and many others took Him up on His offer in coming weeks (Acts 2:47). It would be hard to imagine a case today that could be the equal of the Pentecost sinners.

▶ What about **moral delinquents**? Doubtless the immoral and swindlers and drunks are not welcome at the Father’s banquet. Right? Again, we find they are—provided they are penitent. Paul wrote of some who had been fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners (1 Corinthians 6:9–10). By God’s grace, they had been washed, sanctified, and justified (6:11).

No one has gotten up from God’s table still needing a snack of grace.

▶ **Saul of Tarsus**, who was public enemy number one in the kingdom of heaven at the time, tested the grace-enough-and-to-spare-principle as perhaps no other individual has. He was a blasphemer of God and murderer of innocent Christians. It seems he organized and supervised the mob killing of Stephen, for instance, who likely left a wife and child on earth² when the fatal rock prematurely sent him into eternity (Acts 7).

Surely, Saul would find that grace could cover only so much—and that he had long ago crossed that line. No, he also found bread enough and to spare. Years later he wrote of himself (still calling himself the chief of sinners) as one “who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy . . . and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant” (1 Timothy 1:13–14). Is it any wonder that Paul wrote more of grace than any other New Testament writer—in fact, more than all the others combined!

Can God forgive you? *Yes!* Will God forgive you? *Yes.* The question really is, “Do you really want to be forgiven?” Are you willing to take God on His terms? What are His terms? Learning of Christ (John 6:44–45); faith in Christ (Acts 16:31); repentance of sins (Luke 13:3); confession of Christ (Romans 10:10); baptism into Christ (1 Peter 3:21); and then faithful living for Christ (Revelation 2:10).

Take God at His Word. Trust in Him. Obey Him. Live with Him forever!

Endnotes:

¹ Charles H. Spurgeon, *Miracles and Parables of our Lord*.

² Most commentators believe that the men selected in Acts 6 (among whom was Stephen) were deacons and thus would have met the qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3, among which are a wife and child.

Powerful Verse

An elderly woman had just returned to her home from an evening church service when she was startled by an intruder. She caught a man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables and yelled,

“Stop! Acts 2:38!”

The burglar stopped in his tracks.

The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done.

As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar, “Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture to you.”

“Scripture?” replied the burglar. “She said she had an ax and two 38s!”

“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” —Acts 2:38

[Note: It is a powerful verse. It has the power, when obeyed, to remove all sins in a person's life.]

Take a Stand

When the Nazis came for the communists,
I remained silent;
I was not a communist.

When they locked up the social democrats,
I remained silent;
I was not a social democrat.

When they came for the trade unionists,
I did not speak out;
I was not a trade unionist.

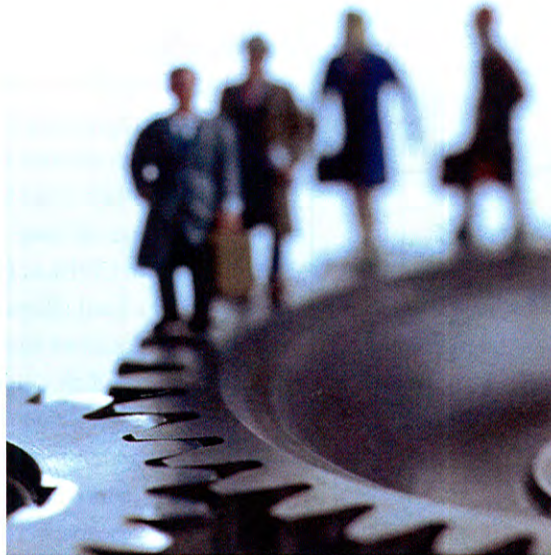
When they came for the Jews,
I remained silent;
I wasn't a Jew.

When they came for me,
there was no one left to speak out.

—Martin Niemöller (1892–1984)
Dachau Concentration Camp survivor

“Stand fast in the faith . . .” —1 Corinthians 16:13

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Assaying Value

Imagine a bank that credits your account each morning with \$86,400. It carries over no balance from day to day. Every evening it deletes whatever part of the balance you failed to use during the day. What would you do? Draw out all of it, of course!

Each of us has such a bank. Its name is *Time*. Every morning it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off as lost whatever you have failed to invest to good purpose. It carries over no balance. It allows no overdraft. Invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness, and success! The clock is running. Make the most of today.

To realize the value of

- ▶ **One year**, ask a student who failed a grade.
- ▶ **One month**, ask a mother who gave birth to a premature baby.
- ▶ **One week**, ask the editor of a weekly newspaper.
- ▶ **One hour**, ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.
- ▶ **One minute**, ask a person who missed the train.
- ▶ **One second**, ask a person who just avoided an accident.
- ▶ **One millisecond**, ask the person who won an Olympic silver medal.

Value every moment you have, and count it a gift from God.

Treasure it by sharing it with someone special—especially your spouse and children. Remember that time waits for no one. Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That's why it's called the present.

“Teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” —Psalm 90:12

The  **HOME**  **PAGE**

How to have a great marriage

Your marriage does not have to be just good; it can be great! What separates good marriages from great ones?

Give God His place in your marriage. Remember that Solomon said, “A threefold cord is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Couples who strive to build a relationship with Christ at its center enjoy an enormous advantage over those who do not (Psalm 127:1).

Remember your vows. Husbands, did you promise to love, honor, cherish, and protect your spouse, forsaking all others? Wives, did you promise to love, honor, cherish, and obey your spouse, forsaking all others? Consider Matthew 19:9 and Hebrews 13:4.

Express love each day. “Show . . . the proof of your love” (2 Corinthians 8:24).

Appreciate one another. When you stop to count your blessings, do not forget to count your spouse! “Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing” (Proverbs 18:22). An attitude of ingratitude will eventually manifest itself in selfish and disrespectful behavior toward one another.

Treat one another as the most important person in the world. Who on earth is more important to you than your spouse? In terms of your relationships with others, no relationship is as important to maintain and cherish than the one you have with your spouse. —Rod Halliburton

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



Unmarried, but Expecting



What should an unmarried couple do when expecting a child? Such is hardly unusual in our day, and ministers are often asked the question. What counsel does the Bible give?

First, forgiveness is necessary. Fornication has been committed, which is a work of the flesh (Galatians 5:19–21) and a sin unlike any other (1 Corinthians 6:18–20). God’s forgiveness is precipitated upon repentance (Luke 24:47), which is change or conversion (Acts 3:19). It comes from genuine sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:10). It is important that sinners be ashamed of their sins (Jeremiah 6:15).

In the case of those who have never obeyed the gospel, repentance must follow belief in Christ as God’s Son (John 3:16) and accompany a public confession of Christ as Lord (Romans 10:9–10). It must be followed by immersion in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Baptism washes away the guilt of the sin of fornication, and all other sins, too (Acts 22:16). In the case of those who have previously been saved, the sin must be confessed to God in prayer (1 John 1:9; Acts 8:22) and to brethren who will also pray (James 5:16; Acts 8:24).

Second, abortion must not be considered. For many, abortion would be an appropriate escape from the consequences of their misbehavior, but this is nothing short of murder, which is, of course, a more grievous sin (Revelation 21:8). In God’s Word, the occupant of the womb is consistently described, not as a fetus or an embryo, but as a child, a son, or a babe (Ruth 1:11; Job 3:3; Luke 1:36, 41, 44). Under the Old Testament, such a child enjoyed the full protection of the law (Exodus 21:22–25), and so it ought to be today. God still hates “hands that shed innocent blood” (Proverbs 6:16–17).

Third, do not rush into a marriage. The prospect of marriage should be considered only with the greatest of caution. A poor choice in the matter of matrimony could very well serve to intensify existing trouble (1 Samuel 25; Proverbs 21:9, 19; 25:24; 27:15). If the involved parties are so lacking in self-control that they cannot refrain from further sexual immorality, then marriage would be worth considering (1 Corinthians 7:1–2), but they must remember that divorce would not be an option (Matthew 5:32; 19:9). Marriage is a lifelong commitment (Romans 7:1–2), so wisdom should be sought (James 1:5).

Fourth, the father should not surrender his parental responsibility. It would be sinful to neglect the child’s material needs (1 Timothy 5:8; Matthew 7:7–11). Children need fathers to provide discipline (Hebrews 12:7–11; Proverbs 13:24). Most important, fathers are duty bound to instruct their children in God’s Word (Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 22:6; Deuteronomy 6:6–9). —Bryan Matthew Dockens,

Las Vegas, NV

Kids Know Dogs

A nursery school teacher was delivering a car full of children home one day when a fire truck zoomed past. Sitting in the front seat of the fire truck was a Dalmatian dog. The children started discussing the dog’s duties.

“They use him to keep crowds back,” said one youngster.

“No,” said another, “he’s just for good luck.”

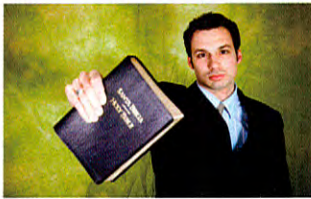
A third child brought the argument to a close. “They use the dogs,” she said firmly, “to find the fire hydrant.”

“A merry heart doeth good.” —Proverbs 17:22





Priesthood of all believers?



While the Old Testament, particularly in Leviticus, gave elaborate ceremonies for the ordination of priests, the New Testament contains none. The reason that there is no ordination ceremony for the priesthood in the

New Testament is that the New Testament teaches the priesthood of all believers.

Speaking to Christians (not clergy), Peter wrote, “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). Peter then discussed the importance of Christ, who was rejected by the builders (religious authorities), but became the precious “chief corner stone” of the church to believers (1 Peter 2:6–8). He then added, “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him . . .” (1 Peter 2:9).

Under the Old Covenant, the priest was to intercede between God and man, and to offer the necessary sacrifices to God. Peter said that Christians are “an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices.” Paul described the nature of the proper sacrifices Christians should offer: “Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1). The reasonable service of Christians is to present their own bodies as living sacrifices to God. God condemned King Saul for taking it upon himself to offer unauthorized sacrifices (1 Samuel 13:12–13; 15:22), so the priesthood of all believers is a significant change.

The emphasis of the New Testament is that every individual member of the church is important. Paul compared the church to a human body, with Christ as its head and the body made up of all the members (Romans 12:4–5; cf. Colossians 1:18). As individual members of the body of Christ, all Christians, as a “royal priesthood,” and a “holy priesthood,” have a ministry to the world. When the church was under great persecution by the Jews, the apostles remained in Jerusalem, but the members scattered and “went every where preaching the word” (Acts 8:4). Those preaching the word were simply Christians, members of the church.

Since Christians are a royal priesthood, there is no need for an earthly priesthood to intercede for Christians with God. All Christians may approach God directly through Christ in prayer. At the same time, each member of this holy priesthood has a responsibility to minister, living a life of purity before the world. —Bob Prichard, P. O. Box 3071, Oxford, AL 36203

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Bible Quiz



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

Name: _____

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Phone: _____

Questions Taken from the King James Version

Starts with the Letter "I"

Find answers in Genesis 1:26; 6:5; 2 Kings 20:11; Psalm 2:1; 1 Samuel 4:21; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 12:36; Luke 1:37; 2:7; Acts 7:8; 17:30; Romans 13:10; 1 Corinthians 3:6; Colossians 3:5; 1 Timothy 5:8; 2 Timothy 2:19; 3:16; 1 Peter 1:4 (not in order).

- _____ Phinehas' wife named her son this, for “the glory [had] departed.”
- “All scripture is given by _____ of God.”
- Men shall give account for every _____ word in the Judgment.
- Covetousness is one form of _____.
- “And the times of this _____ God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.”
- “Love worketh no _____ to his neighbour.”
- “And God said, Let us make man in our _____, after our likeness.”
- Just before the flood, God saw that “every _____ of the thoughts” of man’s heart “was only evil continually.”
- The prophet said, “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name _____.”
- “For with God nothing shall be _____.”
- “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the _____.”
- “Why do the heathen rage, and the people _____ a vain thing?”
- A man that will not take care of his family is “worse than an _____.”
- Christians are promised an _____ which is “incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.”
- “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from _____.”
- Jesus was laid in a manger because there was no room in the _____.
- _____ Abraham’s son; Jacob’s father.
- _____ Prophet who prayed and Hezekiah’s sundial went backward ten degrees.

Answers to Last Issue: *Starts with the Letter C:* 1. Caiphias (Matthew 26:3); 2. Cain (Genesis 4:1); 3. Caleb (Numbers 13:30); 4. Cana (John 2:1–10); 5. Canaan (Leviticus 25:38); 6. Candace (Acts 8:27); 7. Carpenter (Mark 6:3); 8. Chebar (Ezekiel 1:1); 9. Cedar (Psalm 92:12); 10. Cornelius (Acts 10:1–48); 11. Cephas (John 1:42); 12. Cease (Psalm 37:8); 13. Christians (Acts 11:26); 14. Commandments (Revelation 22:14); 15. Commit (1 Corinthians 10:8); 16. Cheerful (2 Corinthians 9:7); 17. Chastening (Hebrews 12:5); 18. Carry (1 Timothy 6:7); 19. Care (1 Peter 5:7); 20. Caesar (Luke 2:1); 21. Camel (Mark 10:25); 22. Cheer (John 16:33); 23. Child (Luke 18:17); 24. Christ (Matthew 16:16); 25. Churches (Romans 16:16).

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Keynotes of Thessalonians – Titus

Reviewing key words, verses, phrases, and messages from the New Testament books refreshes our memory (2 Peter 1:12) and helps us to find key ideas as we read.

Book – 1 Thessalonians

Key Word – Hope
 Key Verses – 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10
 Message – Christ is coming again

Book – 2 Thessalonians

Key Words – The Day of the Lord
 Key Verses – 2 Thessalonians 1:7–8
 Message – The righteous judgment of Christ

Book – 1 Timothy

Key Words – Minister
 Key Verses – 1 Timothy 3:15–16
 Message – Be an example of the believers

Book – 2 Timothy

Key Word – Unpretended Faith
 Key Verses – 2 Timothy 3:14–17
 Message – Preach the word, keep the faith

Book – Titus

Key Words – Savior; Salvation
 Key Verses – Titus 2:11–15
 Message – God’s grace brings salvation to all

Source - Frank J. Dunn, *Know Your Bible* (Frank and Yvonne Dunn Publications, 1997), 430–648



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- Heaven Is Four Steps from Any Place on Earth. Step 2.**
- Practical Suggestions for Learning the Bible.**
- Can I Change?**
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- Can a Christian Fall from Grace?**
- Scruples.** Tolerating differing opinions among believers.
- Can We Let Our Conscience Be Our Guide?**
- How to Get a Good Night’s Sleep**
- The Day the Preacher Sat Next to the Atheist**
- A New Look at the Old Rugged Cross**
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- What Must I Do to Be Saved?**
- A Lying Tongue** **Scared of the Dark**
- Finding God’s Treasure** **Jesus’ Mother**
- Back issues of *House to House/Heart to Heart*

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He Gave His Blood



In his book *Written In Blood*, Robert Coleman tells the story of a little boy whose sister needed a blood transfusion. The doctor had explained that she had the same disease the boy had recovered from two years earlier. Her only chance for recovery was a transfusion from someone who had previously conquered the disease. Since the two children had the same rare blood type, the boy was the ideal donor.

“Would you give your blood to Mary?” The doctor asked. Johnny hesitated. His lower lip started to tremble.

Then he smiled and said, “Sure, for my sister.”

Soon the two children were wheeled into the hospital room—Mary, pale and thin; Johnny, robust and healthy. Neither spoke but when their eyes met, Johnny grinned.

As the nurse inserted the needle into his arm, Johnny’s smile faded. He watched the blood flow through the tube. With the ordeal almost over, his voice, slightly shaky, broke the silence. “Doctor, when do I die?”

Only then did the doctor realize why Johnny had hesitated, why his lip had trembled when he’d agreed to donate his blood. He had thought that giving his blood to his sister meant giving up his life. In the brief moment, he had made his great decision.

Johnny, fortunately, didn’t have to die to save his sister. Each of us, however, has a condition more serious than Mary’s, and it required Jesus to give not just His blood, but His Life. —Craig Brian Larson, *Illustrations For Preaching and Teaching*, Baker Books, 1993.

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” —Colossians 1:14

Jesus, the academic marvel . . .

In **chemistry**, He turned water to wine (John 2:1–10).

In **biology**, He was born without the normal conception (Matthew 1:18–25).

In **physics**, He overcame the law of gravity by walking on water and ascending into heaven (Matthew 14:25; Acts 1:9–11).

In **economics**, He disproved the law of diminishing return by feeding 5000 with two fish and five loaves (John 6:1–11).

In **medicine**, He cured the sick and the blind without administering a single dose of drugs (Matthew 8:1–34; 15:30).

In **history**, He is the beginning and the end (Revelation 1:8).

In **government**, He is King of kings (1 Timothy 6:15).

In **religion**, no one comes to the Father except through Him (John 14:6).



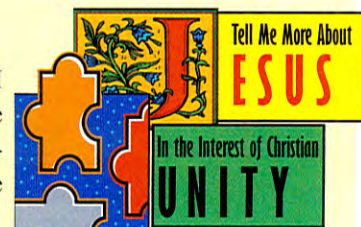
Read the Instructions

I can vividly remember my first two-wheeler bicycle that my dad bought me when I was a boy. It was a red Huffly “Cheater Slick” with a banana seat. Now, when he bought the bike, he had a choice of buying a display model that was already assembled, or he could buy the “bike in a box” that he would have to assemble himself. We bought the bike in a box because it was five dollars cheaper.

So we took the bike home and spread all the parts out on the living room floor. To a little boy, it all looked so confusing. But one thing I knew . . . I knew where the hand grips went, so I popped them on the handlebar without reading the instructions. To my dismay, I later learned that I shouldn’t have been so hasty and should have read the instructions, for the handlebar had to be threaded through a joint prior to putting on the hand grips. Uh-oh. Too late. The grips were on, and wouldn’t come off, so one of the grips had to be cut off. Consequently, my red Huffly bike always had just one hand grip.

That lesson learned many years ago reminds me that life comes so much easier when we read the instructions. In fact, God left us an instruction book, the Bible. For instance, one of the things He tells us in the Bible is that it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35), and yet how many people do you know who are pursuing happiness apart from giving and selflessness? Friends, do yourself a favor and read the instructions before you make a mistake. God made you, and He knows best how you are to function. For best results, consult the owner’s manual. —Steve Higginbotham, Glasgow, Kentucky

“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee . . .” —Psalm 32:8





Emergency Message



Years ago soldiers at Fort Dix were fighting a forest fire.

They were out in the forest with the flames all around them when a plane flew over unexpectedly. The

unidentified pilot flew very low over the firefighters and began to drop notes with weights tied to them. Three times he did this. This is what the notes said: "You are surrounded by flames and you are going to perish unless you take action immediately. There is one narrow corridor left open, and that is your only escape; before long it will be cut off." The firefighters read the note, obeyed it, and their lives were saved.

A message came from above and told them something they could not know in the midst of the smoke, heat, and furor. Thankfully the firefighters did not question the authenticity or reliability of the note. They acted on it by faith; they acted on it in time and they were saved.

What a picture of our society today! We are in a firestorm of trouble; we are in an inferno of problems. We face a rising tide of violence, the horrible disease of AIDS, racism and hatred, and many other social ills. God has given us His message from above, and there is a way to escape and to live for Him in an X-rated society. —Stan Coffey (from KneEmail)

"And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" —Jude 1:23