



*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

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The Ten Most Important Words You'll Ever Say

Allen Webster

Consider a few facts about words

- There are about 700,000 words in the English language, more than any other language.
- The average lead pencil will write 50,000 English words.
- The Bible (KJV) contains 773,746 words.
- Normally, a person speaks 26,800 words per day, enough to fill up a 500 page book each week.
- The average person uses 773,650,000 words in a lifetime of 75 years.

Words are important. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Proverbs 18:21). God in heaven is listening carefully to our words on earth (Matthew 12:36-37). Words have the potential to set "on fire the course of nature" (James 3:6).





What are the most important words? The ten most important words in the English language—in any language—are found in Acts 8:37:

“I BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD.”

These ten words are the most important words a person will ever speak.

The word *confess* is found 47 times in Scripture (including *confessed*, 7, *confession*, 6, *confessing*, 3, *confesseth*, 3). *Profession* (which sometimes translates the same word in the New Testament) is used 12 times (in various forms).

Confession may be grouped under two headings, confession of faith and confession of sin. Confession is used in the sense of affirming the truth that Jesus is God’s Son, and also in the sense of admitting one’s sins and shortcomings.

CONFESSION OF CHRIST

When Jesus said, “For by thy words thou shalt be justified” (Matthew 12:37), He must have had in mind these ten words of confession, for Paul said “with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:9–10). Upon the grand proposition that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, rests the salvation of the world, and in it are centered all the hopes which mortals can have that reach beyond the grave. It underlies the whole scheme of man’s redemption. For if He is not the Son of God, Jesus was the biggest imposter known to the world, the Bible is a fable, and no man was, is, or ever will be under obligation to believe in and obey Him.

On the other hand, if this statement is true, His claims are just, and every man who professes to believe it puts himself under obligation to accept the terms that He requires.

WHAT IS CONFESSION?

The New Testament word translated *confess* is from the compound Greek term *homologeō*. The roots are: *homo*, “same,” and *legeō*, “to speak,” thus it means to “say the same thing as another.”

IT IS A UNIFYING STATEMENT.

It unifies us with every Christian who has ever lived since Peter preached on Pentecost (cf. Amos 3:3). All who go to heaven during the Christian age begin at the same point. Each makes the same con-

fession that the Ethiopian treasurer made before he climbed down from his chariot to be baptized: “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37). There is 100 percent agreement about who Jesus is and what Jesus did. Such unity is both good and pleasant (cf. Psalm 133:1). It also unifies us with God. Our confession says that we are in “agreement with what God holds and declares to be true.” We acknowledge fully that Jesus is God’s Son.

IT IS A PUBLIC STATEMENT.

It is a public subscription to the divine creed, that is, “I believe Jesus to be the Christ the Son of God.” We must require a confession with the mouth, provided the subject has the use of the tongue with which to make it. Paul twice said that the confession is to be made with the mouth (Romans 10:9–10). Nodding the head, raising a hand, signing a pledge card, or writing a note would not meet this requirement.

We are to “profess” Christ (1 Timothy 6:12). In English *profession* (which sometimes translates *homologeō*, e.g., 1 Timothy 6:12; Hebrews 3:1; 4:14) emphasizes the act’s publicity. *Profess* (*pro*, forth, *fateor*, to say) means “to declare openly.” For instance, Jesus will one day publicly “profess” to the wicked “I never knew you” (Matthew 7:23). So to confess Christ is to declare agreement with all that He says, and to profess Christ is to declare Him publicly as our Lord.

IT IS A TURNING POINT STATEMENT.

The Thessalonians “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (1 Thessalonians 1:9). Why? They had come to believe in His Son Jesus “and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come” (1:10). The radical meaning of confess is “avowal” which implies a change of conviction or of course of conduct on the part of the subject. A sinner is traveling the broad road that leads to destruction (Matthew 7:13). At the point he turns around he makes a statement. That statement is, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” That is the reason that he is turning around. He has a new Lord, a new code of conduct, a new hope and goal.

Confession is not limited to the lips; it includes the life. Our actions verify the veracity of our vocalizations. In fact, unless our lives reflect our confession, we forfeit our salvation. Jesus said,

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matthew 7:21–23).

It is appropriate that God should be honored with the mouth, for He made man’s mouth (Exodus 4:11). He promised to give His faithful people a “mouth and wisdom” (Luke 21:15).



God Forgive Me When I Whine

Today, upon a bus,
I saw a girl with beautiful hair.
I envied her, she seemed so merry,
And I wished I was as fair.
When suddenly she rose to leave,
I saw her hobble down the aisle.
She had one leg and used a crutch.
But as she passed, she gave a smile.

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.
I have two legs, the world is mine.

I stopped to buy some candy.
The lad who sold it had such charm.
I talked with him, he seemed so glad.
If I were late, it'd do no harm.
And as I left, he said to me,
"I thank you, you've been so kind.
It's nice to talk with folks like you.
You see," he said, "I'm blind."

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.
I have two eyes, the world is mine.

Later while walking down the street,
I saw a child with eyes of blue.
He stood and watched the others play.
He seemed not to know what to do.
I stopped a moment and then I said,
"Why don't you join the others dear?"
He looked ahead without a word.
And then I knew he couldn't hear.

Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.
I have two ears, the world is mine.
With feet to take me where I'd go.
With eyes to see the sunset's glow.
With ears to hear what I'd know.
Oh, God, forgive me when I whine
I've been blessed indeed, the world is mine.

"Be thankful unto him, and bless his name ..."

—Psalm 100:4

Where Is the Punctuation?

F. W. Emmons wrote the following article in 1873. Note that each paragraph is exactly the same, word for word. Only the punctuation is changed. Much of life depends on where we put the emphasis, or punctuation.

THE GOOD MAN

He is an old and experienced man. In vice and wickedness he is never found. Opposing the work of iniquity he takes delight. In the downfall of his neighbor he never rejoices. In the prosperity of any of his fellow creatures he is ready to assist. In destroying the peace of society he takes no pleasure. In serving the Lord he is uncommonly diligent. In sowing discord among his friends and acquaintances he takes no pride. In laboring to promote the cause of Christianity he has not been negligent. In endeavoring to stigmatize all public teachers he makes no exertions. To subdue his passions he strives hard. To build up Satan's kingdom he lends no aid. To support the gospel among the heathen he contributes largely. To the evil adversary he pays no attention. To good advice he gives great heed. To the devil he will never go. To heaven he must go where he'll receive the just recompense of his reward.

THE BAD MAN

He is an old and experienced man in vice and wickedness. He is never found opposing the work of iniquity. He takes delight in the downfall of his neighbor. He never rejoices in the prosperity of any of his fellow creatures. He is ready to assist in destroying the peace of society. He takes no pleasure in serving the Lord. He is uncommonly diligent in sowing discord among his friends and acquaintances. He takes no pride in laboring to promote the cause of Christianity. He has not been negligent in endeavoring to stigmatize all public teachers. He makes no exertions to subdue his passions. He strives hard to build up Satan's kingdom. He lends no aid to support the gospel among the heathen. He contributes largely to the evil adversary. He pays no attention to good advice. He gives great heed to the devil. He will never go to heaven. He must go where he'll receive the just recompense of his reward.

"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it." —1 Peter 3:10-11

The



HOME PAGE

Show Your Child

“My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways” (Proverbs 23:26).

When it comes to religion, more is caught than taught. In her autobiography, Linda Ellerbee, then coanchor of *NBC News Overnight*, once received this letter from a little girl:

Dear Miss Ellerbee, when I grow up I want to do exactly what you do. Please do it better.

What a thought for parents! Little eyes are watching us; little feet are following us; little minds are scrutinizing us. Our character is a river flowing past our children hour by hour. One day our steps likely will be their steps, our thoughts will be their thoughts, and our words will be their words.

“And he walked in all the ways of . . . his father; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the Lord” —1 Kings 22:43

Secret to Fifty

A couple was celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. Over the years they had raised a brood of 10 children and were blessed with 22 grandchildren.

When asked the secret for staying together all that time, the wife replied, “Many years ago we made a promise to each other: the first one to pack up and leave has to take all the kids.”

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



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True Love

The Bible is a book about love. It assumes that married couples love each other and rejoice together (Ecclesiastes 9:9). Isaac loved Rebekah, and she brought comfort into his life (Genesis 24:67). Uriah the Hittite nourished and cherished Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12:3). Solomon’s wife was as loving to him as a pet deer (Proverbs 5:19). What characteristics does the Bible give of true love?

True love is sacrificial—no price is too great. One man confessed to his friend that he was afraid that he loved his wife too much. His friend asked him if he loved her as much as Christ loved the church. He answered no, and his friend said, “Then you must love her more.”

A husband who understands biblical love would lay down his life for his wife. A wife would do the same for her husband (1 John 3:16; cf. Romans 5:7). It follows logically that one who would make the supreme sacrifice will readily make the smaller sacrifices needed on a daily basis to help a spouse draw nearer to God. Jacob loved Rachel enough to sacrifice fourteen years of his life for her (Genesis 29:20, 30). A husband may not enjoy going to see his wife’s mother, and she may not enjoy watching football every weekend, but these are small sacrifices to make for a good relationship. Personal likes, desires, opinions, preferences, and welfare take a backseat to compatibility, friendship, and long-term closeness.

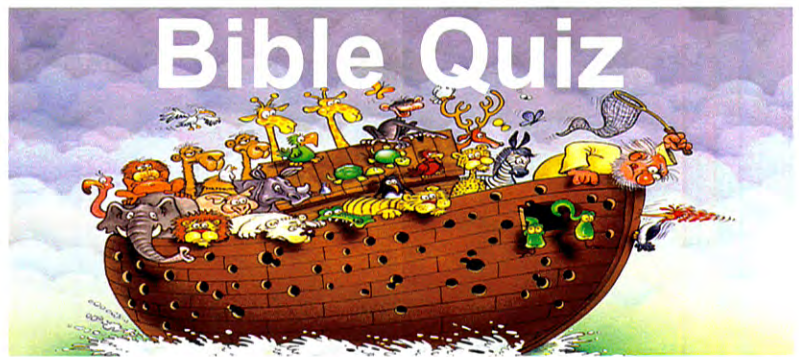
True love is relentless—no road is too long. Love finds a way. It is creative and longsuffering. To use Paul’s words, love “beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth” (1 Corinthians 13:7–8). It doesn’t quit and walk out (Matthew 19:6–9; Romans 7:2). The four friends of a palsied man illustrate love’s creativity. When they could not get to Jesus through a door or window, they climbed up and broke through the roof (Mark 2:4). Love refuses to give up until a spouse is ready for heaven. Love never lets a mate slow up in the Christian race, or give up in the fight with the devil (1 Corinthians 9:24–27).

True love is comprehensive—no sin is safe. Paul refers to removing spots and wrinkles, which is a clothing metaphor (Ephesians 5:27). As a garment brought home from the cleaners has spots removed and wrinkles pressed out, so two Christians long married are cleansed and groomed to meet the Master. The figure may also refer to an aging body that becomes spotted and wrinkled. Since spots are external and wrinkles are caused by internal decay, the figure applies to spouses helping each other overcome both obvious flaws and hidden secrets (Psalm 19:12).

A spouse has a unique perspective and opportunity to help us successfully prepare to meet King Jesus. They know us the best; they are around us the most; they understand our strengths and weaknesses. They likely know our secret sins and carefully masked character flaws. Thus they are in the best position to help us “spruce up” before we go to that marriage feast. Love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8).

God gave us our families to help us be prepared on that great, final day when the whole world will be watching (Matthew 25:31–33). Is your spouse ready?

—Allen Webster, Jacksonville, Alabama



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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Questions Taken from the King James Version

Starts with the Letter "T"

Find answers in Genesis 11:31; Joshua 7:20–21; 2 Samuel 13:1–32; Psalm 18:29; 45:6; Jonah 1:3; Amos 1:1; Matthew 4:5; 10:3; 27:38; Mark 5:41; Luke 1:3; 2:1; 3:1; John 11:16; 19:5; Acts 1:1; 9:36–42; 16:14; 17:11; 19:9; 21:39; 1 Corinthians 13:8; 1 Timothy 1:1–5; 2 Timothy 4:20; Hebrews 9:2 (not in order).

1. _____ Raised from dead by Peter; also called Dorcas
2. _____ Two Syriac words signifying "damsel, arise."
3. _____ Absalom's fair sister; raped by Amnon
4. _____ The chief town of Cilicia, Paul's hometown
5. _____ Place Amos was a herdsman
6. _____ Satan put Jesus on the pinnacle of this
7. _____ Sanctuary (tent) of worship in time of Moses; contained the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread
8. _____ Place Achan buried unauthorized spoils
9. Herod was _____ of Galilee.
10. _____ One of the twelve apostles; also called Lebbaeus
11. Caesar Augustus decreed that all the world should be _____.
12. Jonah fled to _____ from the presence of the Lord.
13. _____ Person to whom Luke addressed Gospel, Acts
14. "These were more noble than those in _____, in that they received the word . . . and searched the scriptures daily."
15. "There two _____ crucified with him."
16. _____ Jesus' disciple; also called Didymus
17. "Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of _____."
18. "Thy _____, O God, is for ever and ever."
19. _____ Hometown of Lydia, the seller of purple
20. _____ Paul's son in the faith; his grandmother was Lois
21. Charity never faileth: but whether there be _____, they shall cease.
22. _____ Left by Paul at Miletum sick
23. "By thee I have run through a _____; and by my God have I leaped over a wall."
24. _____ Abram(ham)'s father
25. _____ Paul taught in this man's school in Ephesus

Answers to Last Issue: Starts with the Letter "K": 1. Knife (Genesis 22:10); 2. Kedron (2 Samuel 15:23); 3. Kadesh (Numbers 20:1); 4. Kirjatharba (Joshua 14:14–15); 5. Kish (1 Samuel 9:3); 6. Kohath (Genesis 46:11); 7. Kiss (Luke 22:48); 8. Korah (Numbers 16:1ff); 9. Kerenhappuch (Job 42:14); 10. Keturah (Genesis 25:1); 11. King (1 Timothy 6:15); 12. Keys (Matthew 16:19). **Find the Hidden Bible Names:** 1. Amos; 2. Enoch; 3. Eli; 4. Boaz; 5. Caleb; 6. Asa; 7. Eve, Adam; 8. Abel; 9. Asa, Amos; 10. Elisha.

What Is God's Plan for Church Organization?



Jesus promised to build His church (Matthew 16:18) and the Father made Him head of that church, which is His body (Ephesians 1:22–23). Since Christ is the only Head of the church, there is

no room for any human authority over the church. The only organization of the church specified in Scripture is that of the local congregation. There is no biblical authority for any organization above the local congregation, such as a convention, association, or synod.

Christ chose the apostles to direct the church in the beginning, promising that the Holy Spirit would guide them (John 16:13). The miracles they did demonstrated that they were from God. Since the apostles had no successors, there are no apostles today, nor anyone to stand in their place to speak authoritatively to the church.

The system that God established to oversee the work of the church after the apostles were gone was one that allowed each congregation to be self-governed and independent. Each congregation was to follow the Bible, being overseen by men that Scripture refers to as elders, bishops, pastors, or overseers. The number of elders in each congregation is always plural in the New Testament. There is no example of a single elder or pastor overseeing a congregation alone (e.g. Acts 20:17).

Deacons are special servants who work under the authority of the elders. Paul addressed a letter to "the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Philippians 1:1). Each congregation also had a plurality of deacons. Men such as Stephen, functioning as deacons, though not specifically called deacons, are first mentioned in Acts 6:1–6.

Paul's letters give very specific qualifications for the elders and deacons which must be carefully followed (1 Timothy 3:1–9; cf. Titus 1). These qualifications are not optional ("must be").

The primary mission of the preacher, or evangelist, is to "preach the word" (2 Timothy 4:2). Timothy was not a pastor, or bishop; he was an evangelist. He preached the word, and helped congregations appoint qualified men to serve as elders.

There is no reason for congregations to be organized today any differently than they were in the first century, with elders overseeing the work of the church, with deacons and evangelists serving under their guidance. This is God's pattern. —Bob

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

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The Whole Bible in 25 Minutes



The Bible can be put into three headings:

God is the former (Genesis 1–2). “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7). Since God created us, we are accountable to Him. If we never acknowledge the creation, we will never see that we are sinners in need of a Savior.

Satan is the deformer (Genesis 3:1–7). Called the “hinge of the Bible,” this passage is crucial. If it were not in the Bible, the whole book would be changed. We finish chapter 2 with heavenly bliss in the garden, but verse 8 shows the creatures hiding in shame. What happened? Sin changes everything.

Jesus Christ is the transformer (Genesis 3:15). From

Genesis 3:8, God is beginning to redeem His people through the coming seed of woman. “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2). —Author Unknown

“Study to show thyself approved . . .” —2 Timothy 2:15

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All About Jesus

This brief outline doesn't actually tell all about Jesus, but uses the concept of *all* in thinking of what Jesus did and does.

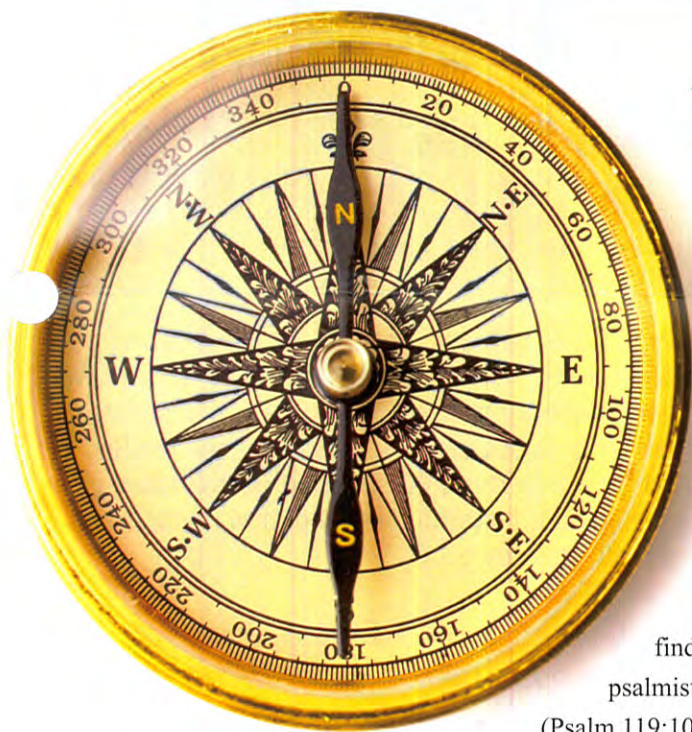
Jesus left it all (Philippians 2:5–8). As one who gave up the glories of heaven, He became our example of the attitude of humility and selflessness.

Jesus paid it all (Hebrews 10:10). With His once-for-all sacrifice, He became our redeemer.

Jesus gives it all (Philippians 4:19; Romans 8:32). Every past activity of Christ's (as in #1 and #2) has present meaning, and He continues to be active as God gives us all we need in Him. He is our supplier.

His past, not mine, determines the present.

His present, not mine, guarantees the future. —J. Randall Methany, Brazil



Wayfinding

In a brochure for the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens in Jacksonville, Florida, the writer describes a new feature in the museum, which has recently undergone renovations. The designers have “opened the place up” to allow for more natural lighting. Architects call this feature “wayfinding.” According to the brochure “wayfinding” is a term architects use to describe the intuitive way a person finds their way through a building with outside visual clues. “It can be overwhelming to be lost in a museum, so giving a visitor [an] occasional glimpse [of] the outside is a good way to orient [the patron] and to help them further appreciate the museum experience.”

The Architect of the universe has provided instruction so that we can find our way, since we could not find it ourselves (Jeremiah 10:23). The psalmist declared, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105). God has revealed that the ultimate goal for all humanity is to live with

Him forever in heaven (John 14:1–3; Revelation 21). He has also revealed that the only way to heaven is through His Son Jesus. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

Sin causes us to lose our way and will cause us to be lost eternally (Romans 6:23). However, because of His great love for us, God gave His Son to die on the cross for our sins, that we might have the forgiveness of sins and the hope of living eternally with Him! (Ephesians 1:7).

The way to heaven through Christ has been illuminated for us in Scripture. We must: believe in Jesus (Acts 16:30–31), turn from our sins in repentance (Acts 17:30–31), confess Jesus before men (Romans 10:9–10), and be baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). Then, if we continue to follow Jesus faithfully, He will lead us to our eternal home (1 John 1:7).

It is overwhelming to try to navigate through life without the proper guidance. In fact, without the proper direction we are lost! But thanks to the loving Architect of life, we can “find our way” to an abundant life now and eternal life to come through Jesus (John 10:10; Romans 6:23).

You can find your way by submitting to *the* Way: Jesus Christ. Won't you? —David A. Sargent, Mobile, Alabama



What's So Great about Following Jesus?

Jesus gives hope—the hope of eternal life.

Unlike many people who stumble through life with no direction, Christians have a goal, and a way to accomplish that goal. Faithful saints know they are headed toward an incomparable destination, the eternal city of God! Jesus is their way to reach the goal—the only way to the Father in heaven (John 14:6), and He is our single hope (1 Timothy 1:1).

Jesus taught that eternal life is available in the world or age to come (Mark 10:30). We live “in hope of eternal life” (Titus 1:2). Stated another way, the Lord has begotten us unto a lively hope (1 Peter 1:3).

Unto what are we looking with desire, expectation, and anticipation? The very next verse has these words: “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.” Simply put, our hope is to live forever in heaven. There is no other hope that compares to this one!

Here is the great thing: it is not limited to just a few people. All people everywhere are invited to come and share in the blessings that God has arranged in and through His Son (Matthew 11:28).

“Come and see” (John 1:39). —Roger Campbell, Cleveland, Tennessee