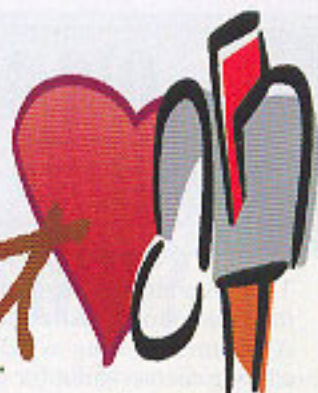


HOUSE TO HOUSE

Heart to Heart



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

Volume 9, Number 5

A publication of the... churches of CHRIST

Founder: Christ – Mt. 16:18
Place: Jerusalem – Isa. 2:1-3, Acts 2:5
Time: A.D. 33 – Dan. 2:44, Acts 2
Head: Christ – Eph. 1:22

Organization:
Christ as head – Eph. 5:23
Elders oversee local church –
Heb. 13:17, Titus 1:5
Deacons as servants –
Acts 6:1-6, 1 Tim. 3:8-13
Members compose body –
Col. 1:2

Name (group):
Church of God – Eph. 3:15
Body of Christ – Eph. 1:22-23
Churches of Christ – Rm. 16:16
Bride of Christ – Rm. 7:4

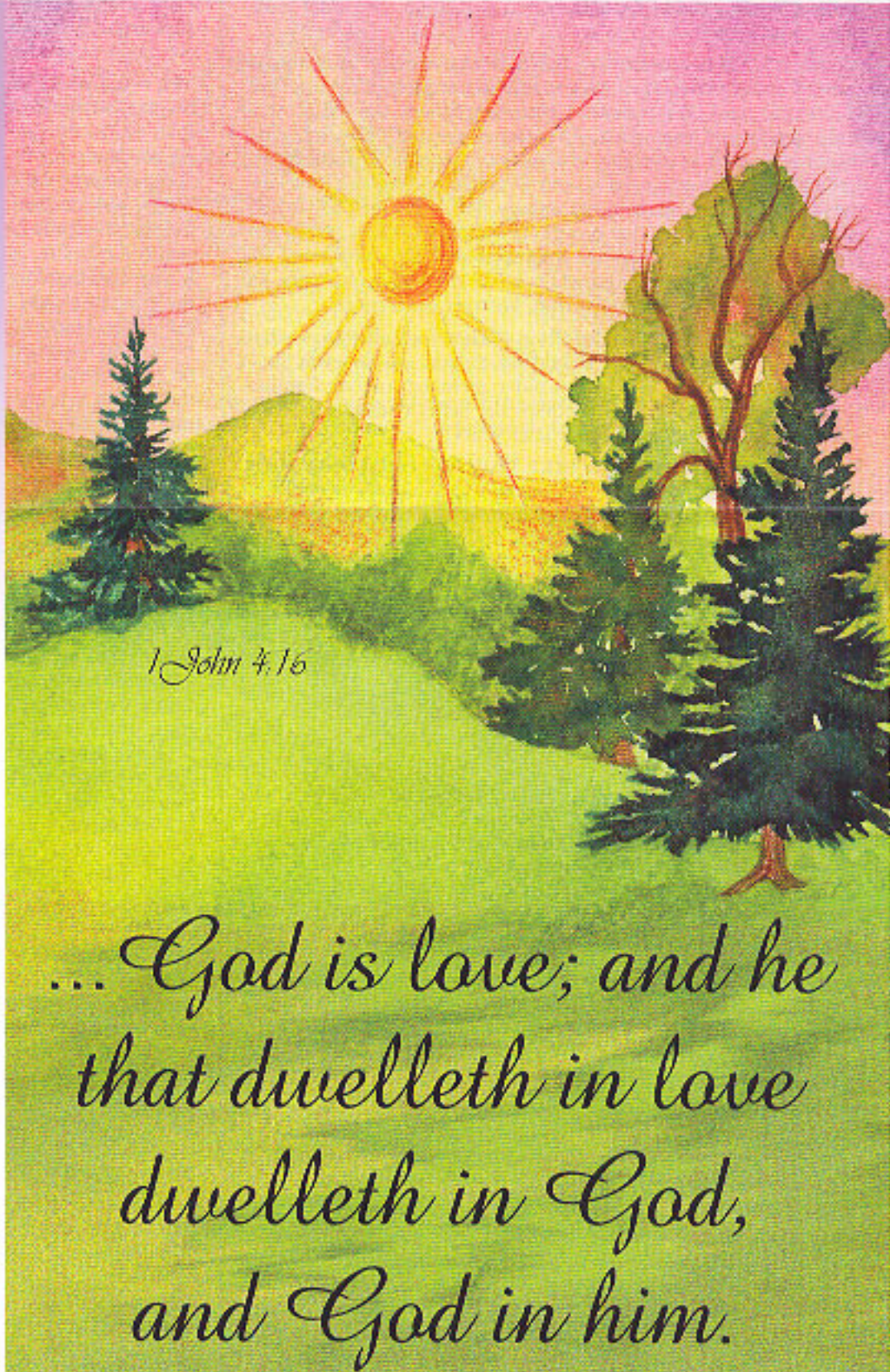
Name (individuals):
Disciples – John 15:8
Saints – Rm. 1:7
Brethren – Lk. 8:21
Children of God – Gal. 4:26
Christian – Acts 11:25-26

Creed: Jesus/Bible – Acts 8:37
Rule of Faith & Practice:
Word of God – 2 Tim. 3:16-17

Worship: Jn. 4:24
Sing – Eph. 5:19
Pray – Acts 2:42; 1 Thes. 5:17
Teach – Acts 5:42
Communion – 1 Cor. 1:23-26
Contribute – 1 Cor. 16:1-2

Mission: Save Souls – 1 Tim. 4:16
Warning: Be Faithful – 2 John 9

If you have questions or comments please contact
us via email at: info@housetohouse.com
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... God is love; and he
that dwelleth in love
dwelleth in God,
and God in him.

Old Age: Taking Care or Taking Advantage

Allen Webster

There is an interesting story in a recent *Sports Illustrated*.¹ It seems that some con artist is going around to aging athletes who have Alzheimer's posing as "Dr. James Hartman." He claims to be purchasing memorabilia for a museum. He takes their trophies, game balls, jerseys... and leaves them with a rubber check. The article ends only half joking that the writer hopes this person is caught *and hanged*. Such abuse of the elderly gets our ire up...we want somebody to do something.

We should stop to consider. We might do, by neglect, what another does by fraud. At age twenty-six, Pat Moore performed a remarkable experiment. An industrial designer, Moore wanted a better understanding of senior adults, so for three years she frequently disguised herself as an eighty-five-year-old woman. She used a professional makeup artist and visited 116 cities in fourteen states and two Canadian provinces in her elderly persona. From her experience, Moore estimates that one of 25 seniors is abused, with most victims being over 75. She was impressed with the compassion and care she received from senior adults when she was in character, but she received harsher treatment from younger generations.²

How do we apply the Golden Rule ("Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them..." Matthew 7:12) to the older members of our families, communities, and churches? Perhaps the better question is, "How will we want to be treated in our later years?"

WE WILL WANT OTHERS TO TAKE TIME FOR OUR LONELINESS. Imagine being surrounded by the same four walls for twenty-four hours a day every day! Think what it must be like to say good-bye to many of your lifelong associates. Ann Landers once ran this thought-provoking entry:

Dear Ann Landers: In the last decade I have witnessed an alarming disrespect for the elderly. In many cultures, old folks are venerated and valued, but not in America. I find this sad and frightening. A few years ago, you printed a column about grandfather's birthday. I showed it to my grandchildren. They were visibly moved and, I might add, have been a lot more attentive to their grandparents since then. Will you please run it again? —St. Petersburg

Dear St. Pete: With pleasure. Here it is.

It was grandfather's birthday. He was 79. He got up early, showered, combed his hair and put on his Sunday best so he would look nice when they came.

He skipped his daily walk to the town café where he had coffee with his cronies. He wanted to be home when they came.

He put his porch chair on the sidewalk so he could get a better view of the street when they drove up to help celebrate his birthday.

At noon he got tired but decided to forgo his nap so he could be there when they came. Most of the rest of the afternoon he spent near the telephone so he could answer it when they called.

He has five married children, 13 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. One son and daughter live within ten miles of his place. They hadn't visited him for a long time. But today was his birthday and they were sure to come.

At supper he sat on the porch waiting.

At 8:30 he went to his room to prepare for bed. Before retiring he left a note on the door... "Be sure to wake me up when they come."

It was grandfather's birthday. He was 79.

In our hustle and bustle world, it is hard to find time to sit with aged relatives and fellow Christians, and if we are not careful, we will neglect this duty—and corrupt our religion. James said, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this. To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself

unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). "Visit" here means to "see after the needs." Certainly one of these needs is conversation and discussion. John added, "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:17, 18). Let us use our days wisely (Ephesians 5:16) and give one once in a while to let an elderly person know he or she is needed and wanted.

WE WILL WANT OTHERS TO HAVE PATIENCE WITH OUR INFIRMITIES. Most of us will better be able to identify with Solomon than Moses. Moses was an exception to the rule of human aging. At his death, his "eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated" (Deuteronomy 34:7). Most of us will wear glasses; most of us will not be able to bench press at seventy what we could at twenty. Solomon, on the other hand, described the aging process with which most of us can identify: "In the day when the keeper of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders [teeth] cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows [eyes] be darkened, And the doors [ears] shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird [cannot sleep]...afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail..." (Ecclesiastes 12:3-5).

In an award-winning article entitled, *A View From 80*, Malcolm Cowley described what it was like to be old: "...when it becomes an achievement to do thoughtfully, step by step, what you once did instinctively—when he can't stand on one leg and has trouble pulling on his pants—when he spends more time looking for things than he spends using them after he has found them—when he listens hard to jokes and catches everything but the snapper."³

What's the application? Patience. Though the old man is only going forty miles per hour down the interstate, or grandma takes **f o r e v e r** to get to the car, or granddad must be told everything three times, let us "add to our temperance, patience" (2 Peter 1:6). To make sure an old person hears you, touch his arm and have him look at you as you speak. Speak clearly, hold up objects to which you refer, and give her clues to establish a context without sounding impatient or upset. As for vision, keep in mind that older people need better lighting and have trouble adapting to the dark. Night lights should be included in each room.

WE WILL WANT OTHERS TO OFFER PHYSICAL ASSISTANCE. We hope to be able to provide for ourselves all of our lives, but we may need physical help later in life. One comedian quipped, "Money can't buy health. And it's getting so it can't support sickness either." With the increasing costs of medication and hospitalization, we may find more truth than humor in that statement. Paul taught that these costs are to be provided by the family, as they are able: "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed" (1 Timothy 5:16; cf. Matthew 15:1-9). This may include finances, seeing after physical work they cannot do, or providing health care.

Solomon bears repeating: "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old" (Proverbs 23:22). As Israel's Premier Golda Meir said: "Seventy is not a sin."

Endnotes:

¹"Late Hit from a Con Artist." Rick Reilly. P. 86. March 8, 2004.

²*Disguised*, Pat Moore, 1985, p. 165-167.

³*Life*, 1979

THINK ON GOOD THINGS

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

The Rest is Gravy

When our only son was a small boy, he spent some time in the hospital and was diagnosed with Kawasaki's Disease.



This disease is so uncommon that most of the medical community at both Emory and Egleston Hospitals paraded by to witness this rare malady.

The greatest concern from the disease was long-term damage to his heart with future repercussions in terms of restricted activity and no athletics. Over the course of time, he was given a clean bill of health and is now a fit and athletic nineteen-year old.

I learned a great number of things during his stay in the hospital. Things like how much a grown man could love a little boy...how when a husband and wife love each other it makes any burden lighter...and, not the least of which, how fragile life really is.

As our son improved and we pulled him up and down the hospital corridors in a little red Radio Flyer wagon, we saw other children who were not so fortunate. Some had inoperable tumors and would never celebrate their fifth birthday. Some would never take a wagon ride because they lay comatose.

I'll tell you this: if you can sneak into your child's room at night after he's asleep and you can lay your hand on his chest and feel the beating of his heart, then you are most blessed.

The rest is gravy! —Randy Medlin, Montgomery, Alabama

“...be ye thankful...” —Colossians 3:15

KIDS' VIEW OF LOVE II:

♥ Concerning why lovers often hold hands: “They want to make sure their rings don't fall off because they paid good money for them.” —Gavin, age 8

♥ “I'm in favor of love as long as it doesn't happen when ‘Dinosaurs’ is on television.” —Jill, age 6

♥ “Love is foolish...but I still might try it sometime.” —Floyd, age 9

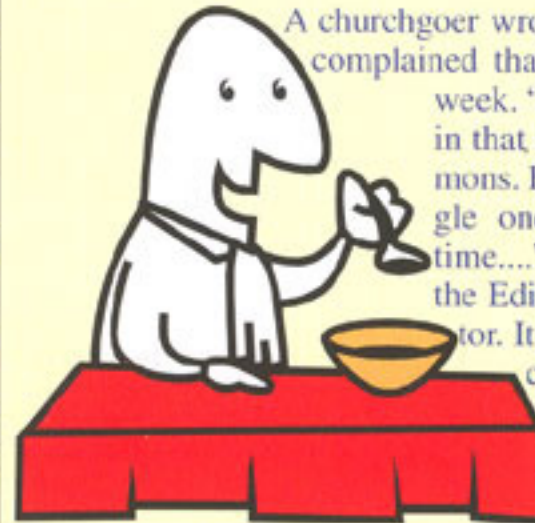
♥ “Love will find you, even if you are trying to hide from it. I been trying to hide from it since I was five, but the girls keep finding me.” —Dave, age 8

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



Why Go to Worship?



A churchgoer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every week. “I've gone for 30 years now,” he wrote, “and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time...” This started a controversy in the “Letters to the Editor” column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

“I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this ... they all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!”

“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart...” —Jeremiah 15:16

Visual Aids

I'd rather see a sermon than to hear one any day.
I'd rather one would walk with me than merely show the way.
The eye's the better pupil, more willing than the ear.
Fine counsel is confusing but example is always clear.
The best of all the preachers are the men who live their creed.
For to see the good in action is what everybody needs.
If you let me watch you do it I can see just how it's done.
I can see your hands in action but your tongue too fast may run.
And the sermons you deliver may be very wise and true but I'd rather get my lesson from observing what you do.
For I may misunderstand you and the high advice you give
But there is no misunderstanding how you act and how you live.

—Edgar A. Guest

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” —Matthew 5:14-16



The Paomnehal Pweor of the Hmuan Mnid

Aoccdmrig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it doesn't mtttaer in waht oredr the lttters in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pelae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit porbelm. Tihs is bcuse-ae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

Amzanig huh?

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well” —Psalm 139:14

The  **HOME**

PAGE

My Drug Problem

I had a drug problem when I was young. I was drug to church on Sunday morning. I was drug back on Sunday nights. I was even drug to Bible classes. I was drug to church for weddings and funerals. I was drug to family reunions no matter the weather. I was drug out of bed to go to school every weekday. I was drug "by my ears" when disrespectful to adults and teachers. I was drug to the woodshed when I disobeyed my parents. Those drugs are still in my veins; they affect my behavior in everything I do, say, and think. They are stronger than cocaine, crack, or heroin and break no laws in administration or consumption.

"Train up a child in the way he should go..."
—Proverbs 22:6

We Go Everywhere Together

BILL SNELL WAS a successful businessman. He owned and operated a large furniture store. Bill was president of a civic club and a member of the school board. He was a devoted husband and father. Bill was especially close to his son, Jerry. They were constant companions. Sometimes Jerry "worked" with his dad at the store. The boy was called "Mr. Jerry" by many customers. Someone said, "Jerry's smile sold more furniture than all his dad's good words."

There was one place Bill and Jerry never went together. Bill never accompanied his wife and son to worship. Jerry often asked his dad to go, but Bill was always "too busy."

Jerry loved Bible school. He liked his teacher and was among her most attentive students. One Lord's Day, the teacher asked, "When you get to heaven, what are you going to do first?" Without hesitation, Jerry replied, "I'm not going to heaven! I'm going with my dad. We go everywhere together."

Not long after that, Jerry's teacher told Mr. Snell about his son's remark. Bill said, "That's just like him. He always wants to be with me...to go where I go." She gently asked, "Where are you going, Mr. Snell? Where are you taking Jerry?" Bill never answered. Nevertheless, the question kept ringing in his ears. Happily, Bill soon responded to the Lord and put on Christ in baptism (Galatians 3:27). He became a faithful and dedicated Christian. He and Jerry could now go EVERYWHERE together. What about you and me? Where are we taking our children? —Phil Sanders

"...the father to the children shall make known thy truth" —Isaiah 38:19b

"Provoke Not Your Children to Wrath"

In two closely related New Testament verses, fathers are given these instructions: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4); "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged" (Colossians 3:21). While much is said about parents properly training children (Ephesians 6:4b), much less is taught about the need for dads to refrain from provoking children to anger (Ephesians 6:4a). Without any claim to have all the answers, please consider the following practical observations.

Provoke not your children to wrath does NOT mean the following:

✚ **Never do anything that makes your child(ren) angry.** From time to time, children will get angry at parents when they step in and "put their foot down." A three-year-old that picks up a sharp knife may pitch a fit when his mom takes it away, but children don't need to play with knives. If we never do anything to cause a child to be upset, then we will turn a spoiled (and dangerous) brat loose on the world.

✚ **Never correct your children.** Jesus said, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten" (Revelation 3:19). Properly administered discipline is not the "provoking" of children that the Lord forbids.

✚ **Never tell children that something is off limits or wrong.** The Lord says that those who take part in the "works of the flesh" will not enter into the kingdom (Galatians 5:19-21). When we restrict our children from such things, they may become hot under the collar, but do not be deceived, such restriction of children's activities is not the "provoking" that God forbids.

✚ **Never to force your children to do something that they do not want to do.** Many children detest chores such as cleaning up their room and may get bent out of shape when ordered to do so, but forcing a child to clean up his room is not the "provoking" spoken of in our texts.

✚ **Never tell your children "No, you cannot do that," even when the matter is not sinful.** Children may throw a tantrum when a demand for a toy from Walmart or a pair of shoes from the mall is not met, but it is not because they have been unduly provoked. God has given someone the task of making decisions in the home. Children are to obey parents, not vice versa (Ephesians 6:1).

Parents DO provoke their children to wrath when they do the following:

✚ **Show partiality/favoritism.** Favoring one child over another or giving special treatment to one over the other can cause anger toward both the parents and the pampered child. Remember what happened in Jacob's family when Jacob favored Joseph over his other sons (Genesis 37).

✚ **Ask children for their opinion, but then consistently disregard it.** Parents need to be honest. If they have no intention of seriously considering what the child has to say, they should not ask for suggestions in the first place.

✚ **Compare their children with each other, or with children in other families.** This often takes the form of a question: "Why can't you be more like _____?" This is almost a guaranteed way to get children angry, and understandably so. Children want to be treated like individuals. We need to exhort them to do the right things and give their best effort in all activities based on Bible principles and reaching their own potential, not on comparison with others.

✚ **Belittle them in front of peers or adults.** This is a very insensitive act, regardless of whether done to a five-year-old or an adult.

✚ **Using insulting names.** We sometimes say hurtful things in anger that we don't really mean and later regret. Insulting our children, even in jest, is unwise.

✚ **Make all their decisions for them.** When children are small, parents naturally make most of their decisions. A time comes, though, when parents have to back off and let children, with their own distinct personalities and interests, make some decisions. Some dads provoke teenage children by trying to dictate to them where they will go to college, what occupation to pursue, or what color clothes to wear.

✚ **Take no interest in their interests.** Children feel hurt when parents don't get excited about their hobbies, sports, and school activities. They feel neglected when they don't make an effort to attend their activities.

There are likely a great number of other ways that parents unduly provoke children. Perhaps these practical illustrations will help more of us avoid unnecessary pitfalls in our efforts to be righteous parents who lead our children in the path to heaven.

—Roger Campbell, Cleveland, Tennessee





How Do We Know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?



While there is ample historical evidence that there was a man named Jesus of Nazareth who lived in the first century, some question if we can believe His claims to be the Christ, the Son of God. The best record of His life, the Bible, gives more than enough evidence that His claims are true, because of the fulfilled prophecies, the record of His miracles, and the testimony of His followers.

The fulfilled prophecies of the Old Testament, accomplished in the life and ministry of Jesus, are a major reason to believe

His claims. The prophet Micah predicted, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2). Although Mary and Joseph were residents of Nazareth, through the providence of God they went to Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus, in fulfillment of the prophecy. The birth of Jesus to the virgin Mary fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy that "The Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

Jesus fulfilled many prophecies in His death. Psalm 22:16-18 predicts of the Messiah, "The assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." John 19:23-24 describes the parting of His garments and the casting of lots at the crucifixion, "that the scripture might be fulfilled." Even the price of His betrayal, thirty pieces of silver, was prophesied over five hundred years before. "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver" (Zechariah 11:12).

In addition to the fulfilled prophecies, the signs and miracles that Jesus performed show that He is the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus showed His power over nature by turning water to wine and calming the sea. He showed His power over sickness by healing the lepers, giving sight to the blind, and making the lame walk. He showed forcefully His power over death by raising Lazarus and others from the dead. His own resurrection from the dead proved conclusively His authority over death.

Peter, speaking for the apostles, told Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). When threatened by the opponents of Christ, Peter and John replied: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20). The apostles at first had trouble believing in Christ's resurrection, but they soon had opportunity to risk their lives for their faith. Peter said, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty" (2 Peter 1:16). They were eyewitnesses of His majesty, and spoke truly.

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



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 "Z"

Find answers in Genesis 10:19, 19:29; Numbers 1:9, 26:33, 27:1-11; Deuteronomy 2:20; Joshua 3:16; 2 Samuel 5:7, 8:17; 19:24-20; 1 Kings 17:9, 10; 22:11; Ezra 3:2-8; 5:1; Esther 5:10-14; Matthew 4:21, 22; Luke 1:13; 6:15; 19:3; John 2:17; Hebrews 12:22 (not in order).

1. Tax collector who climbed a tree to see Jesus _____
2. The father of John the Baptizer _____
3. A high priest in the time of David _____
4. Ammonite name for giants Jews called *Rephaim* _____
5. Place where Elijah lodged with a widow _____
6. Place where Jordan rose up as "an heap" _____
7. Disciples thought of this when Jesus cleansed temple _____
8. Simon the _____ was one of Jesus' disciples.
9. The father of James and John _____
10. A city destroyed at same time as Sodom and Gomorrah _____
11. One of the twelve tribes of Israel _____
12. A prophet in the days of Ezra who wrote a book of the Bible _____
13. A false prophet who advised Ahab to attack Syria _____
14. Had five daughters who asked to inherit his property _____
15. The wife of Haman who suggested building gallows _____
16. Prime builder of Israel's second temple _____
17. The city of David _____
18. Servant of Mephibosheth, helped David with provisions during Absalom's revolt _____

Ephesus and Ephesians

Find answers in Acts 18:24-20:38, Revelation 2:1-7, and the Book of Ephesians.

1. What did Jesus have against this church? _____
2. The Ephesians were sometimes _____, but Paul says they are now _____ in the Lord so they should walk as children of _____.
3. Where are all spiritual blessings found? _____
4. When Paul laid hands on the men who had been baptized with John's baptism, the Holy Spirit came on them and they _____ with _____ and _____.
5. The Holy Spirit is the earnest or pledge of our _____
6. Why should we put on the whole armour of God? _____
7. What did the Ephesians hate? _____
8. In what school did Paul teach for two years? _____
9. What preacher who was described as "mighty in the Scriptures" came to Ephesus? _____
10. What verse in Ephesians mentions pastors in the church? _____

—John Gaines, Pensacola, Florida

Answers to Last Issue: Starts with the Letter 'R': 1. Rabbi (John 3:2); 2. Rachel (Genesis 29:5, 6); 3. Rainbow (Genesis 9:13, 14); 4. Ram (Genesis 22:13); 5. Raven (Genesis 8:7); 6. Rebekah (Genesis 24:67); 7. Red Sea (Exodus 13:18+14:21); 8. Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:21); 9. Reward (Colossians 3:24); 10. Resurrection (Romans 1:4).

Rulers in the Bible: 1. Herod (Acts 12:21-23); 2. Josiah (2 Kings 22:1); 3. Ahasuerus (Esther 2:16); 4. Saul (1 Samuel 31:4); 5. Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:5, 6); 6. David (1 Kings 2:1, 2); 7. Herod (Matthew 2:1-12); 8. Solomon (1 Kings 11:42); 9. Ahaziah (2 Chronicles 22:1-3); 10. Josiah (2 Kings 23:29-30).





Tonight this book saved me...

May God bless the man who placed this book here. I am a young lady twenty-one years old, fatherless and motherless. Tonight this book saved me from taking a wrong step. May the next reader find in it the comfort that I did.

These words were found on the fly-leaf of a Bible in a motel in Birmingham, Alabama. The Bible is the one book that can save many a heartache. There is no greater accomplishment in life than to be able to rightly divide the word of truth. It is worth all the necessary sacrifice. One can never be truly great who does not know the Word, love it, live it, delight in it, and teach it without perversion and without misrepresentation. The one who studies and knows how to handle it is in a position to render the greatest service to the world. No wonder Paul told Timothy (1) to study, (2) to be a workman, and (3) to seek to be approved to God (2 Timothy 2:15). There is no higher ambition on earth.

The one who seeks to know the Bible will endeavor to study its contents book by book, meet its characters as they unfold through its pages, study its types, its doctrine, its topics, paragraphs, sentences, and words. This is a lifetime work.

The Bible is a mirror that enables us to see ourselves. It is food which supplies the strength that we need, a lamp to guide our way, a hammer to break and to build, a sword to fight and to defend, the seed to plant and grow, and the goal to own and to become our reward.

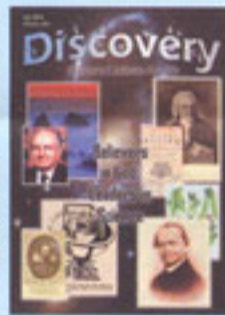
Franklin Camp

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The Organization of the New Testament Church



Universally, the church of our Lord has no earthly organization. There is no earthly head of the church, no pope, no presiding bishop, no ecclesiastical synod, council or convention which formulates and legislates for the Lord's church. Christ, who is in heaven, is the sole head of the church. He is all and in all (Colossians 3:11). He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings, with all the authority in heaven and earth being His (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:36; 17:7; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 4:5; Philippians 2:5-11; 1 Peter 3:22).

*Locally, the Lord has organized His church. Such consists of **elders** (Acts 15:4; 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:7, 17; 1 Peter 5:1-4), **deacons** (Acts 6:1-8; 1 Timothy 3:8-13), **evangelists** (2 Timothy 4:5; Ephesians 4:11; Romans 10:13-17), and **members** (Romans 12:4, 5; 1 Corinthians 12:13-27). Philippians 1:1 presents this simple, but oh, so beautiful, organization: "Paul and Timotheus, servants of Jesus Christ (**evangelists**) to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi (**members**), with the bishops (**elders**) and deacons (**special servants**)."*

With this organization in place, and each fulfilling his responsibilities, (a) the elders will lead, guide, oversee, rule and direct (Acts 20:28-30; 1 Peter 5:1, 2; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; Hebrews 13:17), with the entire work of the local congregation being under their direct supervision and guidance (Acts 11:27-30), (b) all the members will be in subjection to them (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Timothy 5:17), working and supplying (Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:15,16), (c) deacons, as special servants in the local congregation, will admirably serve (Acts 6:1-8), and (d) evangelists will preach (2 Timothy 4:1-8).

The adequacy of the Lord's plan of organization. Employing various ways and means which did not violate the local congregation's autonomy or other Biblical principles, this simple organization was adequate to take care of every responsibility and challenge the early church had: (a) local benevolence (Acts 6:1ff), (b) away-from-home benevolence (Acts 11:27-30), (c) evangelism (1 Timothy 3:15; Colossians 1:23; Acts 8:4), (d) doctrinal questions (Acts 15:1ff), and (e) edification (Ephesians 4:15, 16). And since God (a) intended for this church to stand as long as the earth stands (Ephesians 3:21; Hebrews 12:28; Daniel 2:44), (b) taught that the truth of the first century was to be maintained throughout the centuries (2 Timothy 2:2), (c) warned against any departure from truth (1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Thessalonians 2:3; Acts 20:28-32), (d) we conclude that this organization—the organization of the first century church—is adequate for the church in this century, and, not only adequate, but the one we must have!

—Wendell Winkler, Tuscaloosa, Alabama

SMILE: Preacher, on the phone: "Bad news, deacon. Our church-planting team is divided on whether to call the new congregation 'First United Church' or 'United First Church.'" —Cartoonist Ed Koehler



Jesus the Great



The world has called a number of men "great," such as Alexander the Great and Herod the Great. They were great in power, in courage, in military or political skill, but they were not great in any spiritual sense. Jesus is by far the greatest man who ever lived. None less than an angel from heaven announced: "He shall be great," in foretelling His birth (Luke 1:32). Of only one other man is it said in the Bible that he was "great," and that was John the Baptist (Luke 1:15), and he felt unworthy to even unlatch Jesus'

sandal (Luke 3:16). Of Jesus it was said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). He truly is "wonderful."

► His birth was the greatest of any man (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-23; John 2:10, 11; Hebrews 1:6).

► His life was the greatest ever lived (Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22; 2 Corinthians 5:20; Hebrews 5:8; Philippians 2:8).

► His teaching was the greatest of any (Matthew 7:28, 29; John 7:46; Colossians 2:3).

► His death was the greatest of any (John 15:13; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 5:25-27). It caused a thief to repent (Luke 23:42) and a hardened pagan soldier to marvel (Mark 15:39).

The question remains, "What think ye of Christ?" Who is Jesus to you? What roles does He fulfill in your life? Is He making a real difference? Does His Word rule your heart? Do your actions reflect your love for Him? Do you sacrifice for His cause? The Lamb of God now invites; the Lion of Judah will one day return. —Allen Webster



His Hands

A baby's hands in Bethlehem were small and softly curled, But held within their dimpled grasp—the hope of all the world. A carpenter's hands in Nazareth were skilled with tool and wood; They laid the beams of simple homes and found their labor good.

A healer's hands in Galilee were stretched to all who came For Him to cleanse their hidden wounds or cure the blind and lame. Long, long ago the hands of Christ were nailed upon a tree, But still their holy touch redeems the hearts of you and me!

"And he put forth his hand, and touched him..." —Luke 5:13