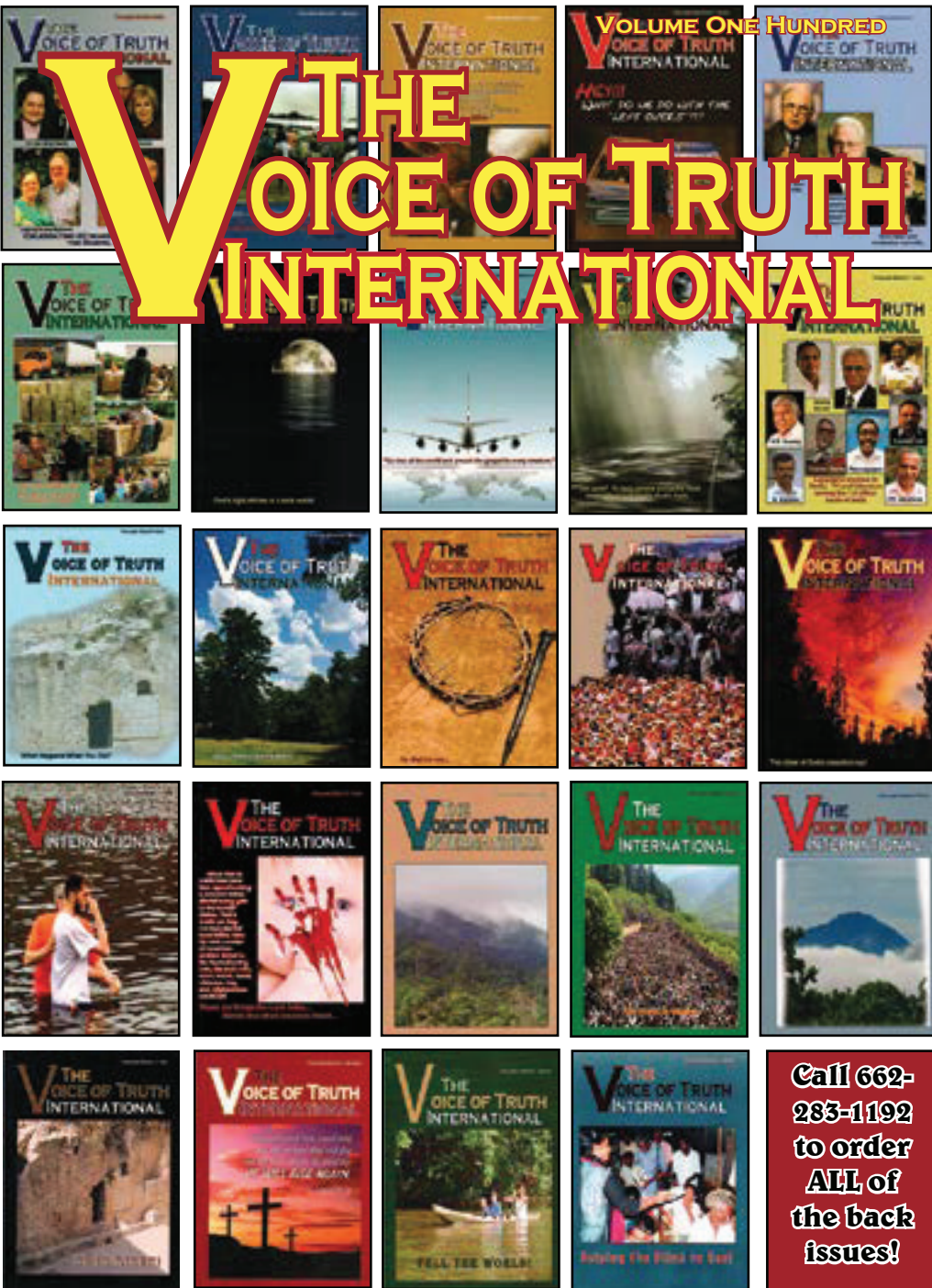


# V THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL



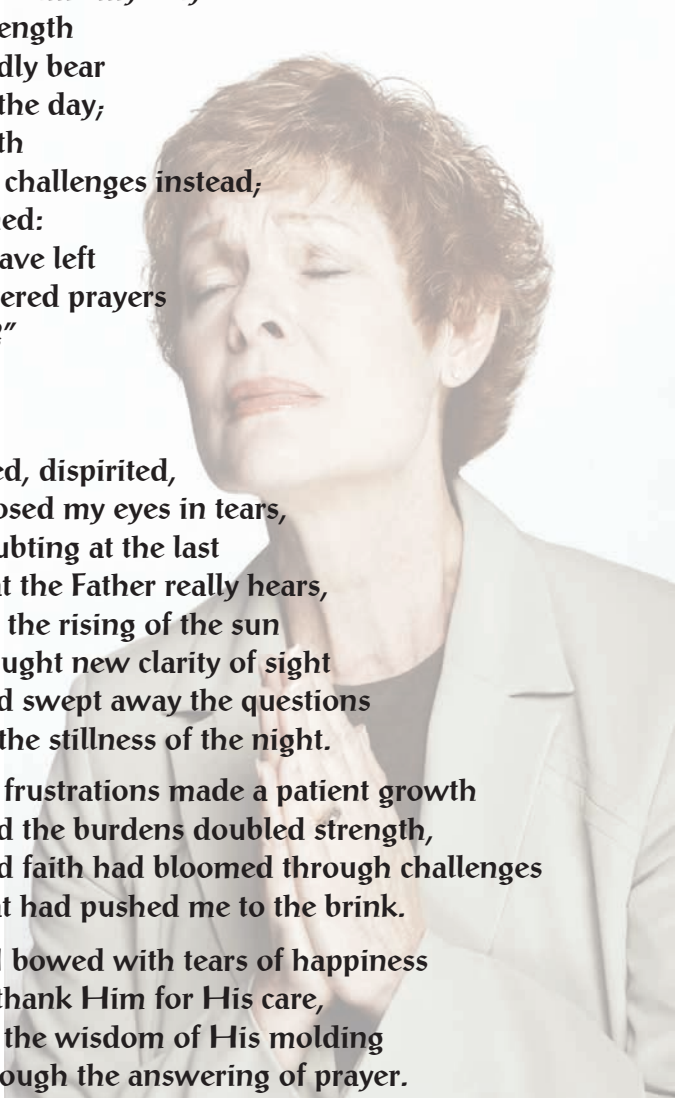
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# The Answering of Prayer

Betty Burton Choate

I prayed for patience  
And frustration came my way!  
I prayed for strength  
And could hardly bear  
The burden of the day;  
I prayed for faith  
But there were challenges instead;  
And I questioned:  
    "Should I have left  
        unanswered prayers  
        unsaid?"

Tired, dispirited,  
I closed my eyes in tears,  
Doubting at the last  
That the Father really hears,  
But the rising of the sun  
Brought new clarity of sight  
And swept away the questions  
Of the stillness of the night.  
For frustrations made a patient growth  
And the burdens doubled strength,  
And faith had bloomed through challenges  
That had pushed me to the brink.  
So I bowed with tears of happiness  
To thank Him for His care,  
For the wisdom of His molding  
Through the answering of prayer.





# THE CLEANSING AGENT AND THE ACTIVATING AGENT

*Chart by Robert C. Lupo*



**BODY**

+



WITHOUT THE ACTIVATING AGENT (WATER), THE CLEANSING AGENT (SOAP) CANNOT/WILL NOT WORK.

**= Clean?  
Not Clean**



**BODY**

+



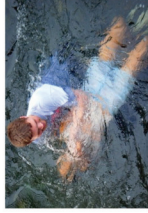
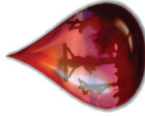
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**= Clean**



**SOUL**

+



+

**= Clean**

**SIN = FILTH OF THE WORLD**

- ♦ SIN IS LAWLESSNESS - 1Jo. 3:4.
- ♦ ALL HAVE SINNED AND FALLEN SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD - Rom. 3:23.
- ♦ WHOSEVER COMMITTETH SIN IS THE SERVANT OF SIN - Joh. 8:34
- ♦ WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH - Rom. 6:23

**BLOOD = CLEANSING AGENT**

- ♦ SHED IN HIS DEATH - Joh. 19:33-34
- ♦ NO REMISSION APART FROM THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD (HEB. 9:22)
- ♦ BLOOD OF JESUS SAVES - Rom. 5:9; REV. 1:5; HEB. 9:22-28.
- ♦ BLOOD/JESUS CONTACTED THRO
- ♦ BAPTISM INTO HIS DEATH AND IN THE LIKENESS OF CHRIST'S DEATH - ROM. 6:1-5 (BURIAL / IMMERSION ONLY).

**WATER = ACTIVATING AGENT**

- ♦ BAPTISM=OBEY FROM HEART GOD'S FORM OF DOCTRINE & BECOME SERVANT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS- ROM. 6:16-18
- ♦ BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST - GAL. 3:27
- ♦ BAPTISM NOW SAVES US - 1Pe. 3:21
- ♦ BAPTISM IS A REQUEST FOR A CLEAN CONSCIENCE - 1Pe. 3:21
- ♦ SINS WASHED AWAY BY BLOOD WHEN BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST - ACTS 22:16

**WASHED/CLEANSED = SAVED**

- ♦ FORGIVEN - ACTS 2:38
- ♦ CLEAN CONSCIENCE - 1Pe. 3:21
- ♦ NEWNESS OF LIFE - ROM. 6:4
- ♦ CLEANSED/SANCTIFIED - 1Co. 6:11
- ♦ WASHED - HEB. 10:22; REV 22:14
- ♦ SPIRITUAL CLEANSING - 1Pe. 3:21
- ♦ BLESSED - REV. 22:14
- ♦ RESURRECTION (IF BAPT.) - ROM. 6:5

# **THE CHURCH OF CHRIST'S CHOICE...**

*Chart by Robert C. Lupo*

**NOT EVEN DEATH COULD PREVENT CHRIST FROM ESTABLISHING HIS CHURCH: (MAT. 16:18) NOR CAN SHE BE DESTROYED (HEB. 12:28).**

**...IS PRE-DENOMINATIONAL:** THE LORD'S CHURCH WAS ESTABLISHED ON PENTECOST (ACTS 2). EVEN THE OLDEST DENOMINATION IS TOO YOUNG TO BE THE ONE TRUE CHURCH THAT JESUS PROMISED AND ESTABLISHED (MAT. 16:18). MEN WILL TELL YOU TO JOIN THE CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE. JESUS NEVER AUTHORIZED SUCH. ONLY THE LORD HAS AUTHORITY TO ADD SOULS TO HIS CHURCH. THEY ARE THOSE WHO GLADLY RECEIVE THE WORD (BELIEVE) AND ARE BAPTIZED ARE THE SAVED (ACTS 2:47, 41; CF. MAR. 16:15-16).

**...IS THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST:** ESTABLISHED THE SAME DAY AND PLACE (ISA. 2:2-3; ACT. 2:1-47). REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTERING BOTH THE KINGDOM AND THE CHURCH ARE THE SAME – KINGDOM (JOH. 3:3-5) CHURCH (ACT. 2:38-47). LORD'S SUPPER IN BOTH – KINGDOM (MAT. 26:29) CHURCH (1CO. 11:20-27). GLORY OF BOTH – KINGDOM (ISA. 2:2)/ CHURCH (EPH. 3:21). DURATION OF BOTH – KINGDOM (1CO. 15:24) CHURCH (1TH. 4:16-17).

**...MATTERS:** JESUS PURCHASED THE CHURCH WITH HIS OWN BLOOD (ACTS 20:28). HOW DARE ANY MAN/MEN SAY, "THE CHURCH DOES NOT MATTER!" IT DOES NOT MATTER WHICH DENOMINATION ONE BELONGS TO... ALL MAN MADE CHURCHES AND TEACHINGS WILL BE ROOTED UP AND DESTROYED (MAT. 15:13).

**...FOLLOWS THE PATTERN FOR THE CHURCH AS OUTLINED IN SCRIPTURE:** (2TI. 1:13; TIT. 1:9; 1TH. 5:21).

**FOR DOCTRINE** (2TI. 4:1-4),

**FOR GOVERNMENT** (1TI. 3:1-13; TIT. 1:1FF; PHI. 1:1),

**FOR LIVING** (PHI. 1:27; 1TH. 4:1-12),

**WORSHIP** (JOHN 4:23-24; ACT. 2:42; COL. 3:16-17; 1CO. 16:1-2),

**WARNINGS** (ROM. 16:17-18; 1TI. 6:3; REV. 22:18-19).

**...WORSHIPS GOD IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH:** (JOHN 4:23-24); MAT. 15:8-13; ACTS 2:42; COL. 3:16-17; 1CO. 16:1-2).

**...WILL BE SAVED BY HIM:** EPHESIANS 5:23 TEACHES THAT JESUS IS THE SAVIOR OF THE BODY (THE CHURCH—EPHESIANS 1:22-23). IF ONE IS NOT IN HIS CHURCH, THEY CANNOT BE SAVED BY HIM. SEE ALSO 1PE. 1:3-5.

**DO YOU BELONG TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST'S CHOICE?**

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**THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST SALUTE YOU**  
(ROMANS 16:16).





# Spray Paint!

Louis Rushmore

The fundamental meaning of “modest” (1 Timothy 2:9) is to be “orderly” or “decorous.” Yes, then, modesty includes both being insufficiently dressed as well as being overdressed. The meaning is broad enough to include deportment—actions and words. Regarding modesty as it pertains to clothing, **clothing** was **originally** implemented for two purposes—to **conceal the human form** and to **protect one from the elements** (Genesis 3:7, 21). God exchanged Adam and Eve’s fig-leaf aprons with animal skins. Such tunics, irrespective of the material from which they were made, usually extended from the shoulders




to the ankles. God determined in the Garden of Eden what constitutes modest dress—for both men and for women.

Often these days, however, clothing neither conceals the human form nor protects one from the weather. When the human form is not concealed—too much skin is exposed or clothes are essentially painted on one’s body—what passes for clothing is counterproductive to the original purpose of clothing, and it is immodest. First Corinthians 12:23 presumes that especially the children of God will modestly cover their “*unpresentable parts*.”

For decades, clothing worn in public by the masses—and even by Christians, also—has been too revealing to correspond with biblical modesty. Tight-fitting clothes, low-cut blouses, short skirts and shorts, sundresses, spaghetti straps, off the shoulder shirts, bikinis, crop tops, low-rise pants, ripped or distressed jeans, and so forth are **not biblically modest**. No one ought to wear such things in public, and especially Christians should never be characterized by such immodesty.

*Who is your family's clothing designer of preference—God or Satan?*

Even more widely today, much of the clothing selected by the masses, and unfortunately by many Christians also, is **biblically immodest for public exhibition**. Added to the examples of immodesty above, women are wearing leggings and similar clothing, which cling snugly to every curvature and crevice of the human body. Only spray paint could more closely apply merely a hue to one’s nudity. Absolutely nothing is left to the imagination! How could parents be so dull of understanding and concern, both regarding biblical instruction as well as lustful tendencies, to allow their children to sport such immodesty? Husbands, why do you let your wives go into public immodestly attired?

Whose definition of “modest” or acceptable clothing do you embrace? If a husband or a father, do you permit your wife and your children to dress more in keeping with the fig-leaf aprons of Adam and Eve, or do you insist that your family subscribe to God’s definition of modesty? **Who is your family’s clothing designer of preference—God or Satan? Just what is the difference between immodest clothing today and “the attire of a harlot” (Proverbs 7:10)?** 



# If I Be Lifted Up

Jerry Bates

In John 12:32-33, Jesus told His disciples some surprising and most likely, very disturbing words. *“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself. This He said, signifying by what death He would die.”* The Greek word for “lifted up” means to exalt. It is used several other times in the New Testament, always in reference to being exalted. John is the only New Testament writer to use this term in reference to the crucifixion

of Christ. However, I think it is safe to say that the future exaltation of Christ as later found in His resurrection and ascension is included in this term. Jesus’ hearers could not understand this teaching. They knew the Scriptures taught that the Messiah and His kingdom would abide forever. Since they understood the kingdom to be an earthly kingdom, this meant that the Messiah would not die. Yet, they also correctly understood that Jesus was speaking of His death. They could not reconcile these two ideas in their minds.

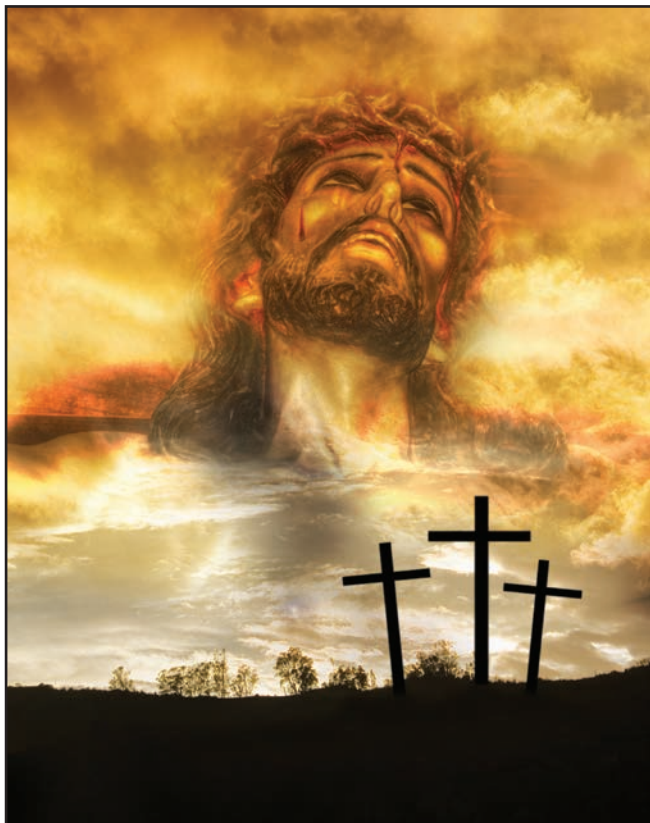
In these verses we find three surprising concepts, all of which are usually misunderstood by the world in general. In the first place, we find that the cross means the judgment of the world (12:31). In the minds of most people, the cross brought salvation, but Jesus said that the cross would bring judgment. Most believe that since Jesus died on the cross for us, God will not send anyone to hell. The world thought it was passing judgment on Jesus at the cross, but in actuality, the cross also brought judgment to them. Considering these thoughts, how can it be said that the cross would bring judgment?

Light is a judgment upon darkness. *“And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does*



*the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God”* (John 3:19-21).

The world’s rejection of Jesus revealed its true character and revealed who stood for God. Its rejection of Jesus showed that they were unworthy of eternal life with God. Later in this chapter, Jesus said there was a judge of the world (12:48), and that judge would be the




words of Jesus. When the world rejected Jesus, it rejected the only means of salvation. Thus, while the cross does bring salvation to those who accept the words of Jesus, it also brings judgment to those who reject Jesus.

Secondly, Jesus said the cross means the defeat of the “ruler of this world” (12:31). The ruler of this world is Satan. The enemies of Jesus had long plotted His death, and they thought His death was a great victory to them. They ridiculed the idea of any guilt from the death of Jesus passing on to them. They boldly cried, “Let Him be crucified,” and also willingly accepted any guilt from His death saying, “Let His blood be on us and on our children.” Satan and his followers wanted to destroy Jesus, but the cross was the first step in His exaltation as Ruler and Judge over all.

Jesus' death appeared to be a victory for Satan and his followers, but it was actually a defeat. By His death, Jesus destroyed the power of Satan. His forthcoming resurrection destroyed the power of the grave and the sting of death (1 Corinthians 15:54-57). Jesus' death also enables us to overcome Satan. John declared, ***"They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"*** (Revelation 7:14). ***"And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb..."*** (Revelation 12:11).

Finally, we find that the cross enabled Jesus to ***"draw all men"*** to Himself (12:32). Notice that Jesus said it was by the cross that God would draw all men. It was going to be the Suffering Servant that would draw people. This sounds odd to the world. Worldly leaders would never use suffering to draw people. Most would think that in order to draw followers, one must offer them some material benefits. Indeed, while Jesus was on the earth, many followed him hoping to gain some material benefit. Some followed Him in order to enjoy the food He might give them. Others followed Him in order to see great miracles. Most Jews expected Jesus to be a worldly king, thereby obtaining the benefits from being subjects of a great king. When they realized Jesus would not offer these things, they turned away.

Jesus said He would draw people by the cross, thereby demonstrating His great love for the world. This is a love that we cannot fully comprehend. ***"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"*** (Romans 5:6-7). A man would never die for his enemies, yet that is exactly what Jesus did. Jesus died for us while we were lost in sin, while we were enemies of God. When we realize the depth of God's love, this should motivate us to devote our lives to Him. Why would we not want to turn to such a loving King?

Furthermore, Jesus said He would draw all men. This is not predestination, but it simply means that all people without distinction, Jew or Gentile, could be the recipients of salvation. There are no racial or other obstacles to coming to God. The death of Jesus destroyed all barriers that separate man from God and from each other. We can have true fellowship with God and with each other (1 John 1:7). Do not let the death of Jesus be for nothing. If we reject the words of Jesus, we make the death of Jesus of no effect, and we doom our souls to eternal separation from God. 



1932—2008

# Looking Back

J.C. Choate

It has been almost 2,000 years since Christ lived and died upon the cross that we might be saved and have the hope of eternal life. He promised to build His church, and through the apostles, it had its beginning in the city of Jerusalem in approximately A.D. 33. It was given a **great commission**, which involved the whole world, even every person in all the world (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16). The plan was to preach the good news of salvation in the city of Jerusalem, then in Judaea, Samaria and finally to the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8). With the Lord's promise to be with them (Matthew 28:20), and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the apostles and converts followed that plan. Within that generation, they had preached the Gospel to every creature under heaven (Colossians 1:23). Again, we read the words of the apostle Paul, when he said, ***"But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, **THEIR SOUND WENT INTO ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR WORDS UNTO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD**"*** (Romans 10:18).

The world has never been the same since. An enemy spoke of Paul and Silas as having **turned the world upside down** with the things they were preaching (Acts 17:6). Indeed, they preached Christ as a resurrected Lord, and through faith in Him and obedience to Him, lives were changed, and a different world was set in motion. Although, as far as we know, the Gospel has never again been taken into all the world from that day to this, still it has made such an impact on the human race that the transformation is being felt even to this day. Morals, law, woman's position, family, man's relationships, work ethics, politics, the judicial system, education, art, music and attitudes toward slavery, war and sin have been changed. **As bad as the world may**



**be, it is still as good as it is because of Christ and the Gospel.**

On the other hand, regardless of the world's achievements, the heights we may reach in our economics, mechanics, technology, communication and production, still—as humans—man is nothing without the Lord. If we can do all of these things on our own, think of what humanity could do in obedience to God! Denying our Creator is not going to change the fact that He exists. Rejecting Jesus and Christianity will not take mankind to greater heights, but rather will bring him to the lower levels of existence—to becoming the “animals” evolutionists have proclaimed him to be.

***But think what a different scenario there would be if every generation of Christians had continued to take the Gospel to every creature right on up to this present time!*** Many wars would have been averted. Numerous sins would have never gained the prominence and acceptance they now have. The entire face of humanity would have been more tempered and godly. However, succeeding generations did not obey their commission, and when we fail to do God's will, we suffer. The entire world is presently paying heavy consequences, and this is just the beginning unless we awaken and turn back to the Lord in obedience.

What a shame to think that we have had all of the tools at our disposal to evangelize the world and to secure our own salvation in the process, and yet, we have not done so. As a result, many Christians sit idle, in spiritual ignorance, denying the truths of the Bible, fellowshiping those in religious error and living like the world. This is failure to ourselves, to our families and to mankind. The church does not grow; the Lord's people deny themselves all of the blessings we would have had if we had done the job our Lord asked us to do. We have also denied the countries of the world the Gospel and its healing and saving power.

Oh yes, as we think on these things, we can grieve over what might have been—but the fact is that we are where we are! We could dwell on our failures to the point of discouragement and total despair, but, instead, let's acknowledge our mistakes and rise up with the determination that we—at last—are going to obey the Lord and evangelize the world! We can do it yet. That is our hope and the hope of humanity for today, tomorrow and forever.

# Looking Forward

What an exciting time to live, to have lived in one century and now to see a new century ushered in! As for the church of the 20th century, we saw gains and losses. Many mistakes were made, and, sadly, we did not rise to the occasion of evangelizing the world.

We can't help but think of what might have been, but we must take the attitude of the apostle Paul when he said, ***“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”*** (Philippians 3:13-14).

We are now in the 21st Century, and we look forward with great anticipation and hope. Jesus asked His people, the church, to go into all the world to preach the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15-16). He also promised to be with us and to help us to accomplish this task (Matthew 28:19-20). Our goal must be to obey Him, setting our minds with determination. We can be assured that He would not ask us to do something He knows we cannot do. Therefore, we can forge ahead with confidence. We also know that we have the greatest message in the world, **the good news that Jesus died that we might be saved and have the hope of eternal life.** It will change men and women, families, countries and the world. With the world in such a hurting mess, what an incentive to motivate us to work!

With such backing and support, how can we fail? There are many reasons *why* we can reach His goal:

◆ **The church** is found all over the world. Though, admittedly, we are few in number in comparison to the great populations, there is a sufficient number of Christians to carry out this great command.

◆ Churches are not in their “infancy” in these far-flung countries, but consist of second and third generation Christians in many cases. This means that there is **spiritual maturity** that enables local brethren in “mission fields” to evangelize in neighboring cities and villages.

◆ There are **Bible schools, printed materials, radio and TV programs** in many of these nations, enabling Christians there to follow-

up on mass media outreach.

◆ We also have Christians throughout the world who are educated in **the English language, and in their own language**, enabling translation of materials to be done accurately.

◆ There are many types of **transportation**, enabling Christians to quickly get to their destinations. How blessed we are to have jet planes that go around the world in a matter of hours. Locally, there are cars, buses and trains, and most of them are available everywhere.

◆ We are experiencing the greatest **communication revolution** known to man. While radio, TV, the cable system, satellites, phones, tape recorders, the printing press, the postal system, faxes, the Internet, Facebook, YouTube and other such facilities may help the secular world to get its message out, we as the Lord's people can also use all of these mediums to enable us to quickly get the Gospel out to the masses. Endless possibilities are there, and we need to be constantly exploring ways in which we may more effectively use them to the furtherance of the Lord's cause.

◆ Finally, there is **relative peace** throughout the world which makes evangelism safe in most nations. Even where there are wars and local conflicts, these may be powerful tools to open doors that would otherwise be closed.

◆ Not going along with the religious world and the doctrines of men can present obstacles, but on the other hand, **preaching in love the oneness of the church, the unity of all believers, wearing the Lord's name and staying with the Bible on all subjects can have their own appeal**. Certainly, we cannot improve on the Gospel as it was given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

It might be argued that there are now more than 7 billion in the world, with the expectation of that number doubling within a few years. The weak-hearted might ask, "How can it be possible for the Lord's small church to evangelize such numbers?" Yet, wait just a minute! We've already seen the tremendous tools God has provided, through His providential timing. Can't we realize that He knew how many people would be in the world today and what tools would be needed to reach them? He has abundantly provided everything necessary for teaching all of the people on earth today, and we can be sure that as the population doubles and triples, or



whatever, God will continue to provide the means with which to reach every soul with the Gospel. Even at this very moment, it is possible to reach the majority of the people of the world with one sermon via satellite! The question is, do we want to preach that sermon enough to set the goal and reach for it?

We must not underestimate the Lord and His people and what we are capable of doing. The sad thing is that, for the most part, we have allowed others to use these tremendous methods of communication, when actually **God has provided them for the use of His own people in evangelizing the world!** For what are we waiting? Why not lay hold on these God-given tools and move quickly to carry out His Great Commission?

Think about this, too. As we preach the Gospel, more and more will obey the Lord so that there will be more laborers to do the work and more funds to pay the costs involved. How can you beat that?

There are pulpits, personal work, literature, radio and TV sermons, schools, student centers, relief work during times of disaster, aid to the poor, and countless other ways to teach and influence souls for the Lord. We need to be looking for any and all ways to reach the lost, and we need to be busy using them.

The more we do, of course, and the more who are taught and converted, the more we will have opposition from the world, even from the religious world. However, opposition and persecution will bring publicity, helping others to know of the church and its work, to learn its message and to create a desire in honest hearts to obey the Lord and to be a part of His great work. This is what happened in the first century according to the writings of the New Testament, and the same will follow throughout the 21st century when we put the Lord first in our lives and evangelize the world.

My! What a joy to obey God, to be saved, to worship Him, to follow and serve Him, and to see His will being accomplished! As His children, we, therefore, look forward to the years ahead and all that we will be able to accomplish with Him. This will change us, and it will change the world. With Christ, we expect victory. **With Christ, there will be victory!** ✝

**As bad as the world may be, it is still as good as it is because of Christ and the Gospel.**

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*100th Edition*  
**The Voice of**  
**Truth International**  
*Quarterly Magazine*







# 5-MINUTE BIBLE STUDY

## Kingdom of Jesus Christ Our Lord

Paula Bates

1. “And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there be some \_\_\_\_\_ here, which shall not taste of \_\_\_\_\_, till they have seen the \_\_\_\_\_ of God come with power” (Mark 9:1).
2. “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and has \_\_\_\_\_ us into the kingdom of his dear \_\_\_\_\_” (Colossians 1:13).
3. “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be \_\_\_\_\_, let us have grace, whereby we may \_\_\_\_\_ God acceptably with \_\_\_\_\_ and godly fear” (Hebrews 12:28).
4. “But when they believed \_\_\_\_\_ preaching the things concerning the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were \_\_\_\_\_, both men and \_\_\_\_\_” (Acts 8 :12).
5. “And has made us to be a \_\_\_\_\_ and to be priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory, and \_\_\_\_\_ for ever and ever. Amen” (Revelations 1:6).
6. “I John, who also am your \_\_\_\_\_, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of \_\_\_\_\_, was in the isle that is called \_\_\_\_\_, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Revelations 1:9)



- Answers:**
1. Standing, death, kingdom
  2. Translated, Son
  3. Moved, serve, reverence
  4. Philip, kingdom, baptized, women
  5. Kingdom, dominion
  6. Brother, Jesus Christ, Patmos

# Christ Is the Savior of the Body

Sunny David

The Bible at Ephesians 5:23 teaches that Christ is the Savior of the body. Now what is the body? The body is the church. Speaking of God, the apostle Paul said, *“And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all”* (Ephesians 1: 22-23). Again, speaking of Christ, the apostle said, *“And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence”* (Colossians 1:18). In verse 24 of the same chapter, the apostle again stated, *“I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church.”*

So, the body of which Christ is the Savior is the church. In saying Christ is the Savior of the body, the apostle in effect was saying Christ is the Savior of the church. Now the question is, “Which church?” There are hundreds and perhaps thousands of churches on earth today, with different names, following different patterns of worship and teaching different doctrines? In the first century when the apostle wrote these words, there was only one church—the one that Christ had promised to build. He had said it’s going to be, *“My church”* (Matthew 16:18). The Bible says that Jesus adds daily to the church (Acts 2:47) those who are saved by believing in Him and obeying His command (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).

Evidently, He adds the saved ones to His church and not to many different churches. Does He know His church? His church wears His name (1 Corinthians 12:27; Romans 16:16), and the members of His spiritual body, the church, are called after His name—Christians (Acts 11:26). They worship God in spirit and truth (John 4:24), and they endeavor to abide only by the doctrine

## GOD

of Christ in everything (2 John 9). The apostle, in 1 Corinthians 12:13, also taught, ***“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greek, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”*** Centuries before any Catholic or Protestant denominational churches came into existence,



saved persons were all, by the direction of the Spirit of God, baptized into one body—that is, into one church. Since Christ adds all the saved people on earth to His church, the church therefore is the body of saved ones on earth.

The church Christ established is like Noah’s Ark. Noah and his family was ordered by God to get into the Ark to be saved from the flood that was going to destroy all living beings on earth, except those in the Ark that was constructed according to the specifications God had provided Noah (Genesis 6-7). The Ark was not the savior, but only those who got into the Ark were saved through water. Later, the apostle Peter, reminding Christians about Noah’s Ark and the eight souls who were saved in it from the destruction of those who were outside of the Ark, wrote:

***Who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine long-suffering waited in the days of Noah. While the Ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 3:20-21)***

The point the apostle was making was that those who were in the Ark

## GOD

were saved through water. It was the water of the flood that separated Noah from the disobedient generation of his time, and it is the water of baptism that separates the saved of today from the disobedient. As Christ commanded, ***“He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned”*** (Mark 16:16). The water that was the means of destruction to others became the very means by which Noah and his household were delivered from the old world of corruption. There is a resemblance between the two deliverances in that Noah was delivered by means of water and the hearers or the believers who have been saved through baptism in water. Baptism, the apostle declared, is the antitype of the water through which Noah was saved in the Ark.

In both cases water is involved. In baptism there is a picture or portrayal of Christ's death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4). The person being baptized realizes that baptism saves in the sense that it is a condition required by the Savior and that, in reality, salvation comes through the resurrection of Christ. The efficacy of baptism for salvation depends not upon the work done but upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which imitates Christ's death. It is the foundation of our faith and hope.

**It was the water of the flood that washed away the filth of that evil generation, and it is the water of baptism that washes away sins (Revelation 1:5). The former affected the flesh and not the conscience, while the latter affected the conscience and not the flesh. How, though, can one have a good conscience if he refuses to be baptized for the remission of sins or to wash away sins, as the Bible teaches (Acts 2:38; 22:16)?** ✝

Sunny David lives in New Delhi, India, and is a Hindi-speaking TV evangelist and an elder for the Lord's church.

### Kenney's Pennies

*“For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake”* (Philippians 1:29 NKJV).

Pay particular attention to that last phrase: “...to suffer...”



**GOD**

# **Did You Ask Any Good Questions Today?**

**Russ Vickers**

Isidor Isaac Rabi, one of America's outstanding physicists, became a scientist for one overpowering reason. He said, "I couldn't help it." Brought to this country as an infant, he has never forgotten his mother's daily query when he came home from public school on Manhattan's Lower East Side: "Did you ask any good questions today?"

Some questions are good to ask, but others are not and can be untimely. Take for example, the account of Jesus healing a man born blind in John 9:1-12. We read in verses 1-2, *"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?"* Other questions appear in this account, too. In verse 8 we read, *"The neighbors therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?"* In verse 10, *"Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?"* However, among all of these questions came one that stands out, and it is one that many people ask about the Savior today: *"Then said they unto him, Where is he?"* (v. 12).

It amazes us how the people were focused on such questions. Yet, the one question in verse 12 is one of worthy consideration. A good answer would be the statement that Paul made in Acts 17:27, where Luke recorded, *"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us."*

It is necessary for men to seek after the Lord, although He is not far from us. How is the Lord near to us? He is a vital part of our lives. He gives us life, the ability to move, reason and our very existence. Solomon said the whole duty of man was to fear God and keep His commandments (Ecclesiastes 12:13). He is near us every minute of every day. He knows all about us.

Where is He? He is closer than you might think!



**Russ Vickers preaches for the Hillcrest Church of Christ in Baldwin, Mississippi, USA.**



# Seven Final Words

**Mark N. Posey**

Jesus Christ spoke seven final statements during His last hours on the cross. Christians cherish these phrases because they offer insight into the depth of His suffering to accomplish redemption. The seven last words of Jesus are presented here in chronological order.

- 1. The word of Forgiveness:** *“Father, forgive them”* (Luke 23:34). Jesus prayed for the many that had put Him on the cross. In doing so, He fulfilled Matthew 5:44. *“Them”* includes us (Romans 5:8; John 3:16). Jesus fulfilled prophecy: *“made intercession for the transgressors”* (Isaiah 53:12).
- 2. The word of Salvation:** *“Today you shall be with Me in Paradise”* (Luke 23:43). This 11th hour conversion might seem unfair; however, Jesus is true to His word of Grace. Paradise (*paradeisos*) represents Heaven, the presence of God (2 Corinthians 12:4).
- 3. The word of Affection:** *“Woman, behold, your son!”* (John 19:26-27). Jesus demonstrated the value and the importance of selflessness. Even at the end He was others-focused. Christians are selfless, Christ-centered and heavenward bound (Colossians 3:1-4).
- 4. The word of Despair:** *“My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?”* (Matthew 27:46). These repeated words depict the intense agony Jesus experienced on the Cross and fulfilled the prophecy of Psalm 22. These words also depict a deep relationship with God because they are directed to Him.
- 5. The word of Physical Torment:** *“I thirst”* (John 19:28). Jesus refused the pain-numbing drink (vinegar mixed with myrrh, Mark 15:23), choosing to experience the complete pain and agony of crucifixion. Now, He received a sponge lifted to Him on hyssop that con-

## GOD

tained sour-wine (vinegar) for parched lips and dry throat so He could utter a great cry.

**6. The word of Triumph:** *“It is finished!”* (John 19:30). The word *tetelestai* (*“It is finished”*) was written on business documents or receipts in New Testament times to indicate a bill had been paid in full. Jesus paid our debt in full on the cross. Jesus came to earth to reconcile God and man; He did so at the cross.

**7. The word of Committal:** *“Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit”* (Luke 23:46). When His work was finished, Jesus gave up His spirit to the Father. He did this when and how He wanted. Jesus was not a victim to be pitied, but a conqueror to be admired and loved.

Let us never forget that Jesus died for you and me.



Mark N. Posey is the preacher for the Austinville church of Christ in Decatur, Alabama, USA.

### Did You Know?

#### Rebecca Rushmore

Romans 12:2 instructs Christians not to be like the world, but to *“be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”* The Greek word translated as *“transformed”* is the same word behind our English word “metamorphosis.” A butterfly is an insect that has gone through a change from an egg, to a caterpillar (larva), to a cocoon (pupa), to full adult. **This is a complete change or transformation. A Christian is one who has made a complete change from living like the world to living like Christ.**



# **The One Who Stands Between**

**Michael L. King**

Apparently, because of the holiness of God and the unworthiness of man, God always selected one to serve as an intermediary between the two. When simplified, it is like to a baseball player who having had a ball hit his direction, fields it and throws it to another player centrally located who can throw home. Similarly, we cannot reach “home” by our own strength and ability, so God chose men like the patriarchs, judges, prophets, Moses and then Christ, during the Christian dispensation, to stand between or be equidistant between the two sides. The writer of Hebrews declared that God can save those who come to Him through Christ, for He always lives to make intercession for him (Hebrews 7:25).


God spoke to us through the inspired Paul to tell us that Jesus was the one and only Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5). There is one God, one Mediator and one humanity. ***“He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth”*** (Acts 17:26). It is important that we understand that we, the one humanity, reach God through Christ (John 14:6). There were many religions that existed before the coming of Christ, such as Confucianism, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism. Why did Christ come if salvation did not depend upon Him? Contemporary groups put “saints” before Christ and the church’s authority before Him. Preachers are to preach the Word so sinners can believe on Jesus of whom they have heard (Romans 10:14). The preacher does not absolve the sinner or propitiate God. The question was asked Paul to make this point, ***“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?”*** (1 Corinthians 3:5). Additionally, Paul made the point that he was not crucified for them nor were they baptized into his name (1 Corinthians 1:13).

**Jesus was to be the Mediator of a new covenant and provide redemption for the first covenant.** His mediatorship was two-fold in nature. He was Mediator of the New Covenant or the New Testament. He had to die before being qualified to fill this position to redeem those under

## GOD

the New Testament (Hebrews 9:16). Moses brought the Law down from Mt. Sinai to the people. Moses was *“in the church in the wilderness”* with the Angel that spoke to him on Mt. Sinai (Acts 7:38). Christ came down from the cross to bring a new covenant to the people and stood between God and man. God in earlier times spoke through the fathers and by the prophets, but in the latter days, He spoke to the people by His Son (Hebrews 1:1).

We ask, “Why a mediator?” Man was estranged from God, and Christ introduced Christianity as a solution. Man was lost, and Christ came to save him and to express God’s love toward man, while he was yet a sinner (Romans 5:8, 10). Jesus is like a jury in that He mediates between God and man as well as between man with man. He is unbiased and fair. Christ is certainly qualified because He understands God, having come from Heaven and being with God. He too understands God’s attitude toward man and sin. **Jesus was both God and man (1 Timothy 3:16) and so, He can identify and connect with both God and man.** He is man’s Advocate with the Father and begs God on his behalf (1 John 2:1-3).

So, we end where we began our thinking. God is Holy, and man is unholy. Because of this reality, man cannot come to God except through Christ (John 14:6). Jesus *“knew no sin.”* Therefore, He is worthy to approach God on man’s behalf (2 Corinthians 5:21) as our High Priest. This is the reason why when we pray, we do so *“in the name of Jesus”* (John 16:23). Jesus had been given all authority in Heaven and Earth (Matthew 28:18), and to that authority, everyone must submit, *“that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those I heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth”* (Philippians 2:10). Our communication with God is done through His sinless Mediator placed between sinful man and God. Jesus is God’s Immanuel, meaning *“God with us”* (Matthew 1:23). It would profit us nothing if we chose to believe in God and refuse to accept the One who “stands between,” for there is no approaching the Father except through that one and only sinless Mediator who beseeches God on sinful man’s behalf and makes intercession for him (Romans 8:34). 

Michael L. King preaches for the New Albany congregation in New Albany, Mississippi, USA.

## EVIDENCES



# Our Awesome God!

**Betty Burton Choate**

Scientists guess that the universe is a sphere, measuring about 46 1/2 billion light-years from the earth in each direction. What that is saying is that humans really don't know the actual expanse of the universe. Perhaps it is as endless as God is eternal. After all, what would lie beyond where the universe ends?

Just as we cannot comprehend the eternality of our God, Who, according to Scripture, had no beginning and will have no end, we cannot comprehend the vastness of His creation. What power screams out to us as we look up into the skies and see the billions of stars whose existence cannot be denied! We look at our own solar system, at the perfection of its interrelated movements as the planets in their separate orbits circle the sun year after year in measurable and predictable timing and movement. We see the turning of our earth in its orbit, making our days and nights as well as our years—and with such preciseness that the measurement is declared by scientists to be **365.242199** days!

What knowledge! What power! What foresight all of these things declare to anyone who is willing to take note!

Yet, not only did God have the ability to create the vastness of our universe, He created everything in the world we see around us. Some of



## EVIDENCES

those things are huge: the now-extinct dragons and dinosaurs, Sequoia trees, blue whales, elephants and so many other living things. Have you noticed what detail went into every individual creation? Experts can look at a skeleton and name the living creature. They can look at the bark or leaf of a tree and name the variety. Size, shape, skeletal structure, skin, features, limbs, even fingers and toes are distinct identifying factors that separate kinds and species.

In our world of humans, we tend to place great importance on the “big” things, often not feeling that we have adequate time to deal with unimportant details of the “little” things in our lives. However, our all-powerful and all-knowing God was not so limited! Look at the “weeds” growing in your yard. Too often, most of our attention is devoted to getting rid of the unwanted little pests, but stop and take a close look at the color, design, and exquisite detail of those tiny blooms!

Compared to my fingers, they are hardly large enough to measure, but God chose not to make them simply a blob of color! By His creativity, they are works of living art!



Photo by Pia Scanlon



We move to consider even smaller things: Do you know what that evil-looking creature is? It is the head of a weevil that eats mango seeds! (Mangoes are tasty fruit. Maybe, *with a terrific sense of humor*, God made him UGLY to denote the bad work he would be doing in destroying those important seeds!)

Then, there is a mite on the back of a honey bee.

Look at its size compared to the eye of the bee, yet it too has microscopic detail.

Have you ever wondered what one of your tears might look like under a microscope? Don't ask me what all those

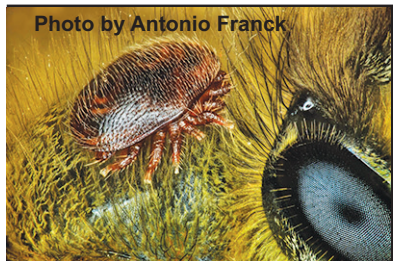
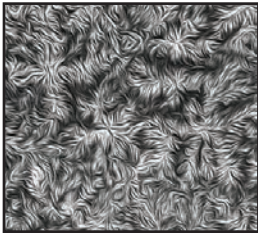


Photo by Antonio Franck

## EVIDENCES

little lines and designs are, but this is a photo of a tear, at 10 times its actual size. Even with



such a fleeting and unimportant thing as a tear, God makes design a part of its reality!

Now, think about cells. Everything that

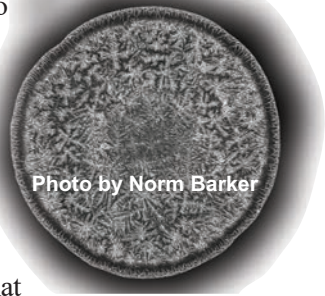
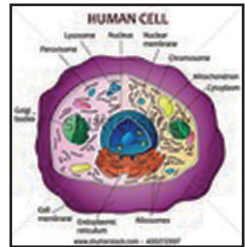


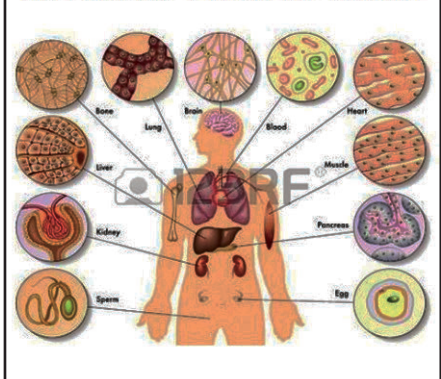
Photo by Norm Barker

lives is composed of millions, billions, trillions of cells, each one designed to perform a certain work in the organism. Consider a human cell, for instance. Scientists actually do not know the number of cells in the typical human body, but they speculate that perhaps there are 50 to 75 TRILLION! Cells wear out, but they replenish themselves at the rate of 300 billion new ones every day, 200 million per minute, according to scientists. That means that 100 years might have passed since a person's actual birth into this world, but most of the cells that make up his body are only a few days, weeks or months old! The speculation is that every 7 to 10 years all the cells in the body have been replaced, except those of the brain.



In every living thing there are numerous types of cells, as is illustrated here with the human body. Each cell is composed of specific parts, necessary for the completion of the work it was designed to do—and I emphasize *designed* because the Great Designer planned all of this, from the **limitlessness of space** to the **entities too small** for man to have discovered yet! **Our God is GREAT!** ✝

### DIFFERENT TYPES OF CELLS



## EVIDENCES

# A Question of "Time"



## Rex Banks

In every good fairy tale, just when defeat seems inevitable for the good guys, a hero appears on the scene to crush the forces of darkness and to restore justice. So it is with our modern fairy tale entitled *Evolution Vindicated* (subtitle: Your Grandfather Was an Ape). Just when the cause seems lost, when mutations won't act as they should, when the laws of thermodynamics just will not behave, suddenly a hero appears on the scene. His name is **"Time."** Whereas the wicked witch changed the prince into a frog, **"Time"** can transform an amoeba into a man. Little wonder, then, that the evolutionist wants as much of our champion as he can get, and on every side we hear references to "natural clocks" and "constant decay rates," which supposedly indicate a vast age for the universe. How disconcerting, then, to find the "enemy" in the creationist camp as our ultimate hero—**"Time"**!

## POPULATION GROWTH

In his paper entitled, "World Population and Bible Chronology," Dr. Henry Morris states, *"If (these) very conservative assumptions were made (i.e. that the average family has only 3 children and the life-span is one generation) for the over 28,600 generations assumed in a supposed million years of man's life on earth, the world's population should be over 10 to the power of 5000 people!"* A maximum of no more than 10 to the power of 100 people could be crammed into the known universe. Of course, we cannot know that plagues, wars, etc., have not hindered the growth of population in the past, but as Dr. Morris points out, *"If man has actually been living on the earth for one or two million or more years, there have been uncounted millions upon millions of people who have lived and died. But only a scant handful of the remains of prehistoric men have ever been found."* When applied to population growth, the uniformitarian assumption solved by evolutionists makes time the enemy of the evolution model.


## EVIDENCES

### COSMIC DUST INFLUX

Influenced by the same uniformitarian assumption, scientists were concerned prior to the first lunar landing that a lunar ship would sink down into the huge amount of cosmic dust, which should have accumulated upon the moon's surface over the past 4.5 billion years. It is estimated that about 14.3 million tons of meteoric dust comes onto the earth per year, and if there were no erosional agents acting upon it, there would be a layer of dust approximately 16.5 metres in thickness on the earth. Since there are no such erosional agents acting upon the moon's surface, the dust remains where it settles. Huge amounts should have accumulated over 4.5 billion years, but the lunar landings have shown that only a very thin layer (often no more than 3mm) covers the moon's surface.

Furthermore, since meteorites contain large amounts of nickel, a rare element in terrestrial rock, this tells us something about the age of the earth. Harold S. Slusher comments, *"Taking the amount of nickel in the ocean water and ocean sediments, and using the rate at which nickel is being added to the water from meteoric material, the length of time of accumulation turns out to be only several thousand years, rather than a few billion years"* (*The Age of the Solar System*). Once again, time is on the creationist's side.

### RADIOCARBON DATING

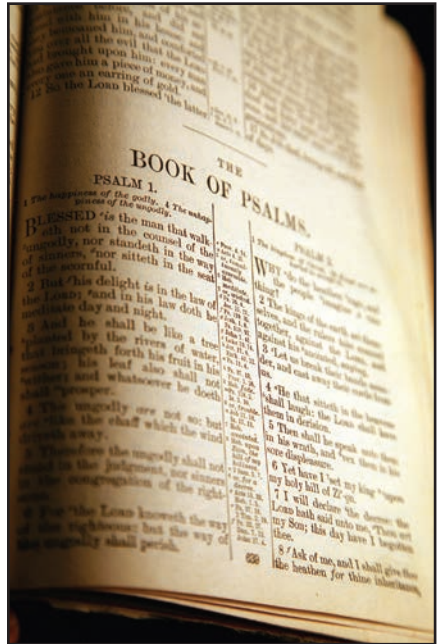
The assumption that Carbon 14 is in steady state (its overall rate of formation is equal to its rate of decay) in the earth as a whole, lies at the foundation of the radiocarbon dating technique, and yet, this assumption is demonstrably false. In fact, C14 is still building up in the carbon cycle of the earth, but this fact is usually ignored by the evolutionists, because such a balance should have taken only about 30,000 years to achieve. Dr. Melvin A. Cook explains that when this fact is taken into account, *"...it telescopes all results by this method to about 10,000 years or less!"* (*Do Radiological Clocks Need Repair?*) Again, the implications for the evolution model are obvious: **"Time"** is always on the creationist's side! 

Rex Banks works with the church in Porirua, New Zealand

# Psalm 119

Cecil May, Jr.

Psalm 119 is the longest Psalm. It is also the longest chapter in the Bible. It is an acrostic. Each verse in each section of eight verses begins with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet, through 22 sections in (Hebrew) alphabetical order. Quite a literary feat! In addition, every one of the 176 verses contains a synonym for God's Word: "law" verse 1, "testimonies" verse 2, "ways" verse 3, "precepts" verse 4, "statutes" verse 5, "commandments" verse 6, "rules" verse 7, "statutes" verse 8, etc.



**God's Word is our joy and delight.** *"In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches" (14). "I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word" (16). "Your testimonies are my delight; they are my counselors" (24). "The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces" (72). "Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day" (97).*

**God's Word keeps us from sin.** *"How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word" (9). "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you" (11).*

**God's Word is eternal and unchanging.** *"Forever, O Lord, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens" (89). "Your righteousness is*



## THE WORD OF GOD

*righteous forever, and your law is true” (142). “Your testimonies are righteous forever; give me understanding that I may live” (144). “The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever” (160).*

**God's Word helps us in our afflictions.** *“This is my comfort in my affliction, that your promise gives me life” (50). “Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word” (67). “It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes” (71). “Trouble and anguish have found me out, but your commandments are my delight” (143).*

**God's Word keeps us from error.** *“Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way” (104). “Therefore I consider all your precepts to be right; I hate every false way” (128).*

**God's Word defines our fellowship.** *“I am a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts” (63). “Let those who fear you turn to me, that they may know your testimonies” (79).*

**God's Word guides our way safely.** *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (105). “Great peace have those who love your law; nothing can make them stumble” (165).* †

Cecil May, Jr. is Dean-Emeritus of the Bible Department at Faulkner University in Montgomery, Alabama, USA.



### Robison's Rubies

Some people say there is no moral right or wrong. If that is true, how could anyone say some behavior is better than other behavior? Who could say courage is better than cowardice?

Who could say generosity is better than stinginess? Who could say faithfulness to marriage vows is better than adultery? There has to be moral right and wrong. Was not slavery just plain wrong? What about cannibalism? What about murder or rape? There are, indeed, some things that are morally wrong in every place and at every time. There is an absolute moral standard. Sometimes I wonder if we just say there is no moral standard simply because we don't like some of the morals. God said there would be people who would “suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Romans 1:18).



## THE WORD OF GOD


# *Sharpening Our Axes*

Denny Petrillo

Solomon gave a great lesson in preparation in Ecclesiastes 10:10. A woodsman may be a powerful and energetic person. Yet, he will exhaust his resources if he does not take the time to prepare himself for his task. There is an important lesson for us today.

Far too many have assumed the role of teacher without proper preparation. They have become like the men of Ephesus who are *“wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying of the matters about which they make confident assertions”* (1 Timothy 1:7). It is a dangerous thing for a man to teach others the eternal truths of God. This is why Paul warned Timothy to *“pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching”* (1 Timothy 4:16), and James said, *“let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment”* (James 3:1).

What, then, should one do to “sharpen his axe”? **First**, he must himself be a faithful, trustworthy man (2 Timothy 2:2). This means that he will not take liberties with God’s inspired Word. He recognizes that it is perfect and complete, and he must not tamper with it (2 Timothy 3:16-17). **Second**, he must be willing to ‘burn the midnight oil’ in intense study. He has to be a *“workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth”* (2 Timothy 2:15). How does he handle accurately the Word of truth? He does it by study. He does it by meditating on the Word ‘day and night’ (Psalm 1:2).

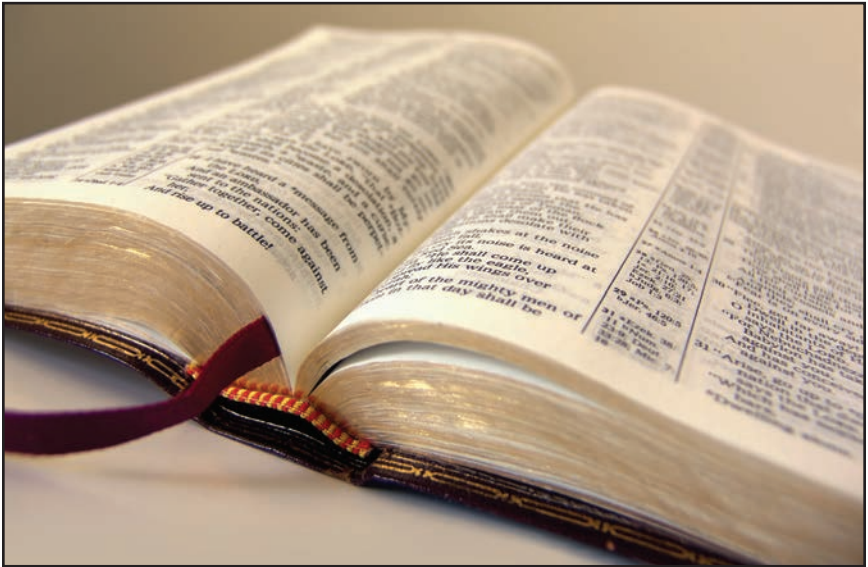
If we want to be successful, we will prepare ourselves. Solomon concluded this verse by noting that *“wisdom has the advantage of giving success.”* Let us not be lazy in the handling of God’s Word. **It is too important that we get it right!** 

Denny Petrillo is the President of Bear Valley Bible Institute in Denver, Colorado, USA.

## THE WORD OF GOD

# *Back to the Bible for Unity*

Gary C. Hampton



Thomas Campbell came to the United States from Ireland for health reasons. His journey came in the midst of a long struggle with the division he saw in the religious world of his Irish homeland. Thomas discovered that the religious climate of the United States was no better.


He became part of what was known as the Christian Association of Washington, Pennsylvania. Thomas played a key role in writing the Declaration and Address, first published in 1809. One statement in that document shows the tenor of his work. He pleaded that:

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all speak, profess, and practice, the very same things, that are exhibited upon the sacred page of New Testament Scripture, as spoken and done by the Divine appointment and approbation; and that this be extended to every possible instance of uniformity, without addition or diminution; without introducing anything of private opinion, or doubtful disputation, into the public profession or practice of the church (page 50).

He set forth a series of propositions which he saw as the only reasonable basis for unity. Number 5 stresses the importance of going back to the Bible for our authority.

That with respect to the commands and ordinances of our Lord Jesus Christ, where the scriptures are silent, as to the express time or manner of performance, if any such there be; no human authority has power to interfere, in order to supply the supposed deficiency, by making laws for the church ; nor can anything more be required of Christians in such cases, but only that they so observe these commands and ordinances, as will evidently answer the declared and obvious end of their institution. Much less has any human authority power to impose new commands or ordinances upon the church, which our Lord Jesus Christ has not enjoined. Nothing ought to be received into the faith or worship of the church; or be made a term of communion amongst Christians, that is not as old as the New Testament.

We live in a time of high religious division. May we realize the importance of unity and lend strong voices to calling for all to go back to the Bible, practicing only such as is old as the New Testament. 

Gary C. Hampton preaches for the Siwell Road congregation in Jackson, Mississippi, USA.

**David's Devotional:** What if Noah, Abraham, Moses and especially Jesus had done their own wills instead of God's will? Where would we be? What if **we** do our own wills instead of God's will? That would make something **wrong** with us, wouldn't it?

# **IF YOU WERE SAVED BEFORE BAPTISM**

**Alvin Jennings**

Here is Bible proof that it is impossible for you to be saved before your obedience to Christ's command to be immersed in water.

**1. You were saved before your sins were forgiven.** *"Then Peter said to them, **'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'**" (Acts 2:38).*

**2. You were saved before your sins were washed away.** *"Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).*

**3. You were saved before you were born again.** *"Jesus answered, **'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God'**" (John 3:5).*

**4. You were saved before you were joined with Christ.** *"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27).*

**5. You were saved before you were saved.** *"...baptism that now saves you" (1 Peter 3:21).*

**6. You were saved before the time the Lord promised He would save.** *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).*

**7. You were saved before you were freed from sin.** *"But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness."*

**8. You were saved before you entered into Christ and without His blood.** *"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7).*

**9. You were saved before your soul was purified.** *"Since you have*

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*purified your souls in obeying the truth...* (1 Peter 1:22a).

**10.** You were saved before you received the Holy Spirit and without belonging to Christ. *"...the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him"* (Acts 5:32; 2:38) *"...if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His"* (Romans 8:9b).

**11.** You were saved before your faith had any value, before it expressed itself in love. *"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love"* (Galatians 5:6).

**12.** You were saved before your obedience, which Jesus required for all who receive salvation. *"...He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him..."* (Hebrews 5:8,9). ✝

Alvin Jennings: [www.PaperPulpitFortWorth.com](http://www.PaperPulpitFortWorth.com)



# WHAT COLOR WAS SAUL'S (OF TARSUS) HORSE?

**Raymond Elliott**

The following will be questions that can be found in the New Testament regarding the conversion of a biblical character by the name of Saul, who was a persecutor of the “Way” (Acts 22:4). I will give you the basic texts found in the Book of Acts. This method will allow you to read the verses from the Bible without my understanding being given to the passages of Scriptures. You can read for yourself what the writer, Luke (Acts 1:1; Luke 1:1-4), wrote as he was guided by the Holy Spirit. Here are the passages: Acts 9:1-19; 22:1-16; 26:1-26.



- ❖ Why was Saul going to Damascus ( 9:1-3; 22:4-5)?
- ❖ Did Saul believe that he was doing the will of God by persecuting the disciples of Christ and that he did it with all sincerity (23:1; 26:9)?
- ❖ What caused Saul to be unable to see (22:6)?
- ❖ Who appeared to Saul on the way to Damascus (9:3-5)?
- ❖ What effect did this experience have on Saul (9:4; 22:6-7)?
- ❖ Who was Saul actually persecuting when he was persecuting the church (8:4; 9:4-5; 22:7-8)?
- ❖ What were the questions Saul asked the Lord (9:6; 22:10)?



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- ❖ What city was Saul instructed to enter (9:6; 22:10)?
- ❖ What did Saul do for three days (9:9,11)?
- ❖ Do you understand that Saul was a believer in Jesus Christ at this point in time and that his actions indicated that he was penitent of his sins?
- ❖ What were the basic reasons for the Lord to appear to Saul (22:14-15; 26:16-18)?
- ❖ What was the name of the disciple who was sent to speak to Saul (9:10)?
- ❖ What act of faith was Saul instructed that he “must do” (Acts 9:6) in order for his sins to be washed away (forgiven) (Acts 22:16)?
- ❖ The question may be asked, did Saul, in fact, obey this command (see Romans 6:1-4)? Please notice the plural pronouns “us” and “we,” which would include Paul who wrote the Book of Romans (1:1).

Oh, I have not dealt with the question that is the title of this article, “What color was Saul’s (of Tarsus) horse?” You know, that is a very interesting question. I have seen pictures and videos of Saul riding a horse on the way from Jerusalem to Damascus; however, would you believe, there is no passage of Scripture that informs us he was even riding one! I sincerely thank you for your time and interest in this study of God’s Holy Word. ✝

Raymond Elliott; b.rayelliott@gmail.com; Prattville, Alabama, USA.

**Jesus!** The name that calms our fears,  
That bids our sorrows cease;  
‘Tis music in the sinner’s ear  
‘Tis life, and health, and peace.  
He breaks the power of blackest sin  
He sets the pris’ner free;  
His blood can make the foulest clean—  
You—and you—and even me!

—Author unknown

## SALVATION

# THEY WHO ARE NOT READY...

Bradley Shannon Choate

*“...thou shalt not know what hour I come upon thee”* (Revelation 3:3). Have you wondered what this verse is saying? It talks of the Second Coming of Christ. Many times the Bible speaks of this. I have two examples that I am going to mention, but there are many other places in the Bible that tell of Christ’s Second Coming.

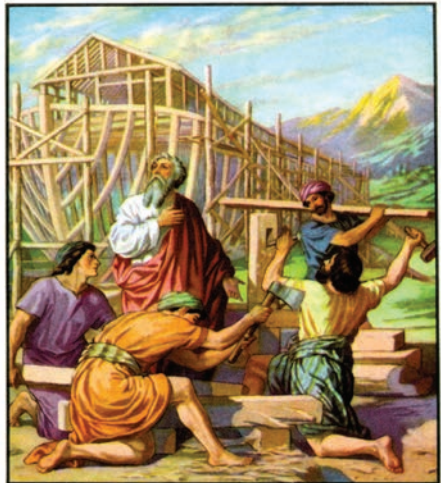
### **The Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13)**

This parable that Christ told is about ten virgins. Five of these were very wise, but five were very foolish. These virgins took their oil lamps and went to meet the bridegroom at his wedding. The foolish took their lamps but did not take extra oil with them. However, the wise virgins took oil with them. Now the bridegroom was about to come, and the foolish virgins cried to the wise, ***“Give us your oil, for our lamps are gone out.”*** But the wise virgins replied, saying, ***“No, there is not enough oil for both of us. Go and buy.”***

While the foolish were away to buy their oil, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterward, the foolish virgins came back saying, ***“Lord, Lord, open to us!”*** But he answered saying, ***“I know you not!”*** So, we must be ready when the bridegroom (Christ) comes again.

### **Noah and the Great Flood (Genesis 6-9)**

Another example is of Noah. You will find this account in the Old Testament (Genesis 6-9). After the Lord had created the earth, He saw it becoming corrupt. However, one man was pure in heart. This



## SALVATION


man was Noah. One day, God commanded Noah to build a great ark, for God was soon to destroy the earth with water. Noah built the ark just as God had commanded him to do, and he preached to the people about the destruction of the earth. After years of building, the ark was finished. No one, though, had responded to Noah's warnings. All who were to be saved were Noah, his wife, Shem, Ham and Japheth (their sons), and their wives.

Now the day had come, and Noah and his family gathered into the ark. God finally shut the great door, and it started to rain. It rained for 40 days and 40 nights. Then, the world and its wicked people were destroyed. All who were now living were the inhabitants in the ark. After 150 days, the waters began to dry up, and the ark rested on Mt. Ararat.

Later, God promised that He would not destroy the earth with water again, but with fire. Here, He was speaking of the Judgment Day when Jesus will come and destroy the earth with vengeance and flaming fire. When Jesus comes, it will be as a thief in the night (Revelation 16:15). Not even the angels in Heaven know when that day will be (Matthew 24:36).

When the foolish virgins were late, they cried, ***"Lord, Lord, open to us!"*** but he did not. In Matthew 7:21, Jesus said, ***"Not everyone who shall say unto me, 'Lord, Lord', shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven."*** Also when the people were not ready after Noah had preached to them, they could not enter the ark because the door had been shut.

We must also be ready when Christ comes again on Judgment Day. If we are not, then the door to eternal Heaven will be shut to us forever.

Please, repent of your sins and be born into God's family. Prepare for Judgment Day. If you are not a Christian, come and learn how you can become one. Learn about the one true church, Christ's church, the church of Christ (Romans 16:16). 

Bradley Shannon Choate is the son of J.C. and Betty Choate. This article was a "sermon" assignment for his Bible class when *he was 12-years-old!* Because of Brad's desire and compulsion to learn computers when the first "home computer" came on the market, he does web design commercially today. **Also, with Brad's help, Betty learned how to do computer layout work, which enabled "World Evangelism" to begin publishing of *The Voice of Truth International* and increased their printing of brotherhood books to about 250 titles! What tremendous blessings for countless souls throughout the world!**

## SALVATION

# Baptism, What Is Its Mode?

Ben Bailey and Shane Fisher

The religious world confuses every aspect of the clear teachings of the Scriptures on baptism. One of those aspects is the *mode*. The word “mode” refers to the method by which baptism is performed. A person who surveys the religious landscape will find three modes of baptism practiced: (1) sprinkling, (2) pouring, (3) immersion. While there are many who claim the proper mode may be sprinkling or pouring, it is not by majority vote that biblical questions are decided. The Bible, itself, is our only guide of authority (Acts 17:11; John 12:48; Exodus 23:2; Colossians 3:17). The question, then, is, ***“Is there any word from the Lord”*** (Jeremiah 37:17) on the mode of baptism? Yes!

## The Usage of the Word “Baptize” In The Scriptures

The word “baptize” comes from the Greek word *baptizo*. The **first use of the word** is John 3:23 regarding the administration of John the prophet. In this passage, the Bible records that ***“...John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there...”*** (John 3:23). This is a powerful incidental detail that John the apostle just so happens to write down by the inspiration of the Spirit. It is a fact that “much water” is not needed for sprinkling or pouring. When reading this passage, one must honestly ask himself, “Why did John need to be baptizing where there was much water?” The best evidence suggests that he was baptizing where there was “much water” because he needed enough water to immerse those who came with penitent hearts.

The **second passage** is Mark 1:9-10, regarding Jesus being baptized by John the prophet. Mark records, ***“And immediately coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove”*** (Mark 1:10). Mark records that Jesus came up from the water. Question: “What do you have to do in order to come up out of the water?” You must ***first*** go down into the water! It is clear from this passage

## SALVATION

that Jesus was immersed, which plainly teaches that one must be engulfed in water and then come up out of it to be baptized like Jesus. There is no way anyone can say this is anything else but the act of immersion.

The **third passage** is Acts 8:38 regarding the eunuch's conversion. Luke records, *"And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him"* (Acts 8:38). The mode of baptism required Philip (the administrator) and the eunuch to go down into the water. Why was this necessary? If sprinkling or pouring were used in this case, either Philip or the eunuch could have gotten the water for the purpose of pouring or sprinkling. However, since baptism is immersion, it was necessary for both Philip and the eunuch to *go down into the water*.

The **fourth passage** is Romans 6:1-4 (see also Colossians 2:11-12). In this context, baptism is likened to a burial. Everyone understands that in a burial the body is completely covered. Remember, Jesus was laid in a new tomb owned by Joseph of Arimathea, and the tomb was sealed by a large stone (Matthew 27:57-61). The body of Jesus was covered



on all sides. Likewise, the linking of baptism with the idea of a burial clearly shows that Paul recognized that baptism was by immersion. Sprinkling or pouring are not immersion because they do not fit the picture of being identified with Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Unless a sinner has been buried with Christ in the waters of baptism, he cannot claim to have been buried with Jesus or to be raised in newness of life (Romans 6:2-4).

The **fifth passage** is the usage of the word "baptism" in a figurative sense in Matthew 20:20-28. The sons of Zebedee clearly had a mistaken view about the nature of the kingdom of Jesus. Jesus revealed to them that if they were to be partakers of the blessings of the kingdom, then they would have to undergo


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suffering just as He suffered. We know that Jesus was not referring to His water baptism by John the prophet (Matthew 3:13–17) because the death of John had occurred six chapters earlier in Matthew 14:1–12. A dead administrator cannot baptize you! Secondly, Jesus had already made a reference to His death using this same type of language in Luke 12:50. Who would dare promote the ridiculous idea that Jesus only suffered a little? Since He used the imagery of baptism in regard to His crucifixion, it is obvious that He was engulfed (or overwhelmed) in suffering and pain when He hung on the cross!

The **sixth passage** is the usage of the phrase “baptized into Moses” in a figurative sense in 1 Corinthians 10:1–4. If you read the historical account of the Israelites passing through the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21–31), you will discover that they were covered by walls of water on each side and the cloud of glory overshadowed them (Exodus 14:18). They were covered on all sides! Who would ever suggest the ridiculous idea that when the sea divided, the Israelites passed through water that was no more than a few millimeters high?

The **seventh passage** is the usage of the word “baptism” as an antitype of the universal flood of Noah’s day in 1 Peter 3:21. Read the historical account of Noah and his family who were saved by the overwhelming water that covered all the pre-Flood mountains (Genesis 8:17–20), lasted a little over a year, killed all the animals and human beings that were outside the ark that could not survive in water (Genesis 8:21–23). With that description of the flood, the farthest idea from your mind would be to suggest that the mountains were covered with a few millimeters of water or that animals and human drowned in a sprinkling of water!

## Conclusion

Is the mode of baptism really that important? Should we sprinkle today if people request it? When all the evidence has been weighed, it is clear that the Scriptures teach baptism is by immersion. In order to be pleasing unto God, we must only practice the true mode of baptism— **immersion**. 

**Ben Bailey is the preacher for the Central church of Christ and has worked with The Gospel of Christ program since 1996. He resides in McMinnville, Tennessee, USA.**

**Shane Fisher is a missionary and works with World Evangelism. He resides in Wiona, Mississippi, USA.**



# Verse Search



## 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-11

Jerry Bates

1. What was the subject that Paul was endeavoring to instruct the Corinthian Christians? (v. 1)
2. Paul calls idols \_\_\_\_\_. What does that mean? (v. 2)
3. What had caused the Corinthians to be carried away to idolatry? (v. 2)
4. “No one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus \_\_\_\_\_, and no one can say that Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ except by the Holy Spirit? (v. 3)
5. There are differences of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ but the same Spirit, Lord and God. (vs. 4-6)
6. What does this indicate regarding the function of each Christian? (vs. 4-6)
7. What does this indicate regarding the Godhead? (vs. 4-6)
8. For whose profit were the manifestations of the Spirit given? (v. 7)
9. Did every Christian have all the spiritual gifts? (vs. 8-10)
10. What is the prophecy to which Paul referred? (v. 10)
11. What are the tongues to which Paul referred? (v. 10)
12. How many Spirits are behind all the spiritual gifts? (v. 11)
13. This Spirit distributed these gifts to each individual as He willed. (v. 11)      True      False

**(See the back cover for answers.)**

## VERSE SEARCH

**1** Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: **2** You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. **3** Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

**4** There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. **5** There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. **6** And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. **7** But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: **8** for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, **9** to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, **10** to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. **11** But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

**NOTES:** These verses begin a lengthy discussion of spiritual gifts, which continues throughout the next two chapters. The Corinthian church had several problems, and apparently one of them was a misunderstanding of spiritual gifts. They were guilty of pride, and it seems that they especially valued speaking in tongues, thinking that such a gift indicated superior spirituality. However, Paul made it clear that one spiritual gift is not inherently better than another or that certain gifts were given to more spiritual people.

There were many different gifts, but there was only one Spirit behind them all. The Spirit distributed the gifts for His own purposes, and the different gifts should not have in any way led to competition or pride; rather, they should have led to unity. The spiritual gifts were given for the good of the church as a whole and not for the good of any one person. Just as the Spirit, the Lord (Jesus) and God the Father were all involved in the distribution of these spiritual gifts, which indicated unity among the members of the Godhead. The different gifts were given for the purpose of fulfilling the different needs of the church.

The tongues mentioned in this passage were simply foreign, human languages, not some mysterious Holy Spirit language known only to God. The next couple of chapters further identify the purpose of spiritual gifts as well as the proper use of them. Miraculous gifts are often claimed today by certain people; however, their claims are quite different from what is described in these chapters.

# Pre-denominational

Bill Boyd

Some people think the church of Christ is a sect. That does not surprise me. Paul was called “*a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes*” (Acts 24:5). The chief of the Jews in Rome said to Paul, “*as concerning this sect, we know that it is everywhere spoken against*” (Acts 28:22). It was not a complimentary term. The word “*sect*” in the King James Version is translated “*heresy*” in other versions. Those who called the church a sect thought Christians had come together on a falsehood, but to their credit, they recognized that the members of that body believed a distinctive doctrine and that their faith gave them a distinctive identity. Some today say the church is sectarian because of its distinctive plea, but saying that does not make it so.

I have heard it said that the church is “undenominational.” I have said that myself, and I know what I meant. As a prefix, “un” can mean “not,” and that is what I was trying to say; the church is **not** denominational. Yet, “un” often has other meanings, like “reverse” or “opposite.” “Non-denominational” may be a better term. “Non” almost always means “not,” and the church of Christ is **not** denominational. Yea, verily, it is “anti-denominational”—against denominationalism. It is often hard for people to think of a “church” that is not denominational. For a long time, members of the Lord’s body were about the only ones ever saying that.


Now, I am seeing many different kinds of churches that call themselves “non-denominational.” Many say they are a “Community Church.” Some use creative names like, “The Spirit of Love Church” or “Rock Fellowship.” They say they are “non-denominational” because they are independent congregations that answer to no higher organizational structure. I understand that, but while these modern non-denominational churches value their independence, they do not so much value Bible authority. They pretty much worship any way they want to, teach their own plan of salvation and openly fellowship with those who do not share

## THE CHURCH

their distinctive faith. They still think that when it comes to salvation, “one is just as good as another.”

Locally, churches of Christ are independent congregations. Like the Christians in the New Testament, their spiritual brethren are those of *“like precious faith”* (2 Peter 1:1), but they limit their fellowship to those of that faith. That is why some call them a *“sect.”*

“Pre-denominational” is a relatively new term (as least it is to me.) “Pre” means “before.” A church that is “pre-denominational” is a church that existed before there were denominations. While some find it difficult to think of a church existing today that is not part of a denomination, they never seem to have a problem understanding that the church Jesus established in the New Testament was pre-denominational. In the New Testament, people were baptized into Christ and added to His church without joining any denomination. (There was no denomination to join; there was just the one church.) These pre-denominational Christians worked together and assembled to worship in independent congregations. Elders were appointed to shepherd the flock and to oversee their work, and some of the saints were asked to serve as deacons. Christ was their Head, and they recognized a common identity with those in other locations with the same faith. “Pre-denominational” is a good term; it points back to the early church. We can hear the same Gospel they heard, respond to it the same way, be added to the same church and gather in local congregations to worship just as they did, without joining any denomination.

We can be the pre-denominational church. Those who do not understand this may call us a *“sect,”* but that is nothing new. 

### **Kenney's Pennies**

*“For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life”*

(Romans 5:10 NKJV). **His death paid the price. His life paved the way.**



## THE CHURCH

# TERMS BY WHICH THE CHURCH OF THE LORD IS DESIGNATED IN THE BIBLE

R.C. Lupo

The term most often used in the New Testament is simply *“the church.”* In the original language of the New Testament (Greek), the term does not always refer to the church that Christ built. In Acts 19:32, it refers to *“the assembly”* of an angry mob. In Acts 7:38, it refers to the Israelites in the wilderness.

*“The church”* refers to a group of people, never to a building. In reference to the Lord’s church, it means those *“called out of darkness into light”* (1 Peter 2:9). Note the following ‘musts’ of those called out of the darkness of sin by the Gospel (2 Timothy 1:8-11).

- There must be a *“translation out of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son”* (Colossians 1:13). “Kingdom” is another reference to the church.
- There must also be genuine obedience to that *“form [pattern] of doctrine”* (Romans 6:17). This pattern is the same pattern Paul described in Romans 6:1-16.
- Upon one’s obedience to God, there must be an addition to the church by the Lord (Acts 2:38-47). No one is ever voted into the Lord’s church by men.
- There also must be a conviction that since sins have been remitted or forgiven, we must dedicate ourselves to serve and worship God. Christian devotion ought to be observable in daily life and in the public worship assemblies of the church (Romans 6:6-13).


We must never separate ourselves from the church, since Christ is its Head (Colossians 1:18). What we choose to do or not do to the church, we choose to do or not do to Christ Himself (Matthew 25:40, 45; Acts 9:1-5).

The church is also called *“My church”* by Christ (Matthew 16:18) and *“churches of Christ”* by Paul (Romans 16:16). These words designate Christ’s ownership of the church. The church never belonged to any other

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man, but to Christ alone. When people speak of ***“my church”*** as “their church,” it demonstrates their lack of Bible understanding as to the true nature of the church; it shows they only know of the church as denominationalism defines it and as they defend it as their property. If men were not divided into different churches, by their different names, doctrines and practices, we would only speak of one church—His (1 Corinthians 1:10).

The church is referred to as the ***“house”*** or ***“family of God”*** (1 Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 2:19; 3:15). This means God is our Father and we are His children. We are brothers and sisters with brotherly love for other family members (2 Corinthians 6:18; Galatians 3:26; Romans 12:9; 2 Peter 1:5-7).

The church is also called ***“the body of Christ”*** (Colossians 1:18, 24; Ephesians 1:10-23), emphasizing the Headship of Christ, the subjection of members to Christ and the functioning of members perfectly, while heeding the commands of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-31). If even one member is severed from the body, it cannot function properly. Note: The body never commands the Head. It is vital that those who wear the name of Christ, as part of His body, honor Him as Lord, in the name that is worn, the doctrine that is taught, in worship and in daily living (Acts 4:12; 1 Peter 4:16; John 4:23-24; Colossians 3:17; 1 Peter 4:11-19). 

**R.C. Lupo is the preacher for the Church of Christ in Sneedville, Tennessee, USA. He also authors charts on salvation and the church for *The Voice of Truth International*.**

### David's Devotional

**What Good Is Money?** There was once a stingy old man who hid his gold at the foot of a tree in his garden. Every day, the stingy old man would come to the tree, dig up the gold and gloat over it. One day, a thief saw the man dig up his gold, look at it a while and put it back in the dirt. After the stingy old man left, the thief dug up the gold and took it away. The next day, the stingy old man returned to the tree, but he found nothing but the empty hole. He cried so loudly that the neighbors all came running to him. He told them how he came daily and visited his gold, but now it was gone. One of the neighbors asked, “Did you ever take any of it out?” “No,” said the man, “I only came to look at it.” “Then come and look at the hole,” said the neighbor, “it will do you just as much good!” If you don’t **use** God’s blessings, they will **never** do anyone any good! Those blessing might as well not exist, and, indeed, one day, **they won’t!**



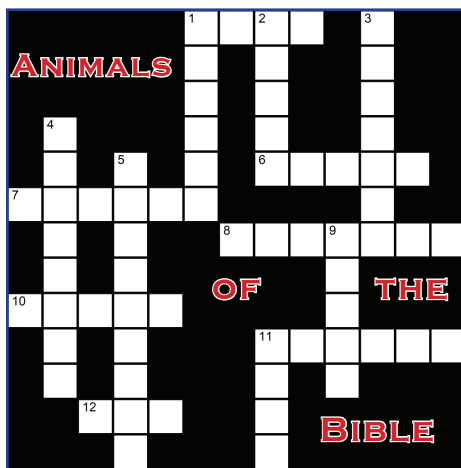


# Bible Find

Martha Rushmore

## Across

1. Animal Jesus told apostles to bring (Mark 11:2)
6. These animals know their shepherd's voice (John 10:3)
7. The hen gathers these under her wings (Matthew 23:37)
8. Peter denied Christ three times and then he heard this animal (Luke 22:61)
10. Animals had a place to sleep, but Jesus had nowhere to sleep (Matthew 8:19-20)
11. Animal that talked to Balaam (Numbers 22:28)
12. Sacrifice God provided for Abraham (Genesis 22:13)



## Down

1. Animals, Abraham's servant took with him (Genesis 24:10)
2. God closed these animal's mouths (Daniel 6:22)
3. Animal that tempted Eve (Genesis 3:1)
4. He eats grass has an ox (Job 40:15)
5. Animal presented alive and then let go in the wilderness (Leviticus 16:8)
9. Animals the Prodigal son fed (Luke 15:15)
11. Animal pants for water brooks (Psalm 42:1)

## Building Faith:



**Pray,  
Trust,  
Meditate,  
Act,  
Remember**

*Now Faith is the substance of things hoped for,  
the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1*

**Steven Burton Choate**

### Faith

For a Christian, faith is the breath of life. There are many things in life that we cannot know but we must believe in order to live spiritually, in order, simply, to carry on. Through inspiration, James tells us, “***Draw near to GOD and He will draw near to you***” (James 4:8). How do we do that? How does one draw near to GOD? One of the ways we can do that is through building our faith in Him, appreciating His faithfulness in keeping His promises. How do we build our faith? As with anything that is worth having, building faith is a process; it entails discipline and may be pursued by various means, in various ways. In addition, it is nothing that one masters; rather, it is something on which one continues to work throughout life, upon which ever striving to improve. I would submit that one of the ways to build faith is through the conscious and deliberate efforts of prayer, trust, meditation, action and remembrance.

### Pray

In 1 Thessalonians, Paul instructed his readers, “***Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of GOD in***

## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

*Christ Jesus for you”* (5:16-18). Couched within the context of rejoicing — knowing that GOD is sovereign, that Christ is victorious and that, through Christ we share in that victory (Hebrews 12:2; James 1:2)—Paul enjoined us to pray, continually, and, as part of this, to express our gratitude to GOD for all that He has done for us. The Gospel accounts are replete with references to Christ seeking solitude in order to engage the Father in prayer. When our lives are filled with contentment and peace, we should pray to GOD, thanking Him for all of His many blessings. When they are colored by trials and troubles—torn by struggle, suffering and tragedy—how much more should we turn to Him in prayer? Pray continually. When facing major choices and life-decisions, go to Him in prayer and whole-heartedly extend to Him the license to overrule in your life for what He determines to be the best course.

### Trust

Having prayed such a prayer, trust that God will be faithful and will act for the best. Critical, here, I believe, is extending to Him that license to overrule for the best. Over and over again, in Christ’s earthly ministry, He questioned those who came to Him concerning their faith. In Mark’s Gospel, following the transfiguration, Christ was confronted by the man whose son was possessed, who begged Him to cast out the evil spirit, the disciples having not been successful in their efforts. ***“Jesus said to him, ‘If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.’ Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, ‘Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!’”*** (Mark 9:23-24). I believe that this account—and others like it which emphasize the faith of the supplicant—convey to us a critical and often overlooked spiritual truth: GOD gave us freewill and honors that gift, in spite of the wrong decisions we make. However, if—through faith—we extend to Him the license to overrule in our lives, to guide us to that greater good through His omniscience, I believe that He will so overrule. Extend that license to Him. Trust Him to open doors of opportunity—or to close them. He does not always act as and when we would expect, but ***He does act***. We must be patient (Psalm 27:14; 46:10). In addition, we should bear in mind that “No,” can be an answer to prayer, as well as “Yes.”

## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

### Meditate

In Genesis 26:63, we are told that, prior to the arrival of his soon-to-be-wife, Rebekah, Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening. Upon what was Isaac meditating? The recent death of his mother, Sarah? The advancing age of his father, Abraham? His own future, including the prospect of a spouse? Scripture does not tell us, and so we do not know. Surely, however, his meditations were concerned to some extent with his own questions about life, the workings of the GOD of his father, Abraham, and his own role in GOD's plan. This seems to be implied by the context of the narrative. Moreover, having witnessed the events described in Genesis 22 and having played a central role in those events (albeit, a passive one), he could not have been unaware of these matters. We, also, do well to reflect, ruminate, meditate upon *our choices* in life, weighing and considering the advantages and disadvantages of the options that confront us, asking, not only, "What do I feel to be the best for me and mine?" but also, "What would GOD have me do?" (Matthew 6:33).

### Act

Having prayed, having extended our trust to GOD to guide us and having meditated upon the choices that confront us, we should act, always striving to be sensitive to GOD's overruling, inviting GOD to be part of our efforts and giving Him praise and precedence in life decisions (James 4:13-15). As we act, we should bear in mind Paul's injunction to the Colossians. *"And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to GOD the father through Him"* (Colossians 3:17).


### Remember

Throughout the Bible, both in Old and New testaments, GOD's people are called to remember. The wanderings of the Jews during the Exodus period were marked by GOD commanding them to erect monuments in order to remember what He had done for them. In the Upper Room, Christ instituted the Lord's Supper so that all of His followers would remember what was being done by Him, through the power of GOD. In these greater

## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

ways, the example of remembering is given to us by way of building faith.

As we look back upon our lives, we can more clearly see GOD's guidance and providence. Caught up in the middle of life's events, beset by physical concerns, the complexity of human relationships and the distractions that the world offers, it is often difficult to see GOD acting in our lives. In hindsight, however, through the lens of faith, we may more clearly see how He has moved in our lives, providing opportunity, easing tensions in relationships, extending necessary moments of mental and emotional peace, and clarity, thereby aiding resolution and action, closing doors that initially seemed to offer advancement, preventing missteps, bringing significant people into our lives and—in so many other ways—making the paths of life straighter and smoother. This perspective requires faith, but it also aids and builds faith.

Let us strive to build our faith. In so doing, let us renew our desire and commitment to live as He would have us to live. 

Steven Burton Choate is the son of J.C. and Betty Choate, serves as an art professor with Harding University, and is a deacon in the Lord's church, West Side, in Searcy, Arkansas, USA.

**As God's Children, we learn to emulate Him. The way He deals with us also becomes the way we deal with each other.**

**Grace—**

**For those who merit or do not merit our favor**

**Compassion—**

**For those who are hurting**

**Forgiveness—**

**For those who repent and ask**

**Reconciliation—**

**With those who are forgiven**

# DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

## Extremes Beget Extremes

Raymond Elliott

I remember well these words spoken by a wise and knowledgeable teacher of mine when I was in college. Brother Rex A Turner, Sr. had many ‘sayings,’ but this is the one I want to emphasize presently. I have lived long enough (83 years) to know factually and by experience that this is true in our society today. He also said that a man needs a “Balance Wheel,” which we sorely need today. We are people of extremism. This is so evident today in the political world. Seemingly, there is no middle ground for some of our elected officials and in society in general. It is truly sad to witness the prejudice, bigotry and hatred manifested in our country. You can find such attitudes in people of different races and ethnic backgrounds. When you watch the news on television or read the newspapers, you can be assured the actions of such extreme attitudes of various individuals and groups are reported.

I am reminded of the opening sentence in the book, *A Tale of Two Cities* (1857), written by Charles Dickens.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.


In short, the description of the society in which the author lived describes, in many ways, the present extreme attitudes and actions of our own time.

As Christians, we should follow the teachings of Jesus Christ who said, ***“Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of***



## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

**God”** (Matthew 5:9). The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 12:17-18, **“Repay no one evil for evil, Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.”** In Hebrews 12:14, we read, **“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.”** We should not only be children of God who possess **“the peace of God, which passes all understanding”** (Philippians 4:7), but we must be **“peacemakers”** in the church and in society. That, my friends, is a great challenge for all who are followers of the **“Prince of Peace”** (Isaiah 9:6). The following should be the prayer of all Christians.

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. And where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved, as to love. (Francis of Assisi) 

Raymond Elliott preaches for the Capitol Heights congregation in Montgomery, Alabama, USA.

### Robison's Rubies

In this postmodern world, a lot of people believe there is no such thing as truth. Well, I'm never going to try to force my ideas of truth on people, but I would repeat the often-asked question, “Is it true that there is no such thing as truth?” Do you see the fallacy? If it is a truth that no truth exists, then truth exists! This does not mean that people who feel they have truth should be nasty or intolerant to other people—no, no, never. One great truth is what Jesus taught—to treat others the way you would want to be treated. Seeking truth is admirable. Finding truth is possible. Persuading people to truth is a noble goal. However, forcing acceptance is impossible, unhelpful and downright mean.



## Quick Commentary on Crucial Verses (Philippians 4:12-18)

I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

These words should be the attitude of life for every Christian. We find ourselves in many circumstances, but when our circumstances are the result of our firm commitment to Christ, we should have an attitude of trust in God that He will see us through every challenge.

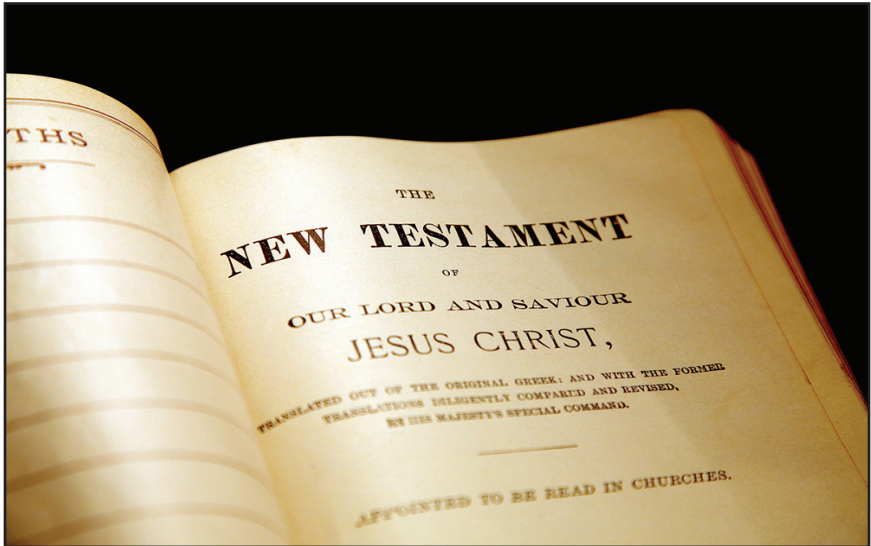
In response to Paul's financial needs that resulted from his imprisonment, he verified that **a missionary or other worker in the kingdom may receive financial support from numerous congregations.** Obviously, the brethren in Philippi were aware of Paul's needs and sent money to him on more than one occasion.

We also read in 1 Corinthians 16:2 that Paul collected money from various congregations to take to the suffering Christians in Jerusalem.

The church's money and the money of individual Christians belongs to God. Other than working through unscriptural "missionary societies," we should be free to use it individually or collectively to support the spreading of the Gospel.

# Remember **WHOSE** You Are!

Curtis D. Burton



God is a central focus of my life. I don't mean that I'm a perfect Christian or that I'm even a good example of a Christian some days, but I do wake up every day choosing to follow God to the best of my ability.

As I've aged, studied and explored, I've been increasingly alarmed by the assault on God that I've witnessed (His very existence), the Bible and religion in general. When I was a teen in the 60s/70s, religion was still seen as the solution to many of the world's problems. Fast forward to the present day and religion is seen as THE problem rather than the solution. Christians are openly ridiculed, scoffed at and belittled. We are seen as judgmental, bigoted and haters.

As America has become more affluent and "educated," many, *even leaders in the church*, have moved toward saying that the Bible isn't the literal and actual word of God. It is, they suggest, "...just a conglomeration

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

of fairy tales thought up by old men of yesteryear in order to hold onto their power and oppress women and the poor.”

You might think those are extreme statements, but just a scant few years ago a former elder in a “Church of Christ” here in Texas said to me, “Surely you are more sophisticated than to really believe that Noah collected all those animals on a boat and lived there with them for over a year!” This same gentleman commented that there was nothing wrong with homosexual behavior because “God made them that way.” His final parting shot was, “And that ridiculous fish story about Jonah. You have a college education, man, surely you realize that those stories were just illustrations of points that were being made in the text...not real events.” *National Geographic*, ABC, NBC, CBS, the History Channel and many theologians even in our “religious” universities openly scoff at the idea that the Bible is inspired or anything beyond a collection of “stories.”

Then there is the whole evolution-thing that has taken root. “NO EDUCATED person can seriously argue that life came about and developed via any method OTHER THAN evolution...” so said as learned a man as Stephen Hawking. It all puts me in mind of Romans 1:28.

*Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God’s righteous decree and those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.*


Sound like the world in which you live? Certainly nails the one with which I deal on a daily basis. Sometimes that depresses me. I see the forces of evil all about me, and sometimes I even see me as part of it all when I fail as a follower. It is all so overwhelming, and the Devil seems to be winning on so

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

many fronts. It is in exactly those times when we see the strength of the Devil and the fallen world about us that we need to remember **WHO** we are. First Peter 2: 9-12 tells us:

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people BELONGING to GOD, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God, once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that thought they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*

That same call is made to us today. We can go around being negative and combative about our faith, OR we can be joyful and live in such a way as to GLORIFY GOD and bring honor to His holy name. That means we have to speak up about what His book says, not in a confronting, mean way, but in love to tell the sick and dying world that there IS A GOD IN HEAVEN AND HE LOVED YOU SO MUCH THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY SON SO THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE WITH HIM.

So, as you go out into the world today, remember two things. “Remember **WHO** you are, and remember **WHOSE** you are.” Everything else will work itself out. 

Curtis D. Burton is the brother of Betty Burton Choate, and a member of the Memorial Church of Christ in Houston, Texas, USA.

**My relationship with God is  
my number one focus. I know  
if I take care of that, He will  
take care of everything else!**

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

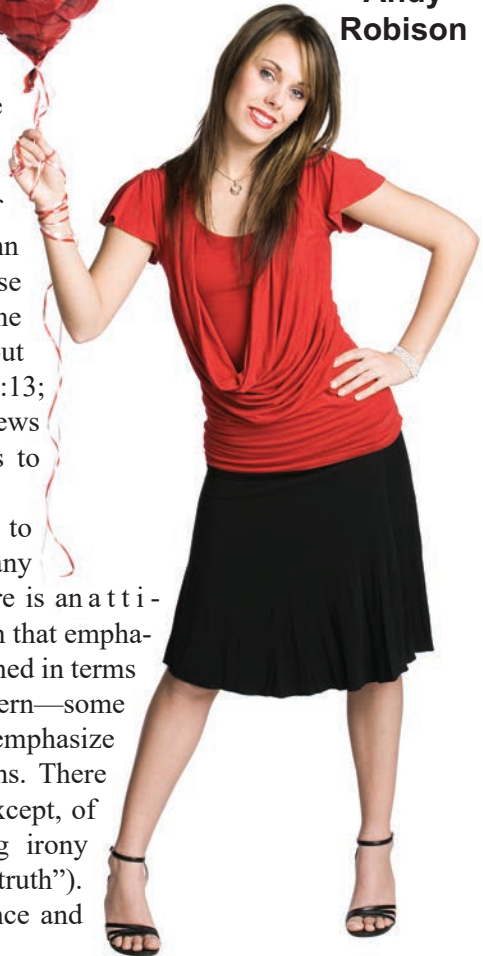
Many proclaim they love Jesus. How many really do will be determined by the Righteous Judge at the Last Day (2 Timothy 4:8). Those who “*love His appearing*” will be those who have been prepared according to Jesus’ terms. Those terms are revealed; they are not secret. The revealed words of Christ will be the standard of judgment in the Last Day (John 12:48). These words include those revealed to the apostles and to the prophets by the Spirit poured out after Jesus’ Ascension (John 16:13; Acts 2:33; Ephesians 3:5; Hebrews 1:1-3). There is no guessing as to what is required of us.

Of course, one may prefer to guess (I speak sarcastically). Many people appear to so prefer. There is an attitude in the world of Christendom that emphasizes love, but that love is redefined in terms of a postmodern world. Postmodern—some say post-Christian—societies emphasize the equality of all belief systems. There is no truth in this worldview (except, of course, the doctrine-devastating irony that “the truth is that there is no truth”). Love is defined as full acceptance and endorsement of all worldviews.



## If You Love Me

Andy Robison






## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

This worldly philosophy spills over into the mindset of the Christian who desires minimal friction with the world. Just love. Don't study on disagreements. Don't aim to *"speak the same thing"* (1 Corinthians 1:10). Just love. Love Jesus, and love people. That is all you need. This is the Postmodernism absolute doctrine.

However, the Savior of the world defined love. *"If you love Me, keep My commandments"* (John 14:15). That simple admonition could not be surpassed in its profundity [wisdom]. It is augmented on almost every page of Scripture. For brief examples, think of James 1:22. *"Be doers of the word, and not hearers only..."* Think of Matthew 7:21, which reads, *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."* Meditate on the multiple illustrations of how *"faith without works is dead"* (James 2:14-26).

These passages, and the multitude of others, are devastating to the "faith only" doctrine, the "grace only" doctrine and the "love only" doctrine. The combination of John 14:15 and John 12:48 necessitates the lover of God dig deeply into the Word constantly, honestly and diligently to see what those commandments are. The one who loves the Lord will want to please Him. One cannot please Him without knowing His commandments. The "think-so" mentality won't work. The commandments are revealed. That knowledge, then, must result in obedience.

It seems that the study in the Word is a test of love in itself. Does the one who claims to be a disciple have love enough to put in the effort to seek the will of the Lord? 

Andy Robison is the minister for the Hillview Terrace Church of Christ and the Director of the West Virginia School of Preaching in Moundsville, West Virginia, USA.

### *Go to Church*

Cecil May, Jr.

Saying "go to church" is often criticized as an unbiblical use of "church." However, since the actual meaning of the New Testament word "church" is "assembly," "Go to assembly" makes perfectly good biblical sense.

## THE HEALING PLACE


Randal Matheny

On a recent social-media site, I started a little community called “The Way of Christ.” Anybody can post there, according to the site’s rules. One person posted a photo of the interior of a huge religious edifice. He titled it, “my healing place.” Immediately, I felt compassion toward him.

The place of true and eternal healing is in Jesus Christ. In the body of Christ, where the gifts of all the members are exercised, the spirit is nurtured. In the family of faith, I find encouragement and strength.

My healing place is in the fellowship of God, the love of Christ and the strength of the Holy Spirit. My place of spiritual salvation is serving and interacting with my brothers and sisters in Christ. The physical location is incidental.

It happened again last night. Singing, praying and reading Scripture together with the friends of Christ, plus a couple of interested outsiders, brought refreshment to my soul. One of the best things about this healing place is that it is available everywhere on earth. No pilgrimages are needed. Instead of occasional visits, every single soul may reside in God’s healing place.

We all need His healing. He invites into His place, in Christ. He welcomes each one as a valued child of His. Here, while there is still time, the door is open. ***“But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption”*** (1 Corinthians 1.30). 

J. Randal Matheny has served as a missionary in Brazil for many years. (You can visit the community “The Way of Christ” at <http://www.votable.com/theway>.) Life is a series of choices—CHOOSE! <http://forthrightpress.com/b/L1>

### None Stand Apart

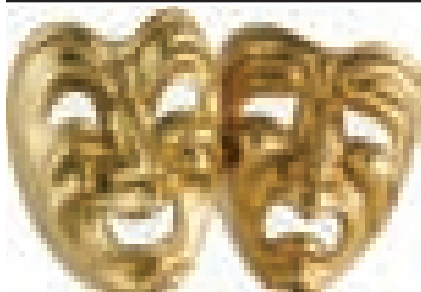
J. Randal Matheny

*The heavy soul, the burdened heart,  
In Christ find peace and joy and rest;  
By mutual love, none stand apart,  
In His assembly none is a guest.*

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## PROVERBS 17:22

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After the Sunday School, the teacher told the story of the Prodigal Son to the class. She asked, “Was anyone sorry when the Prodigal Son returned?”

One boy answered, “The fatted calf.”



Teacher: “Joey, if you put your hand in one pants pocket and found 75 cents, then you put your other hand in your other pants pocket and found 50 cents, what would you have?”

Joey: “I’d have somebody else’s pants on!”



The other day, Suzie and I got into some petty argument. (I say it was petty. She would have said it was Armageddon.) As is our nature, neither of us would admit the possibility that we might be in error. To her credit, Nancy finally said, “Look, I’ll tell you what. I’ll admit I’m wrong if you admit I was right.”

“Fine,” I said.

She took a deep breath, looked me in the eye and said, “I’m wrong.”

I grinned and replied, “You’re right.”



A man shouts frantically into the phone, “My wife is pregnant and her contractions are only two minutes apart!”

“Is this her first child?” asks the doctor.

“No,” he shouts, “this is her husband!”



Thomas Ellsworth told about a preacher who preached his Sunday morning sermon as usual, but this particular Sunday, it was considerably longer than normal.

Later, at the door, as he was shaking hands with the people as they left, one man told the preacher, “Your sermon was simply wonderful—so invigorating and inspiring and refreshing.”

The preacher broke out in a big smile, only to hear the man add, “Why, I felt like a new man when I woke up!”



A doctor and a lawyer were talking at a party. Their conversation was constantly interrupted by people describing their ailments and asking the doctor for free medical advice. After an hour of

## PROVERBS 17:22

this, the exasperated doctor asked the lawyer, “What do you do to stop people from asking you for legal advice when you’re out of the office?”

“I give it to them,” replied the lawyer, “and then I send them a bill.”

The doctor was shocked, but agreed to give it a try. The next day, still feeling slightly guilty, the doctor prepared the bills. When he went to place them in his mailbox, he found a bill from the lawyer.



The housewife was complaining to her husband, “Just look at me. My clothes are so drab and shabby; if anyone came to the door, he’d think I was the cook.”

“Not if he stayed for dinner,” was the retort.



The preacher shocked the congregation when he announced that he was resigning from the church and moving to a drier climate.

After the service, a very distraught lady came to the preacher with tears in her eyes. “Oh, Preacher Bob, we are going to miss you so much. We don’t want you to leave!”

The kindhearted preacher patted her hand and said, “Now, now, Carolyn, don’t carry on. The preacher who takes my place might be even better than me.”

“Yeah,” she said, “That’s what they said the LAST time too!”



When his engine quit, a pilot landed his light plane on a freeway. He jumped out and went over to a car that had pulled off the road out of his way, intending to ask for help. But the woman sitting next to the driver of the car shouted, “We’ll get out of the way, Mister, if you’ll show us where to go. My husband is the only driver in the world who could start out on a freeway and end up in the middle of an airport!”



A gorgeous young redhead went into the doctor’s office and said that her body hurt wherever she touched it.

Impossible!” said the doctor. “Show me.”

The redhead took her finger, pushed on her left shoulder and screamed, then she pushed her elbow and screamed even more. She pushed her knee and screamed. Everywhere she touched made her scream.

The doctor said, “You’re not really a redhead, are you?”


“Well, no,” she said. “I’m actually a blonde.”

“I thought so,” the doctor said. “Your finger is broken.”

# How Do You Measure Up?

Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.



Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

Philippians 3:17-21;  
4:1

# ***TOXIC MASCULINITY***

Victor M. Eskew

“Toxic masculinity” is a term that is thrown out by the media a lot these days. The term means that masculinity is filled with poison. In other words, to be a man is evil.

[Sadly, often these days, it is difficult to decide whether the person we are seeing is a man or a woman. Women dress exactly like men and often cut their hair as men’s cuts used typically to be. Men may have long hair like women and sometimes their dress is much the same. What has happened to our culture and to the respected old-time masculinity? BBC]



In our society, men are under attack.

**Men should play with dolls, not soldier or action figures.  
Men should play dress up, not cowboys and Indians.  
Men should drive a Prius, not a 4-wheel drive pick up.  
Men should ignore women, not speak to them.  
Men should go to plays, not to see WWF.  
Men should like make-up, not guns.  
Men should enjoy salads, not steaks.  
Men should stay home with kids, not work manly jobs.  
Men should hunt for bargains, not wildlife.  
Men should buy soft clothing, not 4-wheelers and boats.  
Men should go to the spa, not to the Monster Truck Show.  
Men should defer to women, not flirt with them.**



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If you do the things that we are told men should not do, then you are infected with toxic masculinity. You are poisoned. There is something wrong with you.

In two passages of Scripture, *the Bible exhorts men to be men*. The phrase used is: “*Quit you like men*” (1 Samuel 4:9; 1 Corinthians 16:13). God wants men to be men, to act like men and to fulfill the role He has given them.

Regardless of what “the experts” and the media say, “Men are not women!” A man is made much differently from a woman. Forcing men to be feminine is a corruption of the role of a man.

Let men be men. Let them do their “man” things.

NOTE: This does not mean that they are not to respect and honor women. A real man knows exactly how to properly treat the women with whom he engages, from his wife, to his daughter, to a coworker and to a stranger on the street.

My friends, just to call something a name does not make it so. Just because a man acts like a man does not mean that he is poison.

MEN, BE MEN! Don’t let society make you ashamed of it!



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# WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT RAISING CHILDREN?

Darla Rosinski

Every endeavor in our lives should begin with loving God with all our heart, soul and might! Being parents is not necessarily something that comes natural, so starting off with our Creator's instructions puts us on the right track.

God repeats things to which He wants us to pay close attention. In Deuteronomy 6 and again in chapter 11, God tells us to diligently teach His way to our children—*talk to them when you sit in your house, when you walk by*

*the way, when you lie down and when you rise up.* That covers just about all the time we have. Always be teaching them about their eternal Father! They need to know that He is the center of the universe!


People have been trusting in the wisdom (?) of other humans for so long, they would never spank a child, partly in fear of being turned into the police for child abuse and partly because they believe what they've been told about it being bad for the child. What does God say about discipline?



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Proverbs 3:11-12 assures us that the Lord corrects those He loves just like a father corrects a son in whom he delights. ***“My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor detest His correction; for whom the Lord loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.”*** In chapter 23:13-14, we’re told, ***“Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod, and deliver his soul from hell.”*** There is a world of difference in spanking a child and abusing him or her! ***“The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother”*** (Proverbs 29:15).

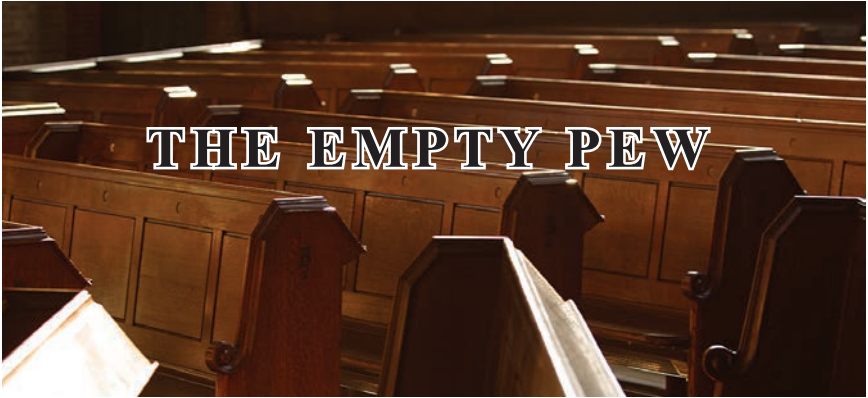
We often hear, “It takes a village to raise a child.” Don’t you believe it! It takes godly parents teaching their children to be godly, too. Do you really want your child to live like the world is telling us we should be? The world wants us to believe things like: There is no God and only weak people believe in Him any more; You can’t believe in the Bible because so many people have touched it, it can’t be right any more; Sex before marriage is fine, just use birth control and if that doesn’t work, you can have an abortion; It doesn’t matter with whom you choose to mate as long as you connect with somebody; Families are no longer Dad, Mom and the kids, they’re Dad, Dad and the kids or Mom, Mom and the kids.

Titus 1:2 tells us that God cannot lie, and that means that every promise He has made to us is true, and we can count on them! We’re promised if we train up our children in the ways of God, when they are old, they will not depart from them. If we’re faithful till we die, we have a home in Heaven for eternity (Revelation 2:10). Isn’t that our ultimate goal, to spend eternity with our children in the home Jesus died to give us? 

Darla Rosinski is the daughter of J.C. and Betty Choate, worshipping with the Lord’s church in Augusta, Georgia, USA.

**What would I tell you, my children...?**

**I would tell you of the peace I feel when I drop off to sleep praying for you, and when I wake and words to God for you are still in my heart.   BBC**



Charles R. Rose

***“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him”*** (1 John 2:15). That is a very serious statement from God’s inspiration. As we think of its implications, I cannot help but think of how easily the love of worldly things comes into our minds and ultimately into our lives. As we allow the world to take control, we inadvertently lead those dearest to us into the same sins as ourselves. Rather than loving the world, as Christians, we are to be ***“fellow laborers with God”*** (1 Corinthians 3:9a). As such, we must ask, “How deep is my love for the souls of friends and family?”

We weep bitter tears when loved ones pass away. Is our anguish more for the loss of their soul or our personal loss of no longer having their presence with us in this world? Jesus wept at the death of His friend Lazarus, but His groanings were for those souls around Him (John 11:33-35). His desire was that they come to believe and to be obedient to God the Father. Paul admonished, ***“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus”*** (Philippians 2:5).

During the restoration movement in Scotland, John Knox invited a group of friends into his home for the evening. He left the group inside, and sometime later they found him in the garden on his knees in deep agony crying, “O God, give me Scotland for Christ or I die!” What would cause you and me to beg God to help us reach our nearest and dearest


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loved ones? We need to get caught up in the excitement of winning souls to Christ. Let us be more than just “members of the church.” Let us be ***“laborers together with God.”*** Let us fervently pray, “O God, give us this community for Christ!”

In recent years when I stand before the congregation to speak, be it here or elsewhere, I am forced to stare out at many empty pews. I have often stood there thinking of the preacher who said he could see Satan sitting there in that empty pew, looking at him, laughing and saying, “I’ve got this one today, preacher!” These thoughts were in my mind as I penned the following.

As I look down at the empty pew  
And think, Dear Lord, why so few?  
Has Satan swayed their every thought,  
With lies and all his evil wrought?  
I know You have said that through that gate  
The masses of humanity wait.  
And as they travel this road of life  
—Unwilling to listen, so full of strife—  
You have left ***us***, the chosen few,  
***To work and fill that empty pew.***

In thinking of our lost loved ones, every Christian has the weight of the Great Commission upon him. Instead of loving the world and the things in the world (1 John 2:15), we must be ***“speaking the truth in love”*** (that we and our loved ones) ***“...may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love”*** (Ephesians 4:15-16).

Let us not bring reproach upon His holy name by neglecting our place in the assemblies of the saints. Let us encourage and admonish our friends and family to fill an empty pew as we worship the one true and living God. 

Charles R. Rose works with the church of Christ in Lincoln, Missouri, USA.

# Healing Grief

**Sheila Gibson**

Many human experiences are common to everyone, yet unique to the individual: life itself, joy, sorrow and eventually, death. We all die, but some of us know the grief of death, long before our own passing, from the loss of someone we love. Or, perhaps many people we love pass away.

Last year, I lost my son—my beautiful, joyful, amazing son. We didn't see the struggles he experienced and didn't perceive he was at risk. We didn't imagine we would ever know the pain of loss to suicide and the questions that follow.

Why didn't he talk to us? What did we miss? How could we have helped him? Why did this happen? Why? Why? Why?

Believe me, the questions come, and no answers are sufficient. The only one who has answers is beyond us now, and we can't reach him—not in this world.

It would be easy to lose myself in sorrow, to drown in the waves of sadness. His absence in my life is almost as strong as his presence was. Like my son in person, his absence makes a statement and walks around with me, consuming a space in my heart that the boy used to fill.

It's a surreal experience, losing a child. Even though he was 30, and far from a "child," there's no perfect word to express that. It's an out-of-order death. Parents are supposed to go first. There's nothing right about outliving someone you birthed.





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Yet, it's done, and there's no undoing it. His ashes sit in my living room to remind me—as if I needed that.

So, I'm left with memories and knowledge of the man he was and with hope for the future. I have hope for seeing him again, for understanding the whys and for knowing he's at peace.

I will go to him, but he will not return to me. ***“But now he is dead... Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me”*** (2 Samuel 12:23).

I'm left with the example he set, giving of himself freely to so many.

He was generous, to a fault.

He was funny and unique, a bright light that drew everyone to him.

He was an old soul and a deep thinker, talking easily about matters of the spirit and the heart.

He was a hard worker, competitive and driven.

He was a soldier for five years—maybe always at heart.

He was tough on the outside but tender beneath the shell.

He was my son and a joy.

We did our best. However, if I'm honest, I'll admit, most of who he was, was with him from birth. The light was always there; we just nurtured it. He was always his own person, always marched to his beat. He made his choices, even at the end.

Since he died, since I began this new life, the one with a hole in my heart, I've learned so much.

I've learned that love is the answer. Whatever the question, in the end, the answer is love. ***“God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him”*** (1 John 4:16). Ultimately, that's the response I want to have, that I choose to have—to life, to the joys and to the sorrows.

So, I love Alex. I will always love him. I know his choice wasn't one of intention to hurt. It was an act of sadness. Although I can't cure the sadness he felt at the end of his life, I can take the love I have for him and share it with others. I can let it fuel generosity from my spirit to others in his honor and out of love for him.

So, I give blood, as he did, and encourage others to do that.

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I remember the joys of his life and celebrate that. It inspires me to find joy where I can. We never know what the day will bring, but we are called upon to be salt and light. ***“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden”*** (Matthew 5:13-14).

I purpose to be good and to do good. ***“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith”*** (Galatians 6:10).

I purpose to be a neighbor. ***“So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?’ And he said, ‘He who showed mercy on him.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise’”*** (Luke 10:36-37).

I purpose to show mercy, and grace. ***“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy”*** (Matthew 5:7).

We have no way to know the struggles others are facing, but we can show the love of God, the compassion of Christ and the heart of a servant.

I will always be grateful for my son, for the man he was and the life he lived. Though he died, still he lives—in my heart and in the world beyond.

Gratitude helps me face each day, helps me hold on to the good of his life and the good I can do for others.

It’s not an easy walk. No, but it is sacred.

So, how can you face your loss, your grief? Maybe yours is of a different nature—the loss of a spouse, a parent, a sibling or a friend. Or, maybe your loss is not of someone but of something—health, security or some other vital component of your life.

I wish I had a magic cure to offer, but no one has that. The only answer is taking one day, one hour, one minute, at a time, opening your heart to gratitude for the good things you still have and becoming a conduit to share with others. Service. Love. That’s it. That’s the only answer I’ve found.

It’s not just a theory. It really works.

We’re told we won’t have more to bear than we can handle. ***“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God***

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*is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it”* (1 Corinthians 10:13). It’s been hard to accept that, and yet, I’m still living—still here. I see that Alex is still playing a part in life too, through me, and others who love him. He’s still influencing, still touching hearts, still bringing smiles.

To anyone struggling with grief, I would say this: Celebrate the one you mourn; remember him at his best; honor him for his gifts; talk about him. Departed loved ones are part of your life, and they always will be. Their stories still have power and work to do. Now, you are the messenger, the keeper of their legacies, and you’ll find ways to let the persons you love and miss spill over into the lives of others through you. Be thankful they were in your life and the joy you had with them. You have that forever. Nothing will change that or rewrite that history. Those memories and those times are yours, and nothing can take that away from you.

Now, you look forward. Every day, every night, brings me closer to seeing again that face I love. His face is one of many I miss, those already on the other side. Yet, I believe it will be the first one I see when I join them.


So, I wait, but I wait in peace. The sadness is there, yes, present every day. Yet, so is the joy that he lived, that he touched so many lives with his life. He is still doing that.

Although I mourn, I am comforted. ***“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted”*** (Matthew 5:4).

Though you mourn, you will be comforted.

Weeping is for the night, but joy comes in the morning. ***“For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning”*** (Psalm 30:5).

We are in the night now, but dawn is coming.

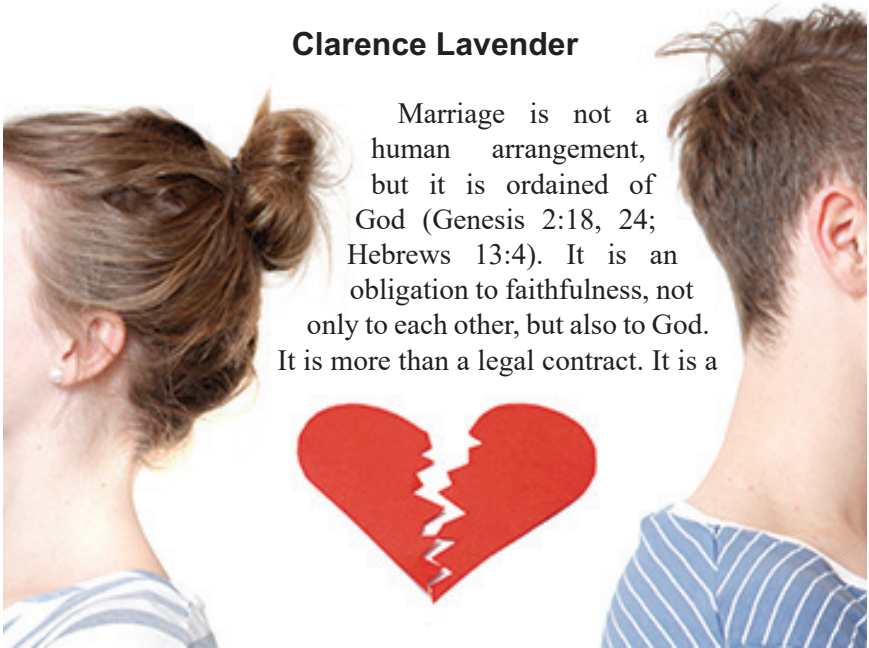
When it comes, we’ll know joy, and reunion. Our wounds will be healed, and our hearts will be whole. 

Sheila Choate Gibson: In honor and memory of my son, Robert Alexander “Alex” Gibson: June 18, 1987-October 3, 2017. Sheila is the daughter of J.C. and Betty Choate.

# Unhappy Marriages Are Not God's Fault

**Clarence Lavender**

Marriage is not a human arrangement, but it is ordained of God (Genesis 2:18, 24; Hebrews 13:4). It is an obligation to faithfulness, not only to each other, but also to God. It is more than a legal contract. It is a



partnership with each other and with God. Marriage is a union of a man and a woman in need of one another. One of the reasons that marriage is in crisis today is because many have lost this sense of being needed.


The crisis in marriage can be seen in that one out of four marriages is broken by divorce. In fact, more divorces are granted in the United States each year than the rest of the world combined. Of the three remaining, desertion takes its painful toll. Of the two that stay together, many are emotionally shattered and functionally do not work. One out of the four is happily married.

Since the odds are against a successful marriage, it is to our advantage to watch for symptoms of troubled marriages. Some symptoms are (1) loss of interest in family members and family activities, (2) loss of interest in caring for the house and personal property, (3) a sense of “drifting apart,” (4)

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chronic and unresolved conflicts, (5) lower than usual achievement levels, (6) poor interpersonal relations at home and other places, (7) defensiveness and overprotection, (8) marked changes in behavior, (9) undue suspicion of the other's behavior, (10) low level of control over emotions, (11) chronic depression, (12) extremes in behavior, (13) overreaction to situations and (14) distorted and confused communications.

God has given us principles if they are followed whereby our marriages can be strengthened. A few of these are (1) making marriage a partnership (Genesis 2:18), (2) showing an interest in each other, his or her work (Philippians 2:4), (3) being unselfish (1 Corinthians 13:5), (4) never being jealous of in-law relations (Proverbs 6:34), (5) being tolerant (Matthew 7:3), (6) being pleasant (Proverbs 16:24), (7) keeping a merry heart (Proverbs 15:13), (8) hearing a matter completely before answering it (Proverbs 18:13), (9) speaking fitting words (Proverbs 25:11) and (10) being forgiving (Colossians 3:13).

Unhappy marriages are not God's fault. He has given us principles by which to live. God doesn't fail people. They fail themselves. 

### Kenney's Pennies

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses" (1 Timothy 6:12 NKJV). Paul's instructions to Timothy did not refer to carnal weapons but to proclaiming the truth at every front and opportunity. Sometimes, I wonder how much of a "fight" we put forth these days? Some are so camouflaged with worldliness, one wonders if they have forgotten on Whose side they are?



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# Forbid Not the Little Children

Dean Kelly

*“Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.’ And He laid His hands on them and departed from there”* (Matthew 19:13-

15 NKJV). When we moved to Highland Home to begin working with the church there, almost ten years ago, Chris, our youngest, was 11-years-old. There were few little ones in the congregation at that time, especially no small children.

Now, our Sunday and Wednesday night Bible classes have several children. Our classes are able to be divided by age. I know that doesn't sound like much to some from larger congregations, but for our little group of around 50, that is exciting news. We have two babies on the way. We have several that range from 9-months to 4-years-old. There is a sizable number that are older than 4, up to about 10 or 11. It is exciting for us to see these little ones heading to and coming from our Bible classes.

Sometimes the little ones get a little loud. One Sunday, two of our little boys (both less than 18-months-old) were not in good moods, and






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they let everybody know it. One mother said, “I think our boys tried to out-preach you today!” Just this past Sunday, one of our little girls was given a quarter by her mother to put in the collection plate. She is a cute little girl with curly hair. I can’t remember how old she is, exactly, but she is a toddler. When the plate went by, she put the money in, but then she let out a loud complaint, and cried, “I want my money back!” I am glad we take up collection near the end of services, because every person in the auditorium was laughing so hard after they heard her. (I wonder how many adults actually feel the same way, but they just aren’t honest enough to admit it out loud, or they don’t give at all. That’s a thought for another day!) Sometimes someone asks me, “Does it bother you when these little ones make noise or do something funny?” My answer is that it does not bother me at all. Here are some of the reasons why.

1. I always say that if I can’t out-preach the babies that I might as well give up. I have never been a big believer in making a fuss because babies make some noise. I have heard the deafening silence when a congregation has no little ones.
2. When a little one is making noise in the assembly, it means he or she is in the assembly. I believe that the sounds of little ones in the assembly mean that there are parents who believe in the importance of assembling. Each squeak, squeal, laugh or cry tells me that someone realizes that the time to teach a little one about assembling together is from the day he or she is born! Those little noises will turn to language, and ultimately little ones will become adults who have been taught from birth that assembling to study God’s Word and to worship Him are important parts of life.
3. Once in a while a mother says, “I haven’t gotten to really listen to a sermon in months, and I worry that we are bothering others!” Now, I know that this is Dean, not Bible, but I believe that what you are gaining as you struggle with your little one, as that little one wiggles, whines and complains, as that little one thrashes about and demands your attention (all you young mothers know what I mean), what you

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are gaining is the respect of right-thinking people and the growth of a little one who will know what worship is as he or she grows. The way I look at it, a lost sermon or two along the way may help to prevent a lost soul later on down the road.

4. I ask for God's blessings on young parents. I know that you are making decisions every day that affect your children's future and even their eternities. Stay strong and ever put Christianity before their eyes. Please don't ever let anyone discourage you from doing what will build up your children in serving God. You will never regret it if you bring them to worship. Hopefully, it will keep you from ever being in the situation where you cry out, in a serious lament, "I want my children back," when it is too late. We pray for you, we love you, and we want to be an encouragement to you in every way as you do this especially important, very wonderful, yet difficult job.
5. Let me encourage each of us to reassure these young parents to have their children in the assembly, at Bible classes and involved in their parents' Christian lives. Let each of us, like Jesus say, ***"Let the little children come to Me [Jesus], and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."*** What a blessing our little ones are, gifts from God Himself. 

Dean Kelly is the minister for the Highland Home Church of Christ in Highland Home, Alabama, USA.

### David's Devotional

If someone has never heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ, dies and stands before God, he will be lost! Ignorance is no excuse! It is sad and it is unfortunate, but it is true! Several years ago, smallpox killed many people. Today, we have a vaccine; therefore, we don't see many dying from that disease. Some may say, "It's not fair that we don't die, yet years ago they did die!" It's not a question of "fairness," but it's a question of ignorance! They didn't know the cure! The question is, "Do we know Jesus?" This is why it is so important to take the true message to the lost! They simply don't know!

# The Divine Sanctification of the Seventh Day

Ronald D. Reeves



A majority of Christian-minded men and women properly conclude that the first day of the week, Sunday, has been set aside as a day of worship in the Christian Age. In contrast, others promote the continued observance of the seventh day—the Sabbath—in the Christian Age. They assert that the Lord sanctified the seventh day on the very first seventh day. In addition, these people declare that such warrants the continued observance of the Sabbath as a day of rest in the Christian Age—to the

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exclusion of the first day of the week as a day of worship. *“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made”* (Genesis 2:3 NKJV). However, consider the following observations.

1. The seventh day was classed with the other six days as a day of the week (Genesis 1:3–2:3).
2. Genesis 2:3 states the fact of divine sanctification, neither giving a command **on this occasion** to sanctify the seventh day nor stating **when** the sanctification of the seventh day occurred.
3. The only clue in this passage (Genesis 2:3) as to when the seventh day was sanctified is observed in the past perfect tense of the verb “had rested.” The tense of the verb demands that we view the action of “resting” as having been completed before the divine sanctification. Thus, the divine sanctification of the seventh day occurred after God had rested. This passage does not specifically detail the lapse of time between the two events.
4. The statement of divine sanctification of the seventh day (Genesis 2:3) was written about 2,500 years after the creation—during the life of Moses, ca. 1571-1451 B.C.).
5. The Sabbath Day is not mentioned in the Book of Genesis. The first occasion of it being mentioned is recorded in Exodus 16:22-23. This occasion is 13 days before the giving of the Ten Commandments by the Lord to Moses (Exodus 20:1-17), in which the command to keep the Sabbath Day holy was formally applied to the Hebrew people.
6. The Sabbath was made known on Mt. Sinai (ca. 1491 B.C.) rather than at an earlier date. This text specifically names Moses as the agent by whom such was communicated (Nehemiah 9:13-14).
7. The newness of the Sabbath Day in the time of Moses is evident as he did not know what to do with those who violated the Sabbath observance. If the sanctification of the Sabbath Day had occurred about 2,500 years before, with the Sabbath Day being so honored for such a period

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of time, then an inquiry about the disposition of the man breaking the Sabbath Day would not have been needed (Numbers 15:32-36).

8. This passage (Genesis 2:3) sets forth a prolepsis (“the representation or assumption of a future act or development as if presently existing or accomplished” *Merriam-Webster*) wherein two events widely separated in time are joined together in one statement. Other examples of this can be found in Genesis 3:20; 4:20 and Matthew 10:4. Thus, the resting of God on the first seventh day occurred in a different time frame (ca. 4004 B.C.) than the divine sanctification of the seventh day, which occurred much later (ca. 1491 B.C., Exodus 20:1-17).
9. Another example of a prolepsis is recorded in Romans 9:10-13. The text of Romans 9:12 is based upon Genesis 25:23 (ca. 1836 B.C.) while the text of Romans 9:13 is based upon Malachi 1:2-3 (ca. 445 B.C.). Thus, a span of about 1,400 years separates the events recorded in the two adjoining verses. Similarly, a span of about 2,500 years separates the events recorded in Genesis 2:3 and the divine sanctification of the seventh day (4004 B.C. vs. 1491 B.C.).
10. There are no passages of Scripture that state or illustrate that the Sabbath Day was kept before Israel left Egypt (ca. 1491 B.C.). Such an omission should be expected in view of the above points.

Although this discussion only addresses one ploy made by the present-day defenders of the Sabbath Day, we may be assured that their other strategies can be addressed as clearly as has been done in this short article. May we be reminded that the day biblically assigned as a day of worship in the Christian Age is the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:2), as supported by the biblical record and example of Acts 20:7. As we ardently defend the first day of the week as the divinely assigned day of worship, may we also ardently support by our active involvement the first day of the week as the Christian day of worship. We trust that our membership will assemble on the Lord’s Day at every opportunity. 

**Ronald D. Reeves is a longtime preacher who lives in Arkansas, USA.**

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# Transliterated or Translated

David R. Kenney

Some may not recognize the difference between *translation* and *transliteration*, but it can be a very important matter. To translate a word means to select a word from the other language that has an equivalent meaning. Sometimes translators prefer, for whatever reason, to transliterate a word rather than to translate it. Perhaps there is no equivalent word in English, and so they prefer to bring the word into an English format through transliteration.

How does one transliterate a word? One takes the letters of the word in the original language, and then matches, letter-for-letter to the word in the target language. Next, one modifies these transferred letters to fit within the convention of the target language by smoothing the term into a word that appears to be English. For example, if you were transliterating into English, the smoothing process would be called Anglicizing, but if German, the process would be called Germanizing.

An important passage to see that that baptism is **not** a translation but rather a transliteration was pointed out to me by Wayne Jackson.

Then the anointed priest shall take some of the bull's blood and bring it to the tabernacle of meeting. The priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the Lord, in front of the veil of the sanctuary. And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the Lord, which is in the tabernacle of meeting; and he shall pour the remaining blood of the bull at the base of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. (Leviticus 4:5–7 NKJV)

Notice that there are three distinct actions performed; however, the words are not the same! The following chart gives one a comparison.



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Language	Sprinkle	Pour	Dip/Immerse
Hebrew OT	<i>nâzâh</i>	<i>yā·ṣaq</i>	<i>ṭâbal</i>
Greek (LXX)	<i>porsrhanei</i>	<i>ekcheei</i>	<i>bapsei</i>
Greek NT	<i>rhantízō</i>	<i>ekchéō</i>	<i>baptízō</i>
German	<i>gespritzed</i>	<i>gegossen</i>	<i>Getauft</i>
English Translations	sprinkle	pour	baptize

Of particular significance are the LXX and the Greek New Testament. Both of these languages are in Koine Greek, but the timespan between these two works is significant. (The LXX for Leviticus dates to approximately 250 B.C.) Still, the words remain distinctly different from one another (sprinkle, pour and immerse). One of the arguments some attempt to make is that baptism refers to the general meaning of a washing which can be accomplished in a plurality of methods (sprinkling, pouring or immersing). **This argument attempts to generalize where the LXX and the Greek NT specify.** They try to argue this generalization is a product of time; however, such is not the case. One can find instances of pouring in the New Testament (Matthew 26:7, 12; Mark 14:3; Luke 10:34, et. al.), but these are not translated from **baptízō**. One can find instances of sprinkling in the Greek New Testament (Hebrews 9:19, 21; 10:22, et. al.), but these are not translated from **baptízō** either. When one examines a Greek Lexicon where the New Testament uses the term “baptize” or “baptism,” the term is **baptízō** (or some form of it.) Neither the term “sprinkle” nor “pour” are used in connection with Christian baptism.

The apostle Paul portrayed baptism beautifully as a burial with Christ. *“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life”* (Romans 6:3-4). The terms “baptized” and “baptism” here both mean the same thing: “plunging, dipping, washing, water-rite, baptism” (*Analytical Greek Lexicon* 165).

As to the concept of the usage of the term “washing” in reference to baptism, there is an interesting occurrence where both terms show up in

## TEXTUAL STUDIES

Ananias' directions to Saul of Tarsus. "*And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord*" (Acts 22:16). Here, Saul was told to "*wash*" (apolouō) and "*be baptized*" (baptizō). The general meaning "*wash*" is given a specific method of "immersion." What Saul was being told was to wash away his sins through the mode of immersion, not sprinkling or pouring. In this instance, the term "*wash*" was used, but the method was still specified. If baptism meant "to wash" in a general sense, then how does one explain this? One will search in vain to find an instance in the New Testament where the terms for "sprinkling" and "pouring" are used for Christian baptism.

Sadly, many translations have done mankind a disservice by refusing to translate the term **baptizō** in order to perpetuate the false doctrine of sprinkling and pouring as forms of Christian baptism. In 1611, the translators of the King James Version reversed the Puritans' error of rendering baptism as "wash," but they made the unfortunate decision to transliterate the term as "baptism" rather than to translate it. This has been known for centuries, as acknowledged by Martin Luther who stated in his *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, "The second part of baptism is the sign, or sacrament, which is that immersion in water from which it derives its name, for the Greek 'baptizo' means 'I immerse,' and 'baptisma' means, 'immersion.'"

Some will try to minimize or trivialize these matters, but let me ask you a question to ponder. When you stand before Christ, would you rather that you had been sprinkled, poured or immersed into Christ (Galatians 3:27)? If one wants to obey what Christ commanded, there is only one correct answer. ✝

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**David R. Kenney preaches for the church of Christ in Wadsworth, Ohio, USA.**



# Scavenger Hunt

## through Proverbs

Rebecca Rushmore

(Answers inside back cover)

1. What is the beginning of knowledge?
2. If we trust and lean on the Lord, what will He do?
3. What is the beginning of wisdom?
4. What exalts a nation and what is a reproach to a nation?
5. What is one who is led astray by wine and strong drink?
6. Name two places it would be better to live than with an angry, brawling or contentious woman.
7. What should one choose instead of great riches, silver and gold?
8. How should we treat our enemy who is hungry and thirsty?
9. To what bold animal are the righteous compared?
10. What is one who adds to God's words?

# **Where Was God When Stephen Needed Him?**

**Royce Frederick**

Can you imagine yourself in Stephen's situation? From among the thousands of Christians in the city, the Christians in Jerusalem had chosen him and six other men to serve in a very special way (Acts 6:1-6). The apostles themselves had appointed



him to his new work as one of the deacons. Along with the other six men, it was his responsibility to supply food to poor widows every day, and he had to be careful to do it in a way that was fair for all of them. His faithfulness in this work helped lighten the load of responsibilities that the apostles were carrying. It helped them give their full attention to teaching and preaching the Word of God. As a result, many more people were led to Christ (Acts 6:7).

Now, the enemies of the truth were throwing stones at Stephen (Acts 7:57-59). The pain was terrible, and death was near. He had served God well in relieving the suffering of other people, but God did not choose to spare Stephen from suffering and death at the hands of these wicked men.


It is reported that an atheist once asked a Christian, "If there is a God, why didn't He help Stephen when his enemies stoned him to death?" The Christian replied, "God did help Stephen—by giving him the grace to pray

## BIBLE CHARACTERS

for his murderers.”

The Lord does not promise to totally protect Christians from all problems and pains on earth. Sometimes, He does remove the trouble, and yet, at other times, God lets the trouble remain and provides His grace to help us endure (2 Corinthians 12:9).

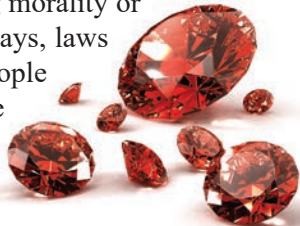
The stones of enemies were able to destroy Stephen’s physical body, but they were not able to destroy his faith and love. In his dying moment, “... *he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not charge them with this sin.’ And when he had said this, he fell asleep [died]*” (Acts 7:60).

God did not abandon Stephen. At the end of time, God will raise Stephen from death and bring him to His home in Heaven to live forever. *“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus”* (1 Thessalonians 4:14). God does promise to totally protect Christians forever in Heaven. *“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away”* (Revelation 21:4). 

Royce Frederick is the Editor of *International Gospel Teacher* and lives in Fort Worth, Texas, USA.

### Roblson Rubies

Have you ever heard it said that “You can’t legislate morality”? Sounds good, but if it is taken to its logical conclusion, it would mean that we could never have any laws against murder, rape or incest. If you can’t legislate morality, you could not have laws against slavery, child marriages or sex trafficking. I’ve heard some authors go so far as to say that most legislation is either legislating morality or legislating immorality. I suppose in some ways, laws are just codifications of the moral codes people accept. Yet, what if people get things upside down? The Bible said it could happen. *“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil”* (Isaiah 5:20).



## **BIBLE CHARACTERS**

# **Be a Barnabas**

**Patrick Morrison**

Barnabas is one of the great characters of the Bible. Here is one who was such an encourager that the apostles changed his name to reflect this (Acts 4:36)! In every instance wherein we read of Barnabas, we see him acting as an exhorter of his brethren. What an asset to the first century church! What would the church look like today if more people would strive to be like Barnabas? It is all too easy to fall into the trap of running down the brethren, of finding fault with others and of magnifying the shortcomings of others so that our own failures appear miniscule in comparison. Think of the souls that could be won to the Lord and built up in the faith if we would give our energy to being encouragers rather than tearing down or belittling our brothers and sisters. What made Barnabas such a great encourager? Notice what he did that we can emulate today.

Find someone in need and enrich him or her. When many of the new converts were suddenly in great need, Barnabas and others of kindred spirit rose to the occasion. He sold some land and gave the proceeds to the apostles to distribute as they saw fit (Acts 4:37). This heart of generosity caused the world to notice and long to be part of the family of God. What if Barnabas had maintained that what he possessed was his own, and he did not have to share it? Would the church have grown as rapidly without the giving spirit of ones like Barnabas?

Find someone who is alone and include him or her. Saul of Tarsus was a great enemy of the Lord and His people, wreaking havoc upon the early church (Acts 8:3). This antagonist soon had a change of heart and was converted to Christ. The brethren were initially reluctant to accept Saul for fear that he might be feigning conversion in an attempt to infiltrate the church and worsen the persecution against them (Acts 9:36). Barnabas was convinced of the genuineness of Saul's conversion. He brought this new convert to the apostles so that they, too, would accept him as one of their own (Acts 9:27). What if Barnabas had not been so accepting of Paul?



## BIBLE CHARACTERS


Would the church have missed out on the greatest missionary ever known?

Find someone who has fallen and restore him or her. After embarking on their first missionary journey together, Paul and Barnabas returned to report on the work God was doing through them among the Gentiles. As they were preparing to return to the mission field, Barnabas made known his desire to take John Mark along with them again. Paul vehemently disagreed,



and the contention became so sharp that Paul and Barnabas parted ways (Acts 15:39). Previously, John Mark had started into the mission field with Paul and Barnabas, but he had turned

back for a reason that is not revealed to us. Barnabas wanted to give this young man another opportunity. However, Paul seemed to have lost respect for John Mark. Yet, we know that later in his ministry, this young man had become very valuable to Paul (2 Timothy 4:11). What if Barnabas had written this young man off because of his mistakes? What if no one would have been willing to give John Mark another opportunity?

I am thankful that God in His infinite wisdom chose to record for us part of the life of this great man, Barnabas. May we seek to encourage and lift up our brethren at every opportunity. We may not have the ability to be great preachers, great song leaders or great Bible class teachers, but every one of us has the potential to be a Barnabas! 

**Patrick Morrison preaches for the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper, Alabama, USA.**



# *New Heavens and a New Earth*

Louis Rushmore

*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for **new heavens and a new earth** in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless. (2 Peter 3:9-14 NKJV)*

The context of 2 Peter 3:9-14 is an end of time passage. This physical


## BIBLE QUESTIONS

earth and the entire universe are only temporary. They will be utterly destroyed; even the basic elements of physical matter will cease to exist—indicated by “*pass away*,” “*the elements will melt*” (twice), “*burned up*” and “*dissolved*.” This earth, however, is presently mankind’s dwelling place.

After this earth and the universe are destroyed—after man’s present dwelling place no longer exists—mankind will need a replacement dwelling place. Peter described the replacement home for righteous souls—“*in which righteousness dwells*”—as “*new heavens and a new earth*.”

This present earth is suited for the physical composition of humans, but we mortals also possess an immortal quality—the possession of our spiritual side—our souls (Hebrews 10:39; James 5:20; 1 Peter 2:11). “*Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it*” (Ecclesiastes 12:7). At the end of time, our mortal bodies will be converted into immortal bodies, suited for a spiritual, non-earthly existence.

*As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed — in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:48-53)*

Changed over to spiritual bodies, we will no longer have a use for a physical dwelling place. The “*new heavens and a new earth*” of which the apostle Peter wrote is a **figurative** reference to a replacement habitation fitted for spiritual bodies. Other Old Testament and New Testament verses likewise use the same expression “*new heavens and a new earth*” also in a figurative way (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; Revelation 21:1). 

## BIBLE QUESTIONS

# Are There Saved in All Churches?

Maxie B. Boren

The common viewpoint of people in the denominational world is that it doesn't make any difference to which church a person belongs, because we're all going to the same place, but just in different ways. This concept is indeed the popular thing to believe, and in fact, **people want to believe it!** They want to believe it because it removes the consternation people would otherwise experience when friends and loved ones hold to doctrines that are diametrically opposite to their own.

For whatever reasons, there is a growing tendency, it seems to me, for more and more members of the Lord's church to have such an outlook. This is a natural result, when one considers a decline in Bible knowledge within our ranks and the inclination to be like the others about us. Tragically, the church throughout the land has so many half-converted, ill-informed members that a drift toward denominationalism and its concepts poses a great danger. It is no real surprise, then, that many members of the church have indeed embraced the idea that there are saved in all churches.

However, can one substantiate such a philosophy from the Scriptures? Doesn't it matter any longer what the Bible teaches? Do keep in mind that the **Bible is the Word of God** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)!

The Bible teaches that *"all spiritual blessings are in Christ"* (Ephesians 1:3). To be *"in Christ"* is to be in the church over which Christ has been made the Head and of which He is the Savior (Ephesians 1:20-23; 5:23; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14). The apostle Paul declared that there is but *"one body."* Since there is **only one body**, and since the body is the church, then there is **only one church** (Ephesians 4:4).

The Scriptures plainly teach that those who hear the Gospel message,

## BIBLE QUESTIONS

believe it and render submissive obedience to the terms of pardon the Lord gave enter Christ. Christ adds these that are being saved to the church (Acts 2:41, 47). Thus, the process by which penitent believers are saved from sin is the same process by which they become members of the church. **The Lord's church is the spiritual body of the saved!**

There's no such thing as being saved, and yet being outside the Lord's church. The Lord adds the saved to the church! Apart from Christ, people are lost; those of responsible mind and age who have not obeyed the Gospel are apart from Christ. To be apart from Christ is the same as being outside His church. Those outside His church are lost.

If a person really believes the Bible is the Word of God, He will obey the Gospel of Christ, whereupon Jesus will add Him to **His church**. There is the one true church of the Bible, and then there are other churches that mere men have made. †

**Maxie B. Boren (1932–2016) was a Gospel preacher and an elder in the Brown Trail congregation in Bedford, Texas, USA.**



### Robison's Rubies

If the Bible is an inspired authority for how we live our lives (and I believe based on evidence that it is), then how can we understand that authority? People say, "You can't understand that book."

However, we can understand the Bible.

We just have to apply some common sense. First, realize what era of time is being addressed. In Genesis 6 is a command that an ark be built, but we didn't live in that time period. In Exodus-Deuteronomy, commands for building a tabernacle, keeping feasts and offering sacrifices were given, but we don't live in that time period, either. We live in the time period of Christ, who has spoken to us in this last era, "these last days" (Hebrews 1:1-4). Therefore, we need to follow the commands of the New Testament, given in the time of Christ.

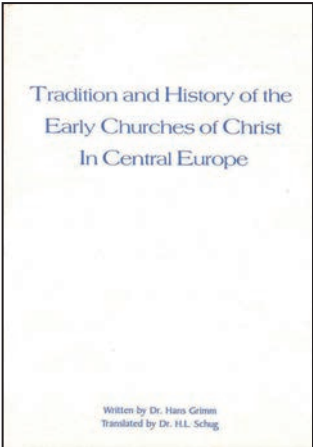
# RESTORATION HISTORY

James Vinzant

The Book of Acts in the New Testament contains a record of the origin and early history of the church of Christ. Acts 2 records the sermon of Peter with the eleven apostles when about 3,000 were baptized **“for the remission of sins”** and were added to the body of believers. This was the beginning of *ekklesia*, the **“called out”** body of believers, the church. Inspired writings from the pens of Luke, Paul, Peter, John, James and Jude contain the Holy Spirit’s record of the church’s continuing growth through most of the first century (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

During the following years, as the Scriptures had forewarned, there was a **“falling away”** from the truth and the **“man of sin, the son of perdition”** was revealed. He was to be the one who **“opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God and is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God”** (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4). The apostle Paul went on to forewarn that this **“mystery of lawlessness is already at work,”** the result of believing lies and lawlessness (vs. 5-12).

These predictions of Scripture culminated as ecumenical councils developed new doctrines and super-organizations unknown to the New Testament, finally approving the office of Pope as the universal bishop in A.D. 606. In the process of time, men like Martin



Tradition and History of the  
Early Churches of Christ  
In Central Europe

Written by Dr. Hans Grimm  
Translated by Dr. H.L. Schug

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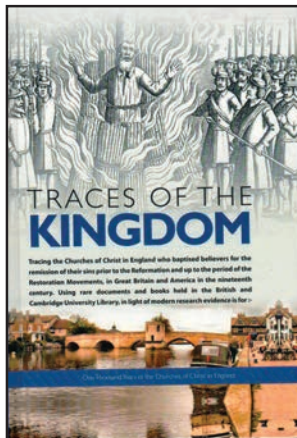
## CHURCH HISTORY

Luther, John Huss and many others called for a return to the Bible for authority in religion. Those who protested departures from the Bible came to be known as *protestants*.

In various locations in Europe, and later in America, men who called for returning to the roots of Christianity were called simply *disciples* or *Christians* (Acts 11:26). This restoration movement began to spread like *fire in dry stubble*, as described by religious historians in early America. Thousands rejected denominational names, creeds, and affiliations. During those many years, they were identified simply as Christians or disciples.

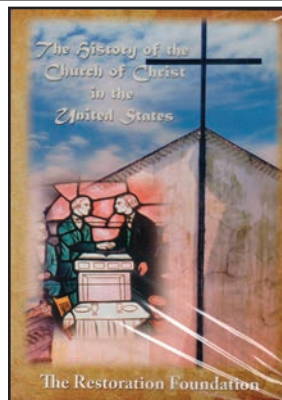
A summary of these events has been produced by James Vinzant through his decades of study and research. He came from many generations of Gospel preachers in his family. He traveled and researched their work in a carefully documented history of the past 200 years. Vinzant's excellent history is being offered on DVD through his generosity **WITHOUT COST** while the supply lasts. Contact us early for your free copy.

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**Traces of the Kingdom** by Keith Sisman (deceased) traces the church of Christ in England prior to the Reformation and up to the period of the Restoration Movements, in Great Britain and America in the nineteenth century. Using rare documents and books held in the British and Cambridge University libraries, in light of modern research, evidence is for one thousand years of the churches of Christ in England. **Cost: \$29.95, and worth every penny!**

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FROM THE HEART OF

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# THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

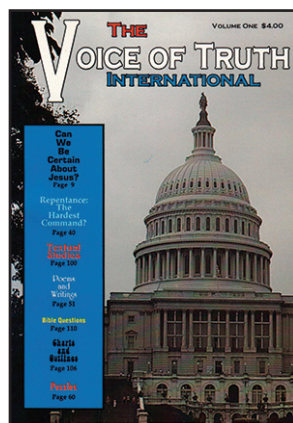
Betty Burton Choate

**Volume 100!!!** A milestone in our history!

The first issue of *The Voice of Truth International* was printed in 1994, a small printing for the beginning because there were no subscribers and no supporters. J.C. Choate served as the Editor, with Byron Nichols as the Associate Editor. The format was similar to *Reader's Digest*, a perfect-bound black-and-white booklet with graphics and divided into topical articles. Numerous well-known and biblically sound brethren were invited to be staff writers.

The intention from the beginning was to make *The Voice of Truth International* a magazine that could be shared with brethren and seekers all over the world. Currently, approximately 35,000 to 40,000 copies are printed of each quarterly issue, most in India, but six thousand copies are also printed in Nigeria and an additional five thousand in Ghana. Seven thousand are circulated in India and surrounding nations. Usually about 20,000 copies are shipped to the States for churches and individual subscribers here, and for mailing to about 50 nations abroad.

In addition to the English copies, *The Voice of Truth International* is translated and printed in the Indian languages of Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, Marathi and also Braille. (Brethren there draw from TVOTI for articles for their monthly magazines, printed in various Indian languages, and many brethren in the States use it as a source for their bulletin articles.) A few issues were also translated into Spanish, and we would like to do more but are in need of capable volunteers who can do the translation and layout.



## FROM THE HEART OF

Shown below are covers for the magazine in other languages, and in Braille. Almost half of the world's blind population lives in India, and so we are thankful to have a good program of evangelism among them, as well as printing in Braille so that they can continue to study God's Word in their own places.



We have individual subscriptions in the US for *The Voice of Truth International* for \$15 for a one-year subscription or \$25 for two years. Congregations can receive a box of 35 copies of 4 issues for \$350 per year. Many congregations do order boxes to be shared among their members and to be given to contacts in their area.

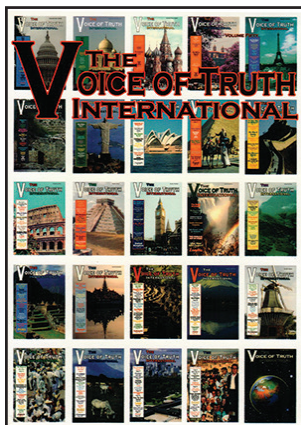
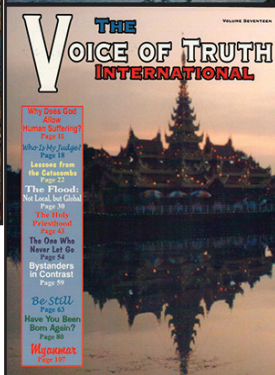
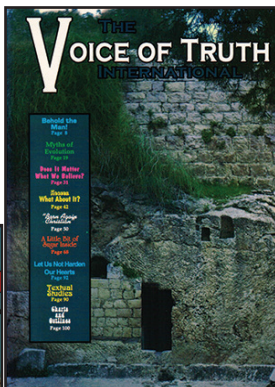
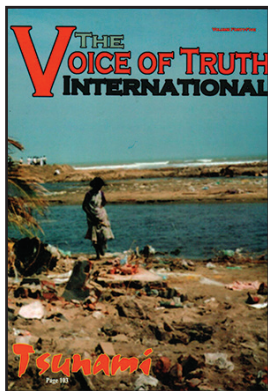
We ship many thousands of copies overseas, free of any charge to the recipients, paying the costs from “profits” accumulated from subscriptions. (No salaries are paid to editors, writers or layout staff.). Some time back, we came close to the “overdrawn” point in the TVOTI bank account; so, we made an appeal to churches and to brethren to put us in their budgets for monthly contributions so that we could continue using the magazine as a major outreach tool. We are very thankful that the response to that appeal was enough to keep us solvent.

Because *The Voice of Truth International* was intended primarily as a study tool for people in nations where other biblically sound materials would not be available, each issue carries about fifteen topics: **God, Evidences, The Word of God, Salvation, The Church, Doctrine to Live By, Christianity in Action, Worship, Daily Christian Living, The Christian Home, Textual Studies, Bible Characters, Charts and Outlines, Humor, Poems, and additional fillers.** As issues continued to accumulate, in effect a library of materials dealing with the various topics became available for the recipients who would have few other study

## FROM THE HEART OF

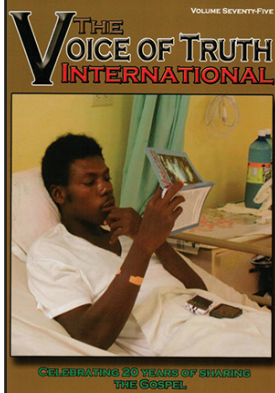
tools! This was J.C.'s goal when he dreamed of beginning the magazine.

Many issues have focused on a particular country. **"From the Heart of..."** would give some secular, historical background, followed by the spiritual, historical development and showing what was currently being done. The front cover featured a picture of something representative of the country, while the back cover showed a map and a summary of its secular and spiritual development. We had hoped to continue with this plan until every nation in the world in which the Lord's church existed had been featured, but slowness in response to our requests caused us to begin to focus on particular needs and brotherhood works. We continue with



a mixture of topics, intending to emphasize current developments and goals.

Volume 50, as shown to the left, carried pictures on the front and back of all previous front covers. We're using the covers for volumes 51-100 on this issue!





## FROM THE HEART OF

### Letters from Recipients

Greetings from Nigeria. I'm writing to inform you that 3,000 copies of the just printed VOTI Volume 99 have been distributed so far to churches of Christ in the Northern, Eastern and Western States of Nigeria for the end of the year and beginning of the new year programs.

The remaining will be shared during the forthcoming Great Workshop 2019 for preachers/WBSFUW in Mbaize town, Imo State between February 6-9, 2019 Lord willing.

We deeply appreciate your great support for the growth of the Lord's church in Africa and the rest of the world. May the Lord continue to bless all your undertaking in Jesus Christ name, amen. Makinde Ebens

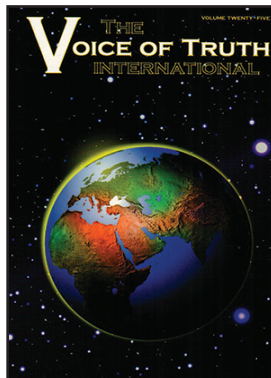
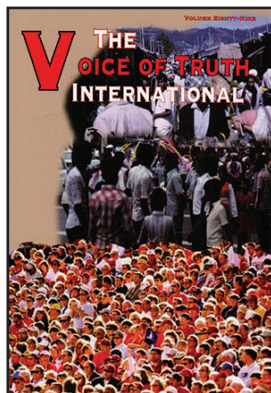
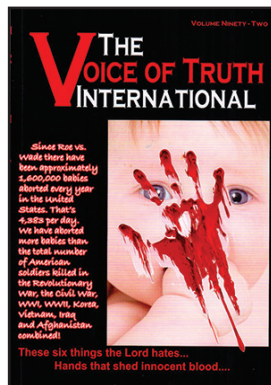
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Dear beloved in Christ, We would like to request your assistance of Gospel materials and be on your mailing list for *The Voice of Truth*. We are a group of people who are committed to evangelize in the villages and towns of Malawi. Our main challenge is lack of Gospel materials for spiritual growth and the sake of sinners. We are blessed with your teachings through your publications which are available here in Malawi through some other people. Therefore, we request your collaboration and partnership with us, so that we may spread together the word of God and grow spiritually. Yours in Christ, Cathereen Belenado

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Greetings to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I thank you for your wonderful work you have been doing through this *Voice of Truth International* world wide. For some years now I have not been able to reach My Study helper, Bob Phillips, who used to assist with the current volumes produced for the work of evangelism. Edafetite Edafe, DELTA STATE, NIGERIA.

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## FROM THE HEART OF

I, brother Sunday Ekpe (preacher) of the Church of Christ in Mkpiani, Nigeria, respectfully write this application on behalf of the church, to apply for **THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL** through your good office to be donated to our congregation. In respect of this, the materials will be of help in teaching and evangelising in our locality. More so, we hope these materials will aid us as an effective means of evangelism. I hope you will give this application due consideration and approval by adding our name into your regular mailing list. We are looking forward to receiving a nice reply.

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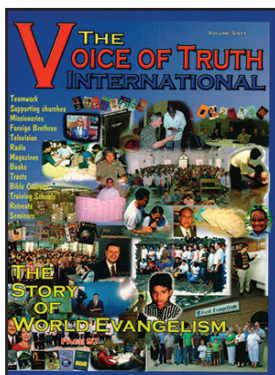
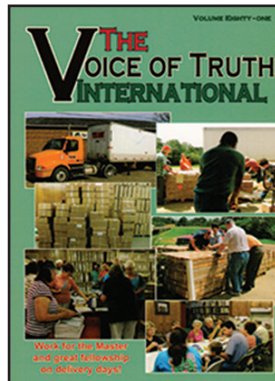
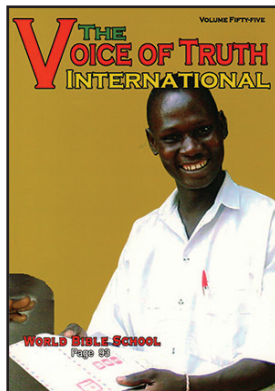
Greetings from Nigeria. The sms message that just reached me from one of the recipients of VOTI volume 97, named brother M.B. Archibong, shows that the two-day WBS seminar held in his congregation resulted into 22 conversions. Brother Archibong got the highest numbers of VOTI volume 97, 5 packages of 50 booklets each for distribution at the just-concluded seminar. I remain your fellow minister of God, Makinde E. Olufemi (minister).

---

Thank you for sending me *Voice of Truth International*. Those books helped us to convert 18 souls for Christ. We need more and more to share with our preachers and follow-up workers. Your books help us in Bible classes as well as in evangelism. We need many copies to enable me to conduct another seminar. Please extend this appreciation to the office in America. (from Nigeria)

---

From the USA: I keep copies in my car and also at my door so that I can offer one to whoever comes to my house. I always encourage them to visit with the church and to study with us, and I write my name and phone number in the magazine so that they can call me if they have any questions.





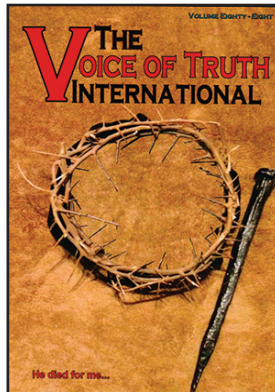
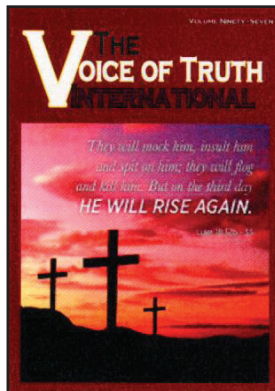
## FROM THE HEART OF Today

What changes have come about during these intervening 25 years? The format itself remains the same except that, now, we have upgraded to full color, making each issue a treasure to read and preserve.

We are thankful that *The Voice of Truth International* continues to be widely read throughout the world, with Louis Rushmore now serving as Editor and Jerry Bates as Associate Editor. Both have been part of our “World Evangelism” team since 2007. We draw from many sound writers in our brotherhood for the articles appearing in each issue.

Our greatest desire is that our printed materials will bring salvation to many souls throughout the world. If you, as a reader, have any suggestions that would be helpful to us, please don't hesitate to speak up, and please share the magazine with those around you. The Lord has promised to come. We want to help make others ready. ✝

***This ad appears in the Indian edition:***



## THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

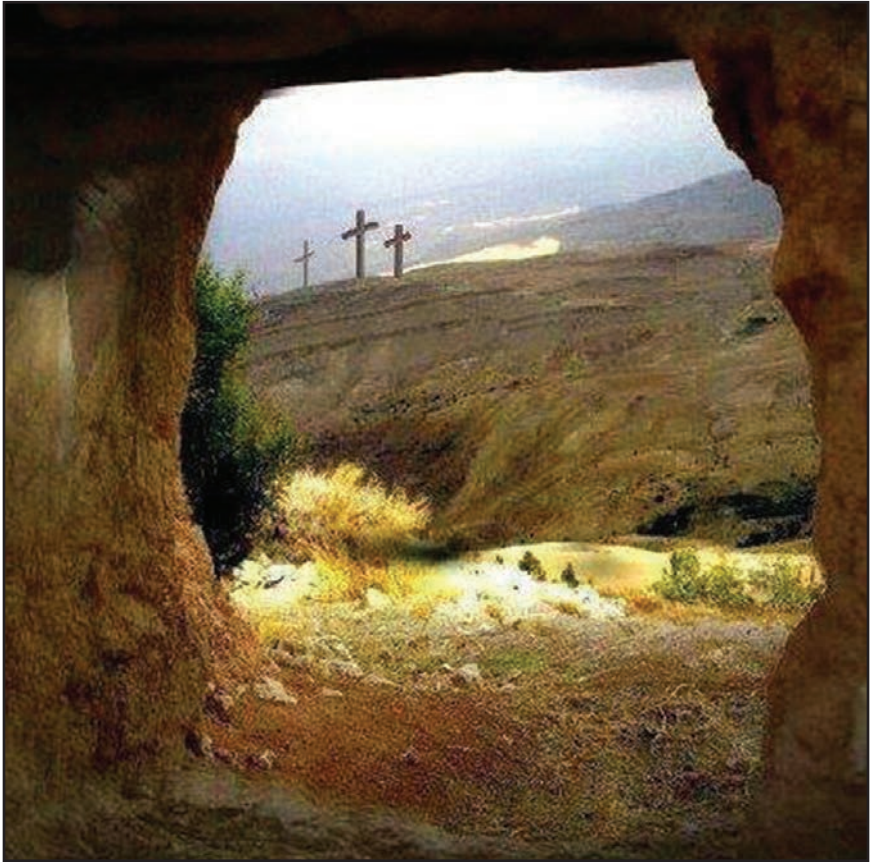
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# *The Mystery of the Ages*

Betty Burton Choate



Mystery of Eternal Ages  
—Turning point in Time—  
Knew no heralding of trumpets,  
Was not recognized by Pilate,  
Sanhedrin nobles,  
Or the mob;

—Bowed with sin  
And condemnation,  
Jesus cried aloud and died.

Who was present  
For the moment  
When Salvation's price was paid?  
Weeping, stood His Mother,  
John,  
A few women who believed,  
And those who mocked in unbelief,  
But not  
The men He'd gathered round Him  
As He taught and healed the land,  
Not His brothers or His sisters  
Had been made to understand.

Only later did they own Him,  
Risen Lord,  
Transcendent God,  
Holy Lamb of man's redemption,  
Judge in glory of us all,  
Only later did they fathom  
—Preach to earth's remotest isle—  
That the Babe laid in the manger  
—That the Man laid in the grave—  
Must be born in hearts of sinners,  
Dead **in** sin,  
Now dead **to** sin,  
And born again, **alive in Him**,  
Eternally.

**West Virginia Christian** is an excellent monthly, 4-page, tabloid, newsprint magazine. Each issue contains insightful, uplifting and edifying religious articles by faithful Christian men and women. In addition, one can find in its pages pertinent news and information about events of interest to brethren in West Virginia and nationwide. Single subscriptions are \$10.00 per year, and bundle rates are available. Readers may write or email for information: West Virginia Christian, 647 Water St., Salem, WV 26426 or [WVaChristian@aol.com](mailto:WVaChristian@aol.com).

**Magnolia Messenger** is a superb quarterly, 24-page, full color, tabloid, newsprint, religious journal. Its layout is modern and appealing to the eye. Inside, the *Magnolia Messenger* is packed with religious articles on a variety of subjects by Christian men and women, with news and with events. Though it especially caters to the State of Mississippi, its appeal reaches nationwide and even addresses items of interest worldwide. Single subscriptions are without charge and made possible by donations from individuals and congregations of the churches of Christ. For further information, write or email: Magnolia Messenger, P.O. Box 1578, Kosciusko, MS 39090 or [franksmm@aol.com](mailto:franksmm@aol.com).

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**Gospel Gazette Online** is a monthly Gospel magazine on the Internet, begun by Louis Rushmore in 1999.

**Gospel Gazette Online**

Serving an international readership with the old Jerusalem Gospel via the Internet

Thousands of articles, written by faithful

Christians, are archived and selectable through the onsite search engine.

**GGO** is free to users throughout the world, and it is visited regularly even in parts of the world that remain virtually inaccessible to missionaries. (**[www.gospelgazette.com](http://www.gospelgazette.com)**)

**Apologetics Press** has been the voice in churches of Christ for many years, speaking clearly and biblically on subjects pertaining to **Creation/Evolution, the Godhead, the inspiration of the Scriptures, and other vital questions of faith**. A new line of Bible class curriculum, **Exploring God's Word**, is available online, and much of it can be downloaded free of charge. Dave Miller has produced excellent DVDs on **The Silencing of God in America** and **The Quran**. **Phone: 800-234-8558; Website: [www.ApologeticsPress.org](http://www.ApologeticsPress.org).**



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**Let this be your commitment:**

**ONE TRACT TO**

**ONE PERSON**

**ONE MINUTE**

**ONE DAY**

---

***SHARE***

**ONE BIBLE LESSON**

**ONCE IN A WEEK TO**

**ONE PERSON**

---

***INTRODUCE***

**ONE NEW VISITOR TO**

**THE LOCAL CONGREGATION**

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# Are *YOU*



**A REFRIGERATOR –  
ONLY STORING  
THINGS?**

**OR**

**ARE YOU AN  
INCUBATOR,  
PRODUCING  
MORE AND  
MORE SOULS  
FOR CHRIST?**



## **What Can You Do to Help Spread the Word?**

- \* For just a moment, put yourself in a village in Africa, or even in a large city in India, or in the jungles of South America. You are an immortal soul, living in a perishing body. How will you knowledgeably prepare for the judgment and eternity that awaits us all?
- \* Does the church of Christ exist in your community, so that you can hear the Gospel preached? For most people in the world, the answer is “No”.
- \* Is there a source for buying Bibles in your community? Though the Bible has been translated into most languages, villages seldom have bookstores. For most people in the world, the answer is “No”.
- \* If you have found the Truth and are a Christian, is there a bookstore from which you can order additional study materials? For most people in the world, the answer is “No”.

So you are born into an unbelieving home, you live according to the religion of your parents, you grow old, and you die, thrust into eternity to meet the God you never knew. What unspeakable tragedy! The scenario is LIFE for the majority of the people of the world.

Through mass media — radio programs, TV, and literature — we are doing all we can to bring God’s Word to people who have so little hope. Half of each issue of *The Voice of Truth International* is sent free of charge to churches and individuals who have few or no other study materials, to aid in their spiritual growth. We ask brethren to help us with \$35 a month, to cover the \$8,000 postage bill incurred with every issue. Will you please have mercy on these souls and help us share the saving Gospel with them?

To help with this particular need, please send your checks to:

**THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL**  
**P.O. Box 72, Winona, MS 38967**

To speed up your announcement that you want to help,  
call us at 662-283-1192 or send your email to

Choate@WorldEvangelism.org  
Website: WorldEvangelism.org

## Dear Brethren:

◆ I want to subscribe to the quarterly magazine, ***The Voice of Truth International***. Enclosed is my check for \$15.00 for four issues, or \$25.00 for eight issues, starting with Volume \_\_\_\_\_. My address is given below.

◆ I want to order the complete set of volumes in print (100 issues) for the reduced price of \$2.00 per copy. My address is given below.

◆ Please send special prices for WBS teachers and their students.

◆ I want to MAKE A GIFT subscription of ***The Voice of Truth International***. Enclosed is my check for \$15.00 for four issues, or \$25.00 for eight issues, starting with Volume \_\_\_\_\_. The address is given below.

◆ I want to send \$30.00 per month (or a multiple), for a box of 35 copies (or multiples) of each issue of the magazine as they are printed. Churches are also urged to use boxes in this way. Or you may send one payment of \$350.00 per year for four issues. This will help us to send more copies to the mission fields.

◆ We want to give \$\_\_\_\_\_ each month to help send this magazine to mission fields of the world, including the USA.

◆ As a congregation we want to help print and circulate copies of each issue of this magazine by making a special contribution to this effort. We can specify where the copies we pay for will be used, whether in our personal work, in jail ministry, overseas, or...

**(Return this form in an envelope, along with your check, to the following address, stating your wishes.)**

**THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL**

**P.O. Box 72**

**Winona, MS 38967**

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PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

## ANSWERS TO PUZZLES

### Verse Search (Page 44)

1. Spiritual gifts
2. Dumb, which indicates lifelessness
3. Ignorance
4. Accursed, Lord
5. Gifts, ministries, diversities
6. Each is to function for the good of the church.
7. Unity
8. Everyone or the church
9. No. No one person had every gift.
10. Inspired teaching or new revelations

### Scavenger Hunt (page 88)

#### Answers:

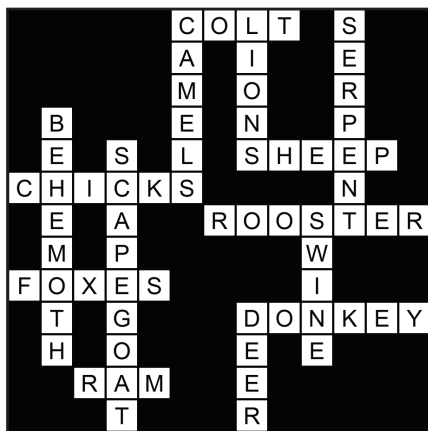
1. "the fear of the Lord" (1:7)
2. direct our paths (3:5-6)
3. "the fear of the Lord" (9:10)
4. righteousness, sin (14:34)
5. not wise (20:1)
6. corner of a housetop or wilder-

11. Human languages

12. One Spirit

13. True

### Bible Find (page 50)



ness (21:9, 19)

7. a good name and loving favor (22:1)
8. give him bread to eat and water to drink (25:21)
9. a lion (28:1)
10. a liar (30:5-6)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

