

HOUSE to HOUSE
HEART to HEART

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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 30 NUMBER 8

A FARMER WHO NEVER PLOWED A FIELD

Allen Webster



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youtube



When He visited earth, Jesus laid aside His regal purple robe to don the coarse dress of the common man.

When Jesus laid down the scepter, He picked up a hammer. He gave up stardust for sawdust. He exchanged the singing of angels for the pounding of nails. He went from framing worlds to framing houses. If you had shaken His hand, you would have felt the calluses put there by countless hours of physical toil. If you had overheard His conversation, it would have been about measurements, plumb lines, and estimated dates of completion.

Yes, Jesus was a carpenter (Mark 6:3), but why? He could have been anything. Unlike us, He was not limited by natural talent or opportunity. Nothing was beyond His capability or beyond His control. He was a jack-of-all-trades, a ten-talent man, a prodigy, and a genius all rolled into one. He could have been born into any family circumstance He wanted or attended any educational institution He chose. He could have had any profession.

This line of reasoning presents some interesting possibilities. Jesus did not

choose to be a farmer. There would have been some logic in the Son of God coming as a farmer. He was the One who gave us “seedtime and harvest” in the first place (Genesis 8:22; John 1:3). He created the very earth and put life into the tiny seed (Genesis 1:11–12). He made the earth fertile, trees fruitful, and vegetables edible. He invented the water cycle and gave the former and latter rains in time for harvest (Ecclesiastes 1:7; Jeremiah 5:24; Matthew 5:45). To be the provider for man’s basic needs would be appropriate for the One who had given His people manna from heaven (Exodus 16), Israel a land that flowed with milk and honey (Exodus 3:8; 13:5), and Elijah and the widow a constantly full flour barrel and oil cruse (1 Kings 17:14).

Nonetheless, so far as we know, Jesus never pushed a plow nor picked a tomato. He never inhaled the scent of newly turned earth nor felt the sweat run down His back as He picked beans under a hot July sun. He never smiled as He saw the first bud breaking the ground in the spring, or sighed as the last wagonload of produce came out of the field in the fall.

This is all true, but He was still the “Sower who went out to sow” (Matthew 13:3). His seed brought forth thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold (Mark 4:8). He has “filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty” (Luke 1:53). And on Pentecost, He watched as His crop brought forth three thousand souls (Acts 2:41).

What is involved in Jesus being the Sower?

JESUS PURCHASED A FARM

He has a big, expensive farm—the whole world (Psalm 24:1; Mark 16:15). Someone calculated that there are 1,486,471,876,165 acres in the world. The average cost is about \$1500/acre (in the U.S.), so using that as a base figure, one could theoretically purchase the surface of the earth for \$2,229,707,814,247,500. As much as two quadrillion is, it is not as much as the purchase price for Jesus’ farm; that cost Him His own blood (Acts 20:28).

JESUS SOWS SEEDS

The seed of the kingdom still possesses life-generating power (Luke 8:11; Mark 4:14). The Holy Spirit works through that Word in conversion (Ephesians 6:17).

Why is the Word compared to seed? Both seem insignificant but possess great power (Genesis 1:11; Romans 1:16). A small acorn looks harmless enough,

but given the right conditions, it can grow large enough to remove a house from its foundations. God’s Word, like a seed, is “living and powerful” (Hebrews 4:12; Galatians 6:7–8; cf. 2 Timothy 4:2). Unlike men’s written words, God’s Word has life in it; that life can be imparted to those who believe and obey it. It can generate new life. No other book can do that.

This seed grows in only one place: the human heart (Luke 8:15). There are four kinds of soil (hearts):

- **Wayside soil:** the hardhearted hearer (Matthew 13:19; Luke 8:11–12). If a person continues in this hardened condition, he will never be saved (2 Corinthians 4:3). This is one reason it is important to reach young people before they become hardened in sin (Ecclesiastes 12:1).
- **Shallow soil:** the stony place hearer (Matthew 13:20–21; Luke 8:13). We are warned, “Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (James 1:22).
- **Divided soil:** the thorny place hearer (Matthew 13:22; Luke 8:14). Just as weeds grow in a field, selfishness, lust, dishonesty, relativism, ungodly tolerance, and immorality can grow in our hearts. We can ignore them and let them choke the Word, or pull them out and save our souls.

- **Receptive soil:** the good ground hearer (Matthew 13:23; Luke 8:15). The seeds in the parable are all of the same nature, sown from the same bag by the same sower. The only variable is the type of soil they encounter.

JESUS PRUNES VINES

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit” (John 15:1–2). Jesus stays involved in the lives of His followers, operating through His providence to better prepare us for the eternal harvest.

JESUS HARVESTS FRUIT

Jesus wants to pick you and me as choice fruit and store us forever in His celestial barn. Sure, most people want to live in a mansion, but a barn will satisfy me—but not just any barn. I want to live in God’s barn! In the Parable of the Tares, Jesus pictures the end of the world as a harvest when weeds and wheat are separated. The tares (representing the ungodly) will be bundled and burned—lost in the lake of fire. The wheat will be gathered into the owner’s barn—God’s barn—heaven (Matthew 13:30).

For someone who never plowed a field, Jesus surely has done a lot of farming.

“He who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it.” —MATTHEW 13:23





Good and Perfect Gifts

James explained, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning” (James 1:17).

Some are deceived into thinking that the temporary gratification of sin is a good and perfect gift. For example, the pleasures of adultery are undeniable. Revenge can bring quick and cheap gratification. Crushing another’s feelings by cruel words and gossip can bring a warped kind of pleasure.

But these are not gifts from above. They are not good and perfect gifts. They are tainted, tarnished, and temporary.

Then there are those blessings that do not immediately appear to be blessings.

James has already pointed out how trials can bring blessings such as faith, perseverance, and spiritual maturity (James 1:3–4).

- The gift of loneliness makes us seek the fellowship of God.
- The gift of failure makes us more understanding of those who fail.
- The gift of falling short gives us the ability to forgive those who err against us.
- The gift of sorrow makes us better qualified to sympathize with those who grieve.

Not every gift looks like one. Do not be deceived. Trust the Father, who is not capricious, who does not lash out because He is having a bad day. —Stan Mitchell

At Day’s End

Is anybody happier because you passed this way?
Does anybody remember that you spoke to them today?
The day is almost over and its toiling time is through;
Is there anyone to utter now a kindly word of you?

Can you say tonight in parting with the day that’s dipping fast,
That you helped a single person of the many that you passed?
Is a single heart rejoicing over what you did or said?
Does the person whose hopes were fading now with courage look ahead?

Did you waste the day or lose it?
Was it well or sorely spent?
Did you leave a trail of kindness, or a scar of discontent?
As you close your eyes in slumber, do you think that God will say,
“You have earned one more tomorrow by the work you did today.”

—Anonymous

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all.”

GALATIANS 6:10

A Recipe for Happiness

Happiness is something we create in our mind;
It’s not something we search for and so seldom find.
It’s just waking up and beginning the day
By counting blessings and kneeling to pray.
It’s giving up thoughts that breed discontent
And accepting what comes as “heaven sent.”
It’s giving up wishing for things we have not,
And making the best of whatever we’ve got.
It’s knowing that the future is secure for us,
And pursuing our tasks without fret or fuss,
For it’s by completing what God gives us to do
That we find contentment and happiness, too.

“I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.”

PHILIPPIANS 4:11



God’s Plan for Saving Man

Divine Love: John 3:16

God’s Grace: Ephesians 2:8

Christ’s Blood: Romans 5:9

Holy Spirit’s Word: 1 Corinthians 2:12–13

Sinner’s Faith: Acts 16:31

Sinner’s Repentance: Luke 13:3

Sinner’s Confession: Romans 10:10

Sinner’s Baptism: Acts 22:16

Christian’s Love: Matthew 22:37

Christian’s Work: James 2:24

Christian’s Hope: Romans 8:24

Christian’s Endurance: Revelation 2:10

Watch on youtube





Carve Out Couple Time

Does your relationship with your spouse fall to the bottom of your to-do list? Consider these suggestions:

Schedule special rituals. Devote a certain time of the day to just the two of you. Mark it on your calendar if necessary.

Write love letters. Send a romantic email. Tuck a card in her purse or his pocket.

Shake up your lunchtime routine.

Set up a card table for two in your office and order take-out. Share a blanket picnic on the floor.

Turn downtime into dates. If both are heading off, leave a few minutes early and detour for a quick cup of coffee.

Pour passion into the mundane. Cooking can be soothing and fun. Folding laundry together can give you a chance to catch up. Once you start devoting ordinary moments to each other, every day can be a honeymoon.

—Source: MSN.com (10/18/05)

"Redeeming the time."

EPHESIANS 5:16

Got It Right. Wrong?

While attending a marriage seminar dealing with communication, Tom and his wife, Grace, listened to the instructor say, "It is essential that husbands and wives know each other's likes and dislikes." He addressed the man, "Can you name your wife's favorite flower?"

Tom leaned over, touched her arm gently, and whispered, "It's Pillsbury, isn't it?"

"A merry heart does good."

PROVERBS 17:22



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To My Child: Things I Can & Cannot Do

I can share your life,
But I cannot live it for you.
I can teach you things,
But I cannot make you learn.
I can give you directions,
But I cannot always lead you.
I can allow you freedom,
But I cannot account for it.
I can take you to worship,
But I cannot make you believe.
I can teach you right from wrong,
But I cannot decide for you.
I can give you love,
But I cannot force it upon you.
I can teach you to share,
But I cannot make you unselfish.
I can teach you to respect,
But I cannot force you to show honor.
I can tell you the facts of life,
But I cannot build your reputation.
I can tell you about lofty goals,
But I cannot achieve them for you.
I can teach you to obey,
But I cannot answer for your actions.



I can warn about your sins,
But I cannot make your morals.
I can love you as my child,
But I cannot place you in God's family.
I can teach you about Jesus,
But I cannot make Him your Savior.
I can teach you about prayer,
But I cannot make you pray.
I can tell you how to live,
But I cannot give you eternal life.

—Anonymous

Just for Fun Word Search

Find the words in blue.
Words go in any direction.

He **said** to me, "My **grace** is **sufficient** for **you**, for My **strength** is made **perfect** in **weakness**." Therefore most **gladly** I will rather **boast** in my **infirmities**, that the **power** of **Christ** may **rest** upon me. Therefore I take **pleasure** in infirmities, in **reproaches**, in **needs**, in **persecutions**, in **distresses**, for Christ's **sake**. For when I am weak, then I am **strong**.

— 2 CORINTHIANS 12:9-10

O	T	Q	X	S	I	B	U	H	N	C	Z	J	S	O	S
H	J	N	A	Q	O	Z	T	E	X	J	Q	G	N	H	E
S	Y	I	E	A	S	G	C	H	R	I	S	T	O	K	I
N	D	M	S	I	N	H	B	Y	R	B	V	R	I	P	T
A	R	T	K	E	C	P	E	R	F	E	C	T	T	L	I
I	F	E	R	L	G	I	V	B	O	F	G	G	U	E	M
H	Q	T	S	B	M	F	F	H	K	L	L	N	C	A	R
T	S	W	L	T	I	E	E	F	H	E	A	O	E	S	I
N	P	G	E	C	A	R	G	K	U	L	D	R	S	U	F
I	Y	A	R	A	E	D	S	X	A	S	L	T	R	R	N
R	S	K	I	W	K	J	S	Y	U	S	Y	S	E	E	I
O	Z	D	O	J	Y	N	W	Z	A	D	U	Z	P	B	A
C	B	P	E	S	Y	S	E	H	C	A	O	R	P	E	R
Z	H	H	R	E	R	C	F	S	N	N	Y	L	D	A	R
B	S	Z	I	H	N	S	E	S	S	E	R	T	S	I	D

What Is the Gospel of Christ?

The theme of all the New Testament is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Practically every page provides information on the topic. In its simplest terms, the gospel of Jesus is the “good news” concerning Him. In a day when there is so little good news, it is important to spread the good news of Jesus.

The gospel message is that although man is a sinner, deserving of death, God loved mankind enough to provide salvation. Paul warned that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), and “the wages of sin is death” (6:23). Comfort comes, however, in knowing that “the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (6:23). Christians are “justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (3:24). The amazing grace of God is truly good news.

At the gospel’s heart is Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. As Peter preached the first gospel sermon on Pentecost, he spoke of “Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst” (Acts 2:22). Although He was put to death, death could not hold Him: “This Jesus God has raised up” (Acts 2:32). “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). The people were pricked in their heart, and said, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). Peter told them how to accept the good news: “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). The gospel is for “all who are afar off” (Acts 2:39). The church would include the Gentiles as well as the Jews.

Faith moved many to obey: “Those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them” (Acts 2:41). The church grew rapidly as many were added to the church (Acts 2:47).

Christ commands: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen” (Matthew 28:19–20). —Bob Prichard

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front.



Bible Quiz

VOLUME 30:8

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark. We will grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark “Tips for Bible Study” as a way of saying thanks for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State: _____
Phone: _____

Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

Answers to Previous Quizzes

V. 30:6 “One Dozen Scriptures to Learn with Your Teen”: 1. Loved, Son, life (John 3:16); 2. Created (Genesis 1:1); 3. Way, No (John 14:6); 4. LORD (Psalm 23:1); 5. Rock, church (Matthew 16:18); 6. World (Mark 16:15); 7. Baptized, saved (Mark 16:16); 8. Faith (Hebrews 11:1); 9. Hearing (Romans 10:17); 10. Son, God (John 20:31); 11. Abundantly (John 10:10); 12. Love (1 Corinthians 13:13).

V. 30:7 How Much Do You Know About the Resurrection?: 1. An angel of the Lord (Matthew 28:2); 2. A spirit (Luke 24:37); 3. Six (Mark 15:25–34); 4. The first (Mark 16:9); 5. Three (Matthew 26:57–75); 6. Simon Peter (John 18:10); 7. The Helper / Holy Spirit / Spirit of truth (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13); 8. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (John 19:38–42); 9. Simon (Luke 23:26); 10. Tiberias (John 21:1); 11. Joseph of Arimathea (John 19:38); 12. Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9; John 20:11–14); 13. Thomas (John 20:24–25); 14. Forty days (Acts 1:3); 15. “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

One Dozen Scriptures for Couples

Directions: Without opening your Bible, fill in all the missing words and verse references you can. When you have done all you can from memory, use these Scriptures to complete the exercise: Genesis 2:24; Proverbs 5:18; Matthew 19:6, 9; 1 Corinthians 7:4; 13:13; Galatians 6:2; Ephesians 5:24–25; Colossians 3:9; Titus 2:4; Hebrews 13:4 (not in order). Finally, memorize the verses with your partner. Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

1. Joy: “Let your fountain be blessed, and _____ with the wife of your youth.”
2. Sacrifice: “Bear one another’s _____, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”
3. Authority: “Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the _____ be to their own _____ in everything.”
4. Togetherness: “Therefore a man shall _____ his father and mother and be _____ to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”
5. Perseverance: “Therefore what _____ has _____ together, let not man separate.”
6. Honesty: “Do not _____ to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds.”
7. Husbands: “Husbands, _____ your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and _____ Himself for her.”
8. Sex: “The wife does not have authority over her own _____, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the _____ does.”
9. Faithfulness: “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits _____; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits _____.”
10. Honor: “Marriage is _____ among all, and the _____ undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”
11. Wives: “That they admonish the young women to love their _____, to love their _____.”
12. Love: “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is _____.”

The Church in the New Testament...TODAY

We all agree that the right church is the church that existed in the first century, the church of which Peter, John, James, and Paul were members. If we can find that same church existing in our day, it will still be the right church.

How do we know when we find it? We must ascertain its essential identifying features. We then need to search for the church today that has the same features. When we find it, we will have found the right church. As we open our New Testaments, what essential identifying features do we find about the church?

- The church was guided solely by Christ's doctrine, through the apostles. The church had no man-made creed, discipline, confession of faith, or catechism (Acts 2:42; Philippians 1:27; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3).
- The church worshipped on the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:2), when they sang acapella (Ephesians 5:19), gave of their means (1 Corinthians 16:2), observed the Lord's supper

(Acts 20:7), prayed (1 Corinthians 14:15), and studied God's Word (Acts 2:42; 20:7).

- The church was organized on a local, autonomous, congregational level (Acts 14:23), with elders, deacons, evangelists, and members (Philippians 1:1).
- The church was designated "the church" (Colossians 1:18), "the churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16), "the church of the Lord" (Acts 20:28 ASV), and "the church of God" (1 Corinthians 1:2).
- People entered the church by becoming penitent, baptized believers (Acts 2:36-47).

This was the church as it existed in the first century, the church of which Peter, James, John, and Paul were members. Now, with no intent to be boastful, but to be kindly clear, we affirm that the church of Christ in your community is the same church. The church of Christ in this century has the same essential identifying features:

- We have no man-made creed, discipline, confession of faith, or catechism. We are governed solely by the apostles' doctrine found in the New Testament.
- We worship on the first day of the week by engaging in acapella singing, praying, studying God's Word, giving of our means, and observing the Lord's supper.
- Each congregation is local, independent, autonomous (self-governing), having elders, deacons, evangelists, and members.
- We are designated as "the church of Christ" or by an equivalent.
- If you were to ask, "How do I become a member of the church of Christ today?" you would be kindly instructed that you must become a penitent, baptized believer.

We plead for the church now (this century) as then (first century). Such is pure, simple, and beautiful New Testament Christianity! —Wendell Winkler, *The Church Everybody Is Asking About*

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Recommended Podcast



Sisters is a podcast for Christian women by Christian women. Our goal is to help you grow your faith and knowledge of God's Word—while also growing our own. We cover a variety of topics to encourage us, challenge us, and root us in Christ. Find episodes here: pod.link/1723627768

I want to learn more about the Bible!

If you knew for sure that the religious path you are on would not get you to heaven, would you change? If there was the possibility of a doubt, would you investigate? Why not request a personal Bible study today?

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☐ Jesus Loves Me This I Know



☐ What Makes a Nation Great?



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☐ The Tragedy of Almost



☐ How to Increase Your Spiritual Passion



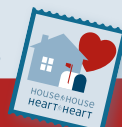
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VOLUME 30:8

All materials are completely FREE of charge (including shipping in the U.S. or Canada).



Chapter to Chapter GENESIS

This card is part of a rhyming memory system for learning the key people, events, topics, and verses of all 929 Old Testament chapters.

INTRODUCTION

Written by Moses under divine inspiration, Genesis is the first book of the Bible and lays the foundation for all Scripture. Its name means "origin," and it records the beginning of the world, humanity, sin, and God's covenant with His chosen people. The book covers approximately 2,300 years of early history and is divided into two main parts: primeval history (chapters 1–11) and patriarchal history (chapters 12–50). Genesis highlights key events such as Creation, the Flood, and the call of Abraham, and it traces the lives of the patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. It is heavily theological, introducing vital doctrines such as monotheism, divine sovereignty, and the promises that anticipate the Messiah. It was likely written between 1446 and 1406 BC.

CHAPTER/TOPICS

VERSES

1. The Creation is done. 1:31
2. Creation in review. 2:4, 24
3. The forbidden tree. 3:6, 15
4. Sin lies at the door. 4:7
5. Genealogy of men's lives. 5:1, 24
6. Sons of God intermixed. 6:2, 8
7. God opens the heavens. 7:11
8. The waters abate. 8:3
9. God sends Noah a sign. 9:13
10. List of men. 10:1
11. A tower to heaven. 11:4
12. In Abraham the promise dwells. 12:7
13. Strife in between. Lot chooses the unclean. 13:8, 13
14. A brother's son Abraham redeems. Blessed by a priest and king. 14:12, 19
15. The promise is foreseen. 15:18
16. Sarah is mean. Ishmael is seen. 16:6, 15
17. Abraham and his household are made clean. 17:13
18. The Lord and His angels convened. 18:10
19. Sodom and Gomorrah are obscene and become a smoky scene. 19:5, 24
20. Abraham's dishonesty. 20:9
21. Abraham has a son. Hagar is shunned. 21:3, 12
22. Abraham is found true. 22:12
23. Sarah will no longer be. 23:2
24. Rebekah is adored. 24:67

CHAPTER/TOPICS

VERSES

25. Abraham dies. In Jacob and Esau nations arrive. 25:8, 23
26. Isaac looks for a fix. 26:1
27. Jacob uses deception. 27:19
28. Jacob looks for a mate. and sees heaven's gate. 28:6, 12
29. Rachel is fine. 29:18
30. Jacob in a hurry. 30:25
31. Jacob on the run. 31:21
32. Jacob gets a name that is new. 32:28
33. Jacob and Esau agree. 33:4
34. Circumcision makes them sore. 34:22
35. Benjamin is alive. Rachel dies. 35:18, 19
36. Esau's family is picked. 36:9
37. Joseph receives dreams from heaven. Sold by his own brethren. 37:5, 28
38. Tamar needs a mate and she's not going to wait. 38:14
39. Joseph in a bind. Jailer treats him fine. 39:7, 21
40. Butler restored. Joseph is ignored. 40:21, 23
41. Joseph stores up a ton. Soon there's going to be none. 41:35, 57
42. Joseph's brothers he knew, but he's hidden from their view. 42:7
43. Simeon is set free. Benjamin Joseph sees. 43:23, 29
44. Judah falls to the floor. For Benjamin's life he implores. 44:14, 33
45. Joseph is alive. 45:1
46. Goshen is Joseph's pick. 46:28
47. Pharaoh meets Joseph's brethren. 47:2
48. God's blessings Isaac restates. Joseph's sons receive their estate. 48:3, 5
49. Jacob's blessings assigned. 49:1
50. Isaac is buried out of the city. 50:13

—Based on *Old Testament Simplified* by Rob Whitacre.

THE CROSS by the Numbers

ZERO

sins; bones broken (Hebrews 4:15; John 19:36)

ONE

sovereign Lord; atoning death (John 19:36)

TWO

natures—mortal and divine (1 Peter 2:24)

THREE

days; crosses—one person died in sin, one died to sin, and one died for sin (Matthew 27:38–44)

FOUR

ways His garments were divided (John 19:23–24)

FIVE

major wounds—back, head, hands, feet, and side (John 19:1, 18, 34)

SIX

unmerciful hours (Mark 15:25, 34)

SEVEN

sayings on the cross (Matthew 27:46; Luke 23:34, 43, 46; John 19:27–30)

EIGHT

days after the resurrection (John 20:26–31)

NINE

gifts given by Christ after His ascension (1 Corinthians 12)

TEN

days between His ascension and Pentecost (Acts 1:12–14)

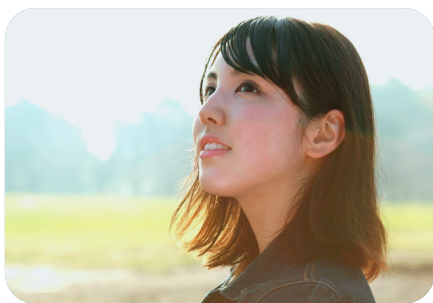
ELEVEN

apostles who waited in Jerusalem (Acts 1)

TWELVE

apostles who turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6)

—Stephen Bradd



Prepare to Meet God

Why Should One Prepare? Because meeting God is inevitable: “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, ‘As I live, says the LORD, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.’ So then each of us shall give account of himself to God” (Roman 14:10–12). Meeting God is just as certain as death (Hebrews 9:27).

And because heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people: “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:2–3).

How Should One Prepare? We are not left to wonder what one must do to be prepared to meet God. God has “given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue” (2 Peter 1:3). Preparing to meet God involves hearing (Acts 10:33); believing (Act 16:31; Hebrews 11:6); repenting of sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38); confessing faith in Christ as the Son of God (Matthew 10:32; Acts 8:37); being baptized (Mark 16:15–16); adding Christian graces (2 Peter 1:5–8); and being faithful unto death (Matthew 10:22; Revelation 2:10).

When Should One Prepare? The time to prepare is now, in this life. “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). Once the rich man in the parable died and was in torment, it was too late for him to prepare (Luke 16:19–31). Preparation must be made while one has the opportunity (Matthew 25:1–13).

Salvation does not just happen. One must prepare, and one must prepare according to the why, the how, and the when that God has put forth. —Kevin D. Smith



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You're Invited to
**BACK-TO-CHURCH
SUNDAY**

We are excited to invite our community to our special Back-to-Church Sunday service on September 21! Location and contact info can be found on the front.

We'd love to get to know you!