

HOUSE to HOUSE
HEART to HEART

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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 23 NUMBER 6



THE “WEAKNESSES” OF ALMIGHTY GOD

Allen Webster

God is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving, and ever-present (Psalm 139:1–16; 1 John 4:8). He is Almighty God—the perfect Being.

Paul’s statement, then, is unusual: “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Corinthians 1:25). This, of course, emphasizes man’s weakness and God’s strength. The sense is, “If God had a weakness, it would still be stronger than man. God on His worst day is better than man on his best day.” But let’s run with this thought. What are God’s “weaknesses”?

THE ALMIGHTY GOD HAS A “WEAK” MEMORY.

God has trouble remembering certain things—He just cannot recall forgiven sins. This was the prayer of the ancients: “Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions” (Psalm 25:7). Again, “Oh, do not remember former iniquities against us! Let Your tender mercies come speedily to meet us” (Psalm 79:8). Through both the statesman

prophet and the weeping prophet, God promised “forgetfulness.” He told Isaiah, “I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins” (Isaiah 43:25). Jeremiah received this joyful message: “I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more” (Jeremiah 31:34). God reiterated the promise in the New Covenant: “I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more” (Hebrews 8:12; 10:17). Forgiven sins are blotted out (Acts 3:19) and washed away (Acts 22:16). He forgot the wastefulness of the prodigal (Luke 15:20–24) and the bloody hands of Christ’s crucifiers (Acts 2:23, 38, 41). He offers this same forgetfulness to us!

THE ALMIGHTY GOD HAS “WEAK” HEARING.

There are some prayers that God cannot hear way up in heaven. God does not hear a sinner’s prayer. The psalmist knew this: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear” (Psalm 66:18).¹ The wisest man knew it, too: “One who turns

away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination” (Proverbs 28:9). Peter said, “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil” (1 Peter 3:12). This does not mean that God is unaware of their petitions; instead, He refuses to answer them. When the sinner looks to heaven, and says, “My Father,” he looks in the wrong direction (cf. John 8:44). Prayer is the privilege of God’s child.

Sin stops the flow of God’s blessings. Although an estimated 500,000 tons of water rush over Niagara Falls every minute, on March 29, 1948, the falls suddenly stopped. People living within the sound of the falls were awakened by the overwhelming silence. Some believed it was a sign that the world was coming to an end. It was thirty hours before the rush of water resumed. What happened? Heavy winds jammed the ice fields of Lake Erie into the entrance of the Niagara River near Buffalo and stopped the water’s flow.² Sin does that to the Niagara of God’s blessings. On the other hand, James promises that “the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (James 5:16).

THE ALMIGHTY GOD HAS “WEAK” SMELLING.

In the Old Testament, Jehovah is sometimes pictured as “smelling” the sacrifices offered Him (cf. Genesis 8:21–22). In the New Testament, Christ’s sacrifice of Himself is said to be a sweet aroma to God (Ephesians 5:2) and Christians graciously serving others “smells” good to God (Philippians 4:18). When Israel offered God unacceptable sacrifices, He suddenly developed “smelling problems.”

He warned that if they walked contrary to His Will, “I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas” (Leviticus 26:31). Many years later, it happened: “I despise your feast days, and I do not savor your sacred assemblies” (Amos 5:21). As a boy, Norman Vincent Peale found a cigar, slipped into an alley, and lit up. It tasted terrible, but it made him feel grown up—until he saw his father

coming. He quickly put the cigar behind his back, and, trying to be casual, pointed his father’s attention to a billboard advertising a circus “Can we go, Dad? *Please!*” His father’s reply taught a lesson he never forgot. “Son, never make a petition while at the same time trying to hide a smoldering disobedience.”³ God cannot accept worship from hypocrites—He just cannot stand the smell.

THE ALMIGHTY GOD HAS “WEAK” EYESIGHT.

God has trouble seeing certain things. Isaiah said, “You have cast all my sins behind Your back” (Isaiah 38:17)—indicating that they were “out of sight, out of mind.” An unusual two-goat ceremony under the Old Law illustrates the invisible quality of forgiven sins. God told them to sacrifice one goat as symbol of sin’s penalty; the priest was to lay hands on the other’s head—the scapegoat—as a symbol that the people’s sins were being transferred to the animal. Then the goat was sent into the wilderness to show that their sins had been carried away (Leviticus 16:8–10, 30–32). This ceremony has messianic overtones. Jesus is now God’s Scapegoat to “take away the sin of the world” (John 1:29; cf. Isaiah 53:6–12). God laid on Him all our sins at Calvary. We can now be forgiven! How far does He carry them from us? As far as the east is from the west! (Psalm 103:8–17).

Micah pictures forgiveness as God casting sins into the sea (Micah 7:19). Of all the places on earth to lose something—especially to an ancient mind—none is more irretrievable than those at the bottom of the deep ocean. When God sees a penitent child walking in the light, He sees His Son’s blood, not mistakes, for “if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).

Jesus never met a man He would not save. Read the Gospel Records and see for yourself. You never find Him saying, “I wish I could help you, but there’s nothing I can do.” You never hear Him say, “Your case is too difficult for me.” He leaves no inkling of unwillingness or inability. He died for “the sins of the

world”—all of them. He shed His blood for “the remission of sins”—all sins.⁴

God will forgive anybody for any sin! It matters not what sins have been committed. Some sinners hesitate to come to Christ because they fear God can never forgive them. Some Christians live in doubt of whether God has forgiven them. It is good to be sensitive to sin, but it is not good to doubt God. He said He would forgive—did He lie? (cf. Titus 1:2). God’s heart was big enough to forgive those who murdered His own Son (Acts 2:22–41). He mustered enough compassion to forgive Paul, a murderer of Christians (1 Timothy 1:13–15). He forgave the Corinthians who were guilty of all sorts of vile sins (1 Corinthians 6:9–11). His grace has appeared to all (Titus 2:11); He wants all to be saved (2 Peter 3:9), and He invites all (Matthew 11:28–30; Revelation 22:17). Surely God can forgive you and me.

It sounds too good to be true, but it is true. Sinners who come with faith in God’s Son (John 3:16; 8:24), repenting of sin (Luke 13:3), confessing Christ (Matthew 10:32), to be baptized in water for forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:36–38; 1 Peter 3:21), do not leave disappointed. God does not just pretend to forgive; He really forgives. “Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity?” (Micah 7:18).

Are you not glad that the Almighty God has these “weaknesses”?

Endnotes

¹ According to Psalm 109:7, He may even count their prayers as sin.

² Merle Mees in *Fresh Illustrations for Preaching & Teaching* (Baker).

³ Kirk Russel, DeForest, Wisconsin. *Leadership*, Vol. 4, no. 4.

⁴ Adapted from John Gipson, Little Rock, Arkansas.





A CROWN for a CROSS

The Ammonites' history with Israel was continually tense. The Ammonites were descendants of Ben-Ammi, Lot's younger daughter's son (Genesis 19). They refused to aid Israel in their flight from Egypt and had hired Balaam to curse Israel (Deuteronomy 23). In Israel's siege against the last Ammonite stronghold, Rabbah (2 Samuel 12:26–31), Joab had captured the city's water supply and was ready to take the city. He requested that the king come to Rabbah for the final battle so David would receive the honor instead of his captain. When the city fell, the crown was removed from the Ammonite king and placed on King David's head.

What is amazing is that this crown weighed almost seventy-five pounds. Some commentators have trouble believing that it could have been placed on David's head. However, in countries where travel is usually by foot and goods are often carried on the head, seventy-five pounds would not be unusual. I personally have seen young men carrying the rear axles of cars balanced on their heads!

Imagine what a glorious crown it must have been—pure gold encrusted with precious stones. If we travel through time a thousand years, we read of another King who had a crown placed on His head. This crown, however, was not gold nor encrusted with jewels. It was a crown of thorns, plaited by Roman soldiers and forced on the brow of Jesus of Nazareth (John 19:2). He was forced to stand before these mocking soldiers, blood running down His face, as they derisively bowed and shouted, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Jesus was willing to suffer humiliation and even give His life on the cruel cross to save mankind from the wages

of sin (Romans 3:23; 6:23). Because He did, God "crowned him with glory and honor" and "put all things in subjection under his feet" (Hebrews 2:7–8). Truly, Jesus is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

There is still more. Let us travel ahead to another time. It may be tomorrow, next week, next year, or ten thousand years from now. It is the time when Jesus appears at His second coming. The dead in Christ will be resurrected from the grave, and along with the living Christians, will be changed and meet Christ in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18). Then there will be a great accounting, the Day of Judgment (Matthew 25:31–46). On that day, Jesus will hand out crowns to His faithful servants. Paul wrote, "Finally, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day: and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:6–8).

We can receive a crown, not from a man, but from the King of kings and Lord of lords Himself. Paul referred to this crown as an "imperishable crown" (1 Corinthians 9:25). James and John referred to it as the "crown of life" (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10), and Peter called it the "crown of glory" (1 Peter 5:4). They all represent the wonderful gift of the eternal life with God for His faithful servants. Will you receive a crown? Can God count you as one of His faithful? Ada Powell penned the following words, "There's a crown for your cross, there is gain for your loss; You'll be given a crown for your cross. There's a beautiful crown when your cross is laid down; You'll be given a beautiful crown."

—Bob Bauer



Take your Calculator

Begin with 66, the number of books in the Bible. Add 13, the number of books by Paul in the New Testament. Add 7, the number of the "churches of Asia." Multiply by 3, the number of the Godhead. Multiply by 12, the number of tribes in Israel. Multiply by 12, the number of apostles. Add 666, the number of the beast in Revelation. Turn the calculator around so that you can read the answer upside down. You will see the solution to the world's greatest ills.



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: Romans 1:16
Sinner's Faith: Acts 16:31
Sinner's Repentance: Luke 13:3
Sinner's Confession: Romans 10:10
Sinner's Baptism: 1 Peter 3:21
Christian's Love: Matthew 22:37
Christian's Work: James 2:24
Christian's Hope: Romans 8:24
Christian's Endurance: Revelation 2:10

Nine out of Ten

Understandably, many families must utilize the services of a day care center, but some Americans use such centers merely to increase their buying power by putting both parents in the workforce. A comprehensive study of American families discovered that “even among dual wage-earning couples, nine out of every ten believe that children are better off being raised with a mother at home rather than in a day care setting.”

—Family Research Council

“That they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers”

TITUS 2:4–5



Smile

Married life can be frustrating. In the first year of marriage, the man speaks and the woman listens. In the second year, the woman speaks and the man listens. In the third year, they both speak and the neighbors listen.

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

1 Corinthians 13 for the Home

If I live in a house of spotless beauty with everything in its place, but have not love, I am a housekeeper not a homemaker.

If I have time for waxing, polishing, and decorative achievements, but have not love, my children learn cleanliness but not godliness.

Love leaves the dust in search of a child's laugh. Love smiles at the tiny fingerprints on a newly cleaned window. Love wipes away the tears before it wipes up the spilled milk. Love picks up the child before it picks up the toys.

Love is present through the trials. Love reprimands, reproves, and is responsive. Love crawls with the baby, walks with the toddler, runs with the child, then stands aside to let the youth walk into adulthood.

Love is the key that opens salvation's message to a child's heart. Before I became a mother, I took glory in my house of perfection. Now I glory in God's perfection of my child.

As a mother, there is much I must teach my child, but the greatest of all is love.

“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails”

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4–8



No Charge

Our little boy came up to his mother and handed her a piece of paper. After his mom dried her hands on an apron, she read the following:

For cutting the grass: \$5.00
For cleaning up my room: \$1.00
For going to the store for you: \$.50
Babysitting my kid brother: \$.25
Taking out the garbage: \$1.00
For getting a good report card: \$5.00
For cleaning up and raking yard: \$2.00
Total owed: \$14.75

His mother looked at him standing there, expectantly. She picked up the pen, turned the paper over, and wrote:

Nine months I carried you while you were inside me: No Charge
The times I've sat with you, doctored, and prayed for you: No Charge
For all the tears that you caused through the years: No Charge



For all the nights filled with dread, and the worries I knew were ahead:
No Charge

For the toys, food, clothes, and even wiping your nose: No Charge
And when you add it all up, the full cost of love is: No Charge

When the son finished reading what his mother had written, there were great tears in his eyes. He looked straight at his mother and said, “Mom, I sure do love you.” And then he took the pen, and in great big letters he wrote: “PAID IN FULL.”

Where Did Cain Get His Wife?

Cain has the distinction of being the first murderer in the Bible. When he saw that “the Lord respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering,” he became “very angry, and his countenance fell” (Genesis 4:4–5).

This led Cain to rise up against his brother Abel and kill him. When God asked Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” he evaded the question by saying, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” (4:8–9). The Lord recognized his sin, however, and told him that he would be a fugitive and a vagabond (4:10–12). The Lord then set a protective mark on him and sent him out.

Thus “Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived, and bore Enoch” (4:16–17). Some have thought that since Cain was dwelling in the land of Nod, that his wife must have been from some unknown race of people dwelling in Nod. The text does

not say that Cain found his wife in Nod, however, but simply that he was dwelling in Nod and that when he knew his wife sexually, she bore his son Enoch.

Cain’s wife must have been a sister, niece, or other relative. Since Adam and Eve were the first human beings, then all people descended from them, including Cain and his wife. There was no separate creation of some unknown people in the land of Nod. If Cain did meet and marry his wife in Nod, she still would have had to be a relative. While the text mentions no other children of Adam and Eve before it says that Cain knew his wife, that does not mean that there were no other descendants of Adam and Eve at that time. Moses was simply listing the descendants of Cain before he listed the preferred line through Seth, the son appointed in the place of Abel (4:25). “Adam called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living” (Genesis 3:20). “After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years;

and he had sons and daughters” (5:4). Since Eve was “the mother of all living,” and Adam “had sons and daughters,” Cain’s wife must have descended from Adam and Eve.

But if Cain married a sister or niece, or other near relative, was not that incest? God did not introduce laws forbidding incest until later (Leviticus 18) when the breakdown of the human genetic pool became a problem. Those who lived before the Genesis flood were apparently much healthier than those who came along after the flood. Life spans of hundreds of years were not unusual before the flood, but life spans were much shorter after the flood. Adam lived 930 years, while Seth lived 912 years, and the longest lived man was Methuselah, who lived 969 years (Genesis 5:5, 8, 27). These long life spans were possible only because they were stronger genetically. Current laws forbid intermarriage with close relatives because diseases and genetic problems result. —Bob Prichard

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Bible Quiz

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Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark! We'll grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark "The Plan of Salvation" as a way of saying thanks for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: _____
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Answers to Previous Quizzes

V. 23:4 *John: The Gospel of Belief*: 1. No one (John 1:18); 2. Cephas (1:42); 3. Water to wine (2:9); 4. Is born again (3:3); 5. She was a Samaritan (4:9); 6. It was the Sabbath (5:16); 7. Adultery (8:3); 8. Set (make) you free (8:32); 9. Five loaves, two fish (6:9); 10. Leftover bread (6:13); 11. Pool of Siloam (9:7); 12. Bethany (11:1); 13. Four days (11:39); 14. Husbandman (Vinedresser, Gardener) (15:1); 15. Branches (15:5); 16. Laying down his life for his friends (15:13); 17. In the same way as Jesus and God are one (17:11–12); 18. Fought for Him (18:36); 19. Passover (John 2:13–17); Nicodemus (3:9–16).

V. 23:5 *Who's Who in the Bible*: 1. Adam, Eve (Genesis 2:19; 3:20); 2. The Lord or Moses (Exodus 14:21); 3. Cain (Genesis 4:8); 4. Esau (Genesis 25:34); 5. Jacob (Genesis 32:28); 6. Joseph (Genesis 41:41; Genesis 42–45); 7. Joshua (Deuteronomy 34:9); 8. Samson (Judges 16:6–21); 9. Daniel (Daniel 6:23); 10. Esther (Esther 2:3–4, 16–17); 11. David (1 Samuel 17); 12. Job (Job 1:22); 13. Mary (Matthew 1:18); 14. Lazarus (John 11:43–44); 15. John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13–17); 16. Herod (Matthew 2:16); 17. Joseph (Luke 1:27); 18. Peter (Matthew 26:75); 19. Judas (Luke 22:48); 20. Saul/Paul (Acts 9:15–18); 21. Thomas (John 20:28); 22. Jesus (Matthew 27–28); 23. Elizabeth (Luke 1:13).

Wisdom Speaks

Directions: Find your answers in the verses listed. Questions are taken from the King James Version.

- Who is called the "wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24)? _____ my _____ than your _____" (Isaiah 55:9).
- Paul "came not with excellency of speech or of _____, declaring unto you the testimony of God" (1 Corinthians 2:1).
- God made foolish the wisdom of _____ (1 Corinthians 1:20).
- Jews required a sign, but _____ sought after wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:22).
- From where does true wisdom come (1 Corinthians 1:30)? _____
- If a Christian lacks wisdom, he should _____ (James 1:5).
- Paul did not rely on the wisdom of " _____ " (1 Corinthians 2:6).
- God said, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and _____
- When enticed to join sinners, a wise person will not _____ (Proverbs 1:10).
- A wise young man, when tempted by an immoral woman, will " _____ [his] way far from her . . ." (Proverbs 5:8).
- "A _____ son heareth his _____ instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke" (Proverbs 13:1).
- A wise man will not engage in _____ (Proverbs 10:23).
- A wise man will turn "the other _____" (Matthew 5:39).
- A wise man will not proclaim _____ (Proverbs 12:23).
- A wise man focuses his mind on six things (Philippians 4:8): whatsoever things are _____, _____, _____ of _____ report.

Evidence for INSPIRATION



A cynical scientist long ago sneered at the Bible as a “collection of rude imaginings of Syria,” as “the worn out old bottle of Judaism into which the generous new wine of science was being poured.” The cynical savant is now dead, but the Bible is still alive as the Book of Books (Hebrews 4:12). The old wines of science grow sour in their cellars, and its new vintages have their day, but the Bible shows no signs of senility. Its youth is eternal. When contemporary men of science and their theories are forgotten, the Bible will remain what it has been for mankind for two thousand years, the one universal book of wisdom, of truth, of sublimity, and of consolation. —James Douglass

There are many lines of evidence used to prove the inspiration of the Bible. A very convincing one is the scientific foreknowledge the writers of the Bible show. These men knew things about science that were not discovered until hundreds—sometimes thousands—of years later. Consider a few of the following:

- Long ago the Bible said that the earth is round: “It is He who sits above the circle of the earth” (Isaiah 40:22).

- Long ago the Bible said that the earth is suspended upon nothing: “He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing” (Job 26:7). (Men once thought the earth was supported by gigantic elephants, turtles, or some such things.)
- Long ago the Bible said that light can be divided: “By what way is light diffused?” (Job 38:24). We divide light into different colors by a prism.
- Long ago the Bible said the seas are all in one bed: “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered into one place . . . and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas” (Genesis 1:9–10). All earth’s great oceans are connected together and are actually one sea. The Bible indicated this before men discovered it by sailing around the earth.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God”

2 TIMOTHY 3:16

“All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the Lord endures forever”

1 PETER 1:24–25

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Recommended Resource



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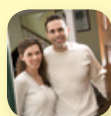
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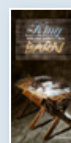
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☐ When the Fullness of Time Was Come



☐ Boot Camp for Christian Soldiers



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☐ What Does God Expect from Me, Anyway?



☐ Beware the Danger of False Teachers

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A MAN FROM MARS

Suppose we were to give a Bible to a man from Mars and tell him to follow the New Testament explicitly. If he did, having never heard of religion, what would be the results?

He would learn that the Bible is all-sufficient. Our visitor would learn that he needs no other book, for God's Word is complete (2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:3). He would learn that Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into “all truth” (John 16:13), and that “whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God” (2 John 1:9). He could reason, then, that any other book that claims divine origin is fraudulent, and that he cannot accept any other book, even though its author may claim to be God's prophet (Galatians 1:8–9).

He would learn that Christ is an all-sufficient Savior. Our interplanetary traveler would soon understand that the Lord Jesus Christ is the sum, substance, and summary of salvation from statements like, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29), and, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). The man from Mars could readily see the doctrine that all good religious people will be saved is not so. Those who reject Christ may be good, moral people, but they cannot be saved, for there is no hope if one refuses Christ as God's Son, the Savior of the world (Luke 10:16).

He would learn that all followers of Christ are called Christians (Acts 11:26). Our imaginary friend, by reading the Bible, would not decide to wear the denominational names that are so common today. Going strictly by the Bible one could never wear the name Halley nor the name of any other man. He could reference Peter's statement, “Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter” (1 Peter 4:16).

He would learn what he must do in order to be saved. The man from Mars would see from such passages as Ephesians 2:8–9 and Romans 6:23 that he could not save himself. However, he would discover that there are some definite acts of obedience with which he must comply (Hebrews 5:8–9).

After believing that Christ is God's Son (John 3:16), repenting of his sins (Acts 2:38), and confessing his faith (Romans 10:9–10), the Martian would want to be baptized in Jesus' name for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). He would never think that all he had to do was bow his head and say, “Jesus, I receive you as my personal Savior,” because that statement is not found in the Bible.

What would be the result if all who claim to follow Christ were to agree to go totally—and only—by the Bible? Could we not all agree on the things that the man from Mars would believe if he took God's Word alone? Let's try it!

—Adapted from Larry Ray Hafley



God, or Man, or Both

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. He will appear before us as a Jew, lowly born, humbly bred, without the manners of the court or the capital, without the learning of the school, or the culture of the college; a mere peasant, as it were, just like the unlettered workmen of Nazareth. He becomes a preacher, just as Amos the herdsman of Tekoah and multitudes more of His people had done, but He is flouted by the Pharisees, contradicted by the scribes, hated and persecuted by the priests. In a word, He is despised and rejected of the official guardians of religion, and heard gladly by the common people alone. The men He gathers round Him are, like Himself, without delicate thought or the fastidious speech. All God's great works are silent. Light as it travels makes no noise, utters no sound to the ear. Creation is a silent process; nature rose under the Almighty hand without clang or clamor, or noises that distract and disturb. So, when Jesus came, being of God, His coming was lowly. —John R. W. Stott





The Common People

I enjoyed reading one time about Queen Elizabeth's first American baseball game in Baltimore. Escorted by the President and Mrs. Bush and the baseball commissioner, the Queen sat in VIP skybox and enjoyed a pregame buffet of crab cakes and blackened smoked turkey. She stayed for two innings.

Now, I'm not so sure Queen Elizabeth has been to a ball game yet. After all, what's a baseball game without nine innings, hard bleachers, and expensive hot dogs?

This illustrates an important spiritual point. When God sent His only begotten Son Jesus into the world, He could have placed Him in a palace with jewels and crowns and servants. He didn't. Instead, He gave Him the dirt roads of the common man. And Hebrews 4:15 says Jesus was "tempted in all points as we are." He's a Savior who can understand the hardships of our lives. No wonder the Bible says "the common people heard Him gladly" (Mark 12:37). —Glenn Colley



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