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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 30 NUMBER 5

Nashville Rd. CHURCH of CHRIST

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Tim Strickland.....Associate Minister
Garrett Rowlett.....Youth Minister

SUNDAY

Bible Classes.....9:00 a.m.
Worship 10:00 a.m.
Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Classes..... 7:00 p.m.

Visit Us Any Time!

SERVICES OFFERED

- Bible Classes for All Ages
- Youth Retreats and Outings
- Foreign Missions and Medical Campaigns
- Someone to Listen to Your Needs in Confidence
- Prayers for the Distressed
- Day Trip and Night Trip Outings for all ages
- Outreach Teams for the Community
- Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes Program
- Youth Devotionals
- Young Professionals Program
- Mid-age Excels Program
- Outreach Teams
- Bible Correspondence Courses For All
- Young Adult Men's Retreats
- Local Prison Outreach
- TNT: Tuesday Nights Together every other Tuesday for Youth

HOUSE TO HOUSE/HEART TO HEART is published monthly. It is sent to select Gallatin routes and individuals free upon request. Send all correspondence to address above. To God be the glory.



There used to be a website that posted information for those who were looking for lost family Bibles. A typical entry was like this.

LANCASTER

Last known place that the Bible was at in the late 1920s to early '30s Wysox, Pennsylvania. This Bible had the family history in it.

Others were more poignant:

VALENTE

I'm looking for a Bible belonging to Joseph Valente. Joseph passed away in 1998 and his Mom sent the Bible to Joe's brother Danny in North Carolina. Danny never received the Bible, and we can't find it. The Bible has sentimental value, as Joe is no longer with us. Any info would be wonderful.

Have you ever lost a Bible? You may have put it on top of your car as you talked to a friend in the church parking lot and forgot to get it before driving home. You may have misplaced it in a move or

loaned it to a friend who never returned it. Most of us have lost a Bible before—at least for a few days.

Have you lost a Bible in church? Many Bibles turn up on church lost and found tables. Of all places to lose a Bible, church seems the least likely. We expect to *use* our Bibles in worship—not misplace them. We expect to *find* truth in church—not lose it.

In the days of Josiah, the Jews found God's law that had been lost. Hilkiah the high priest told Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD" (2 Kings 22:8). This led to a revival among God's people.

Let's take this idea of "losing the Bible" in church and explore it from different perspectives. Some Christians "lose the Bible." How?

SOME LOSE THE BIBLE IN MODERNISM

Modernism denies the supernatural. England, who gave the world the King James Version in the seventeenth century, lost the Bible in the nineteenth century. They

still had copies of Scripture; they just did not believe it anymore. Today many reject the truth that the Bible is an inspired revelation from God (cf. 2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21).

Religious liberalism plagues today's world. Many religious seminary professors do not believe in full inspiration, the virgin birth, the bodily resurrection of Jesus, nor the miracles the Bible records that Jesus did (cf. John 20:30–31). Religious groups led by people trained at these institutions cannot expect their faith to grow.

SOME LOSE THE BIBLE IN POLITICS

France lost the Bible leading up to the French Revolution in 1789. Before the Revolution, France spent millions of dollars indoctrinating their people with atheistic literature. They felt the Bible stood in the way of progress, so they tried to remove it. When they did, they lost their government. The people gained freedom from religion and rebelled against the state.

A similar thing is currently underway in America and other nations. Many people no longer read the Bible; some openly defy it.¹ Governments have distanced themselves from it while opening the doors to secularism and false religions such as Islam. As unbelief in Scripture gains ground, morality plunges. Hate runs rampant; fornication is widely practiced; divorces are common; homosexuality is accepted; abortion is defended; dishonesty, stealing, drug use, gambling, and practically every form of unethical behavior is seen on every street corner, TV show, and news report.

SOME LOSE THE BIBLE IN THE PULPIT

There are churches that get only a thimbleful of the water of life in a whole Sunday service. I am studying the Bible with a man who previously attended a denomination. He loves the church of Christ because we teach the Bible. He said his previous “pastor” vaguely referred to a verse at the beginning of a sermon, and that was it for the whole hour.

Congregations that hear little but personal interest stories, testimonials, pop

psychology, current religious thought, jokes, commentary on contemporary events, and men's opinions are spiritually starving (cf. 2 Timothy 4:2). Franklin Camp said, “[A] sermon without scripture is like an empty bucket for one dying of thirst.” How can people learn the Bible if they do not hear it? (Romans 10:14). Abraham spoke from Paradise to say, “They have Moses and the prophets; *let them hear them*” (Luke 16:29).

SOME LOSE THE BIBLE BY ABSENTEEISM

Many grew up attending Bible classes, worshiping, and reading the Bible at home, but somewhere in college or in the busy years of their twenties, they grew lax and quit attending services. God wants each one back. He accepts prodigals every week. He rejoices when the new generations of children grow up with a knowledge of God (cf. 2 Peter 2:20–22).

SOME LOSE THE BIBLE IN NEGLECT

A small child took a Bible from a coffee table and asked, “Mother, is this God's book?”

“Yes, it surely is,” she replied.

“Well, I think we had better send it back to Him, because we don't use it anymore.”

Satan does not care if we own ten Bibles so long as we do not read any of them. On a Bible quiz, one group thought an epistle was the wife of an apostle, the tower of Babel was the place where Solomon kept his wives, and the Mosaic Law was a law compelling people to have their floors laid with colored stones.

It may seem simplistic in this tech age to encourage such a basic thing as reading a book, but Bible reading is fundamental to spiritual life. John said, “Blessed is he who reads” (Revelation 1:3). Paul said, “Till I come, give attention

to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (1 Timothy 4:13).

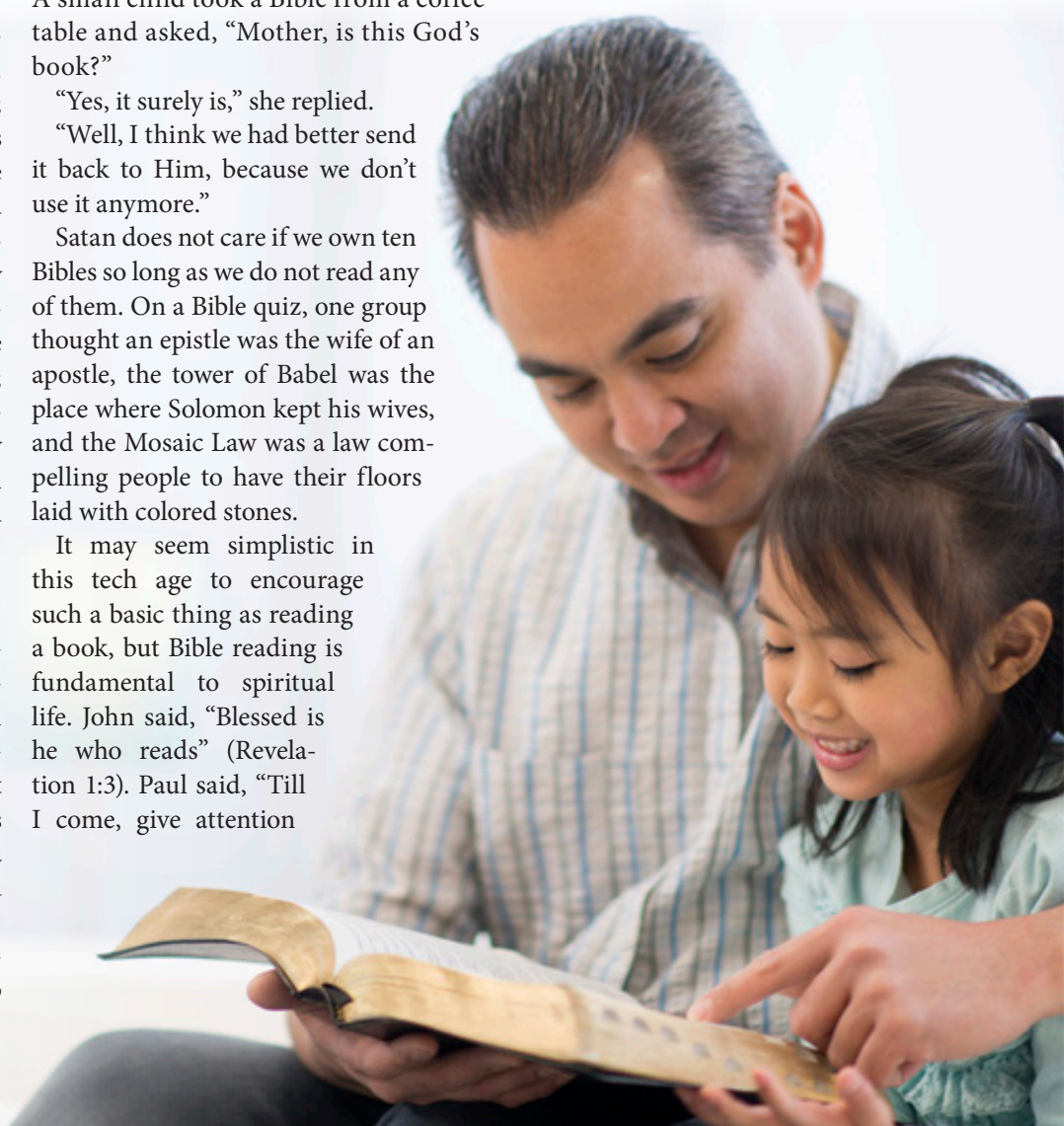
God commanded every king of Israel to read the Scriptures: “It shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes” (Deuteronomy 17:19).

Caleb Thomas Winchester once said that the great books are those “that everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read.”² No one should go to the grave without having read the Bible. The Bible is the greatest book; it deserves the most attention. Find your Bible and read it!

Endnotes

¹ American Bible Society, “State of the Bible,” 2025, <https://www.americanbible.org/news/state-of-the-bible/>.

² Mark Twain, “The Disappearance of Literature” (speech, Nineteenth Century Club Dinner, 20 November 1900), in Paul Fatout, ed., *Mark Twain Speaking* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1976), 360.





Christian Gardening

Plant three rows of squash:

1. Squash gossip (Proverbs 17:9)
2. Squash criticism (Matthew 7:1)
3. Squash indifference (Hebrews 2:3)

Plant seven rows of peas:

1. Prayer (Luke 18:1)
2. Promptness (Proverbs 1:28)
3. Perseverance (Galatians 6:9)
4. Politeness (Colossians 4:6)
5. Preparedness (Luke 21:36)
6. Purity (Matthew 5:8)
7. Patience (Romans 12:12)

Plant seven heads of lettuce:

1. Let us be unselfish and loyal (Philippians 2:3–4)
2. Let us be faithful to duty (1 Peter 4:10)
3. Let us search the Scriptures (John 5:39)
4. Let us not be weary in well doing (Galatians 6:9)

5. Let us be obedient in all things (Acts 5:29)
6. Let us be truthful (Colossians 3:9)
7. Let us love one another (1 John 4:7)

No garden is complete without turnips:

1. Turn up for church (Hebrews 10:25)
2. Turn up for meetings, prayer, and Bible study (Hebrews 10:25)
3. Turn up with a smile, even when things are difficult (Philippians 4:4)
4. Turn up with determination to do your best in God's service (Hebrews 12:1–2)

After planting, may you grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). May you reap rich results. —Glenn Hitchcock

"Grow."

1 PETER 2:2

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o'er His body on the tree;

Then I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

—Isaac Watts (1674–1748), *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, 1707.
Charles Wesley reportedly said he would give up all his other hymns to have written this one (Gordon M. Hyde, "The Wondrous Cross," *Ministry* [July 1978], 7.)

"God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

GALATIANS 6:14

Ten Other Reasons Why I Never Wash

1. I watch other people washing on TV.
2. There are lots of clean people who never wash.
3. We've just moved here six years ago, and I haven't had a chance to wash yet.
4. I bought a bad bar of soap once, so I vowed I would never wash again!
5. I feel as close to washing on the golf course as I do in the bathroom.
6. I never wash when I have company.
7. Washday is the only day I have to sleep in.
8. My wife washes enough for the whole family.
9. I know people who wash but don't act very clean.
10. Washing is the opiate of the masses. —Johnny Ramsey

"Oh come, let us worship."

PSALM 95:6



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





This Will Not Work at Home

Who's Your Father?

While the family was sitting around the dinner table, Jennifer, age five, turned to her brother Andy (age three) and pointed to her dad. "That's not your real father," she said, startling the whole family.

"Yes, he is!" Andy replied.

"No, he's not," Jennifer insisted. "God is your heavenly Father."

Still pointing at her dad, she said, "That's your homely father!"

Barriers to Submission

First Corinthians 11:7 says the "woman is the glory of man." Proverbs 18:22 says, "He who finds a wife finds a good thing." A godly spouse brings great benefit to a family, cultivating a peaceful home, stronger marriage, and spiritual growth (1 Peter 3:1–4). Here are some barriers to being a godly wife:

- Vying for power and control of the family.
- Not supporting her godly husband's decisions.
- Desire for independence. (Husbands and wives are to depend on each other.)
- Open or passive opposition to God's command to husbands to be leaders and providers (Ephesians 5:23–33; 1 Timothy 5:8).

God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him" (Genesis 2:18). The wife is as important as the husband; he must honor her (1 Peter 3:7). Let us be thankful for the women in our lives. What would we do without them?



To watch videos, read articles, answer Bible questions, and more go to house-to-house.com

On a recent trip, my wife and I stayed in a hotel. I noticed a label on the TV remote: "This will not work in the home."

I thought of other things that will not work in the home.

- **Selfishness**—A family cannot work based on "Big me, little you." Marriage and parenting both require sacrifice and love (1 Corinthians 7:4; Ephesians 5:25; 6:1–4).
- **Dishonesty**—Honesty is not the best policy; it is the only policy. Many families are unstable because they are dishonest with each other. An extra-marital affair divides a home. Jesus said, "Every city or house divided against itself will not stand" (Matthew 12:25).
- **Rebellion**—Rebels displease God (1 Samuel 15:22). A rebellious home is neither happy nor functional. Children who respect parents have far fewer problems than rebels (Ephesians 6:2–3).
- **Permissiveness**—Children often rule the roost. Parents back away from firm

rules and discipline because they fear they will damage their children's self-esteem. Children need discipline in order to become mature adults. The Bible still says, "He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly" (Proverbs 13:24).

- **Secularization**—In times past, parents feared God, read the Bible, and followed morality in the home. There was a healthy fear of eternal punishment. These days, however, the perpetual influence of television brings a postmodern philosophy of "anything goes" and "people do not matter much." Grappling with issues of right and wrong does not occur in some homes, because, according to many, right and wrong no longer exist.

Like the hotel TV remote, these things will not work in the home. —Lance Cordle

"A wise man . . . built his house on the rock."

MATTHEW 7:24

Just for Fun Bible Verse Word Search

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

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

You must **continue** in the things which you have **learned** and been assured of, **knowing** from whom you have learned them, and that from **childhood** you have known the **Holy** Scriptures, which are able to make you **wise** for **salvation** through **faith** which is in **Christ Jesus**. All **Scripture** is given by **inspiration** of God, and is profitable for **doctrine**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of **God** may be **complete**, thoroughly **equipped** for every **good work**. —2 TIMOTHY 3:14–17

Christ Is the

Center, Focus, & Key

Let us not forget the reason the Bible was written and preserved: "that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13).

Christ is the center, focus, and key to the inspiration and interpretation of the Bible. This is why the books of the Old and New Testaments fit together so well into one cohesive and comprehensive whole. Taken together, they present the progressive unfolding, revelation, and communication of Christ.

1. The Law (Genesis–Deuteronomy) prepares the ground or base on which the moral system of Christ rests. It is the beginning or first principles of the system of truth. Christ is the ultimate foundation of all that is right (1 Corinthians 3:11).
2. The History section (Joshua–Esther) shows the preparation for Christ. History, from an inerrant biblical perspective, holds true the necessity of righteousness and faith (2 Timothy 3:16).

3. Poetry (Job–Song of Solomon) expresses an aspiration for Christ the Savior.

Seeing that Scripture is nothing less than the words of our very Creator, it is no wonder that throughout the centuries men and women have been astonished by it. David said, "The law of the LORD is perfect" (Psalm 19:7).

4. Prophecy (Isaiah–Malachi) proclaims an expectation of Christ. The Bible is the account of redemption, how God rescues men from sin and from death.
5. The Gospel Records (Matthew–John) relate the historical manifestation of Christ. They are true accounts of the work and the acts of Christ the Son of God (John 20:30–31).
6. Acts relates the propagation of the gospel of Christ. It portrays the resurrected Christ in His ascension, by

the Spirit, through the disciples, for the producing of the church—the kingdom of God.

7. The Epistles (Romans–Jude) give the interpretation of Christ. The epistles answer questions asked by the church or address problems within the church.
8. Revelation describes the consummation of all things in Christ. The second coming of Christ marks the time when the church goes home for eternity.

How is it that every part of the Bible, in spite of its great diversity, can contribute to its overarching theme of redemption and its central figure, the Christ?

How? Because it is from God! —Mark Posey

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God."

1 JOHN 5:13

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

Bible Quiz

VOLUME 30:5

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark. We will grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark "30 Exceedingly Great and Precious Promises of God" 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. 30:3 Jesus' Miracles: 1. Turning water to wine (John 2:1–11); 2. Mustard seed (Matthew 17:14–21); 3. Peter's/Simon's (Matthew 8:14–15; Mark 1:29–34); 4. Sleeping (Matthew 8:23–27; Mark 4:38); 5. Jairus', twelve years old (Mark 5:21–43; Luke 8:41–42, 49–55); 6. Legion (Mark 5:9; Luke 8:30); 7. Five loaves and two fish (Matthew 14:13–21; Mark 6:30–44); 8. Peter (Matthew 14:28–29); 9. Peter, James, and John (Matthew 17:1–13); 10. That they might accuse Him (Matthew 12:9–13; Mark 3:1–5); 11. "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (John 9:1–41); 12. Thirty-eight (John 5:1–9); 13. Lazarus (John 11:1–44); 14. Martha and Mary (John 11:1–44); 15. Blindness (Mark 10:46–52); 16. a. Five thousand (Matthew 14:13–21; Mark 6:30–44); b. Piece of money (Matthew 17:24–27); c. Simon (Luke 5:4–11); d. Right (John 21:6); e. A few (Matthew 15:32–38; Mark 8:1–9).

V. 30:4 One Dozen Scriptures to Learn with Your Child or Grandchild: 1. Lord (Psalm 23:1); 2. Fathers, training (Ephesians 6:4); 3. Fool (Psalm 14:1); 4. Obey (Ephesians 6:1); 5. Pray (1 Thessalonians 5:17); 6. Love (Hebrews 13:1); 7. Jesus, Son (Acts 8:37); 8. Love, kind (1 Corinthians 13:4); 9. Word (Luke 8:11); 10. Christ (Romans 16:16); 11. Gospel, power (Romans 1:16); 12. Do not lie (Colossians 3:9). *And a Half Dozen More:* 13. Love (1 John 4:8); 14. Wept (John 11:35); 15. Cares (1 Peter 5:7); 16. Grace (Ephesians 2:8); 17. God (John 1:1); 18. Flesh (John 1:14).

Jesus' Parables

Find answers in Matthew 13:23, 44–46; 17:20; 18:14; 20:16; 21:32; 25:13–32, 40; Mark 4:26–29; Luke 10:29; 15:4–7, 11–13. Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

1. In the parable of the talents, what three amounts (number of talents) does each receive? _____
2. "So the last will be _____, and the _____ last."
3. The King will reply, "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the _____ of these My brethren, you did it to _____."
4. What great characteristic is the mustard seed compared to? _____
5. The seed falling on good soil refers to one who hears the word and _____ it.
6. The good soil yields a hundred, sixty or _____ times what was sown.
7. In the parable of the growing seed, is the seed ever harvested? _____
8. What question is Jesus answering in the story of the Good Samaritan? _____
9. The kingdom is like _____ hidden in a field.
10. "Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that _____ of these little ones should perish."
11. The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for beautiful _____.
12. "When he had found one pearl of great price, went and _____ all that he had and bought it."
13. In the parable of the lost sheep, what does the man do when he notices one sheep missing? _____
14. Jesus tells the Pharisees that they did not believe John, but the tax collectors did. He concludes, "you did not afterward _____ and believe him."
15. In the parable of the prodigal son, which son goes to the far country? _____
16. In the parable of the talents, what does the man with the one talent do with money? _____
17. In the parable of the ten virgins, Jesus concludes, "Watch _____, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

The Four Thieves of the Crucifixion



(1) **The thief who regretted** (John 12:6). Oh, the advantages Judas had! Jesus selected him to be an apostle, and his peers trusted him as the treasurer. He observed many of Jesus' sermons and miracles (Matthew 11:5). Yet it was Judas who betrayed Christ for money. His betrayal turned to regret, but rather than seeking forgiveness, he hanged himself (Matthew 27:3–5). Repentance means more than feeling sorry for a wrong. It is the desire to change and do better (2 Corinthians 7:10).

(2) **The thief who was replaced.** It was customary to release a prisoner at the Passover. Thus, Pilate offered the crowd either Jesus or Barabbas. They requested the notorious murderer and robber rather than Jesus (Matthew 27:15–16; John 18:40). Barabbas had someone else (Jesus) take his punishment for him. Barabbas could say that Jesus died in his place. Of course, we can say it, too (2 Corinthians 5:20–21).

(3) **The thief who rebelled.** At first both thieves crucified spoke against Christ (Matthew 27:41–44), but only one kept on doing it (Luke 23:39). This thief remained impenitent because he forgot God, ignored death at hand, and justly deserved what he was receiving (Luke 23:40–41). He died in a state of rebellion in spite of the rebuke and repentance of the other thief and a Savior close at hand.

(4) **The thief who repented.** This thief had a change of heart. In his agony, he looked to the Savior and admitted his sinfulness and Jesus' innocence (Luke 23:40–42). His repentance did not bring escape from death, but it did bring relief and fellowship with Jesus in the next life (v. 43). He did what the Lord wanted him to do, and in that sense he is an example to us.

All of us are represented by one of these thieves. Have you let Jesus down? Have you allowed Jesus to take your place? Are you rebellious? Have you repented? Which are you? —Gary Puryear

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

Recommended Resource



[youtube.com/@HousetoHouseHTH](https://www.youtube.com/@HousetoHouseHTH)

"From Our House to Your House" is a series of discussions centered on building a godly home. It highlights the significance of creating a home environment filled with joy, grace, and mercy, ensuring that each family member feels valued and supported.

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?

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Prayer requests or comments: _____

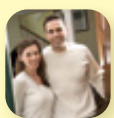
I would like:



☐ A Bible Correspondence Course



☐ A DVD Bible Study



☐ An In-Home Bible Study

New Tracts!

- ☐ Why Are We Knocking at Your Door?
- ☐ Seven Things Satan Wants You to Do
- ☐ A New Sheriff in Town
- ☐ Faith Is the Victory That Overcomes the World



More subjects:



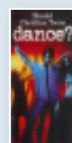
☐ His Own Worst Enemy



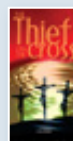
☐ Not Far from the Kingdom



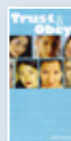
☐ How to Get Ahead Without Getting Even



☐ Should Christian Teens Dance?



☐ The Thief on the Cross



☐ Trust and Obey



☐ Enough and to Spare

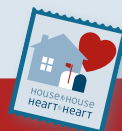


☐ Can We Let Our Conscience Be Our Guide



Don't see the topic you need? Visit www.housetohouse.com for more subjects.

VOLUME 30:5



30 More Exceeding Great & Precious Promises of God

2 Peter 1:3-4

Take a look at the blessings God gives to His people, and rejoice!

God's promises:



Strength (Psalm 29:11)

"The LORD will give strength to His people;
The LORD will bless His people with peace."



Protection (Psalm 91:4-6)

"He shall cover you with His feathers,
And under His wings you shall take refuge;
His truth shall be your shield and buckler.
You shall not be afraid of the terror by night,
Nor of the arrow that flies by day,
Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness,
Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday."



Provision (Matthew 6:33)

"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."



A new name (Isaiah 56:5)

"Even to them I will give in My house
And within My walls a place and a name
Better than that of sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
That shall not be cut off."



Wisdom (James 1:5)

"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him."



Forgiveness (1 John 1:9)

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."



Things working together for good (Romans 8:28)

"We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."



A new heart and spirit (Ezekiel 36:26)

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."



Nothing can separate us from His love (Romans 8:38-39)

"I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."



Supplying needs (Philippians 4:19)

"My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."



Eternal life (1 John 2:25)

"This is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life."



Being a help and shield (Psalm 33:20)

"Our soul waits for the Lord;
He is our help and our shield."



Closeness with God (James 4:8)

"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."



Victory over sin through Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57)

"Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Before . . .

Before you pray, believe (Matthew 21:21).
Before you speak, listen (James 1:19).
Before you spend, earn (Proverbs 14:23).
Before you write, think (Acts 15:6).
Before you quit, try (2 Peter 1:5).
Before you die, live (John 10:10).

"Consider your ways!"

HAGGAI 1:5

Tell the Devil Off

James A. Garfield stated, "If there be one thing upon the earth that mankind loves and admires better than another, it is a brave man—a man who dares look the devil in the face and tell him he is the devil."¹ A Christian can do that. He has the armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20). He has the assurance that John gave: "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

Endnote

¹ Quoted in J. B. McClure, *Pearls from Many Seas* (Chicago: Rhodes & McClure, 1898), 140.

Blinded by Temptation

Several months ago, I was driving down the road when I realized I didn't have my sunglasses. The sun was fairly low and directly in my eyes, so I reached back into a tool bag and found an old pair of glasses. I put them on and suddenly I could see. The only problem was that these glasses had shade 5 green lenses, typically used for welding and cutting torches. Everything was going fine until someone stopped in front of me and I couldn't see their brake lights. I suddenly slammed on the brakes, narrowly avoiding an accident. Quickly, I removed the glasses and decided to deal with the sun. That day, I remembered an important lesson I had once forgotten: green lenses block out red light.

Have you ever thought about how much of a blessing it is to have brake lights? Being able to see when someone is stopping in front of you is something we might overlook, but those lights serve as an important warning, helping us avoid potential dangers ahead. Having those warnings allows us to play it safe and steer clear of accidents and hazards. Of course, anyone who drives understands the importance of brake lights and hazard signs, yet we often struggle to apply the same principles when it comes to sin.

Instead of watching for the warning signs of sin, we go through life wearing shade 5 lenses, allowing ourselves to get as close as possible before we're suddenly caught in an "accident." But can I really call it an accident if I put on glasses that block out brake lights—or worse, drive with my eyes closed—and then crash into the car in front of me? The same is true of sin. We must be aware of our surroundings and anticipate temptations that might distract our vision from Christ. First Peter 5:8 tells us, "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

No one accidentally sins. God gives us warning signs. James 1:14–15 says,

But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

We must recognize the things that tempt us and avoid them at all costs. Think of David, for example. Temptation led him to become an adulterer and a murderer, but did that happen by mistake? Second Samuel 11:2–3 says,

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It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

David blinded himself and ignored several warning signs of temptation. First, he saw Bathsheba bathing. Then, he *recognized* her beauty. Next, he *inquired* about her. Even after learning that she was the wife of one of his own mighty men, an elite group of his thirty-seven best soldiers, he still proceeded. Second Samuel 11:4 tells us that he *sent* for her. At what point should David have realized he was heading down a dangerous path? Seeing Bathsheba could have been avoided entirely if he had kept his eyes where they belonged. However, he allowed temptation to block out all the warnings of the dangers ahead.

We must walk carefully and always be alert to the temptations in our lives. When we see the signs of temptation, rather than pushing forward, we should slow down and seek a way to avoid trouble. Fortunately, God does not leave us alone in this battle against temptation and sin. First Corinthians 10:13 says, "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it." God promises to provide us with a way to escape sin, but we cannot close our eyes and expect to find that way out.

Finally, we must recognize that when we do sin, we need to repent and turn back to God. Just as we see in the sad story of David and Bathsheba, where temptation led to sin, we can also look to David as an example of what to do next. When David came to his senses after being confronted by Nathan, he said, "I have sinned against the LORD." We, too, must be willing to confess that we have sinned against God, lay it aside, repent, and follow Him. Because in Christ, we receive the same promise David received. In 2 Samuel 12:13, Nathan tells David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die." Do not put on blinders when it comes to temptation and sin. If you find yourself ignoring the warnings of temptation, take off the glasses and set your eyes on Jesus (Hebrews 12:1–2).

Andrew Spivey