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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 24 NUMBER 3



If the church had the opportunity to preach one sermon to the whole world, what should it be? Its theme would have to be Jesus, for there is no salvation “in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

No other person has been more frequently discussed, written about, painted, and sung to than Jesus, but about fifty percent of the world’s population still does not even know who He is.¹ It is estimated that of the world’s 7.7 billion people, 3.15 billion have little or no access to the gospel.² Even among those who think they know about Jesus, there are many misconceptions. He remains an enigma to most of humanity.

What does the world need to know about Jesus?

#1: JESUS DOES NOT WANT TO CONDEMN YOU; HE WANTS TO SAVE YOU.

Many see Christianity as the “Religion of No.” They believe it sucks the fun out of life with its rules and “thou shalt nots.” They see Jesus as judgmental and condemning.

This is not the Jesus of Scripture. Jesus said, “I did not come to judge the world but to save the world” (John 12:47). “God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved” (John 3:17).

Jesus loves each person unconditionally. No matter what people have done—good or bad—He loves them. He invites each to abundant living (Matthew 11:28–30; John 10:10) and wants all to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9). His love never ends (Jeremiah 31:3; John 13:1). No one will ever love us more than Jesus already does.

#2: JESUS IS GOD’S ANSWER TO MAN’S SIN PROBLEM.

Sin is man’s great problem. Like a drop of poison in a glass of water, even a little taints the whole life and results in death (James 2:10). Sin is universal—“There is none righteous, no, not one” (Romans 3:10); and fatal—“the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). Before Christ, sin was man’s unsolvable problem.

Isaiah said saving man would be costly. Because of our sin, someone had to die—the just for the unjust (Isaiah 53:5–6).

In the Old Testament, an animal could die for a man's sin, but that was only a temporary solution (Hebrews 10:4).

When God saw man's desperate need, He provided a Savior (Acts 13:23). He sacrificed His own Son: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "The Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14).

Jesus came to earth and lived a perfect life (Hebrews 4:15), qualifying Him to be the sacrifice for sin (a sinner could not die for sinners). Isaiah wrote, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:5-6).

#3: JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD.

Each person must eventually come to one of three possible conclusions concerning Jesus:

- Jesus was a liar. His claims to be the Son of God from heaven were deliberate fabrications and have misled millions of people over the past two thousand years.
- Jesus was a lunatic. He really believed what He said, but was no more the Son of God than He was the king of England.
- Jesus is Lord.³ He was who He said: the promised Messiah, Son of God, and Savior of the world.

The evidence points to the third conclusion. One cannot read Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and come away saying Jesus was a bad man (liar) or mentally imbalanced (lunatic). He went about doing good (Acts 10:38); His words were logical and articulate. That leaves "Jesus is Lord."

#4: JESUS IS "ONE OF US" (THE SON OF MAN).

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). God could have chosen to send Jesus into the world as a fully grown and sinless man. He could have quickly died on the cross and gone back to heaven. Instead Jesus was miraculously conceived in Mary's womb as a baby (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:35; cf. Isaiah 7:14). He lived a common life for thirty years, an extraordinary life for forty months, and an excruciating life for six hours.

So about ninety percent of His earthly existence was spent living as an average person. He came from a common family, wore a common name, did common work, ate common food, spoke a common language, and had common responsibilities.

#5: JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED BY HIS OWN PEOPLE FOR BEING TOO HOLY.

Religious people, not atheists, killed Jesus. He was not condemned for wicked deeds, but, in effect, for holi-

ness. His "crimes" included socializing with sinners (Mark 2:13-17), healing on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:9-14), driving exchangers from the temple (John 2:13-16), and accepting worship (Matthew 9:18; 20:20).

He made claims Jewish leaders considered blasphemy. He claimed

- To forgive sins (Matthew 9:1-2).
- To come from heaven (John 6:38; 16:28).
- That God sent Him (John 8:42).
- To be sinless (John 8:46; 18:23).
- To have preexisted (John 8:58).
- To be the only way to salvation (John 3:16-18; 5:24; 6:40; 10:9; 11:25; 14:6).
- To be the bread of life and the living bread (John 6:35, 48, 51); the light of the world (8:12); the good shepherd (10:11, 14); the way, the truth, and the life (14:6).
- To be God (John 5:18; 10:30-33; 14:8-9).

It was only blasphemy if it were not true.

#6: JESUS CAME BACK TO LIFE.

Jesus lived again. That the tomb was filled is generally stipulated to by both sides. Jesus died and was buried. That is not the question. The question is what happened to the body. There are three choices:

- His enemies stole the body.
- His disciples stole the body.
- He was resurrected.

The first is disproven by the fact that Christianity's enemies never produced the body. Preaching the resurrection began within a stone's throw of His tomb—in the presence of His enemies. They did all they could to stop the church's growth, but they never said, "We took His body. You look like a bunch of fools for claiming a resurrection."

The second choice is equally untenable. First, believers had no access to the body. Jesus' tomb was triple protected by

- A stone: Artists typically portray a disk-shaped stone over Jesus' tomb, but out of the nine hundred tombs discovered from this period, only four had stones like that. Most were more

like corks. Either way, its entrance was blocked.

- A guard: Pilate put guards at the tomb.
- A seal: A seal was a sign that the contents belonged to Rome. Anyone caught breaking it would likely be crucified.

Second, the disciples died for their faith. Not one recanted and said, “We took the body. There was no resurrection. It was all a lie.” People do not die for something they know is a lie.

#7: JESUS BUILT THE CHURCH AND WANTS YOU TO BE A MEMBER.

The only lasting institution from Jesus’ life is His church. He promised, “On this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). The promise was fulfilled on the Pentecost following His resurrection (Acts 2:1–47). The church of Christ grew rapidly in Jerusalem, Judea, and throughout the Roman Empire.

The same church still exists today. Jesus adds every person He saves to it (Acts 2:47). In fact, that is the only way to become a part of it. He invites you to accept the facts of the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:1–4), obey its commands (Acts 2:38), and then enjoy its promises (Mark 16:16). He will add you to His church where you can worship and work until He comes or you pass over to His side in death.

#8: JESUS REIGNS OVER THE WHOLE WORLD—EXCEPT ONE PLACE.

When Jesus ascended to heaven (Acts 1:9–11), He also ascended to His throne (Psalm 24:7–10). He presently rules as the world’s King (1 Timothy 6:15).

Yet there are pockets of resistance—places where His rule is not recognized. Those places are human hearts where He stands at the door and knocks (Revelation 3:20). Does He rule in your heart? He wants you to take Him with you on your life’s journey. He has high expectations. He requires certain behavior and attitudes. He lays out what is right and wrong in Scripture, and He must be given preeminence in all things (Colossians 1:15–20).

Like an engagement proposal, the choice is up to us. He will not make us follow Him, but life is better with Him in it. And eternity without Him is unthinkable.

#9: JESUS WILL JUDGE EVERYONE.

He gave a preview of that great scene when the Son of Man shall come in His glory: “He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left” (Matthew 25:31–33). You will be there; I will be there; we should prepare.

#10: JESUS WANTS EACH PERSON TO FOLLOW HIM (MATTHEW 11:28–30).

We are back to where we began. He stands ready to save; He is the only way to heaven.

- A physician can save your life,
- A lawyer can save your business,
- A financial advisor can save your money,
- A coach can save your athletic career,
- A consultant can save your reputation.⁴

But only Jesus can save your soul (Matthew 16:26).

Endnotes:

¹ <http://www.biblehelp.org/noheard.htm>.

² <https://globalfrontiermissions.org/gfm>.

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis%27s_trilemma.

⁴ Author unknown (adapted).

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: 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



Home

Home is the beginning point of everything. Here, life makes up its mind. It is not just the beginning place of biological life, but of moral, ethical, mental, spiritual, and emotional life as well. Parents have the first opportunity to affect the feelings, beliefs, and ideas of the child. —Author unknown

Bibles in Spanish

My family was visiting a church and the minister announced they had both Spanish and English Bibles for use during the service. My youngest son tugged at my sleeve and whispered, “Mommy, I want one of those Spanish Bibles.”

“Don’t be silly, you can’t read Spanish,” I quickly rejoined.

Holding out his own Bible to me, my kindergartner explained, “Mom, I can’t read English either.” —Rebecca Self, Chaparral, New Mexico. *Today’s Christian Woman*, “Heart to Heart.”

Mealtime

My family’s mealtime menu offered two choices—take it or leave it. —Sam Levenson, *Everything but Money* (Simon and Schuster).

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

In the Next Five Minutes . . .

Leonard Johnson, one founder of Faulkner University in Montgomery, Alabama, once preached a sermon in a gospel meeting in a small Alabama town. In it he said, “In the next five minutes, I am going to tell you everything the New Testament says about the name of the church.”

For the next five minutes, brother Johnson did not utter a word. Then he said, “There you have it—everything the New Testament says about the name of the church.”

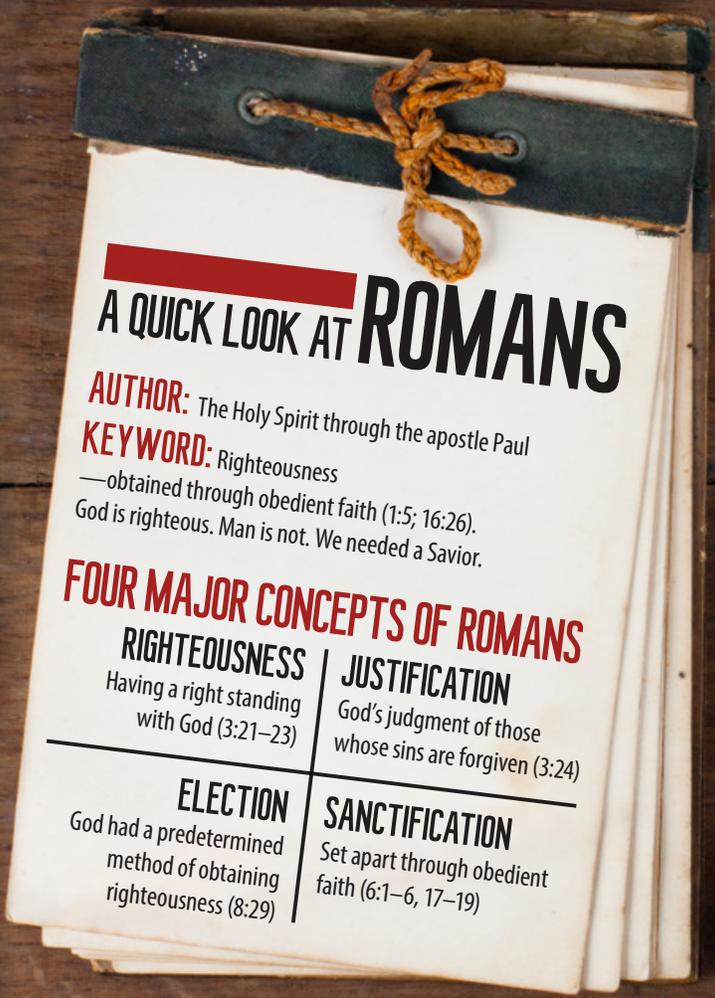
Johnson was right—the church, the body of people redeemed to God by Christ’s blood, does not have a proper, formal, exclusive, and patented name. It was not and is not a denomination and does not wear a denominational designation. Instead, the New Testament gives numerous descriptors for the church. The church (the aggregate of all who have been saved by obedience to the gospel) is the spiritual body of Christ, of which there is but one (Ephesians 1:22–23; 4:4). It is the spiritual temple of God, being composed of living stones (Ephesians 2:19–22). It is the house (-hold, family) of God, with every child of God a member of it (1 Timothy 3:15). It is the kingdom of God’s dear Son (Colossians 1:13; cf. Acts 2:47).

Christ called it “My church” (Matthew 16:18). A plurality of local congregations are “churches of Christ” (Romans 16:16). At the same time, they also are “churches of God” (1 Corinthians 11:16), and the universal body of redeemed people is called the “church of God” (11:22).

Geographically, God’s people are spoken of as the church at Jerusalem, the church of God which is at Corinth, the churches of Judea, the churches of Galatia, and the seven churches of Asia. Modern Catholic and Protestant names are noticeably absent, and came to be applied to religious groups arising since the New Testament.

Churches of Christ today strive to be the church of the New Testament order. We do not profess to be a denomination. The use of the biblical descriptor “church of Christ” is not intended as our official name. Any biblical descriptor is acceptable. However, in our divided religious world, it is practical to consistently use the same descriptor. —Hugh Fulford





WHEN | WHERE | WHY

Written from Corinth to the church in Rome. Paul was returning to Judea from his third missionary journey in AD 57–58. He wanted to express his desire to be with them, and to impart knowledge and comfort to them.

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



Bible Quiz

VOLUME 24:3

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark! We'll grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark "Chapter to Chapter - 1/2 Corinthians" 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. 24:1, Cities, Deserts, and Rivers:** 1. Cedar trees (1 Kings 5:6); 2. City of David, which is Zion (1 Kings 8:1); 3. Blood (Exodus 7:17); 4. Seven years (Genesis 41:30); 5. Goshen (Genesis 45:10); 6. Egypt (Hosea 7:16); 7. 20 (1 Kings 9:11); 8. Shemer (1 Kings 16:24); 9. Commander army of Hazor (1 Samuel 12:9); 10. Egypt (Hosea 9:3); 11. Ravens (1 Kings 17:1–6); 12. 38 years (Deuteronomy 2:14); 13. John the baptizer (Luke 3:2–4); 14. Jordan River (Matthew 3:13); 15. Jordan River (Joshua 3:13); 16. Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates (Genesis 2:10–14); 17. Seven (2 Kings 5:9–14); 18. Moses (Exodus 2:1–10); 19. Euphrates (Revelation 16:12); 20. Amos (Amos 5:24)
- V. 24:2 Kings of Chaos:** 1. Solomon (1 Kings 9:15–28) 2. Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:1–19) 3. Jeroboam (1 Kings 12:20; 14:1–20) 4. Asa (2 Chronicles 16:12) 5. Elah, son of Baasha (1 Kings 16:8–10) 6. Ahab (1 Kings 16:30–31) 7. Ahaziah (1 Kings 22:51–52) 8. Jehoram (2 Kings 3:1–3) 9. Mesha-King of Moab (2 Kings 3:4, 21–27) 10. Joash (2 Chronicles 24:1, 22) 11. Jehoahaz (2 Kings 13:1–2) 12. Amaziah (2 Chronicles 25:1–4) 13. Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:19–23) 14. Ahaz (2 Chronicles 28:1–3) 15. Zechariah (2 Kings 15:8–10) 16. Menahem (2 Kings 15:14–22)

How Much Do You Know about King David?

See: 1 Samuel 16; 17; 18; 19; 25:5–38; 2 Samuel 5:4–7; 9:11; 11:1–17; 12:1, 15–19; 15:14; 17:25; 18:14; 1 Chronicles 3:4; 29:26–27

1. What was David's occupation as a boy? _____
2. Which prophet secretly anointed David as king? _____
3. David was soon hired to work for King Saul. What was his job? _____
4. Who made several attempts on David's life because of jealousy? _____
5. Which giant Philistine warrior did David bring down with a sling and a stone? _____
6. How long did David's reign over all of Israel last? _____
7. From whom did David capture his capital city (Zion)? _____
8. With what beautiful woman did David commit adultery? _____
9. What did David do to try to cover up his adultery? _____
10. Where was David anointed as king of Israel? _____
11. How old was David when he first began to reign over Judah? _____
12. Who was David's first wife? _____
13. Which of David's sons tried to overthrow and kill him? _____
14. Who refused to assist David and his men, and died as a result? _____
15. Which former king of Israel tried to kill David out of envy? _____
16. Who was the prophet that confronted David with his adultery? _____
17. What was the cost of David's sin with Bathsheba? _____
18. Who did Absalom appoint as commander over his army in Joab's place? _____
19. How did David's son Absalom die? _____
20. Who was the crippled son of Jonathan cared for by David? _____



The Simple Gospel

No book written by man has so many simple words as the New Testament.

There is an air of simplicity about the biographies of Jesus which, like the breezes from the Galilean hills, blows upon our sophisticated minds.

The gospel has not been recorded in philosophical phraseology, scientific terms, complicated sentences, or the dialects of angels; it has been expressed in the simplest terms so that even children can understand.

Man has muddled the stream of divine thought by theological and ecclesiastical terms and phrases until it is much more difficult to understand the doctrines of men than the simple teachings of the New Testament.

The gospel of Jesus contains truths so plain and clear that the untrained minds of innocent children can begin to catch and follow them (Matthew 19:13).

Teachers often confuse by their clouded explanation, when, if they would just read the New Testament aloud, the simplicity of thought would be gained.

While on earth, Jesus replaced the traditions of men with respect to the law by His simple teachings. The instructions given to Christians as to how to live the Christian life can be understood. No one has a just complaint to make against the requirements of the New Testament toward a simple life (2 Corinthians 11:3). —H. Leo Boles

"The simplicity that is in Christ"

2 CORINTHIANS 11:3

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

Recommended Resource



The Gospel Broadcasting Network is unique in the world of religious TV—commercial free, and they never ask for money! Sponsored by the churches of Christ, GBN is available on many cable systems, as well as through their smartphone apps, the Roku device, and at gbntv.org.

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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- The Omni God
- Five Pictures of Hope
- Make Jesus Your Banker



More subjects:



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The Weeping Preacher



Does It Make Any Difference Which Church I Attend?



Do I Really Matter?



A Covenant Every Man Ought to Make with His Eyes



Sealed by the Spirit



Biography of Saul of Tarsus



Who Is Missing Out?



I've Got Friends in Low Places



How to Have a Great Spiritual Retirement

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



Amazing!

The *Greyhound* had been thrashing about in the north Atlantic storm for over a week. Its canvas sails were ripped, and the wood on one side of the ship had been torn away and splintered.

The sailors had little hope of survival, but they manually worked the pumps, trying to keep the vessel afloat. On the eleventh day of the storm, sailor John Newton was too exhausted to pump, so he was tied to the helm and tried to hold the ship to its course. From one o'clock until midnight he was at the helm.

With the storm raging fiercely, Newton had time to think. His life seemed as ruined and wrecked as the battered ship he was trying to steer through the storm. Since the age of eleven, he had lived a life at sea. Sailors were not noted for the refinement of their manners, but Newton had a reputation for profanity, coarseness, and debauchery which even shocked many a sailor.

John Newton survived that day at the helm. That day, March 21, 1748, was a turning point in his life. It was a day that he would never forget, for he believed that “on that day the Lord sent from on high and delivered me out of deep waters.” On that day he began to turn to the Christ that he had ignored since childhood when his mother had tried to teach him the Scriptures.

Newton went on to write the words of the following beloved hymn:

“Amazing grace! how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.”

Newton lived to be eighty-two years old. Even then, Newton never ceased to be amazed by God’s grace and told his friends, “My memory is nearly gone; but I remember two things: That I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior.”

—adapted from Stan Mitchell, *Forthright Magazine* and *The Reformed Reader*

“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” —the apostle Paul, 1 Timothy 1:15



Sharon’s Sweetest Rose

I may know archeology—the study of rocks—but if I don’t know Jesus, then I don’t know the Rock of Ages.

I may know astronomy—the study of the stars—but if I don’t know Jesus, then I don’t know the Star of Jacob.

I may know botany—the study of plants—but if I don’t know Jesus, then I don’t know the Lily of the Valley or Sharon’s sweetest Rose. —Clarence DeLoach





Blessings *in Disguise*

There was a single survivor of a shipwreck who was thrown upon an uninhabited island. After a while he managed to build a crude hut in which he placed the things he had salvaged from the sinking ship. He prayed to God for deliverance and anxiously scanned the horizon each day to hail any ship that might chance to pass by.

One day, upon returning from a hunt for food, he was horrified to find his hut in flames. All that he possessed had gone up in smoke. The worst had happened, so it seemed. But that which seemed to have happened for the worst was, in reality, for the best. In God's infinite wisdom, his loss was for the best—that for which he had prayed. The next day a ship arrived. "We saw your smoke signal," the captain said.

Can we not take our seeming calamities and look for God's best in them? In the face of trials and disappointments, we should remember the assuring words of Paul to God's children: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).

—Author Unknown



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3/19



OPINION POLL

What are the top five issues facing our country? And, why?

<input type="checkbox"/> Abortion	<input type="checkbox"/> Immigration
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol/Drugs	<input type="checkbox"/> Marijuana/Drugs
<input type="checkbox"/> Corruption	<input type="checkbox"/> Minority Rights
<input type="checkbox"/> Death Penalty	<input type="checkbox"/> Morality
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment/Energy/ Earth Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Supreme Court Appointees
<input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Affairs	<input type="checkbox"/> Muslims/Sharia Law
<input type="checkbox"/> Gender Identity Issues	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Freedom/ Government "Big Brother" Surveillance
<input type="checkbox"/> Global Warming	<input type="checkbox"/> Racism
<input type="checkbox"/> Gun Control	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious Freedom
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Marriage
<input type="checkbox"/> Homosexual Marriage	

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