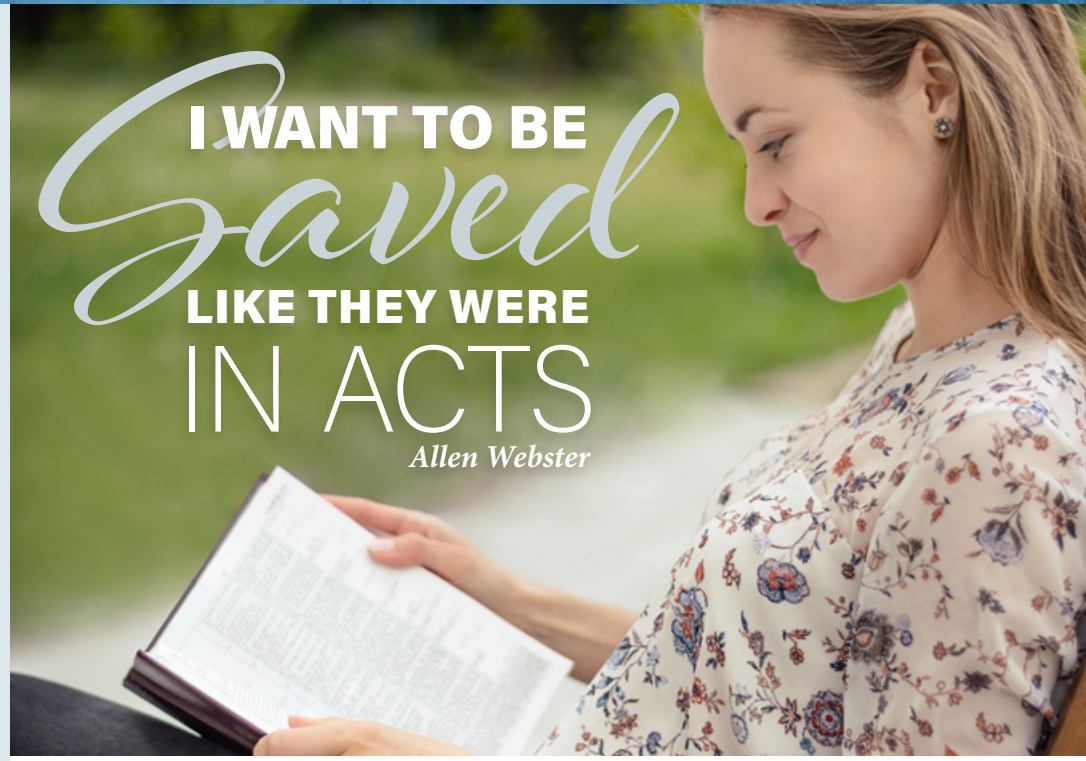


HOUSE to HOUSE
HEART to HEART

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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 7



I WANT TO BE *Saved* LIKE THEY WERE IN ACTS *Allen Webster*

The New Testament books of Matthew through John record the life, teachings, commands, and promises of Jesus. One promise was “I will build My church” (Matthew 16:18). One command was “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

The book of Acts is based on those two verses. Acts 1 records Jesus’ ascension to heaven; Acts 2 records the building of His church; Acts 3–28 records Christians taking the gospel to the world.

The good news, aided by God’s Spirit, flowed down Mount Zion with such momentum that it soon spread from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and the faraway capital of Rome (Acts 1:8; Isaiah 2:2–4). It had such force that it still circles the globe today.

WHAT GOD DID

Preachers are quick to talk about what man must do to be saved, but the discussion of salvation begins with what God

did and does. God loved man and initiated salvation when men were sinners (John 3:16; 12:47; Acts 10:36; Romans 5:6–8).

God sent His Son to take the punishment man deserved (Acts 13:23; 1 John 4:14). Isaiah wrote, “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 53:6).

WHAT THE APOSTLES TAUGHT

Acts shows God’s plan of salvation applied in ten specific conversions, some non-conversions, and a few related summary statements.

In Acts 3:19 and 26, instruction was given to repent and be converted, but no conversions took place. In 5:29, Peter told the council that men “ought to obey God rather than men,” but they rejected it, and none were converted (5:33). Apollos was a convert who needed further teaching (18:24–26). Felix, Festus, and Agrippa rejected the gospel (24:25; 26:24, 28).



Some were not converted, but many were. We will look for a pattern of how sinners were saved in Acts. Read these in your Bible and draw your own conclusions (Acts 17:11).

Conversion 1: 3000 Jews on Pentecost (Acts 2:22–47). Acts 2 records the beginning of the church. The Jewish feast of Pentecost had brought devout Jews to Jerusalem from many places. The day began with the coming of the Holy Spirit (2:1–13). When people came to see what was happening, they heard the apostles speaking in all the tongues of the people. Some thought they were drunk (2:12–13).

Peter denied that and explained this event fulfilled Joel’s prophecy (Joel 2:28–32). Peter concluded, “Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:14–36).

Peter began with what God did (2:16–36) and finished with what man must do (2:38). About 3000 Jews

- heard (2:6, 14) and then initiated their salvation process (2:37).
- repented (2:38).
- confessed (2:21). Calling on the Lord’s name includes confession and can stand for the entire process (cf. 22:16).
- were baptized for the remission of sins (2:41). “For” (Greek *eis*) means “in order to obtain.” *Eis* is found 1173 times in the New Testament and is never translated “because of” (cf. Matthew 26:28).
- received remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (2:38).

- were added to the church (2:47; Galatians 3:27).
- continued in the apostles’ doctrine (Acts 2:42; Revelation 2:10).
- enjoyed fellowship with each other and favor with outsiders (2:44–47).

Conversion 2: Samaritans (8:5–13). Philip began with what Christ did (8:5, 12). They heard (8:5–6), believed (8:12), and were baptized (8:12–13).

Conversion 3: Ethiopian Treasurer (8:26–39). He heard (8:30–31, 35) and then initiated the salvation process (8:34, 36). He believed (8:37), confessed Christ (8:37), and was baptized (8:38). He “went on his way rejoicing” (8:39). This shows three things about baptism.

- “Here is water” shows baptism’s medium—water (8:36).
- “Both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water” shows baptism’s mode—immersion (8:38).
- “What hinders me from being baptized?” (desiring immediate baptism) (8:36) shows conformity to baptism’s purpose—forgiveness (2:38; Matthew 28:19–20).

Conversion 4: Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:1–18; 22:6–16; 26:12–23). Saul heard (9:4), believed (9:4, 6), repented (indicated by fasting) (9:9), and was baptized (9:18). He asked two questions of eternal significance: “Who are You, Lord?” (9:5; cf. Matthew 3:17; 16:15–16); and “What do You want me to do?” (Acts 9:6; cf. 2:37; 16:30; 22:16). Every person’s eternal destiny rests on how he answers these questions.

Conversion 5: Cornelius and His Household (10:1–48). Peter used the keys Jesus gave him (Matthew 16:19) to swing salvation’s door open to the Gentiles (cf. Acts 2:39). Unlike Moses’ Law (Deuteronomy 10:15), God now shows no favor to any racial or national background. All people are on equal footing in receiving the gospel, as He honors all who fear and obey Him (Acts 10:34–35). Cornelius heard (10:33–44), believed (10:43), and was baptized (10:47–48).

Conversion 6: Deputy and Other Gentiles (Acts 13:1–7, 12–52). These heard (13:7, 42–44) and believed (13:12, 48). No detail is given of what was preached or

practiced. It does not say they repented, confessed, or were baptized.

In a few places in Acts (4:1–4; 17:34), as here, “believe” is used as a summary or a synecdoche. *Synecdoche* is “a figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole.”¹ When Moses said not a “hoof” shall be left behind (Exodus 10:26), he used a synecdoche, as does a cattleman who says he has “ninety head of cattle.” Jesus used synecdoche in John 3:16: “Whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” He permitted belief, which is only one condition of pardon, to stand for all the conditions.

This does not make repentance or baptism unnecessary any more than God’s granting Gentiles “repentance to life” (Acts 11:18) makes belief unnecessary.

Conversion 7: Lydia and Her Household (16:13–15). These women meeting for prayer heard the gospel (16:13) and were baptized (16:15).

Conversion 8: The Philippian Jailer and His Household (Acts 16:26–34). When Paul and Silas met a demon-possessed girl, they cast out the demon, which got them cast into prison. After an earthquake, Paul stopped his jailer from committing suicide. The jailer asked what to do to be saved (16:30).

Paul said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved” (16:31). To understand this, one must consider the context and full response (16:22–24).² The jailer was a Roman. He was at best irreligious, and at worst a pagan.

Why would Paul say “repent and be baptized for remission of sins” to one unfamiliar with God, Jesus, penitence, baptism, sin, and remission? Paul gave the short answer and then taught him what belief involved.

They jailer heard (16:31–32), believed (16:34), repented (implied by washing their stripes) (16:33), and was baptized the same hour (16:33). He rejoiced after being baptized (16:34).

Conversion 9: Crispus and the Corinthians (Acts 18:8). They heard, believed, and were baptized (18:8).

Conversion 10: Ephesian Disciples (Acts 19:1–7). They heard (19:2–4), believed (19:4), and were baptized (19:5). They received gifts of the Spirit (19:6).

The Thank You Company

Ali Spizman was just four years old when she created her own pretend company. She was CEO of the *Thank You Company*.

When she would hear someone say “Thank you,” she would whisper to her mom, “She’s hired.”

At fourteen, Ali wrote *The Thank You Book for Kids*—a book of creative ways to say “thank you.” She also set up the *Thank You Campaign*, giving away thousands of blank greeting cards to people unable to afford them.

Jesus healed ten lepers; only one thanked Him (Luke 17:12–18). But an attitude of gratitude like Ali’s is infectious.



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

Conversion Case:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Hear	2:14	8:5–6	8:30	9:4	10:33	13:7, 42	16:13	16:32	18:8	19:2
Believe		8:12	8:37	9:5–6	10:43	13:12, 48		16:34	18:8	19:2
Repent	2:38			9:9	11:18			16:33		
Confess	2:21		8:37	22:16						
Be baptized	2:41	8:12	8:38	9:18	10:48		16:15	16:33	18:8	19:5
Be saved	2:38			22:16	10:43					
Reaction	2:44	8:8	8:39		10:46	13:48		16:34		19:6
Remain faithful	2:42	8:22–24		9:19	10:48		16:15	16:34	18:11	

WHAT WE LEARN

(See chart). No single conversion records all that is involved in a sinner’s salvation. Taken together, though, they show a clear pattern. To be saved, a sinner must hear, believe, repent, confess, and be baptized (Mark 16:15–16; John 3:3–5). A convert receives salvation, the gift of the Spirit, church membership, joy, and community. Then one must remain faithful (Acts 2:42; Revelation 2:10).

Since the entirety of God’s word is truth (Psalm 119:160), and God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34–35), we must take the whole as what God requires for salvation. Every person who is truly saved is saved the same way.

Salvation is like a combination safe. Its lock will open only after certain numbers are entered in sequence. If a combination is: turn right to 3, left to 10, right to 7, left to 4, and right to 1, then it will not open if one

- Turns left first and stops at 3.
- Turns right first and stops at 10.
- Turns right last and stops at 2.
- Omits 10 from the sequence.
- Adds 8 to the sequence.

Man’s response to God’s offer of salvation is like that. The five requirements for scriptural baptism are as follows:

- Immersion in water (Acts 8:35–39; Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12),
- of a penitent believer (Acts 2:38; 8:36–38; Mark 16:16),
- upon a confession of faith (Acts 8:37; Matthew 10:32–33),
- for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16),
- in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

Acts 19:1–7 illustrates salvation’s combination lock. Apollos baptized disciples

after teaching them outdated doctrine—John’s baptism, which was replaced at the cross (John 3:23; Colossians 2:14). John’s baptism differed from Great Commission baptism in the order of the commands (repent/believe instead of believe/repent, Mark 1:15³), required no confession of Jesus, and was not in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Apply the combination lock principle:

- Immersion in water? Yes.
- Penitent believers? Yes/no. They were penitent but were taught to believe on One to come.
- Remission of sins? Originally, yes (Mark 1:4), but it was invalidated.
- Upon a confession of Christ? No.
- In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? No.

This combination did not work, so Paul correctly taught and baptized them.

The most important question one can ask is “Am I saved?” To hear “yes” on the day of judgment (Matthew 25:31–33), we must make preparation now. “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” (Hebrews 2:3).

Following Acts is the correct path. You are invited to visit the church of Christ in your community, where you will find this taught and practiced.

Endnotes:

¹ <https://www.ultius.com/glossary/literature/rhetorical-devices/synecdoche.html>.

² The thief on the cross (Luke 23:43), often appealed to for deathbed, faith-only conversion, lived under Moses’ Law. As one saved prior to Jesus’ testament (Hebrews 9:15–17), he can no more be an example of how to be saved today than Naaman, Jonah, the Samaritan woman, or Bartimaeus. Jesus had not been resurrected; the Great Commission had not been given; the church (kingdom) did not yet exist.

³ John urged people to repent of not keeping the Law and to believe on the One to come. Great Commission baptism requires people to believe in Jesus (who has come) and to repent of sins.

Quotable

The man who seldom finds himself in hot water is the one with a wife, several daughters, and one bathroom.

—Anonymous

You can't fully comprehend the phrase "million-dollar smile" until you've had a child in orthodontic braces. —Jean Walter

My family's mealtime menu offered two choices—take it or leave it.

—Sam Levenson, *Everything but Money*

Good character, like good soup, is made at home.

—Seen on a Brooklyn, New York, church bulletin board

Better parents make better children who turn out to be better parents. —Anonymous

Some kids are real advocates of solar energy, particularly when it comes to removing snow from the sidewalks.

—Sandy Cooley in New Holstein, Wisconsin, *Reporter*



Don't Be Sorry

One morning after a snowstorm, Susan was outside shoveling her driveway. She stopped to wave hello to her neighbor, and he asked her why her husband was not out there helping her with the chore.

She explained that one of them had to stay inside to take care of the children, so they drew straws to see who would go out and shovel.

"Sorry about your bad luck," he said. Susan replied, "Don't be sorry. I won't!"

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



A Father's Toolbox

Back on the farm, I remember that when something broke down, my father would get out his toolbox and make the repairs. As a child, I was always fascinated by his toolbox and its contents. It seemed my father could fix almost anything with the tools inside.

From the beginning, God has designated husbands/fathers as the leaders of the home. Fathers have a great responsibility in making sure the whole family goes the right direction in the name of the Lord. The Christian father needs to have his spiritual toolbox at the ready. Some of the tools he needs include the following:

Adjustable wrench: Fathers must be able to adapt to any situation that arises.

Carpenter's pencil: Fathers must be able to draw the boundaries for the family so that all can clearly see them.

Level: Fathers must be fair and keep a level head in all circumstances.

Pliers: Fathers must be able to hold everything together, even when everybody else may be losing their grip.

Hammer: Fathers must be effective in driving home important truths.

Utility knife: Fathers must be able to cleanly separate and remove undesirable things and influences so that they do not harm the family.

Screwdriver: Fathers must keep turning the family in the right direction to keep them secure.

Tape measure: Fathers must be measuring and monitoring the family's resources, priorities, and use of time.

Duct tape: Fathers must be ready to apply a "quick fix" to problems so that they do not get out of hand, holding them in check until a permanent solution is found.

Extension cord: Fathers must plug into the proper power source (prayer, Scripture) and distribute energy to every family member.

Fathers are important, and they must use the proper tools and take the time to build and mend the family into a strong structure for the Lord. —Edd Sterchi, *Campbellsville, Kentucky (via Watertown, Tennessee, Church of Christ)*

Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

EPHESIANS 6:4

It Is Not What You Have

A king suffered a terribly painful sickness. His advisor told him that the only cure was to locate a contented man and ask for his shirt to wear night and day.

Immediately messengers were sent through the kingdom to look for such a man and bring back his shirt.

Months passed; finally all the messengers returned empty-handed. The king was exasperated. "Do you mean to tell me there is not even a single man in all my realm who is content?"

A messenger replied, "We found only one such man in all your realm."

"Why did you not bring his shirt?"

"Master, the man had no shirt."

Dr. Dale Robbins writes, "I used to think people complained because they had a lot of problems. But I have come to realize that they have problems because they complain. Complaining doesn't change anything or make situations better. It amplifies frustration, spreads discontent and discord, and can invoke an invitation for the devil to cause havoc with our lives."

"Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless" (Philippians 2:14–15). —Anonymous

If Christ Be Not Raised . . .

If Christ did not rise from the dead, He is not divine (Romans 1:4). If He is not divine, His death did not take away the Old Covenant any more than the death of a mere man would have (Hebrews 10:9–10; Colossians 2:14; Ephesians 2:13–16). But because He is divine, He took away the Old (2 Corinthians 3:6–18; Romans 7:1–7; Galatians 4:21–31) and ratified the New (Hebrews 8:6–13; 9:11–17).

It was the sixth hour (high noon), and darkness prevailed until the ninth hour (three o'clock in the afternoon). The earth quaked; the veil of the temple was rent; the soldiers near the cross cried, "Truly this was the Son of God!" (Matthew 27:54). The tombs of the dead split. Amid the darkness of Calvary, the sinless Son of God, dying for the sinful soul of man, bowed His stately head and said, "It is finished"—and died! (John 19:30). There the grandest drama ever enacted was completed. It began in Eden with the fallen pair and ended in the horrors and tragedies of Calvary. There the remedial system was finished, the scheme of hu-

man redemption affected, and the Law, having been fulfilled, ended.

The United States was once under the Articles of Confederation, but now it is under the Constitution. The Supreme Court of the United States is not to decide whether a law is authorized by the Articles of Confederation; instead the Court is to determine whether it is authorized by the Constitution.

Before the cross of Christ, God's people were under the authority of the Old Covenant, but today they are under the authority of the New Covenant. In this dispensation, they are not to go to the Old Covenant in an attempt to learn what to do to be saved and how to worship God acceptably; they are to go to the New Covenant to learn those things.

If Christ did not rise from the dead, God could not have given "Him to be head over all things to the church." Please consider the following:

"Which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:20–23).

If Jesus did not rise from the dead, neither shall we. He says, "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death" (Revelation 1:18). He has the key that will unlock every grave.

—Anonymous



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



Bible Quiz

VOLUME 25:7

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

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Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

Answers to Previous Quizzes

V. 25:5 *The Holy Spirit*: 1. Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18); 2. Dove (Luke 3:22); 3. Baptizing, name (Matthew 28:19); 4. Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1); 5. Blasphemy (Matthew 12:31); 6. Drunkenness or being full of new wine (Acts 2:13); 7. The third hour of the day (Acts 2:15); 8. Baptized, remission, gift (Acts 2:38); 9. Ananias (Acts 5:3); 10. Liberty (2 Corinthians 3:17); 11. Wind (Acts 2:2); 12. Tongues as of fire (Acts 2:3); 13. Spoke in tongues (everyone could understand in their own language) (Acts 2:4, 11); 14. Peter (Acts 2:14); 15. Simon (Acts 8:18); 16. Peace, joy (Romans 14:17); 17. Body, temple (1 Corinthians 6:19); 18. Moved (2 Peter 1:21)

V. 25:6 *Marriages and Weddings*: 1. Rebekah (Genesis 24:64–65); 2. He turned water into wine (John 2:1–10); 3. He sent his armies to destroy them and burn their city (Matthew 22:2–7); 4. Daughters (Exodus 21:7–9); 5. Hosea (Hosea 1:2); 6. She had children while Hannah had no children (1 Samuel 1:2); 7. Give your daughter (Dinah) to my son (Shechem) as a wife and make marriages with us (Genesis 34:8–9); 8. He married an Ethiopian woman (Numbers 12:1); 9. No (Matthew 22:30); 10. World, please (1 Corinthians 7:33).

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus

Directions: Find answers in the following passages: Genesis 12:1–3; Psalm 69:21 (Mark 15:36); Isaiah 11:1–5; 7:14; 53:12; Jeremiah 31:15; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 9:9; 11:12; 12:10; Matthew 2:1–16; 3:13; 4:1; 5:8; 6:33; Luke 2:8–20. Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

- How many wise men visited the baby Jesus? _____
- Which prophet predicted the murder of the children when Jesus was a young child? _____
- Which prophet predicted that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem? _____
- Who told Herod about the prophecy concerning where Jesus would be born? _____
- Who prophesied Jesus' coming as "a Rod from the stem of Jesse"? _____
- Which prophet predicted Jesus' riding into Jerusalem? _____
- Zechariah prophesied that Jesus would be betrayed for what amount? _____
- Who baptized Jesus? _____
- Where was Jesus baptized? _____
- Who led Jesus up into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil? _____
- David prophesied that as Jesus was crucified, they would give him what to drink? _____
- Who prophesied of Jesus' crucifixion that "they will look on Me whom they pierced"? _____
- Who prophesied that Jesus would be "numbered with the transgressors"? _____
- What did Jesus say the pure in heart would do? _____
- What are Christians to seek first in their lives? _____
- Which man's seed would bless all nations? _____
- Who prophesied that a "virgin shall conceive and bear a Son"? _____
- Who were the first visitors to see the baby Jesus? _____
- Did the wise men come to the manger to visit the baby Jesus? _____
- Who wanted to kill the baby Jesus? _____

CONTEXT IS KING

The meaning of any Scripture will be consistent with what comes before and after it. Words in the Bible, as in other literature, convey meaning according to rules of grammar. Since a sentence is the basic unit of intelligible discourse, and the paragraph is the framework for expressing a complete thought, the paragraph is the basic unit of Bible study.

First, read the entire paragraph to see a verse as a part of the whole thought. Some translations (ASV, NKJV, ESV) show paragraphs by indentation, verse numbers in bold print, and/or double space, while others use a symbol (¶ in KJV) to show original paragraphs.

Second, determine how words are being used. Bible words should be taken in their normal sense unless the author is using a figure of speech. For example, Revelation is written in figurative language (Revelation 1:1), so when it talks of dragons, serpents, harps, and stars falling

to the earth, these represent ideas beyond the literal.

Third, determine general or specific application. If an explanation is specific to a single person, then it does not apply to people today. Paul commanded Timothy to bring the cloak, books, and parchments he had left at Troas (2 Timothy 4:13). Obviously, this was not a general command that requires all Christians to journey to Rome with warm garments and study materials. Three types of commands directly intended for today include the following:

- Universal commands (Matthew 5:19, 22, 28, 31–32; 19:4–9; John 3:16; 4:14; 8:34; Romans 10:13; Galatians 5:4; 1 John 2:2; 3:4, 15; 4:15);
- Instruction to the church (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15–16; 1 Corinthians 14:35; 1 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 3:15);
- Commands given to groups to which

we belong (Ephesians 5:22–33; 6:1–3; 1 Timothy 2:8–12; Titus 2:1–10; James 3:1; 1 Peter 3:1–7; 5:1–3).

Practice careful examination to avoid taking verses out of context. To quote out of context is to remove a passage from its surroundings in a way that distorts its meaning.

D. A. Carson is often quoted for this famous statement: “A text without a context is a pretext for a proof text.” (Carson attributed the quote to his father, Tom.) Man is ever prone to this. One rabbi is said to have satirized his rival by saying, “When Rabbi Eliezer expounds, he begins by saying, ‘Scripture, be silent, while I am interpreting.’” If we twist verses to fit theories instead of adjusting beliefs to fit Scripture, we facilitate our own destruction (2 Peter 3:15–16).

Start a study of the Bible today. It is the most important book. —Allen Webster

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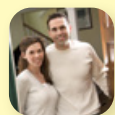
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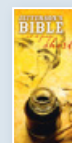
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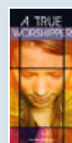
God's City of Refuge (Part 2)



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VOLUME 25:7



Kings

of Israel and Judah

1 SAMUEL 8 – 2 CHRONICLES UNITED KINGDOM

 **Saul**
1050–1010 BC

 **David**
1010–970 BC

 **Solomon**
969–933 BC

After Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam sparked a revolt that divided the kingdom. In the Northern Kingdom, Jeroboam set up centers of calf worship in Dan and Bethel to discourage people from travelling to Jerusalem to worship. With that as the pattern, there was never a faithful king in the Northern Kingdom, although Jehu did some good things. The Southern Kingdom had a few kings the Lord called good, a few that were a mix of good and bad, and a few bad.

DIVIDED KINGDOM

Kings of Israel

The Northern Kingdom included the tribes of Asher, Dan, Ephraim, Gad, Issachar, Manasseh, Naphtali, Reuben, Simeon, and Zebulun.

 **Jeroboam I**
931–910 BC

 **Nadab**
911–910 BC


 **Baasha**
910–887 BC

 **Elah**
887–886 BC

 **Zimri**
886 BC


 **Tibni**
886–880 BC


 **Omri**
886–875 BC


 **Ahab**
875–854 BC


 **Ahaziah**
855–854 BC

 **Joram**
854–843 BC

 **Jehu**
843–816 BC

 **Jehoahaz**
820–804 BC

 **Joash**
806–790 BC

 **Jeroboam II**
790–749 BC

 **Zechariah**
748 BC

 **Shallum**
748 BC

 **Menahem**
748–738 BC


 **Pekahiah**
738–736 BC

 **Pekah**
748–730 BC


 **Hoshea**
730–721 BC


Kings of Judah

The Southern Kingdom included the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

 **Rehoboam**
933–916 BC

 **Abijah**
915–913 BC

 **Asa**
912–872 BC


 **Jehoshaphat**
874–850 BC

 **Jehoram**
850–843 BC

 **Ahaziah**
843 BC

 **Athaliah**
Queen
843–837 BC


 **Joash**
843–803 BC

 **Amaziah**
803–775 BC


 **Uzziah**
787–735 BC


 **Jotham**
749–734 BC

 **Ahaz**
741–726 BC

 **Hezekiah**
726–697 BC

 **Manasseh**
697–642 BC

 **Amon**
641–640 BC

 **Josiah**
639–608 BC

 **Jehoahaz**
608 BC

 **Jehoiakim**
608–597 BC

 **Jehoiachin**
597 BC

 **Zedekiah**
597–586 BC



The Swoon Theory

According to this theory, Christ merely fainted on the cross and later revived in the grave.

Thus the physical life of Jesus was not extinct but only exhausted. Jesus was restored by the tender care of His friends and disciples; after a brief period, He quietly died a natural death and was secretly buried.

Jewish historian Josephus, Latin writer Valerius Maximus (author of a collection of historical anecdotes), and psychological and medical authorities have been consulted for examples of such apparent resurrections from a trance or asphyxia, especially on the third day, which is supposed to be a turning point for putrefaction.

If this theory were true, how did His emaciated body muster the strength to roll away the stone? Why did the guards fail to see Him while He was leaving the tomb? How did He convince the apostles that He had risen from the dead? How did the professional executioners miss the fact that He was still alive?

Besides the inexplicable physical difficulties—the wounds, loss of blood, and the side (likely heart) pierced by the spear of the Roman soldier—this theory fails to account for the moral effect on His followers.

Imagine a brief, sickly existence of Jesus in need of medical care, terminating in His natural death and final burial, without even the glory of martyrdom, which attended the crucifixion. Far from restoring the faith of the apostles, this would have only in the end deepened their gloom and driven them to utter despair. —Anonymous



The Privilege of Knowing God

Paul confided, “For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day” (2 Timothy 1:12). He said, “I know whom [not merely what] I have believed.”

The Christian’s assurance is linked to God the Father’s character. God the Father has some astonishing metaphysical attributes:

- Self-existent (Psalm 90:2; John 5:26);
- Eternal (Psalm 90:1–2);
- Omniscient (Hebrews 4:13);
- Omnipotent (Daniel 4:35);
- Holy (1 Peter 1:15–16; Revelation 4);
- Faithful and just (John 7:24);
- Merciful (Titus 3:7).

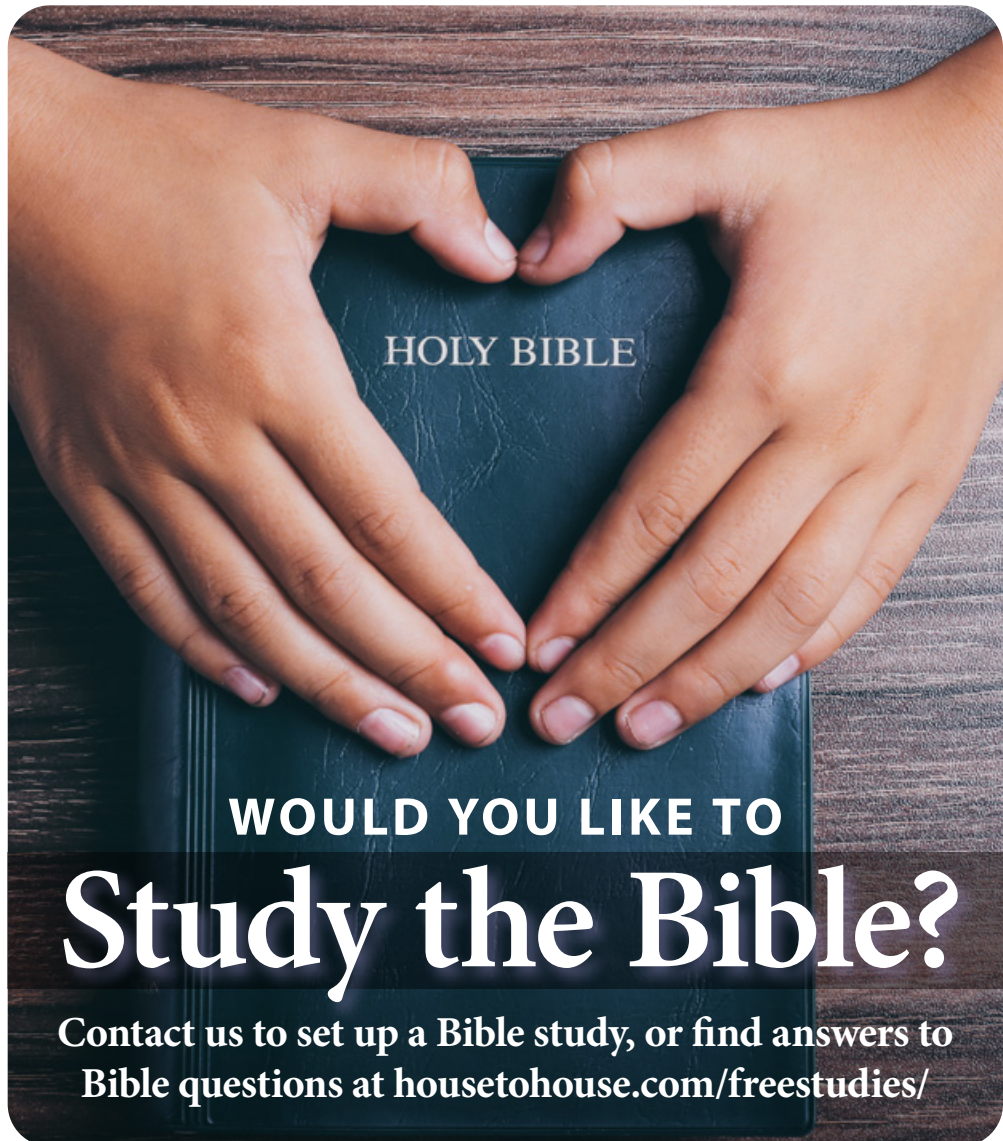
He has an even more amazing moral characteristic: God is a being of absolute love (1 John 4:8, 11). This is one of the great themes of the New Testament (John 3:16; 10:28–29; Romans 8:31–39; Ephesians 2:5, 8–9; Philippians 1:6; 1 Peter 1:3–5; 1 John 4:7–21). God’s love shows that He gave His Son to die in our place (John 3:16), while we were yet sinners (Romans 5:8). It also shows that He does not want a single person to be lost (2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4).

God’s faithfulness also leads us to confidence in our salvation. He promised (1 Peter 1:5–7, 19; 2 Peter 1:1–2; Job 37:5; Psalm 147:5). A faithful Christian’s “I don’t feel saved” equals a lack of faith in the promises of God. —Anonymous



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