

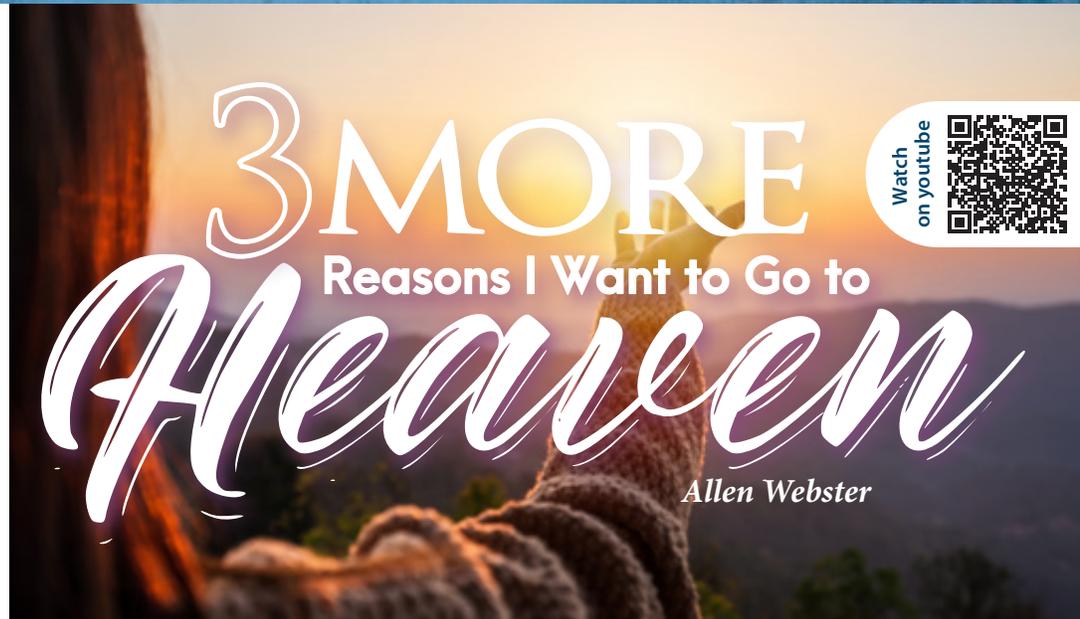


HOUSE to HOUSE  
HEART to HEART

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# House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 31 NUMBER 6



## 3 MORE

Reasons I Want to Go to

# Heaven

Allen Webster

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I never tire of dreaming of heaven. Daydream with me a little more. What is so great about heaven?

### I WANT TO GO TO HEAVEN TO MEET THE PEOPLE OF THE BIBLE.

I have studied and preached about Bible characters so often, I feel that I know them. You have likely read and heard sermons about them so much that you feel the same way.

Have you considered that you may live across the street from Abraham? You may be a next-door neighbor to Matthew, and pass Peter's house on the way to see Paul. You may have Sunday lunch with Job, Joshua, John, and Jeremiah. You may sit next to Sarah, Solomon, Samuel, Stephen, and the Samaritan woman in a worship service.

Jesus said, "Many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 8:11; cf. Hebrews 11:16). Think of seeing the names from Hebrews 11 on the mailboxes on your street: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Joseph, Moses, Amram, Jochebed,

Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

Think of having conversations with all the New Testament characters such as Matthew, Barnabas, Luke, Silas, Cornelius, Nicodemus, the thief on the cross, and the widow who gave two mites. For years we have read about them, and when we get to heaven, we will finally meet them. We will have time to get to know every one of them on a first-name basis. We will get to:

- Ask Adam what he thought when he first laid eyes on Eve (Genesis 2).
- Ask Noah what it was like living in that floating zoo for a year with all those animals—and what it was like to turn them loose and see them scamper away on the refreshed earth (Genesis 6–9).
- Ask Abraham and Isaac to show us how the knife was poised before God stopped the human sacrifice (Genesis 22).
- Ask David to demonstrate how he slung the rock that killed Goliath (1 Samuel 17).

- Ask Moses to show us again how he parted the Red Sea. Perhaps we can even get the Israelites who were there to reenact the entire scene.
- Ask Daniel about what the lions' den smelled like, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego what the fiery furnace felt like.
- Request that David lead us in "The Lord Is My Shepherd."
- Have Jonah lecture to us about what his experience in the fish's belly taught him, and have Paul tell us about the stoning at Lystra.
- Ask Mary what it was like to carry the Son of God in her womb for forty weeks, and then what went through her mind as she saw Him hanging on the cross.
- Ask blind Bartimaeus to tell us how Jesus healed him, and what it was like to see Jesus' face as his first sight.
- Ask the Christians from Pentecost to describe the day the church began; perhaps Peter will even preach that sermon again!
- Wouldn't it be interesting to hear Paul lecture on faith, law, love, and works from Romans? And, John, could you

please go through the symbolism in Revelation for us?

### **I WANT TO GO TO HEAVEN TO BE FREE FROM TEMPTATION.**

God has given me a wonderful life here—far better than I deserve, and easier than most (especially from the worldwide perspective). Still, I know what it feels like to cry, hurt, toss and turn, and be stressed out over deadlines and pressure. I well know the tug of temptation and the guilt that comes from sin. One day these will all be "former things" (Revelation 21:4). That will be a good day.

### **I WANT TO GO TO HEAVEN TO CLAIM MY INHERITANCE.**

This may seem shallow, or even selfish, but I am looking forward to receiving the inheritance my Father has promised. This is a scriptural desire, for Jesus said, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:20–21).

Those who remain loyal under persecution are told that their reward in heaven

will be great (Matthew 5:12). The rich young ruler was foolish not to place his interest in eternal treasure instead of earthly riches (Luke 18:18–23). Moses was much wiser, "for he looked to the reward" (Hebrews 11:26). Paul declares that our hope is laid up for us in heaven (Colossians 1:5). Poor people can look forward to the time when they become "heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him" (James 2:5). The apostles used future inheritance as an incentive to remain faithful (1 Peter 1:3–4). It is proper, even required, that we "seek those things which are above" (Colossians 3:1–2).

Heaven is a place where God rewards His children. What will the inheritance be? The Bible mentions a crown and a mansion, but much of it is shrouded by mystery. It is like waiting to open a wrapped gift; you know it is something good, and you can hardly wait to see what your Father has for you. God loves to give (John 3:16; James 1:17), and He can give gifts that no one else can (Psalm 50:10–12; Philippians 4:19). Heaven will be wonderful because we get a remarkable inheritance (2 Timothy 4:8).

Do you have hope of heaven?





# See God in Nature

The voice of nature is impotent regarding the revelation of the will of God. It can proclaim “God is,” but not “God said.” It can disclose the face of God but not the mind of God. Man may descend into the depths of the earth, walk the floors of the oceans, and set his foot on some distant planet, but the revelations of his journeys will not contain one word of God’s will for his life. The world of nature has

no knowledge of sin, Christ, Calvary, or redemption. Man may search the world of nature, but only the Holy Spirit can search the mind of God. That search has been made, and its results have been recorded in the Bible. —Frank Chesser, Montgomery, Alabama

*“When you read, you may understand.”*

EPHESIANS 3:4

## Country Funeral

As a young minister in Kentucky, I was asked by a funeral director to hold a graveside service for a homeless man who had no family or friends. The funeral was to be held at a new cemetery back in the country, and this man would be the first to be buried there.

I was not familiar with the backwoods area, and I soon became lost and finally arrived an hour late.

I saw the backhoe and the open grave, but the hearse was nowhere in sight. The digging crew was eating lunch. I apologized to the workers for my tardiness, and I stepped to the side of the open grave. There I saw the vault lid already in place. I assured the workers I would not

hold them up for long, as I told them that this was the proper thing to do.

The workers gathered around the grave and stood silently, as I began to pour out my heart and soul. As I preached, the workers became excited and began to say “Amen.” Their fervor truly inspired me. So I preached and preached like I had never preached before, all the way from Genesis to Revelation.

I finally closed the lengthy service with a prayer, thanked the men, and walked to my car. As I was opening the door and taking off my coat, I heard one of the workers say to another, “I ain’t never seen nothin’ like that before, and I’ve been puttin’ in septic tanks for thirty years.” —Author Unknown



## The Doilies

As a new bride, Aunt Edna moved into the small home on her husband’s ranch. She put a shoe box on a shelf in her closet and asked her husband never to touch it. For fifty years Uncle Jack left the box alone, until Aunt Edna was old and dying.

One day when he was putting their affairs in order, he found the box again and thought it might hold something important. Opening it, he found two doilies and \$82,500 in cash.

He took the box to her and asked about the contents. “My mother gave me that box the day we married,” she explained. “She told me to make a doily to help ease my frustrations every time I got mad at you.” Uncle Jack was very touched that in fifty years she’d only been mad at him twice. “What’s the \$82,500 for?” he asked. “Oh, that’s the money I made selling the rest of the doilies.”

*“A merry heart does good.”*

PROVERBS 17:22

## 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

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# Beating Back Boredom

Consider some ideas to combat boredom and refresh our relationships.

- **Date.** Once a week, go out on a date. It does not need to be fancy or costly, but try to do new things. Check with your local paper, websites, or town hall for events happening in the area. Often these events will be inexpensive and enjoyable, which makes for interesting conversations.
- **Have a family night.** Choose one night of the week to play games, cook a meal together, look at old pictures, or get ice cream. The goal is to make memories to tie the family together. Sharing an event is more important than the event itself.
- **Hobbies.** If the two of you share a mutual hobby, make some time to do it together. If you don't have one, consider checking with your local high schools, art schools, or colleges. Many offer evening courses for things from painting, to pottery, to wood carving.
- **Work out.** Many of us need to be more physically fit, and our partners can help us. Take walks, go to the gym, go jogging, or use a workout video series at home. You will feel better and have time to talk.

- **Sports.** Learn more about your spouse's favorite sport. If possible, play with them. If not, watch it on television or go together in person.
- **Give up some of yourself.** If you have a hobby that takes up a lot of time and energy, scale back. Remember that you are married to your mate, not the TV, the lake, the garage, the lawn, or the scrapbooks.

No relationship should be all fun all the time, but we should all make it a priority to tackle boredom. Boredom is the waste that is left after apathy or resentment steals the fruit of joy from our relationships, so focus on keeping the foxes out of your relationship (Song of Solomon 2:15).

*"Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of your youth."*

PROVERBS 5:18



## Caution: In Case of Rapture

A popular bumper sticker says, "Caution: In case of rapture this car will be unmanned."

This is a popular doctrine taught by many religious groups. But would you be surprised to learn that neither the word *rapture* nor the commonly taught doctrine of the rapture even occurs in the Bible?

It is said that this event will be a "secret rapture," when the Lord will appear and take away his faithful saints secretly, leaving the rest of the world searching for an explanation of what has happened. The Bible, however, says that the second coming of the Lord will not be a secret, but rather that "every eye will see him" (Revelation 1:7). Paul describes Christ's coming this way: "The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God" (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

Friends, the second coming of the Lord will be anything but a secret!

—Don Blackwell

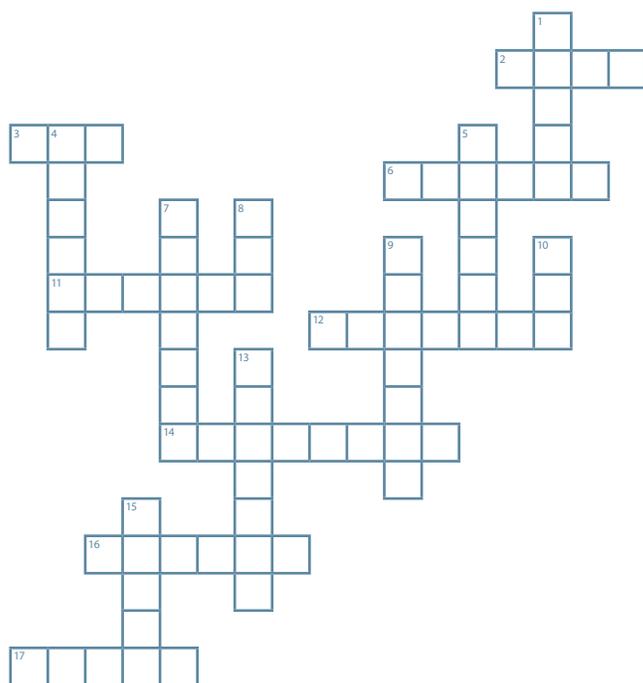
*"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen."*

REVELATION 1:7

## Just for Fun Crossword, Isaiah 53:4–6

Use the words in blue to complete the puzzle.

"Surely He has **borne** our **griefs** and carried our **sorrows**; Yet we esteemed **Him stricken**, Smitten by **God**, and afflicted. But 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 53:4–6



1. BORNE; 2. LORD; 3. HIM; 4. ISAIAH; 5. GRIEFS; 6. TURNED; 7. SORROWS; 8. WAY; 9. WOUNDED; 10. GOD; 11. ASTRAY; 12. BRUISED; 13. STRIPES; 14. STRICKEN; 15. PEACE; 16. HEALED; 17. SHEEP



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# A TRAVELER'S GUIDE to Heaven

**Accommodations:** Arrangements for accommodations must be made in advance (John 14:2).

**Passports:** Persons seeking entry will not be permitted past the gates without having proper credentials and having their names registered with the ruling authority (Revelation 21:27).

**Departure Time:** The exact departure date has not been announced. Travelers are advised to be prepared to leave on short notice (1 Corinthians 15:52).

**Tickets:** Your ticket was purchased by a Friend named Jesus. It should be claimed by learning the gospel, believing in Christ, repenting of sins, confessing Jesus, and having sins washed away in baptism (Romans 10:17; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Matthew 10:32). Keep its promises firmly in hand (John 5:24; Hebrews 5:8–9).

**Luggage:** No luggage whatsoever is needed or allowed (1 Timothy 6:7).

**Immigration:** All passengers are classified as immigrants, since they are taking up permanent residence in a new country. There is no maximum quota, so all are invited to come (Hebrews 11:16; Revelation 22:17).

**Air Passage:** Travelers go directly by air (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

**Vaccinations:** Not needed, as there are no diseases there (Revelation 21:4).

**Currency:** Deposits may be forwarded to await passenger's arrival. Make deposits as large as possible (Matthew 6:20–21).

**Clothing:** A complete and appropriate new wardrobe is provided for each traveler (Isaiah 61:10).

**Reservations:** Booking is now open. Since departure time is unknown, you should apply at once. If you wait, it may be too late (2 Corinthians 6:2).

*To learn more, please consult the Holy Bible.*

—Arthur Pigman, Evans, Georgia

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



## Bible Quiz

VOLUME 31:6

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark. We will 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: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

### Answers to Previous Quizzes

**V. 31:4 Scrambled Titles: New Testament:** 1. Titus; 2. Romans; 3. Timothy; 4. Corinthians; 5. Revelation; 6. Thessalonians; 7. Galatians; 8. Colossians; 9. Philipians; 10. Ephesians.

Which Case of Conversion Shows...?: 1. Eunuch (Acts 8:26–40); 2. 3000 on Pentecost (Acts 2:38); 3. Eunuch (Acts 8:38–39); 4. Jailer (Acts 16:33).

Important questions: 1. Yes (Mark 16:16); 2. Yes (Acts 8:35–40); 3. Personal answer.

**V. 31:5 New Testament Bible Characters:** 1. Gabriel (Luke 1:26–31); 2. John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13–17); 3. Peter (Luke 22:54–62); 4. Judas Iscariot (Matthew 26:14–16); 5. John (John 13:23; 21:20, 24); 6. Thomas (John 20:24–29); 7. Stephen (Acts 7:54–60); 8. Saul (Paul) (Acts 9:1–6); 9. Peter (Acts 2:14–41); 10. Elizabeth (Luke 1:5–13); 11. Matthias (Acts 1:23–26); 12. The Centurion (Matthew 8:5–13); 13. The Philippian jailer (Acts 16:25–34); 14. Barnabas (Acts 4:36–37); 15. Matthew (Levi) (Matthew 9:9); 16. The Samaritan woman (John 4:7–26); 17. Simon of Cyrene (Luke 23:26); 18. Mary (Luke 10:38–42); 19. Pontius Pilate (John 18:28–19:16); 20. Lazarus (John 11:38–44); 21. Timothy (1 Timothy 1:2); 22. Luke (Colossians 4:14).

## Bible Book Word Find

**Directions:** Thirty (30) books are found in this paragraph. (Actually, 31 if you can find the variant of one Old Testament prophet's name.) Circle those you can find.

This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket, on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his johnboat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph.

During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "The books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus; there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found. God bless.

# Current Info on the Church of Christ

- Churches of Christ rank first in the nation in weekly attendance among their membership.
- Churches of Christ rank first in the national access to congregations.
- Churches of Christ rank fourth in the nation in number of counties in which there is a congregation.
- Churches of Christ are the sixth fastest growing church in America.
- Churches of Christ constitute the twelfth largest religious group in America.
- Churches of Christ are regarded as having a “remarkable degree of unity” by other religious groups because “they have experienced far less fragmentation.”
- Only 4.2 percent of young people in the churches of Christ who graduated from high school in the past ten years have divorced, which is half of the rate of their peers (8.1 percent).

—Dr. Flavil Yeakley, *The Christian Higher Education Foundation Report*

We do not relate this information to boast, but simply to invite you to investigate for yourself what others are finding so compelling. The churches of Christ have a unique plea in the current religious world. We plead for (a) no creed but Christ’s (Acts 8:36–38), (b) no book but the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:3; John 16:13; Jude 1:3), (c) no church but Christ’s (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22–23; Romans 16:16), (d) no name but Christ’s (Acts 4:12; 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16), and (e) no worship (Acts 2:42; 20:7), organization (Philippians 1:1), or doctrine (Titus 2:1), but that authorized by the word of God.

As the restorers expressed it, “Let us call Bible things by Bible names, and let us do Bible things in Bible ways. Let us speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent.” We plead for “Christ’s church in the twenty-first century as it was in the first century.” Many are finding this plea is reasonable, logical, sensible, and compelling.

A growing church is a gospel church (Mark 16:15), a going church (Acts 8:4), a giving church (1 Corinthians 16:2), a good church (Galatians 6:10), a gracious church (Colossians 4:6), a greeting church (3 John 1:14), a gifted church (Matthew 25:14–30), a godly church (Titus 2:11–12), a glad church (Acts 2:46–47), a gathering church (Hebrews 10:25), a glorious church (Ephesians 5:27), and a great church (Hebrews 9:11). That is what the church of Christ is striving to be. —Wendell Winkler, *The Church Everybody Is Talking About* (adapted)

“Come and see.”

JOHN 1:46



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

## Help with **Addiction**



### Recommended Resource

Millions of people are seeking freedom from porn addiction. Sex was created by God to be a good thing, and He wants us to have a healthy view of sexuality. These ten biblical and actionable things can take you from where you are today to purity in Jesus Christ with a healthy view of sexuality.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWAOffsof5w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWAOffsof5w)

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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An In-Home Bible Study

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- Don’t Quit: Passing God’s Faith Tests
- What Would It Take to Get Us Back on Sunday Night?
- Can I Change?



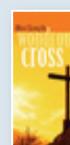
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When I Survey the Wondrous Cross



The Weakness of a Strong Man



Sweat the Small Stuff



Launch Out with Jesus



In the Way He Should Go



Why Not Be a Prodigal: Part 1



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## The Authority of Jesus

Jesus exercised authority over nature (Mark 4:39), illness (Matthew 8:3), and death (John 11:43). He also exercised spiritual authority—He forgave sins, which drew controversy because only God can forgive (Mark 2:10–11). That is why Jesus came! “For 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). After the resurrection He declared, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18).

Scripture places unparalleled authority on His words and actions (Matthew 7:29). Thus it makes sense that to follow Jesus means that everything we do must be done “in the name of”—by the authority of—Jesus (Colossians 3:17).

Understanding Christ’s authority affects daily life: His commands shape ethics, His promises give hope, and His lordship determines allegiance. To follow Jesus is to submit to the words of the King, and to give Him rule over your life. —Matt Wallin





## Will God Forgive Me? How Do I Forgive Myself?

Guilt has a way of clinging to us long after we have said we are sorry. We replay the words we wish we had not said, the choices we wish we had not made. Even when we believe God has forgiven us, we often struggle to extend that same grace to ourselves.

But Scripture is clear: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). God’s forgiveness is not partial or hesitant—it is complete. When He forgives, He does not put us on probation. He removes our guilt “as far as the east is from the west” (Psalm 103:12).

The harder part is learning to live in that forgiveness. Self-forgiveness is not about excusing what we did; it is about believing what God has done. When we refuse to forgive ourselves, we are saying His mercy is not enough. But it is. Christ’s cross is proof that no sin is too deep for His grace.

Forgiving yourself means accepting God’s verdict instead of your own. It means replacing “I will never be free from this” with “I am redeemed.” It is an act of faith—to trust that His word is truer than your feelings.

If God, who knows every hidden thought, has chosen to forgive you, then you can choose to walk in that freedom. Let His grace have the final word. —Matt Wallin



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