

House to House Heart to Heart

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

The 3 Attractions of the Cross

Allen Webster



Nature is full of attractions. Go in any direction from where you live, and you will soon find signs for attractions. "George Washington slept here." "A battle was fought here." "See Ruby Falls." "The world's largest collection of butterflies in our museum." "See Buffalo Bill's grave and Annie Oakley's gun. Step right up."

It is work to scale a mountain, but climbers are drawn to El Capitan and Everest as moths are to flames. Oceans and arctic regions are dangerous places, but explorers, scientists, and enthusiasts love to go there. It is expensive to golf and hunt big game, but this weekend carts and ATVs will go all over.

Attractions are everywhere, but the greatest attraction of all is not a natural wonder, museum display, exciting experience, or historical footnote. It is a living person. Only, He used to be dead—but not for long. Jesus said, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself" (John 12:32).

Many aspects of Jesus' teaching are striking, but perhaps none is more amazing than His bold assertions of His impor-

tance to the world. He said the following:

- There is One greater than the temple (Matthew 12:6).
- A greater than Solomon is here (Matthew 12:42).
- I am the bread of life (John 6:35).
- I am the light of the world (John 8:12);
- I am the door (John 10:9).
- No man comes to the Father except through Me (John 14:6).

Those who make extravagant claims are generally met by incredulity and scorn. Yet Jesus was taken seriously. Even when He said, "I am gentle and lowly in heart" (Matthew 11:29), no one said, "Not true. If you were, you would never claim to be divine." Instead, their unbiased observations substantiated His claims. For instance, temple officials declared of Him, "No man ever spoke like this Man!" (John 7:46). The centurion who executed Him said, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!" (Mark 15:39).



John's biography of Jesus shows Him as the Savior of the world, not simply the Redeemer of Israel.

- He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (1:29).
- "God so loved the world" (3:16).
- The Samaritans identified Him as "the Savior of the world" (4:42).
- He gave His life for the world and gives life to the world (6:33).
- He is the light of the world (8:12).
- Jesus would bring "other sheep" in from outside the Jewish fold (10:16; cf. 11:51–52).

THE FIRST ATTRACTION OF THE CROSS IS ADMIRATION

Jesus was crucified just north of Jerusalem's Damascus Gate on the great road that ran north to south. There He hanged exposed, or presented, before the world. Multitudes passed by looking at Him, witnessing the spectacle. All classes were represented:

- The Roman centurion represents the pagan, military, and skeptical classes. Jesus showed him moral strength and self-sacrifice unsurpassed in history. His reaction? "This was the Son of God!" (Matthew 27:54).
- The multitude represents those who are careless, thoughtless, or agitated. Their reaction? They beat their breasts in amazement (Luke 23:48).
- The thieves represent the guilty, criminal, and penitent. Together they show humanity's two views: the cross is foolishness and a stumbling block; it is God's wisdom and power (1 Corinthians 1:18–24). The forgiven thief illustrates the cross's purpose.

Jesus is history's most admired person. No other has been so praised or so often written about. His morality, courage, kindness, humility, power, purpose, tenderness, love, and sympathy are unsurpassed. He is the only person all nations ever united to praise. Does Socrates, Confucius, or Washington have a claim on the heart of anyone you know?

The inflictors intended crucifixion to be the greatest humiliation and agony possible. Christ saw it as the hour of His glory. "Lifted up" (John 12:32) can carry the idea of glorification. "Behold, My Ser-

vant shall . . . be exalted and extolled and be very high" (Isaiah 52:13). The cross was both Jesus' nadir, the lowest point beneath one's feet, and His zenith, the highest point one reaches. Jesus "became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him" (Philippians 2:8–9).

THE SECOND ATTRACTION OF THE CROSS IS LOVE

Admiration turns to love when one realizes that Jesus' death is personal—that He "gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). At Calvary, Jesus' heart opens to us. We see His

- prayer for the murderers (Luke 23:34),
- gentle answer to the penitent (23:43),
- trust in His Father (23:46),
- tender consignment of His mother to John (John 19:26–27).

People are drawn to follow Jesus not by force but by instruction (John 6:44), which leads to love (2 Corinthians 5:14; Psalm 73:28; 110:3; Hosea 11:4; Jeremiah 31:3). People are driven by fear but drawn by love. Love and sympathy are stronger attractions than fear and hate.

Is it not marvelous that an obscure Teacher, who spent but three years teaching a despised people, and was so despised by the despised people that they killed Him, should be loved by so many?

THE THIRD ATTRACTION OF THE CROSS IS GRATITUDE

Jesus gave so much for those so underserving (Romans 5:8–10). Paul wrote, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift" (2 Corinthians 9:15).

Jesus drawing "all" does not mean all people without exception, but all people without bias. Gentiles/Jews, rich/poor, old/young, female/male, learned/uneducated, all races, from the equator to the ends of the earth, follow Him. God gave Him an innumerable company out of every race, kindred, and social standing (John 6:37–39; Revelation 5:9–10; 7:9).

In Jesus, sinners find all they need:

- The lost find the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).
- The hopeless find the hope of salvation (John 3:16).

- Searchers for truth find satisfaction in the One called "truth" (Proverbs 23:23; John 14:6).
- Those yearning for fellowship find brotherhood (Acts 2:42, 47).
- Those needing direction find a wise Sovereign (Matthew 28:18; 1 Timothy 6:16).
- Those desiring spiritual beauty find He is altogether lovely (Song 5:16).
- Those at odds with God find reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- Those stained with sin like His sanctification (John 17:17).
- The agitated love His peace for wounded spirits (Isaiah 9:6; Philippians 4:6).
- The fearful find peace in Him who gives life and immortality (2 Timothy 1:10).

The Bible is not given primarily as a book of theology. It is a biography. Jesus said the Scriptures "testify of Me" (John 5:39). Christ the Creator is found in the first verse of the Old Testament and in the first verse of the New Testament. Moses wrote of Him in the Law (Deuteronomy 18:15–18); David wrote of Him in the Psalms (e.g., 22); Isaiah had a lot to say of Him in the prophets (see Isaiah 53); John's final book covers a revelation from Him (Revelation 1:1).

Jesus still draws people. He invites, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Abiding in His church (Hebrew 2:12), He draws people one by one to salvation therein (Matthew 16:18).



A Pitching Failure (Legend)

By 1989, baseball player Nolan Ryan reached an incredible 5,000 strikeouts, and all those no-hitters. Ryan was a phenomenal baseball player.

In his rookie year, 18 years earlier, Gil Hodges was the Mets' manager and was impatient with Ryan. Although Ryan could consistently throw over ninety miles an hour, he could not consistently throw over the plate. He was walking everybody and hitting a lot of people. Hodges told Ryan as one game began that he had to pitch better or he would pull him out and trade him. He would be finished.

Ryan went into that game determined that he was going to succeed. He was miserable. He walked seven or eight batters in four innings. Hodges took him out. Later that season he was traded to the Angels.

After the game, Richard Reeves went into the locker room to interview players. He noticed Nolan Ryan apart from the others, looking into a mirror, having difficulty tying his tie. Reeves saw tears in his eyes. Ryan was crying. He could not see to tie his tie because of the tears.

Reeves remembered that incident years later when Nolan Ryan was being celebrated as one of the immortals of base-

ball. He remembered that this legendary man, Nolan Ryan, began his long string of success thinking he had failed. But he kept working. He kept practicing. He kept doing his job.

In like manner, a Christian's life will have failures and disappointments. Many Christians have thrown up their hands and have quit the Christian race—thinking they had failed.

Friends, we must be persistent. "My beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

When failure and disappointment come, remember the words of Jesus' brother: "Count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing" (James 1:2-4).

Don't give up—don't ever give up. Remember, Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). —Tom Moore

"I have finished the race."

2 TIMOTHY 4:7



Liar, Liar

Satan promises the best,
but pays with the worst.
He promises honor,
but pays with disgrace.
He promises pleasure,
but pays with pain.
He promises profit,
but pays with loss.
He promises life,
but pays with death.

—Thomas Brooks

"A liar and the father of it."

JOHN 8:44

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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Watch
on youtube



Thoughts to Ponder

If Walmart is lowering prices every day, how come nothing is free yet?

You may be only one person in the world, but you may be the world to one person.

Do not cry because it is over; smile because it happened.

We could learn a lot from crayons: some are sharp, some are pretty, some are dull, some have weird names, and all are different colors. But they all have to learn to live in the same box.

Everything should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler.

—Glenn Hitchcock

"Meditate on these things."

PHILIPPIANS 4:8



Pay Attention to Critical Things

- Read your Bible (John 20:30–31).
- Be baptized (Acts 2:38).
- Worship God Sunday (John 4:24).
- Play with your children (Proverbs 14:1).
- Take your spouse out on a date.
- Take time to get medical checkups.
- There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, give a dinner party, and fix the disposal.

"First of all..."

1 TIMOTHY 2:1



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

5 Sponges

There are five sponges laying on a counter. Each member of your family has been cleaning up different areas of your home, but all the sponges look the same. You are curious as to what was cleaned, but you cannot tell by looking. They all look the same. What do you do?

As you squeeze the first sponge you see that cola comes out, and you decide that someone cleaned the kitchen.

Upon squeezing the second sponge, you find tub and tile cleaner. That one was used in the bathroom.

In the third sponge you find motor oil. Someone cleaned the garage.

In the fourth sponge, baby powder puffs out. The baby's nursery was cleaned with that one.

In the last sponge is floor wax. That was the one you used on the hall floor.

As you lay the last one down, you look

again at their similarity. They all look the same until they are squeezed.

As life squeezes us, different things may come out: anger, revenge, tears, remorse, greed, untruth, lust, or the love of Christ.

Ask yourself, if I were squeezed, would Jesus and Jesus alone shine forth? Just like the sponge, we can only squeeze out what is put in. Stay in the Word daily and be in continuous prayer so that when life puts the squeeze on you, Jesus and Jesus alone will shine forth. —Glenn Hitchcock

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men."

MATTHEW 5:13

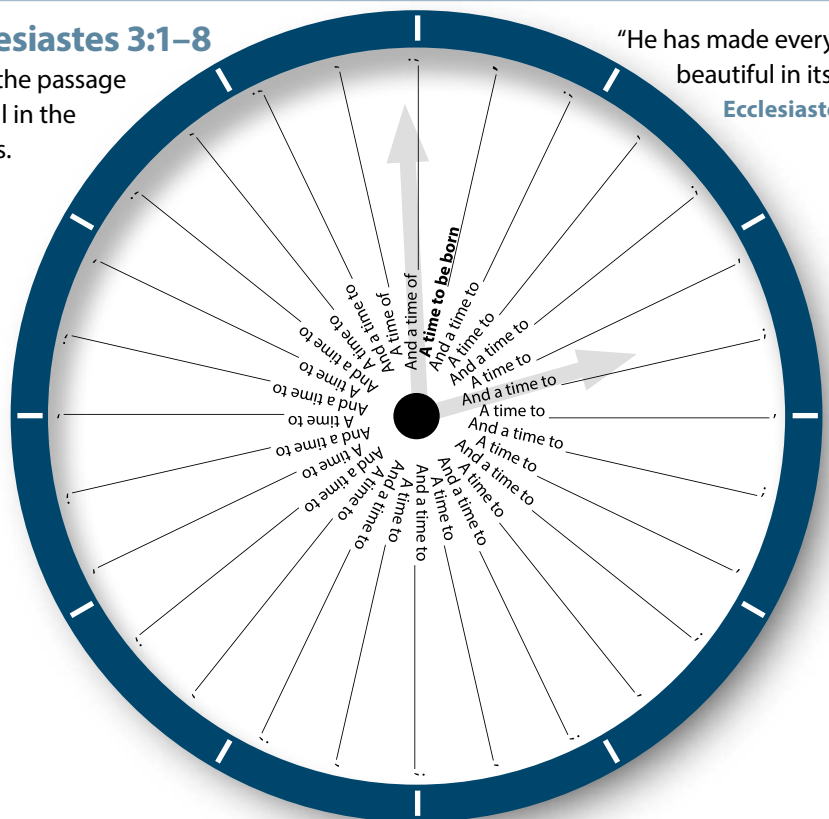
Just for Fun Everything Has its Time

Ecclesiastes 3:1–8

Read the passage and fill in the blanks.

"He has made everything beautiful in its time."

Ecclesiastes 3:11



Looking for Loopholes



A friend visited actor W. C. Fields in the hospital and was surprised he was reading a Bible. When asked what he was doing, Fields said, "Looking for loopholes."

Fields was not the first nor the last to look for loopholes. No other book has received more such attention.

Many claim to have found one. "There are many paths to heaven," some say, but the Bible speaks of only one (Matthew 7:13–14, 21–23; John 14:6). "We have re-studied marriage and have changed our minds," they proclaim. Predictably, their conclusions line up with current cultural norms (cf. Romans 1:18–26).

"The God I know would never condemn one to hell," they say. Yet God clearly said otherwise (Matthew 25:46).

A popular one is, "All you have to do to be saved is believe." Yet faith without works is dead (James 2:26) and invisible. Faith's existence is shown through what it produces (2:18). Obedience perfects faith (2:20–24). If salvation came from affirming Christ's deity alone, then demons are saved (2:19;

Matthew 8:28–29). If salvation were solely by faith, what of the Jews who believed, but refused to confess Christ? (John 12:42).

It is argued that John 3:16, Acts 16:31, Romans 10:9, and Ephesians 2:8–9 do not mention baptism. A selective presentation of evidence is a classic logical fallacy. Is one saved by faith? Yes. Is one saved by Jesus' blood? Yes (Romans 5:9). Yet these are not mentioned in every passage.

Salvation is also by grace (Ephesians 2:8), the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:1–2), baptism (1 Peter 3:21; Titus 3:5), and enduring (Matthew 10:22). That each is not mentioned in every passage does not make them unimportant. All Scripture is important; nothing mentioned is unimportant. Subtracting from the Word is sin (Deuteronomy 4:2; Revelation 22:18–19).

The claim for salvation by faith only is false both by a lack of exclusivity and by direct contradiction. If one must repent and confess (Romans 10:9–10) in addition to believing, then he is not saved by faith only. *Only* means "without anything fur-

ther." Obedience to Jesus is as important as faith. God made it clear that baptism is where sins are forgiven (1 Peter 3:21; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mark 16:16).

Jesus told Nicodemus a person cannot see the kingdom without being born of water and the Spirit (John 3:3–8). "Born of water" refers to baptism (not physical birth because Nicodemus had not experienced it, cf. 3:22, 26; 4:1). Baptism brings new life (rebirth) (Romans 6:4).

There is a tendency to preach a partial gospel, tailoring it to suit personal likes. If a policeman helping a child across a busy street stopped in the middle of the road and said, "You take it from here," could we say the policeman had "saved" the child from a possible accident? This is less serious than teaching a person he is saved when he has not obeyed Jesus.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy is how much effort people put towards avoiding God's commands instead of just obeying them. Obeying God's commands shows that we love God (John 14:15). —Brett Pettrillo (adapted)

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



Bible Quiz

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Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark. We will grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark "The Importance of Baptism" 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. 28:9 Jesus Under Fire: 1. Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:1–14); 2. None (22:3); 3. Farm, business (22:5); 4. Bound hand and foot, taken away, cast into outer darkness, weeping, gnashing of teeth (22:13); 5. "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" (22:17); 6. "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (22:21); 7. "In the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be?" (22:28); 8. "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage" (22:30); 9. No; they are unmarried (22:30–32); 10. Marveled, astonished (22:22–34); 11. Heart, soul, mind, strength (22:37; Mark 12:30); 12. "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39); 13. All the Law and the Prophets (22:40); 14. David was in Jesus' genealogy, but He is God (22:42–45); 15. No (22:46).

V. 28:10 Starts with the Letter "J": 1. Jesus (Matthew 1:21); 2. Jair (Judges 10:3–4); 3. Jairus (Mark 5:22, 42–43); 4. James (Acts 12:1–2); 5. James (James 2:26); 6. Japheth (Genesis 5:32); 7. Jealousy (Proverbs 6:34); 8. Jehu (2 Kings 9:20); 9. Jeremiah (Jeremiah 9:1); 10. Jericho (Hebrews 11:30); 11. Jerusalem (1 Kings 14:21); 12. Jesse (Ruth 4:17); 13. Jethro (Exodus 3:1); 14. Jew (Galatians 3:28); 15. Jezebel (1 Kings 19:1–2); 16. Job (Job 1:8–2:7); 17. Jochebed (Exodus 6:20); 18. Jonah (Jonah 1:17); 19. Jonathan (1 Samuel 18:1); 20. Joseph (Genesis 39:1–7).

Joshua's Only Defeat (and Comeback)

Directions: Find answers in Joshua 7–8.

Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

- How many soldiers did the spies suggest were needed to take it? (7:3) _____
- How many did Joshua send? _____
- How many did Joshua send in the second battle? (8:3) _____
- How many Israelites died in the first battle of Ai? _____
- Why did Israel lose? _____
- How many citizens of Ai died in the second battle? (8:25) _____
- What five sins did Achan commit? (7:11) _____
- What three things did Achan steal? Be specific (7:21) _____
- Which of the three avenues of sin (1 John 2:16) preceded Achan's covetousness? (7:21) _____
- What was done to Achan, his family, and his possessions? (7:25) _____
- In what valley did this take place? _____
- What does this name mean? (7:26) _____
- What restriction was lifted in this battle that had been enforced at Jericho? (8:2) _____
- Joshua demonstrated good leadership when he dwelt _____ the people the night before the battle and then went _____ the people into battle (8:9–10).
- The people demonstrated good fellowship when they went _____ Joshua into battle (8:11).
- What weapon did Joshua keep elevated during the battle of Ai? (8:26) _____
- After the victory, Joshua built an _____ unto the Lord on Mount _____, copied all the law on _____ and then read it to Israel who were divided into two groups standing on Mount _____ and Mount _____ (8:30–35).

Getting to Know Your Bible



Why must you know your Bible?

1. To have everlasting life (John 17:3). With regards to the words of Jesus, the Bible is the only source of the perfect, saving knowledge of God and Christ.
2. To know the greatest book ever written. The Bible is the greatest book because God is the author. There were 40 writers but one author. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16).
3. To know who you are. The Bible tells us our origin, purpose, and destiny (Genesis 1:26–27; 2:7).
4. To be saved from sin. The Bible answers the world's greatest question, "What must I do to be saved?" The gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16).
5. To identify the church of the Lord and know its importance. Christ has one body (the church, Ephesians 4:4) and

Christ is the head of the body (Ephesians 1:22–23).

6. To find the Christian way of life, worship, and service. The inspired word teaches us that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age" (Titus 2:12).
7. To reach the highest goal: "The prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14). —Frank Dunn

"For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."

2 TIMOTHY 4:6–8

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Recommended Resource



Want to learn more about the Bible? World Bible School offers a FREE online Bible study. You will be joined by one of our Study Helpers who can help answer your questions, provide positive feedback and guide you through the study. Start today at worldbibleschool.org or download the World Bible School app.

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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Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Prayer requests or comments: _____

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- This IS What We Signed up for
- A Little-Known Mother Who Changed the World
- Why Do Good Things Happen to Good People?



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A Baptism of the New Testament



Investing Time Wisely



Signs for the Times



God's Lamb in the Devil's Zoo



A Man with a Wait Problem



Is Being a Good Person Enough?

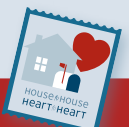


In Pursuit of Patience



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TYPES & ANTITYPES

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE as a type of the HEAVENLY STATE

God is amazing. No one else could put the shadow of future things into the past. Types and antitypes are examples of God prefiguring the future. Types are the shadow in the Old Testament of things that were to come (antitypes) in the New Testament.

The Temple built by Solomon in Jerusalem is a type of the heavenly state as described in the New Testament.



SOLOMON'S TEMPLE TYPE

The Temple was made of costly materials and was beautiful (1 KINGS 6:21-22; 7:13-51).

The Temple was where the manifest presence of God dwelled among His people (1 KINGS 8:10-11).

The innermost part of the Temple, the Holy of Holies, was a place of utmost holiness, where only the High Priest could enter once a year (LEVITICUS 16:2-34).

The Temple was the central place of worship, praise, and sacrifice for the Israelites (1 CHRONICLES 23:27-32).

The sacrificial system of the Temple provided a means for the people to approach God and seek atonement for their sins (LEVITICUS 17:11).

The menorah (lampstand) in the Temple was kept constantly lit, symbolizing God's light (EXODUS 25:31-40).

Solomon's Temple had a bronze "sea" and basins for ritual purification (1 KINGS 7:23-26).

Solomon completed the Temple in seven years, the number of completeness (1 KINGS 6:38).

THE HEAVENLY STATE ANTITYPE

Heaven is costly and beautiful. It cost God His Son. One soul in heaven is worth more than all the material used to make Solomon's Temple (REVELATION 21; 1 PETER 1:18-19; MATTHEW 16:26).

Heaven is the ultimate dwelling place of God, where His full glory is revealed and His people will forever be in His presence (REVELATION 21:3, 22-23).

Heaven is a place of perfect holiness where no sin or impurity can enter (REVELATION 21:27).

Heaven is described as a place of unceasing worship, praise, and adoration of God (REVELATION 4:8-11; 7:9-12).

True access to God's heavenly presence is made possible through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ (HEBREWS 9:11-12, 24).

There is no need for a lamp or the sun in heaven because God Himself provides its light (REVELATION 21:23).

The heavenly city has a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God (REVELATION 22:1).

In this life, we must complete our preparation to enter heaven (HEBREWS 9:27).

Edgy Worship

Some try to lure people with bands, hip worship, edgy programs, and new technology. This is a wrong approach.

It is unscriptural. Preaching the gospel is where the power is (Romans 1:16). Honoring Jesus and pleasing the Father are what church is about (John 4:24; Colossians 1:18). People can find entertainment elsewhere. What the church offers cannot be found anywhere else. Personal study is essential; preaching is essential (2 Timothy 2:15; 4:2).

It is unwise (Ephesians 5:17). People are not as shallow as some leaders think. Barna Group and the Cornerstone Knowledge Network found that 67 percent of millennials prefer a "classic" church to a "trendy" one. A similar study found that "only eight percent say they do not attend because church is 'out of date.'"¹

It is counterproductive. Preaching nourishes the soul (Acts 20:32). One churchgoer wrote an editor: "I've gone to church for 30 years. I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. For the life of me, I can't remember a single one. I'm wasting my time and preachers are wasting theirs."

Controversy followed until this letter ended it: "I've been married for 30 years. My wife has cooked 32,000 meals. For the life of me, I cannot recall the menu of a single one. I know this: Those gave me the strength needed for my work. If she had not cooked, I would be physically dead. Likewise, if I had not gone to church, I would be spiritually dead."

Endnote:

¹ (www.barna.com/research/what-millennials-want-when-they-visit-church/)





An Irish Blessing

May there always be work
for your hands to do;
May your purse always hold
a coin or two;
May the sun always shine
on your windowpane;
May a rainbow be certain
to follow each rain;
May the hand of a friend
always be near you;
May God fill your heart
with gladness to cheer you.

Read these related verses:

Genesis 2:15; John 9:4
Proverbs 30:8-9
Matthew 5:45; Romans 8:28
Genesis 9:13
Proverbs 18:24; 1 Samuel 23:16
Deuteronomy 28:47; Acts 2:46

*"The Lord will command
the blessing on you."*

DEUTERONOMY 28:8



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0189 Center Village



What does it mean to be an authentic Christian? Join Aaron, Scott, and Tucker as they sit down together to discuss the everyday struggles of trying to be an authentic Christian, culturally relevant topics, and the biblical principles that should guide their response. Season 4 newly released!

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