

House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 16 NUMBER 6

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Founder: Christ – Mt. 16:18
Place: Jerusalem – Isa. 2:1-3, Acts 2:5
Time: A.D. 33 – Dan. 2:44, Acts 2
Head: Christ – Eph. 1:22
Organization:
Christ as head – Eph. 5:23
Elders oversee local church –
Heb. 13:17, Titus 1:5
Deacons as servants –
Acts 6:1-6, 1 Tim. 3:8-13
Members compose body –
Col. 1:2

Name (group):
Church of God – Eph. 3:15
Body of Christ – Eph. 1:22-23
Churches of Christ – Rm. 16:16
Bride of Christ – Rm. 7:4

Name (individuals):
Disciples – John 15:8
Saints – Rm. 1:7
Brethren – Lk. 8:21
Children of God – Gal. 4:26
Christian – Acts 11:25-26

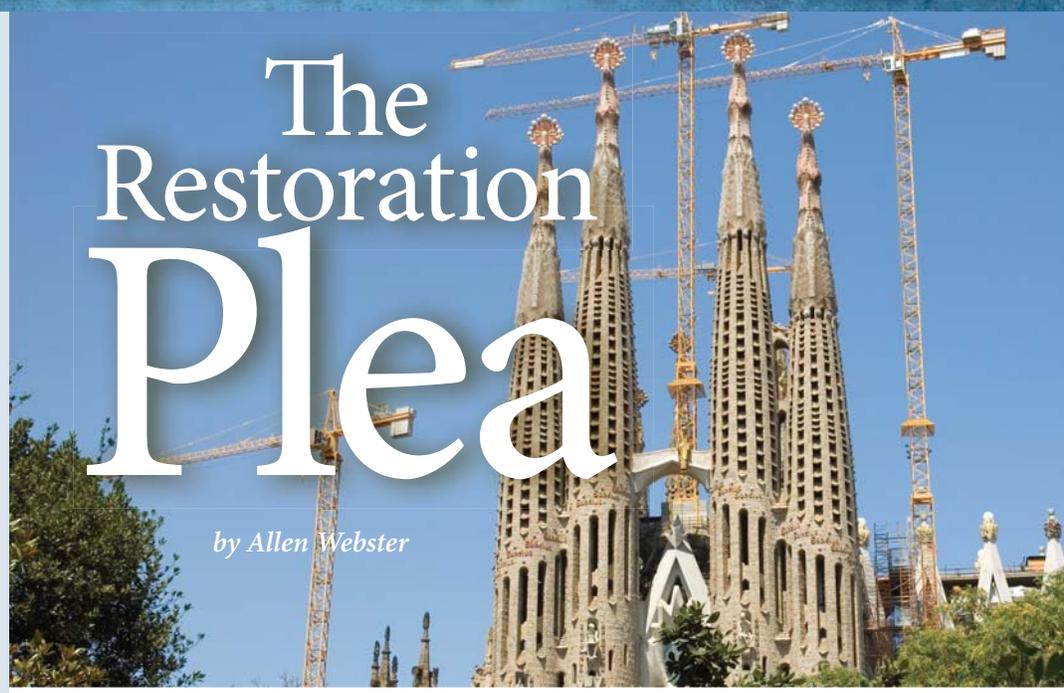
Creed: Jesus/Bible – Acts 8:37
Rule of Faith & Practice:
Word of God – 2 Tim. 3:16-17

Worship: Jn. 4:24
Sing – Eph. 5:19
Pray – Acts 2:42; 1 Thes. 5:17
Teach – Acts 5:42
Communion – 1 Cor. 1:23-26
Contribute – 1 Cor. 16:1-2

Mission: Save Souls – 1 Tim. 4:16
Warning: Be Faithful – 2 John 9

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The Restoration Plea

by Allen Webster

The Restoration Plea has been taught in our land for two centuries now, yet many in this generation have not heard it. It says:

Let us speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent. Let us call Bible things by Bible names and do Bible things in Bible ways. Let's restore the church as it was in the days of the apostles.

When one speaks of a restoration plea, four things are implied.

THE RESTORATION PLEA IMPLIES THAT GOD HAD A PLAN FOR THE CHURCH.

In the basement of America's largest home, the Biltmore mansion in Asheville, North Carolina, there is a model of the structure. The model was completed first as a guide to build the home. In Barcelona, Spain, you can visit the still unfinished Sagrada Familia Church. They have been working on it for fifty years. They have a model of what the building will look like when it is finished.

The restoration plea implies that God had a plan for the church, which He revealed to man (Isaiah 2:2-4; Daniel 2:44; Ephesians 3:10-11).

God has always had a pattern.

- Noah's ark (Genesis 6:22; 7:5);
- Tabernacle (Exodus 25:8-9);
- Temple (1 Chronicles 28:11-19);
- Jericho's walls (Joshua 6; Hebrews 11:30);
- Naaman's cleansing (2 Kings 5:1-14).

Isaiah prophesied of the coming kingdom, showing that God was already making plans for the church seven centuries before it came to be (Isaiah 2:2-4). Isaiah said God would "teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." Jesus sent out the apostles to teach those paths (Mark 16:15-16). Since the early church "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42; cf. 4:32), we know God's messengers got His plan for the church delivered to the early Christians. Just as the fullness of God is in Christ (Colossians 1:19; 2:9) and God has >>



Moses was warned by God
Make all things according
to the pattern

no plans for salvation for the world outside of Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12), so the church is the fullness of Christ, and Christ has no plans for the world outside of His church (Ephesians 3:21).

THE RESTORATION PLEA IMPLIES THAT GOD EXPECTS US TO CONTINUE TO FOLLOW HIS PLAN.

The restoration plea implies that God expects us to continue to follow His plan in each succeeding generation. Paul wrote, “The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2). God wanted His pattern followed century after century.

The Bible emphasizes patterns. In constructing the tabernacle, Moses was warned by God that he must “make all things according to the pattern” (Exodus 25:40; Hebrews 8:5). Paul spoke of the “pattern of sound words” (2 Timothy 1:13 ASV) which early Christians were taught and in which they were to abide (2 Timothy 3:14). These Christians obeyed a “form” of doctrine (Romans 6:17–18) and “marked” (were on the lookout for) those who departed from that pattern (Romans 16:17). When it came to the doctrine of the New Testament, they earnestly contended for the faith (Jude 3), were warned about falling away from the faith (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:3; 1 Timothy 4:1–3; 2 Timothy 4:1–4), and not to go “beyond the things which are written” (1 Corinthians 4:6 ASV). Each generation was charged not to teach a “different

doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:3 ASV).

Warnings not to go beyond the teaching of Christ abound in the New Testament (Galatians 1:6–9; Matthew 15:13; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Revelation 22:18–19). John said explicitly:

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds (2 John 1:9–11).

THE RESTORATION PLEA IMPLIES THAT MAN LEFT GOD’S PATTERN.

By becoming too well known, a product can lose its distinctiveness. The Trademark Association calls this problem “genericide.” Marlin Connelly gives some examples:

- All facial tissue is called Kleenex,
- Any gelatin dessert is Jello,
- Any clear, sticky tape is Scotch Tape,
- Any carbonated drink is a Coke (at least in the South),
- Any adhesive bandage is a Band-Aid.

This has happened to the words *Christian* and *Christianity*. Once brand names for a definite product, they are now used for any kind of vague religiosity connected loosely with the historical Christ. In the minds of some, the rigid New Testament ethical code is now fluid and accommodating. Doctrines that in Bible times were black and white are now gray and faded.

Practices that were then commanded are now optional. For instance, the creed book of the largest Protestant denomination states:

It is most likely that in the Apostolic age when there was but “one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,” and no differing denominations existed, the baptism of a convert by that very act constituted him a member of the church, and at once endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, “baptism was the door into the church.” Now, it is different.¹

Why is it different today? God has not changed His mind. Men have usurped authority not belonging to them and changed God’s church into something different from what He intended. Surely God wants us to return to His original vision for the church.

THE RESTORATION PLEA IMPLIES THAT GOD WANTS HIS PEOPLE TO RESTORE HIS ORIGINAL PATTERN TODAY.

In the long ago, God’s prophet urged, as we do today, “Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls” (Jeremiah 6:16). Let’s go out among our neighbors with an open Bible and call them back to these old paths. ❖

Endnote:

¹ These points are not original, but I do not know from whom I first heard or read them.

² Hiscox, Edward T. 1890. *The Standard Manual for Baptist Churches*. Philadelphia, PA: The American Baptist Publication Society, page 22.

So Today I Choose ...

It's quiet. It's early. My coffee is hot. The sky is still black with darkness. The world is still asleep.

In a few moments, the day will arrive. It will roar down the track with the rising of the sun. The stillness of the dawn will be exchanged for the noise of the day. Calm and solitude will be replaced by the pounding pace of the human race. The refuge of the early morning will be invaded by decisions to be made and deadlines to be met. For the next twelve hours, I will be exposed to the day's demands.

So it is now that I must make a choice.



I Choose Love. No occasion justifies hatred; no injustice warrants bitterness. I choose love. Today, I will love God and what God loves.

I Choose Joy. I will invite my God to be the God of circumstance. I will refuse the temptation to be cynical, the tool of the lazy thinker. I will refuse to see people as anything less than human beings created by God. I will refuse to see any problem as anything less than an opportunity to see God.

I Choose Peace. I will live forgiven. I will forgive so that I may live.

I Choose Patience. I will overlook the inconveniences of the world. Rather than complaining that the wait is too long, I will thank God for a moment to pray. Instead of clenching my fist at new assignments, I will face them with a smile.

I Choose Kindness. I will be kind to the poor, for they are alone; kind to the rich, for they are afraid; and kind to the unkind, for so God has treated me.

I Choose Goodness. I will go without a dollar before taking a dishonest one. I will see good in others when it is hard to find. I will confess instead of accuse.

I Choose Faithfulness. Today, I will keep my promises. My debtors will not regret their trust. My associates will not question my word. My wife will not doubt my love. My children will never fear that their father will fail to come home.

I Choose Gentleness. Nothing worthwhile is won by force. I choose to be gentle. If I raise my voice, may it be only in praise. If I clench my fist, may it be only in prayer. If I make a demand, may it be only of myself.

I Choose Self-Control. I am a spiritual being. After this body is dead, my spirit will soar. I refuse to let what will rot rule the eternal.

To these I commit my day. If I succeed, I will give thanks. If I fail, I will seek God's face.

—“Family Matters,” Augusta Road church of Christ

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance”

GALATIANS 5:22-23



Temptation Is Sweet

At the regular weekly meeting of a weight-loss class, the instructor held up an apple and a candy bar. “What are the attributes of this apple,” she asked, “and how do they relate to our diet?”

“Low in calories” and “lots of fiber” were among the answers.

She then detailed what was wrong with eating candy, and concluded, “Apples are not only more healthful but also less expensive. Do you know I paid seventy-five cents for this candy bar?”

The group stared as she held aloft the forbidden treat. Then from the back of the room a small voice spoke up, “I’ll give you a dollar for it.”

*“Stolen waters are sweet,
and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.”*

PROVERBS 9:17

God's Plan for Saving Man

God's Grace	Ephesians 2:8
Christ's Blood	Romans 5:9
The Holy Spirit's Gospel	Romans 1:16
Sinner's Faith	Acts 16:31
Sinner's Repentance	Luke 13:3
Sinner's Confession	Romans 10:10
Sinner's Baptism	1 Peter 3:21
Christian's Work	James 2:24
Christian's Hope	Romans 8:24
Christian's Endurance	Revelation 2:10





Birthday Diamonds

Bill: It's my wife's birthday tomorrow. Last week I asked her what she wanted as a present.

Doug: So what did she ask for?

Bill: She said, 'Oh, I don't know, just give me something with diamonds.' And so that's why I'm giving her a pack of playing cards.

"Then was our mouth filled with laughter,"

PSALM 126:2

Tips for Strength

Consider some commonsense, practical tips to keep your marriage strong:

- Cultivate hobbies as a couple. Whether it's a bowling league, sports, traveling, or cooking together, find something that you both like to do together.
- Don't stop dating each other. Have a weekly date night.
- Attend an organized marriage retreat once a year, or once every other year
- Vacation together. Whether it's a week, a weekend, or just a day, go someplace where it's just the two of you.
- Read books/magazines/blogs or listen to podcasts on marriage enrichment and discuss the ideas with your partner.
- Read what God has to say about marriage. Search the Bible for terms like "husband," "wife," "marriage," and "love."
- Find ways to grow together spiritually. Attend church services; read the Bible together; have a time for daily prayer.

—Matt Wallin, Jacksonville, Alabama

"Live joyfully with the wife"

ECCLESIASTES 9:9



For more material on the home, go to www.housetohouse.com.

You Could Have Done That

Carol Bartz is the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of Yahoo. In a recent interview at a Forum at Georgia State University, she was asked what was the best advice she had been given.

She said it came from her grandmother who raised her on a farm in Minnesota. "I was in the machine shed with my brother. We heard a rattlesnake above us and ran for Grandma. She grabbed a shovel, knocked the snake out of the rafters and chopped its head off. Then she said, 'You could have done that.' And you know what? She was right."

That got me to thinking about what I could have done. Several years ago while preaching for a church in Flint, Michigan, we had a school of preaching. One instructor taught Greek. I signed up to take the course, went three days, and quit. But I could have done that. Here are some ideas.

(1) Read through the Bible (or the New Testament) in a year. Recently while in Gatlinburg I noticed in the church bulletin the names of those who had already completed reading through the Bible. While in Gainesville, Florida, I noticed on the board that 19 had completed reading through the Bible.

You could do that.

(2) Read a set of commentaries. A brother in the Jacksonville, Alabama, congregation told me that within a year and a half after he obeyed the gospel he had read the complete set of New Testament Commentaries by Burton Coffman. Do you think he knew a little bit more about the Bible after that? You could do that.

(3) A good lady with whom I am acquainted bakes small pound cakes and gives them to the sick. You could do that.

(4) I knew a lady confined to a wheelchair who regularly sent cards of encouragement to the sick and shut in, elders, and members who needed lifting up. You could do that.

Two men were sitting on a stump at the edge of the woods. One was a huge muscular guy; the other much smaller. The small guy said to the large fellow, "If I were as big as you I would go into the woods and rip a big bear apart."

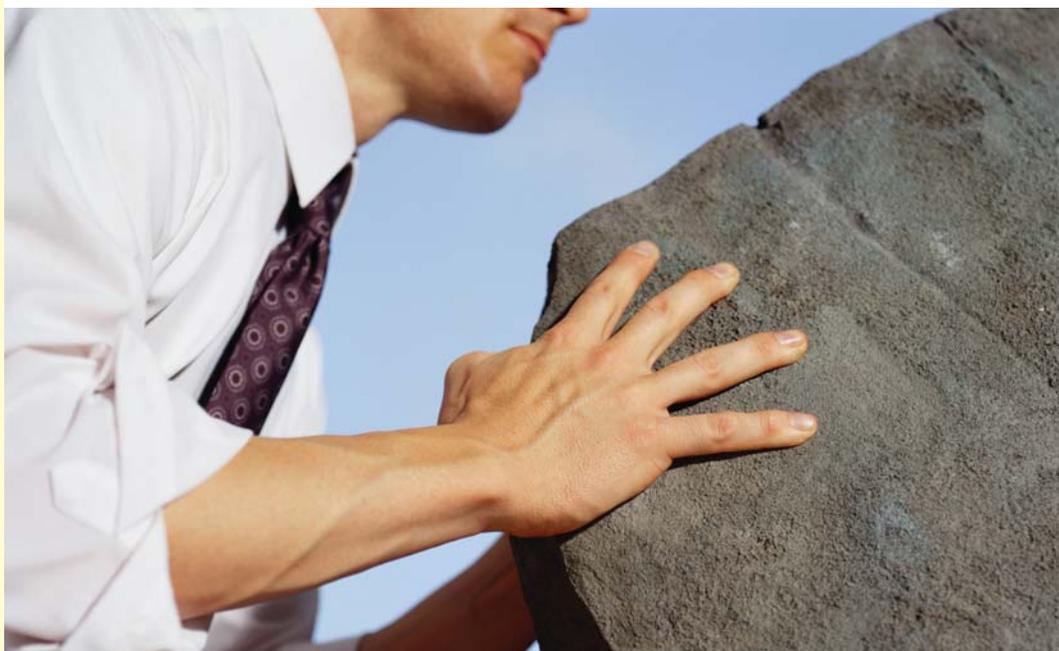
The big guy replied, "There are a lot of small bears in the woods."

You could do that.

—Larry Acuff, Lithia Springs, Georgia

"I can do all things through Christ"

PHILIPPIANS 4:13



Filled with Contradictions?



Many claim the Bible is filled with contradictions. This claim is most often made by those who have little or no knowledge of the Bible. As might be expected of any literary work, the Bible contains apparent contradictions, that is, passages that seem to be contradictory, but which are not when properly understood.

A difference is not a contradiction. Aristotle defined contradiction: That the same thing should at the same time both be and not be for the same person and in the same respect is impossible.

A difference is not a contradiction if the same person was not under consideration, or if the same time period was not used for both, or if the language was not employed in the same sense.

Proverbs 26:4-5 demonstrates the principle. It gives the advice, Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.

Is this a contradiction, since one verse says not to answer a fool, and the very next verse says to answer a fool? Not at all. What Solomon was saying with these verses, in the midst of a series of verses dealing with fools, was that sometimes it is better not to even answer a fool, lest one appear to be just as big a fool for answering. But sometimes the fool must be answered so that he will not think he is so wise that he cannot be answered. Solomon was saying, it will be difficult to deal with a fool!

Because Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about the events of the life of Christ, there are differences among their accounts. For example, Mark says that Jesus was crucified at the third hour (Mark 15:25), while John says that Jesus was on trial before Pilate at the sixth hour (John 19:14). Thus it would appear that either John or Mark is wrong, because John has Jesus on trial three hours after Mark says He was on the cross.

But when one understands that John must have used Roman time, with the sixth hour being 6:00 a.m., while Mark used Jewish time, with the third hour being 9:00 a.m., then the apparent contradiction disappears.

Many other alleged discrepancies can be found, but as long as there is a logical way to explain the differences, then the truthfulness of the Bible stands. If we approach the Bible with an open mind and a willingness to accept its truth, we can understand.

Many find errors in it because they do not approach it openly and honestly. God has communicated His will to us through the Bible. He expects us to understand and obey what it teaches. God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints (1 Corinthians 14:33).

—Bob Prichard, Oxford, Alabama

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Send us your answers (address on front) to receive a FREE Bible bookmark. We'll grade and return your questions and enclose the Facing Trials bookmark as a way of saying "thanks" for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Questions Taken from the King James Version

Answers to Last Issue: *Old Testament Bible Characters:* 1. Elijah (1 Kings 17:1-6); 2. Noah (Genesis 6:13-14); 3. Moses (Exodus 2:5-10); 4. Leah (Genesis 29:30); 5. Eve (Genesis 3:20); 6. Solomon (1 Kings 3:10-13); 7. Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:1-17); 8. Job (Job 1:8-22); 9. Moses (Numbers 20:8-11); 10. Abel (Genesis 4:8); 11. Enoch (Genesis 5:24); 12. Abraham (Genesis 22:1-13); 13. Samson (Judges 15:4-5); 14. Gideon (Judges 7:5-7); 15. Ruth (1:20-22); 16. Samuel (1 Samuel 16:7-13); 17. Saul (1 Samuel 9:2); 18. Elisha (2 Kings 6:1-7); 19. Jonah (Jonah 1:17); 20. Jeroboam (1 Kings 11:40); 21. Uriah (2 Samuel 11:1-17); 22. David (1 Samuel 16:23); 23. David (1 Samuel 17:49-50); 24. David (Psalm 23:1); 25. Daniel (Daniel 6:20-21).

The First and the Last

Directions: Genesis 1:3-5; 2:2; 49:3, 27; Exodus 8:19-20; 11:4-6; 20; Jeremiah 50:17; Matthew 18:15, 17; 19:30; Luke 6:13; Romans 1:16-17; Colossians 1:13-18/1 Corinthians 15:45-47; Revelation 22:13

- The first shall be _____ and the _____ shall be first.
- The gospel came to the _____ first, and then to the _____.
- Who is the firstborn from the dead and the last Adam? _____
- What was the first and last of the Ten Commandments? _____
- Who was the first and last son of Jacob? _____
- What was the first and last of the ten plagues? _____
- Jesus is the _____ and _____, the beginning and the end.
- Israel was taken captive first by the king of _____ and last by the king of _____.
- What happened on the first and last days of creation? _____
- If another Christian trespasses against you what should you do first? Last? _____
- Who wrote the first book in the Old Testament? The last? _____
- Who wrote the first book in the New Testament? The last? _____

Name that Place

Genesis 8:3-4; Numbers 33:39; 2 Kings 9:36; Daniel 3:10-20; John 4:6-7; Acts 11:26

- The place Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were cast when they would not worship an image. _____
- The place Noah's ark came to rest. _____
- The place where Aaron died _____
- In what place did dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel? _____
- The place disciples were first called Christians _____
- The place Jesus talked with a Samaritan woman about living water _____

Thirsty?

Our physical bodies demand water. That shouldn't surprise anyone since 55% of the male body mass is water (51% in women). Our blood is 83% water and muscles are 75%; even our bones are 22% water. Our survival depends on getting enough water, and just a 2% deficiency means we are dehydrated.

Thirst is a sensation we all experience but few can explain. All we know is that when we're thirsty, we begin searching for something to drink.

How's your spiritual thirst? Jesus pointed to this reality: "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37-38, NKJV).

Do you crave the righteousness of God, found in the pages of Scripture? How long has it been since you've had a drink?

—Tim Hall

*"As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
so panteth my soul after thee, O God."*

PSALM 42:1



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- ▶ Marriage: How to Fight Fair —Glenn Colley
- ▶ Christ the Bearer of our Iniquities —Wendell Winkler
- ▶ A Word Found on Every Page of the Bible—Allen Webster

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More!

- I want to better understand the church of Christ.
- I want to receive your weekly newsletter/bulletin.
- Quiero Recibir *Casa a Casa* en Español.
- I want to learn more about your Bible school and programs.
- I have a prayer request: _____
- I have a Bible question: _____
- I want to know more about what God requires for salvation. Please have someone schedule a personal visit with me.

I want to learn more about the Bible!

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____

Bible Study Helps:

- Enroll me in a Free Survey of the Bible Home Study Course. *Pressure-free . . . work on your own at home.*
- I want to see the *Visualized Bible Study* series (an in-home personal study). *These popular videos have been seen by people of all religions all over the world.*
- I would like a daily Bible reading schedule.

Tracts:

- NEW!** Advice to the Grieving
- NEW!** God's Insurance Plan
- NEW!** Should Christians Celebrate Christmas as a Holy Day?
- NEW!** Babel's Rebels
- Saving the Church
- The Kingdom of Christ
- Is the Kingdom the Same as the Church?
- Don't Fall
- When Did the Church of Christ Begin? Did Alexander Campbell start the church of Christ?
- Beating the Devil at His Own Game
- The Most Misunderstood Page of the Bible
- Are We Rushing Through Worship?
- How to Follow Jesus
- How to Love Your Spouse the Way God Wants
- Heaven Is Four Steps from Any Place on Earth (Step 1)
- Shall We Gather at the River?
- Did Jesus Make Intoxicating Wine? (It may surprise you!)
- Salvation: Who Needs It? A study of the conversions in Acts
- If I Don't Preach on Hell
- In Pursuit of Patience
- Feet Swift in Running to Mischief
- The Advantage of Disadvantage
- Christ's Busiest Week
- Who's Your Friend? (Youth)
- My Offering
- Slow to Anger
- Back issues of *House to House/Heart to Heart*

5 Things the Church of Christ Will Never Do

The church of Christ wants to be a people who carefully follow God's Book for we know that only in that way can we honor the Lord and be pleasing in His sight (Revelation 22:14). With that in mind, there are some things that Christ's true church will never do.

(1) The church of Christ will never tell you that man's way is as good as God's way. God's way is always best, every time! His wisdom is far greater than man's (1 Corinthians 1:25).

(2) The church of Christ will never tell you that God accepts every kind of worship, so it does not matter how one worships. Jesus said that we must worship the Father in spirit and in truth (John 4:23–24). Several Old Testament examples remind us that some worship does not please Jehovah (for instance, Cain's worship, Genesis 4; see also Leviticus 10).

(3) The church of Christ will never tell you that since God is loving, we all have the right to live any way that we want. God is love (1 John 4:8), but the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9–11). God is gracious, but He still expects us to practice self-control (Galatians 5:22–23).

(4) The church of Christ will never make light of trying to do exactly what God tells us to do in the Bible. The Lord wants us to obey Him (Luke 6:46). Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

(5) The church of Christ will never tell you that the way to receive the forgiveness of sins is to pray "The Sinner's Prayer." This is true because the Bible does not give this as the way salvation. The book of Acts records the history and doctrine

of the early church, and contains pattern cases of conversion. It records the conversions of thousands of people, yet no one was ever told to pray to get into the Christ. Instead, they heard, believed, and obeyed the gospel (Acts 2:38; 18:8, etc). That is what we intend to tell the people of our generation as well.

—Roger Campbell, Malaysia

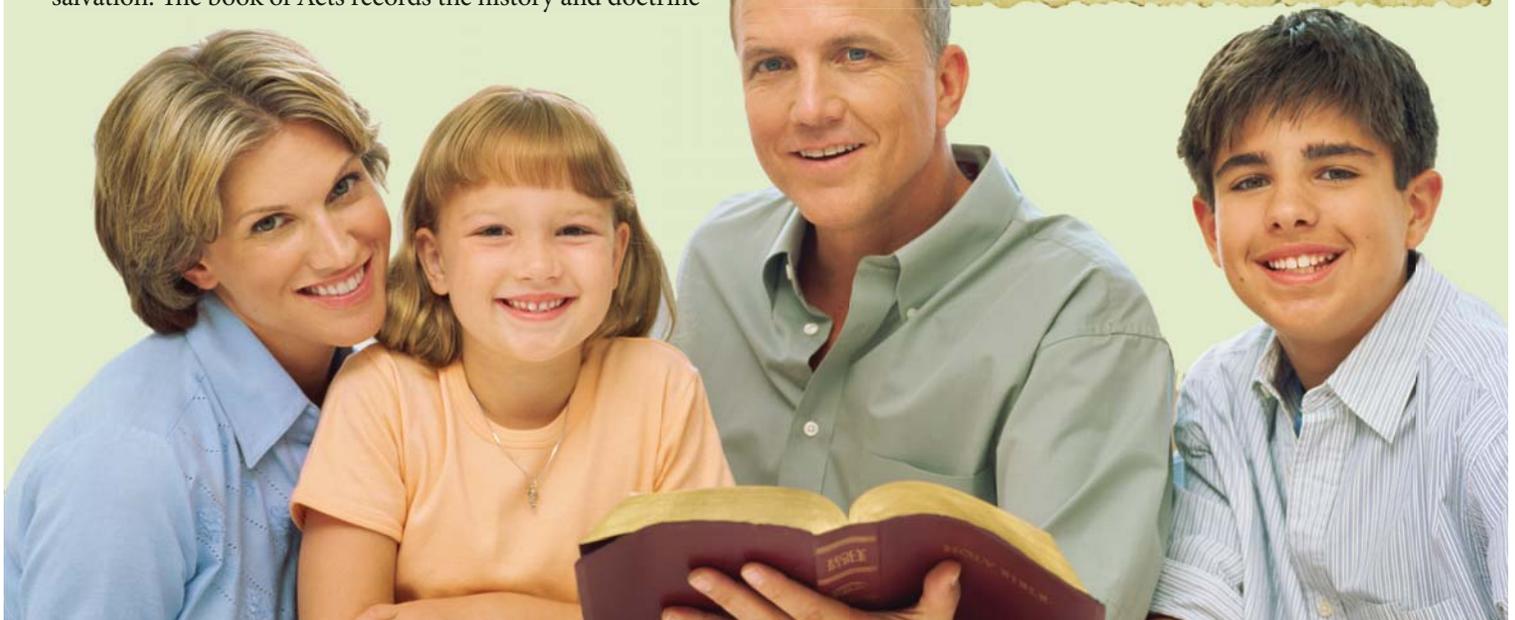
By Grace

- When a person works an eight-hour day and receives a fair day's pay for his time, that is a wage.
- When a person competes with an opponent and receives a trophy for his performance, that is a prize.
- When a person receives appropriate recognition for his long service or high achievements, that is an award.
- But when a person is not capable of earning a wage, can win no prize, and deserves no award—yet receives such a gift anyway—that is a grace. This is what we mean when we talk about the grace of God.

—Author Unknown

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

EPHESIANS 2:8-10



Plan Your Departure

In the spring of 1981, a young man was flown into the desolate north country of Alaska to photograph the natural beauty and mysteries of the tundra. He took along photo equipment, 500 rolls of film, several firearms, and 1400 pounds of provisions. As the months passed, the entries in his diary, which at first detailed his wonder and fascination with the wildlife around him, turned into a pathetic record of a nightmare.



In August he wrote, "I think I should have used more foresight about arranging my departure. I'll soon find out." He waited and waited, but no one came to his rescue.

In November he died in a nameless valley, by a nameless lake, 225 miles northeast of Fairbanks. An investigation revealed that he had carefully mapped out his venture, but had made no provision to be flown out of the area.

All of us need to make specific plans for our departure from this life. If we don't, we can be left in a predicament worse than that young man!

—David Sargent, Mobile, Alabama

*"Enter ye in at the strait gate:
for wide is the gate, and broad is the way,
that leadeth to destruction, and many there be
which go in thereat: because strait is the gate,
and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life,
and few there be that find it."*

MATTHEW 7:13-14

