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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 28 NUMBER 4

Jerseyville

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Don't Play with Sin

Allen Webster

Sin is no plaything. First, we toy with sin, then sin toys with us. To begin with, we play master, and it plays slave; then we switch, and it does not want to take turns anymore.

The prodigal boy in Jesus' story (Luke 15) is an exception. The truth is that most prodigals never come home. Oh, they think they will. They plan to . . . someday. They may even start back toward home . . . several times. But it is a long way back. It is embarrassing to admit you have been wrong. Sin's entanglements are confusing to unravel. Bad habits are hard to break; bad friends are difficult to give up; bad reputations are hard to live down.

What happens to most prodigals? They enjoy the passing pleasures of sin (Hebrews 11:25) and then marry someone from the far country. Somebody they met at a party or a bar. Somebody they "experimented with". Somebody who never knew the Lord and does not care much about knowing Him now (cf. 1 Samuel 2:12). On Sundays, prodigals prefer the lake to the Lord. When it comes to reading, they prefer the day's news to the Good News. They still drink a little more (on the weekends), still smoke (a pack a day now), still use bad language (when they are "with the guys" or in a foul mood), still watch bad movies, and . . . well, you get the picture. They are still in the pigpen. It is hard to leave.

ASK DAVID

His sin started as a Peeping Tom watching his neighbor take her bath (2 Samuel 11:2). He looked (she was beautiful), lusted (she was naked), sent for her (it is hard to say "no" to a king), and slept with her (11:4). That was about as long as he had planned to stay in the far country (a one-night excursion). Unfortunately, David found out that when he was through with sin, sin was not through with him.



Watch on youtube



A few weeks later, he received an unwelcome note. It must have been tightly sealed with "King's Eyes Only" on the envelope. It was probably spotted and smeared with tears. He opened it to read the four words he must have secretly dreaded ever since another man's wife got out of his bed: "I am with child" (2 Samuel 11:5).

He was back on board the sin train—and it was going to keep him much longer than he wanted to stay. You know the downward spiral his life took from there. Deception. Hypocrisy. Conniving. Dishonor. Murder. Cover-up. Quick marriage (2 Samuel 11:6–27).

ASK NATHAN

The next scene is Nathan, God's prophet, paying the former shepherd a visit and telling a parable about a rich man, a poor man, and a pet lamb (2 Samuel 12:1–5). The poor man loved his lamb like it was his own child. He had kept it a long time. It ate at his table. The rich man killed it to feed to a passing guest.

Perhaps David (who thought this was a true story) thought of a pet lamb he had had while growing up. His face flushed with anger, and he rendered this judicial decision: "He shall restore fourfold for the lamb" (12:6). Unwittingly, David had just pronounced his own sentence and rewritten the script for the last two decades of his life. The rest of David's years read like a plot out of daytime television. Sin was about to take him for a long ride.

- Ask David how far sin will take you as he lies for a week in the dirt begging for the life of a dying baby (2 Samuel 12:16–18).
- Ask him at 3:00 A.M. on the seventh day when he has not eaten or been to his bed (2 Samuel 12:16).
- Ask him again as he walks home from the burial.
- Ask him again later when he learns that his daughter has just been raped—while on an errand on which he sent her (2 Samuel 13:7–8, 12–14).
- Ask him again when he finds out that one of his sons is the rapist. Put yourself in this father's place "when King David heard of all these things" (2 Samuel 13:21).
- Ask him again when the message comes that his son has just been murdered—because David has sent him into harm's way (2 Samuel 13:27).
- Ask him again when he finds out that another son is the murderer (2 Samuel 13:28–34).
- Ask him again when he does not see his own son's face for five years (2 Samuel 13:38; 14:28).
- Ask him again as he flees his palace one night, barefoot and weeping, because that son is trying to kill him and take his kingdom (2 Samuel 15:30).
- Ask him again as he ducks flying rocks and flinches from cursing insults (2 Samuel 16:13).
- Ask him again when he—along with all Israel—hears that his son has slept with ten of David's concubines in a tent on top of the king's palace (2 Samuel 16:22).
- Ask him again when his close friend betrays him and wants an opportunity to murder him (2 Samuel 17:1–2).
- Ask him again between his sobs as he grieves that his beloved son is swinging from on oak by his head with three darts through his heart (2 Samuel 18:14, 33).

ASK YOURSELF

How far is sin taking people?

- Have you witnessed the anger, sadness, depression, hatefulness, and hopelessness of a life Satan gives back after an extended stay in the far country?
- Have you looked into the vacant eyes of a person who has been living a worldly lifestyle for several months?
- Have you been around the miserable pessimist who has lost faith in God and the Bible?
- Have you seen a youth robbed of innocence and purity?
- Have you sat with someone who cries until she/he runs out of tears because the consequences of sin have become personal instead of theoretical?
- Have you been to rehab with one whose body has the "shakes," the hollow eyes, the bloodless face, the wasted body of withdrawal?
- Have you attended the funeral of one whom sin took so far that he decided death by bullet or pills was better than life?

Solomon said, "Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, 'I have no pleasure in them'" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). The far country will keep you longer than you want to stay—maybe even for eternity.

They Are All Numbered

A person 20–30 years of age has about 615 hair follicles per square centimeter. A person 50 years of age has around 485 hair follicles per square centimeter. People 80–90 years have approximately 435 hair follicles per square centimeter. This shows an average of about five percent hair loss per year. The average hair loss for an individual is 50–100 hairs per day.[1]

Jesus said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:29–31). When I got older and started losing my hair, I knew that God must have to change His count at least hourly.

People two thousand years ago had the same problems that we have today. Jesus warned, "Therefore do not worry, saying 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'" (Matthew 6:31). What was His response to those whose worldly concerns had overridden spiritual necessities? "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33).

Jesus closed His discourse on worldly cares by saying, "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble" (Matthew 6:34). In other words, there are enough problems in one day to deal with, without compounding them by concerning ourselves with things that are out of our control.

Physical food fills our bodies temporarily, but in time we will hunger again. Jesus fills another kind of hunger. He said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world" (John 6:51). We should take comfort in the fact that we serve a God who knows us personally. He even knows things about us that we do not know about ourselves—like the number of hairs on our heads.

Endnote

[1] From the AAD website: www.aad.org/public/Publications/pamphlets/Hairloss.htm. People with certain sicknesses and genetic hair loss conditions lose more than these averages.





What is a Grandparent?

—Taken from papers written by a class of eight-year-olds.

- A six-year-old was asked where his grandmother lived. "Oh," he said, "she lives at the airport and when we want her, we just go get her. Then when we're done having her visit, we take her back to the airport."
- Grandparents are a lady and a man who have no little children of their own. They like other people's kids.
- Grandparents don't have to do anything except be there when we come to see them. They are so old they shouldn't play hard or run.
- When they take us for walks, they slow down for things like pretty leaves and caterpillars. They don't say, "Hurry up."
- They wear glasses and funny underwear. They can take their teeth and gums out.
- Everybody should try to have a grandmother, especially if you don't have television, because grandparents are the only grown-ups who like to spend time with us.
- They know we should have snacktime before bedtime, and they say prayers with us every time and kiss us even when we've acted bad.

—Anonymous

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



Love Taps

During an attack of laryngitis, I lost my voice completely for two days. My husband devised a system of taps so I could communicate with him. One tap meant, "Give me a kiss," two taps meant "No," three taps meant "Yes," and 95 taps meant "Take out the garbage."

"He who is of a merry heart has a continual feast."

PROVERBS 15:15



Scary Grandmother

After putting her grandchildren to bed, a grandmother changed into old slacks and a droopy blouse and proceeded to wash her hair. As she heard the children getting more and more rambunctious, her patience grew thin. At last, she threw a towel around her head and stormed into their room, putting them back to bed with stern warnings. As she left the room, she heard the three-year-old say with a trembling voice, "Who was THAT?"

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A Different Kind of Family Debt

What parents do not owe their children:

- The latest fashion (Acts 10:34–35; 1 Timothy 2:9–10; James 2:1–10). We need to teach our children to earn admiration and respect through character and not clothing.
- The hottest toys and games (Ecclesiastes 1:4, 8). Look through your house at all the "gotta have it" toys that have not been touched in months. I wrapped all these one year and gave them as anonymous gifts to needy families. Not once did anyone ask, "What happened to my . . . ?" or "Where is my . . . ?"
- A car and money to burn (1 Timothy 6:10–11). There is nothing inherently wrong with buying your children a car, but most 16-year-olds think they are owed a car at 16. Take a group to the mall or on a youth trip and see who has the most spending money—it is not the adults!
- A life free from pain or embarrassment. The Bible says that all who would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12). Peter said, "If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God" (1 Peter 4:16).

What parents do owe their children:

- A godly example (Psalm 85:13; cf. 1 Peter 2:21–22). Jesus gave His disciples an example (John 13:15), as Paul did his (1 Corinthians 11:1).
- A good name (Proverbs 22:1).
- A peaceful home (Proverbs 25:24).
- Objectivity (Proverbs 19:18). Not everyone (including teachers, the police) is "out to get" your child.
- Structure and discipline (1 Samuel 3:13). Children need discernable boundaries. Children need to understand the consequences of violating the boundaries.

What children owe their parents:

- Love (1 John 4:19).
- Respect (Ephesians 6:1–3)—for the name they wear, especially when their parents are not around.
- Obedience. The word "obey" in Ephesians 6:1 is from the Greek compound *hupakouo* (*hupo* = under + *akouo* = hear or give the ear to). Literally it means "to listen with the intent to obey" (cf. 1 Samuel 3:9–10).
- Submission (1 Peter 5:5).
- Proper care when they become aged (Proverbs 23:22; 1 Timothy 5:4). The word "despise" in the phrase "do not despise your mother when she is old" means "to hold in contempt or as insignificant" (it is an antonym of reverence). Your parents helped you with your first steps; help them with their last. Your parents made sure your home was clean and your food was hot—do not let them live in squalor. If you cannot take care of your parents, find someone who can. First Timothy 5:8 says that a failure to properly care for your parents disrespects them, disgraces the church, denies the faith, and damns your soul.

Be sure to pay all of your family debts!

—Todd Clippard



What is the Significance of "Jehovah" as God's Name?



Names are important. It is difficult for us to conceive of things apart from their names. The many different names for God in the Bible describe and demonstrate His character. "Jehovah" (usually rendered "Lord" in the King James Version) appears often in the Scriptures; it means "the Eternal One, the Unchangeable One, the One Who was, and is, and is to come." When Moses met God in the burning bush, he asked His name. "And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And He said, 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, "I AM has sent me to you"'" (Exodus 3:14). God spoke as Jehovah, the self-existent God.

The Hebrew people came to consider one name of God His personal name. Scholars call this name, derived from four Hebrew letters, the tetragrammaton (from "tetra," four, and "gram," letter). The Jews were so concerned about using this name in vain that they would not even pronounce it when reading the Bible aloud. (They substituted "Adonai," meaning Lord.) As a result, the proper pronunciation of the original Hebrew is unknown. Most scholars say "Yahweh" or "Yahveh" is likely the proper pronunciation, although Jehovah has been used since the sixteenth century.

The Bible stresses the importance of respect for God by emphasizing the importance of the name of God. Solomon said, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe" (Proverbs 18:10). The psalmist said, "He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever: holy and awesome is His name" (Psalm 111:9). ("Reverend" [KJV] refers only to God in the Bible, and never to man.) Isaiah spoke of "the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: 'I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones'" (Isaiah 57:15). Jesus told His disciples, "In this manner, therefore pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Matthew 6:9).

The Third Commandment warns, "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain" (Exodus 20:7). Although this commandment is part of the old covenant, the need for respect for the Lord's name continues. Paul wrote, "Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed" (1 Timothy 6:1).

—Bob Prichard

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Bible Quiz

VOLUME 28:4

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark. We will grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark "Questions People Ask—Instrumental Music" as a way of saying thanks for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Phone: _____

Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

Answers to Previous Quizzes

V. 28:2 *Starts with the Letter "U":* 1. Upharsin (Daniel 5:25); 2. Ur (Genesis 11:31); 3. Uriah (2 Samuel 11:3); 4. Urijah (2 Kings 16:10–16); 5. Urim (Exodus 28:30).

Starts with the Letter "V": 1. Vashti (Esther 1:9–22); 2. Veil (Luke 23:45); 3. Vengeance (Romans 12:19); 4. Victory (1 John 5:4); 5. Vine (John 15:1); 6. Viper (Acts 28:3); 7. Virgin (Matthew 1:23); 8. Virtue (2 Peter 1:5); 9. Vagabond (Genesis 4:14); 10. Valley (Psalm 23:4); 11. Vapor (James 4:14); 12. Visit (James 1:27).

V. 28:3 *Spies, Lies, and a River Crossing:* 1. Two (Joshua 2:1); 2. In Rahab's house (Joshua 2:1); 3. Yes (Joshua 2:2); 4. She hid them on the roof with stalks of flax (Joshua 2:4–6); 5. She lied (Joshua 2:4–5); 6. That they show kindness to her father's house (Joshua 2:12–13); 7. She heard how the Lord helped them across the Red Sea and what they had done to the Amorite kings (Joshua 2:9–10); 8. Her father, mother, brothers, and sisters (Joshua 2:13); 9. Not tell anyone (Joshua 2:14); 10. Let them down by a rope from her window (Joshua 2:15); 11. Tied a scarlet cord in her window (Joshua 2:17–18); 12. Three days (Joshua 2:22); 13. Acacia Grove (Joshua 3:1); 14. Priests (Joshua 3:3); 15. Ark of the Covenant (Joshua 3:3); 16. 2000 cubits (Joshua 3:4); 17. Prepare provisions and sanctify themselves (Joshua 1:11; 3:5); 18. During the whole time of harvest (Joshua 3:15); 19. Adam, the city beside Zaretan, Sea of Arabah, Salt Sea, Jericho (Joshua 3:16); 20. The priests (Joshua 3:17).

Starts with the Letter "M"

Directions: Find answers in: Genesis 1:26; 5:1–12; 14:18; 18:1; 23:19; 41:51; Exodus 15:23–25; 16:35; 24:12; Judges 13:2, 24; 1 Samuel 14:49; Ruth 1:2, 20; Esther 2:20, 3:5; Isaiah 8:3; Matthew 1:16; 2:11; 6:24; 10:3; Mark 16:9; Luke 2:7; 10:38–40; John 18:10; Acts 1:23–26; 15:37–38; Hebrews 7:1; 13:4 (not in order). *Questions are taken from the New King James Version.*

1. Jesus' mother was named _____.
2. _____ was a tax collector who became a disciple and apostle.
3. _____ was elected to fill the place of the traitor, Judas.
4. The wise men brought _____ as a gift to the young child, Jesus.
5. The man who received the law from God at Sinai was _____.
6. _____ brought up Esther and was hated by Haman.
7. The name of a son of Isaiah is the longest word in the Bible: _____.
8. One of the sons of King Saul was named _____.
9. The servant whose right ear Peter cut off was _____.
10. The elder son of Joseph was named _____.
11. Food the children of Israel ate for forty years was _____.
12. The father of Samson was _____.
13. The name Naomi adopted in her grief was _____.
14. The place of bitter waters made sweet was _____.
15. Barnabas wanted to take _____; Paul did not.
16. "_____ is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge."
17. _____ was the King of Salem and priest of the Most High God who met Abraham.
18. Abraham buried Sarah, his wife, in the cave of the field of _____.
19. The fourth in descent from Adam was _____.
20. Mary wrapped baby Jesus in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a _____ because there was no room in the inn.
21. "You cannot serve God and _____."
22. The Lord appeared to Abraham by the terebinth trees of _____.
23. "Then God said, 'Let Us make _____ in Our image. . . .'"
24. Seven demons went out of Mary _____.
25. Mary's sister _____ was "distracted with much serving."



A Plea for New Testament Christianity

There are two rival conceptions of the church. One holds that the church is a conglomerate of sorts, being composed of all Christ-believing individuals, regardless of the "church" to which they belong. The other view maintains that the church is composed of every saved individual on earth, but only those who have done just what the Bible requires are, in fact, saved. Which view is correct?

It cannot be denied that Christ desired unity among His followers. In the shadow of the cross, the Savior prayed that His disciples might be one, so "that the world may believe" that He was sent from the Father (John 17:20–21). The early church was a model of this prayer for unity. "The multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul" (Acts 4:32).

Sadly, the religious world today is anything but united. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of competing religious bodies, each vying for our attention and subsequent allegiance. Most, if not all, teach conflicting doctrines and practice varying rituals. From a rational vantage point, it seems the only unity that can rightly be claimed for all such endeavors is superficial at best.

In contrast to the present state of affairs, there is a beautiful simplicity to Christianity. Paul delineated the heart of the gospel in these words: Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:1–4). When the same apostle wrote Romans, he indicated that we submit to a "form" of this teaching (cf. Romans 6:17) when we die to the unrestrained practice of sin, are buried with Christ in baptism, and then raised to walk in "newness of life" (cf. Romans 6:2–4; Colossians 2:12). All who have done so are members of the body of Christ, the church (cf. Ephesians 1:22–23; Colossians 1:18, 24). The name God would have them wear is "Christian"—nothing more, nothing less. —Brandon Renfroe

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VOLUME 28:4

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TYPES & ANTITYPES

JOSHUA as a type of CHRIST

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 shadows in the Old Testament of things that were to come (antitypes) in the New Testament.

In Numbers 27:15–23, we see the selection of Joshua as the successor of Moses to lead God's people into the promised land. Let us look at some of the ways that Joshua was a type of the antitype, Christ.



JOSHUA TYPE	JESUS THE CHRIST ANTITYPE
They have the same name. In Hebrew, Joshua's name is "Yehoshua" which means "God is salvation" (**JOSHUA 1:1**).	Jesus' name in Hebrew is "Yeshua" which is a shortened form of "Yehoshua" and means "God is salvation" (**MATTHEW 1:21**).
Joshua was chosen to lead God's people into the promised land (**JOSHUA 1:1–9**).	Jesus was chosen to lead God's people into the ultimate promised land of eternal life (**HEBREWS 2:10**).
Joshua was obedient to God and led the Israelites to victory (**JOSHUA 11:15**).	Jesus, by obeying God's will, leads us to victory over sin (**1 JOHN 1:7–10; COLOSSIANS 2:15**).
The walls of Jericho fell by obedient faith (**JOSHUA 6; HEBREWS 11:30**).	We enter into Christ by obedient faith (**JAMES 2:24; ROMANS 1:5; 16:26**).
Joshua was a mediator between God and His people, and he made a covenant with them to serve God faithfully (**JOSHUA 24:25–27**).	Jesus is the mediator between God and His people, and He made a new covenant with His blood that provides salvation (**HEBREWS 8:6–13**).
When the Israelites crossed the Jordan River, they began to reap the blessings of the Promised Land (**JOSHUA 5:12**).	Baptism into Christ brings all the blessings that reside in Him to Christians (**GALATIANS 3:27**).
Joshua performed a miracle—he commanded the sun and moon to stand still (**JOSHUA 10:12–14**).	Jesus performed miracles and He was also able to control nature (**MARK 4:35–41; COLOSSIANS 1:16–17**).
Joshua led Israel, God's chosen people in the Old Testament (**BOOK OF JOSHUA**).	Jesus leads all people of all nations who will obey Him (**MARK 16:15–16; HEBREWS 5:9**).



Insights from Student Test Papers

Socrates died from an overdose of wedlock.

Magna Carta provided that no free man should be hanged twice for the same offense.

Martin Luther was nailed to the church door at Wittenberg.

Lincoln's mother died in infancy, and he was born in a log cabin which he built with his own hands.

One horsepower is the amount of energy it takes to drag a horse 500 feet in one second.

We say the cause of perfume disappearing is evaporation. Evaporation gets blamed for a lot of things people forget to put the top on.

To most people, solutions mean finding the answers. But to chemists, solutions are things that are still all mixed up.

You can listen to thunder after lightning and tell how close you came to getting hit. If you do not hear it, you got hit, so never mind.

Some people can tell what time it is by looking at the sun. But I have never been able to make out the numbers.

"I say . . . to everyone . . . not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think."

ROMANS 12:3

House to House
Heart to Heart
4/23

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ANYWAY

People are unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered. Love them anyway!

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Do good anyway!

If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies. Do good anyway!

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway!

The biggest men with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest minds. Think big anyway!

People really need help, but they may attack you if you help them. Help people anyway!

Give the world your best, and you will get kicked in the teeth. Give the best you have anyway!

"Let all that you do be done with love."

1 CORINTHIANS 16:14



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