House to House
Heart to Heart
VOLUME 29 NUMBER 1
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Heart to Heart

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How good is good? "I mean, I'm pretty good. How do I know if I have passed God's test?"

STANDARDS

What is the goal? Paul said, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). The glory of God is the ultimate standard Scripture gives for man's behavior. Jesus said, "You shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48; cf. 1 Peter 1:17). We are to walk in Jesus' footsteps (1 Peter 2:21–22). The goal is to strive toward the goodness of God and to live like the Lord. He has given an example of what kind of behavior is acceptable to Him.

The predictable bad news is that all come short of the goal of perfection, just as an archer comes short of a target, or a runner falls short of breaking a ribbon. To come short of the glory of God means

- To fail to glorify God (Romans 1:21). Instead of glorifying God, sinners dishonor Him.
- To fail to be glorified by God (1 Corinthians 4:5). A broken law can never justify us.
- Sinners cannot glorify themselves before God. They exalt themselves over men; God remains unimpressed (Psalm 52:1–5).

At this point, it needs to be explained that God does not expect perfection (1 John 1:6–10), but He expects man to recognize his condition and his inability to save himself.

ILLUSTRATIONS

A sinner trying to save himself is like going to the Pacific Ocean and saying, "I will jump to Hawaii." Even if one were a superior athlete and had trained for months, he could not do it. If a thousand people lined up and got a running start, nobody could do it. Some might make it farther than others, but none would get close to the goal. That is how man's relative righteousness compares to God's.

Cornelius was an outstanding man. He prayed, gave to the poor, and encouraged the Jews (Acts 10:2, 22). He was good, to be sure, but not good enough (cf. 11:18). Peter was a good disciple, but he often said or did the wrong thing (cf. Matthew 16:22–23; 17:4–5; 26:33–35, 58–75; Mark 9:5–6; John 13:8). Paul was a better apostle, some say, but he sinned greatly before becoming a Christian (1 Timothy 1:15; cf. Acts 7:57–8:3). Both were good, but not good enough.

Dwight Moody said, "If I have two sour apple trees, and one has five hundred apples, all sour, and the other has two apples, both sour, the nature of the trees is alike: they are sour apple trees. So, with people: one man may be vile, with five hundred evil deeds; another may be relatively good, with a few evil deeds; but both are alike."[1]

To be law-abiding, a citizen must keep all laws. To be a lawbreaker, it is unnecessary to commit treason, forgery, speeding, arson, tax-evasion, assault, carjacking, indecent exposure, and murder. Doing any one of these acts causes a citizen to become a lawbreaker (James 2:10). Then a hundred deeds of obedience will not erase one act of disobedience.

Consider two men Jesus raised from the dead. The first was the son of the widow of Nain. He had just died—Jesus interrupted the funeral and rendered it unnecessary (Luke 7:11–15). In that subtropical country, with no refrigeration or embalming, corruption set in fast, so the dead were soon buried (cf. Genesis 23:4). The other was Lazarus, who had been dead four days (John 11:17). Contrast these: one was more corrupt, but they were both dead. So it is with sinners (Ephesians 2:1).

A skyscraper is much taller than a house. From our vantage point, there is a great contrast between the height of these buildings. Which is closer to the moon, though? Sure, the top of one is closer to the moon than the top of the other, but does it matter when both are 240,000 miles from the moon? In the presence of thousands of miles, there is no appreciable difference in a few feet.

So it is with the difference in a bad person and a good person (as we describe them) when compared with God's holiness. Paul wrote, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us . . . through Jesus Christ our Savior" (Titus 3:5–6).

Look at it from the other perspective. All are saved the same way. The ark had one door. Through that door the great elephant lumbered, the little snail crawled, the eagle swooped, the little wren hopped, and Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their wives, walked. All needed salvation and all were saved through that one door (Genesis 6:16; 7:13, 16). This is true of those entering God's ark of safety—the church—today (Acts 2:47). There is only one door—baptism (Galatians 3:27). "Whoever" (John 3:16) surely means me.

APPLICATIONS

Most people are simply unaware they are lost. At some point, this must change. Sinners must sorrow before they can be comforted (Matthew 5:4); sin must be felt before it can be mourned. Unless one knows he is in danger, he sees no need for rescue. Without a knowledge of sin and an acknowledgment of sin, no message involving a cross, blood atonement, or a risen Savior sounds inviting. Why fix what is not broken? Why add unnecessary requirements to a busy life?

It is easy to rationalize behavior as acceptable although it differs from Bible teaching. People compare themselves with others and feel they fare pretty well (cf. 2 Corinthians 10:12). The Laodiceans said, "I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing." Jesus' assessment differed drastically from their self-evaluation: "You are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:17).

Some dismiss sin as unimportant. Ahab thought sin was a light thing (1 Kings 16:31; cf. Proverbs 17:15). Felix dismissed sin (Acts 24:25; cf. 17:32). This is as foolish as dismissing a pathology report showing cancer. The longer one refuses to deal with it, the more damage. With sin, it becomes harder to leave it, not to mention the constant risk of death or Jesus' return (Matthew 25:10; Hebrews 9:27).

CONCLUSIONS

"'Who then can be saved?' But Jesus looked at them and said to them, 'With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible'" (Matthew 19:25–26). "By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:8–10).

God's plan of salvation must be learned and obeyed by every person before leaving this life. What does this involve?

Each must learn who Jesus, the Savior, is and what He did (John 6:44–45). Read Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. (Luke is the most comprehensive; Mark is the shortest.)

Each must believe that Jesus is the Son of God (John 1:12; 8:24; 20:30–31). Once one has read the record, he or she must decide if it rings true. Each must ask if the life and deeds of Jesus substantiate His claims. If the answer is yes, one becomes a believer.

A believer is ready for repentance and baptism (Acts 2:38). Repentance involves changing one's mind about behavior. One must turn from a life of sin and live for the glory of God in righteousness. Life-change begins immediately and continues throughout life.

Baptism is the crucial step when God removes all sin from one's record (Mark 16:16). It is preceded by a confession of faith that could not be known to others otherwise.

At that point, one is a forgiven sinner, a child of God, a Christian, and a member of Christ's church. He or she begins to experience a new level of joy, hope, and peace. He or she worships God enthusiastically, serves others sacrificially, and seeks to lead others to find the path to heaven. It is the best way to live (John 10:10).

How good do we have to be? Wrong question. To whom must we belong? That is the right question.

Endnote

[1] Henry Davenport Northrop. *Life and Labors of Dwight L. Moody.* Published by Butler & Alger. Page 363.



The Power of Godliness

There is a huge difference between the "form of godliness" and the "power of godliness" (2 Timothy 3:5). It has been said that the form of godliness is policy, but the power of godliness is honesty. The form of godliness is on the lips while the power of godliness is in the heart. Notice some qualities of godliness.

Godliness is to be more like Jesus. Are we willing to exercise self-denial, to give up evil habits, and to serve others? (Luke 9:23; Acts 1:1; 1 Peter 2:21–22).

Godliness is profitable for health. "The fear of the Lord prolongs days, but the years of the wicked will be shortened" (Proverbs 10:27). Many lives are shortened due to a worldly lifestyle. The "eat, drink, and be merry" attitude is not profitable for good health.

Godliness is profitable for one's reputation. Do we want a good reputation? If so, let us be godly (Philippians 4:8).

Godliness is profitable for the intellect. Godliness directs one away from a sinful life to a life of truth and holiness (Psalm 14:1; Romans 1:18–32; 12:1–2).

—Harry Goff, Macon, Georgia

"Godliness with contentment is great gain."

1 TIMOTHY 6:6

What Is So Special about Heaven?

Heaven is where God is (John 14:2–3).
Heaven is where we will have perfect understanding (1 Corinthians 13:12).
Heaven is where our life's records are kept (Revelation 20:12).
Heaven is a place of perfect rest (Revelation 14:13).
Heaven is where we will receive our new bodies (1 Corinthians 15:44).
Heaven is where we will reunite with our saved loved ones (2 Samuel 12:23).
Heaven is where our reward is (Revelation 22:12).

—Larry Benderman, Stiversville Church of Christ

"In my Father's House."

JOHN 14:2



The Best Things

"The best things are nearest: breath in your nostrils, light in your eyes, flowers at your feet, duties at your hand, the path of right just before you. Then do not grasp at the stars, but do life's plain, common work as it comes, certain that daily duties and daily bread are the sweetest things of life." —Robert Louis Stevenson, A Life in Quotes

"I will praise the Lord according to His righteousness, and will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High."

PSALM 7:17





Seen on a Headstone

"Remember, friend, as you pass by,
As you are now so once was I,
And as I am now you soon shall be,
So prepare to die and follow me."

Someone then used a black crayon and added these words below the epitaph:

"To follow you I'm not content,
Until I know which way you went!"

"Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God."

3 JOHN 1:11

God's Plan for Saving Man

Watch on youtube

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

Things More Important Than Money

William Cohan relates what former GE CEO Jack Welch says he regrets: "The only time he spoke about his children was when he told me that he 'loved them to pieces' but that he had made 'a mistake' when he gave each of them a bunch of GE stock when he first became CEO."

Because the stock had performed well, they each had something like fifty million dollars in company shares. Although two of his four kids went to Harvard Business School and one went to Harvard's Graduate School of Design, they all quit their jobs, disappointing their father. "They turned out differently than I'd hoped," Welch tells Cohan. "We're close. But they got too much money. . . . If I had to do it all over again, I wouldn't have given it to them."

A father reflects, after a lifetime, on his troubled relationship with his children, and concludes that he should have adjusted their compensation.

Give children time (Ephesians 5:16), discipline (Hebrews 12:1–9), education (Proverbs 22:6), love (Titus 2:4), and above all, faith (Deuteronomy 6:6–7).

—fs.blog/brain-food/november-20-2022

"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

MATTHEW 19:14



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How to Stay Married

A judge in Wisconsin offered seven rules for easing tensions and making married life happier. They are as follows (Bible verses added):

1. Be as nice to your spouse as you are to yourself (Matthew 22:38–40).
2. Maintain a sense of humor (Proverbs 17:22).
3. Try to work out your own problems together (Matthew 5:9).
4. Do not forget small attentions (Zechariah 4:10).
5. Advice of parents should be sought on infrequent and important occasions (Proverbs 10:19).
6. Keep financial matters on a business plane with the idea that marriage is a partnership financially as well as in other ways (Genesis 2:24).
7. Marry with the idea that divorce is illegal and marriage is permanent (Matthew 5:32; 19:4–9).

While the judge has given some good advice, the most important advice of all is: Include God in your marriage (Psalm 127:1–3).

"Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it."

PSALM 127:1

Just for Fun Word Search

R	U	D	J	S	H	Q	T	D	L	M	F	S	R	D
D	O	B	D	E	Q	S	A	U	M	B	F	E	F	Y
G	S	C	A	T	U	N	O	I	T	A	V	L	A	S
H	J	R	K	R	Y	S	L	A	P	C	R	A	O	C
Y	T	E	T	D	O	R	N	L	L	D	U	H	I	O
D	T	X	T	I	E	D	O	V	A	O	Q	A	P	D
R	F	P	Q	I	I	F	S	L	V	H	N	R	P	L
X	X	E	L	O	E	I	E	I	G	N	S	E	O	V
B	D	C	S	C	L	X	O	N	W	N	T	F	U	Y
V	K	T	K	E	P	N	Q	Y	S	F	R	U	R	Q
U	O	A	N	U	O	A	N	I	L	E	E	G	R	I
G	K	T	L	S	E	M	I	T	P	K	N	E	I	D
B	L	I	Z	F	P	B	X	T	B	J	G	Q	R	O
Y	L	O	M	O	V	E	D	S	K	G	T	K	E	Z
J	P	N	R	A	A	S	B	A	Z	Q	H	R	Q	N

Find the words in blue.

My **soul**, wait **silently** for God **alone**,
For my **expectation** is from Him.
He only is my **rock** and my **salvation**;
He is my **defense**;
I **shall** not be **moved**.
In God is my salvation and my **glory**;
The rock of my **strength**,
And my **refuge**, is in God.

Trust in Him at all **times**, you **people**;
Pour out your **heart** before Him;
God is a refuge for us. ***Selah***

—PSALM 62:5–8



Why Should You Believe in God?

housetohouse.com/evidence

How could we ever know if God exists? We cannot see, hear, touch, smell, or taste Him. We cannot weigh Him like we can a five-pound bag of potatoes. We cannot put God under an electron microscope to study Him on an atomic level. So, how can we know that God exists?

Belief in God is not the result of literally seeing His Spirit or touching His essence. What we have at our fingertips, however, is a mountain of irrefutable, indirect, credible evidence that testifies on God's behalf, including the fundamental fact that matter logically demands a Maker.

A study of the material universe reveals that every physical effect must have an adequate cause that came before it (or was simultaneous to it) and is greater than it—a truth known as the Law of Cause and Effect. The U.S. flag that stood tall on the surface of the moon in 1969 was neither eternal nor without a cause. Its existence on the moon demands a sufficient cause.

Some leading atheists contend that "nothing" gave rise to the universe. But the fact is, as renowned atheist Richard Dawkins once admitted, "Common sense doesn't allow you to get something from nothing."

At one time in the past, the material universe did not exist. Then, at some point, it came into existence. But since matter is not eternal and cannot create itself from nothing, then something outside of the material realm must have brought it into existence. Indeed, the very existence of matter demands a Maker.

Atheism irrationally contends that an accidental explosion (from nothing) caused exquisite order—that a well-designed universe came about without a Designer. In truth, atheism is unreasonable, while belief in God is entirely rational. —Eric Lyons

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 "Types – High Priest and Levitical Priest" as a way of saying thanks for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____

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Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

Answers to Previous Quizzes

V. 28:11 *Joshua's Only Defeat (and Comeback):* 1. Two or three thousand (7:3); 2. About three thousand (7:4); 3. Thirty thousand (8:3); 4. About thirty-six (7:5); 5. They took some of the accursed things (7:11); 6. Twelve thousand (8:25); 7. Transgressing God's covenant, taking some accursed things, stealing, deceiving, and putting it among his stuff (7:11); 8. A beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels (7:21); 9. The lust of the eyes (7:21); 10. They were stoned and burned (7:25); 11. Achor (7:24); 12. Trouble (7:26); 13. They could take the spoil and cattle as booty (8:2); 14. With, with (8:9–10); 15. With (8:11); 16. His spear (8:26); 17. Altar, Ebal, stones, Gerizim, Ebal (8:30–35).

V. 28:12 *Starts With the Letter "C":* 1. Caiaphas (Matthew 26:3); 2. Cain (Genesis 4:1, 8); 3. Caleb (Numbers 13:1–6); 4. Cana (John 2:1–10); 5. Canaan (Leviticus 25:38); 6. Candace (Acts 8:27); 7. Carpenter (Mark 6:3); 8. Chebar (Ezekiel 1:1); 9. Cedars (Psalm 92:12); 10. Cornelius (Acts 10:1–48); 11. Cephas (John 1:42); 12. Cease (Psalm 37:8); 13. Christians (Acts 11:26); 14. Commandments (Revelation 22:14); 15. Commit (1 Corinthians 10:8); 16. Cheerful (2 Corinthians 9:7); 17. Chastening (Hebrews 12:5); 18. Carry (1 Timothy 6:7); 19. Care (1 Peter 5:7); 20. Caesar (Luke 2:1); 21. Camel (Mark 10:25); 22. Cheer (John 16:33); 23. Child (Luke 18:17); 24. Christ (Matthew 16:16); 25. Churches (Romans 16:16).

Who Is the Greatest?

Find answers in Jesus' sermon on life in His kingdom found in Matthew 18. *Questions are taken from the New King James Version.*

1. What question did the disciples ask? _____
2. What object lesson did Jesus use to answer? _____
3. "Unless you are _____, and become as little _____, you will by no means enter the _____ of heaven."
4. What is to be preferred to offending a little child? _____
5. What three body parts did Jesus mention relating to offense (causing to sin)? _____
6. What is worse than having a maimed body? _____
7. "The Son of Man has _____ to _____ that which was _____."
8. When Peter asked the Lord how many times he should forgive his brother, what number did he suggest? _____
9. What number did Jesus give? _____
10. When a man could not pay a ten thousand talent debt, what did the king command to be done? _____
11. After the man asked for patience, what did the king do? _____
12. What emotion caused the king to do this? _____
13. How much did another servant owe the man who had been forgiven the great debt? _____
14. What did the unforgiving servant do to this man? _____
15. When the king heard what was done, what did he do? _____
16. What is the primary point of the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant? _____
17. "Therefore whoever _____ himself as this little _____ is the _____ in the kingdom of heaven."



Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

THE BAD NEWS: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9–10).

THE GOOD NEWS: "And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

Washed refers to baptism of a penitent believer (Acts 2:38; 22:16). *Sanctified* refers to setting that person apart from the world for God's holy purposes. *Justified* refers to the person's new standing with God.

THE PROMISE: "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). —David Jones

"The angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.'"

LUKE 2:10

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

Recommended **Resource**

***God: The Ultimate Reality* from Apologetics Press.** Throughout history, people have questioned how they fit into the Universe. Is there really a God? If God does exist, what does it mean for me? To answer these questions, study the free online course *God: The Ultimate Reality.* Visit **mathetis.org/courses** or download the Mathetis app to get started.

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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☐ Don't Stop in Haran



☐ Was Joan of Arc Really Noah's Wife?



☐ I Want to Look upon His Face



☐ God's Heavenly Preachers



☐ The Scourging of Jesus



☐ Heaven Is Just Four Steps Away Part 4



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TYPES & ANTITYPES



JERUSALEM as a type of the CHURCH

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.

Galatians 4:26 and Hebrews 12:22–23 identify Jerusalem as a type of the church.

JERUSALEM TYPE	THE CHURCH ANTITYPE
Is referred to as the "city of God" (PSALM 46:4; 87:3).	Is described as the household of God and city set on a hill (HEBREWS 12:22–23; 1 TIMOTHY 3:15; MATTHEW 5:14–16).
Was the location of the Temple, the central place of worship for Israel (1 KINGS 6).	Is the spiritual house where believers are the living stones and offer spiritual sacrifices (1 PETER 2:5).
Acted as the unifying center for the twelve tribes of Israel (1 KINGS 8:1).	Acts as the unifying body for believers from every nation (EPHESIANS 2:14–19).
Was the dwelling place of God in the Temple (1 KINGS 8:10–11).	Is the dwelling place of God (1 CORINTHIANS 3:16).
Was the city of divine blessings (PSALM 132:15).	Is now the place of divine blessings (ACTS 2:47; HEBREWS 12:22–24; EPHESIANS 3:6; COLOSSIANS 1:13–14).
Was the target of attacks and persecutions for several empires (2 KINGS 25).	Faces persecution, as Jesus warned it would (JOHN 15:18–20).
Is depicted as being inhabited forever (JEREMIAH 17:25).	Will never be destroyed (DANIEL 2:44; MATTHEW 16:18; 2 PETER 1:5–11; HEBREWS 12:28).
Stood as a symbol of hope and future restoration of prophecies (JEREMIAH 33:10–11).	Is a beacon of hope, looking forward to the return of Christ (TITUS 2:13).

Jesus' Two Natures

Jesus went to the temple when He was a 12-year-old boy (Luke 2:40–52). I wish I could have been sitting in a corner. All of the wise doctors, the learned theologians, were questioning Jesus. They might have said to Him, "Well, son, how old are you?"

He could have said, "Well, on my mother's side, I am 12 years old; on my Father's side, I am older than my mother and just as old as my Father," because there never was a time when Jesus was not.

On His mother's side, He got thirsty; on His Father's side, He created every ocean, every brook, every lake, and every spring. He said, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37).

On His mother's side, He got hungry; on His Father's side, He fed 5,000. He said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35).

On His mother's side, He lived in poverty and was homeless; on His Father's side, He created the universe and owns the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10–12).

On His mother's side, with a broken heart, He wept at the tomb of Lazarus; on His Father's side, He said, "Lazarus, come forth!" (John 11:43), and Lazarus came out of that grave. —Anonymous

House to House
Heart to Heart
1/24

Jerseyville church of Christ
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Jesus was God in human flesh—not half God and half man, not all God and no man, not all man and no God; but the God-man, the man-God.

The One who created every seed, every shrub, every tree, and every limb was hanged on a tree, on a cross (Acts 5:30). The One who scooped out a place for the seas, the One who created every lake, every pond, every brook, and every spring was the One who said, "I thirst!" (John 19:28). The One who ignited the sun with a word was the One who suffered under that broiling, noonday, Middle Eastern sun. He was the One who had flung it into space (Psalm 19:1). —Anonymous

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

JOHN 1:14

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