

# The Good Tidings

“...I must preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God...” (Luke 4:43)

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January/February 2007

THE GOSPEL IS THE POWER  
OF GOD UNTO SALVATION

(Romans 1:16)

*The Good Tidings* is an e-journal of New Testament Christianity published in portable document format and sent free to interested individuals via email. Its primary purpose and goal in publication is to “preach the gospel to the whole creation” (Mark 16:16); to teach those outside Christ about the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to edify the faith of New Testament Christians. Subscribers are encouraged to assist us in this effort by forwarding *The Good Tidings* to all their email contacts and by printing out copies for folks who do not have access to email. Send articles and subscription requests to Michael Willey, Editor at [mbwilley@yahoo.com](mailto:mbwilley@yahoo.com)

What Must I Do To Be Saved?  
Hear the Word of God  
John 8:45; Romans 10:17  
Believe in Jesus Christ  
John 3:16; 8:24  
Repent of your sins  
Luke 13:3, 5; II Peter 3:9  
Confess Jesus is the Christ  
Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37  
Be baptized for the remission of  
your sins  
Acts 2:38; 22:16  
Live faithfully everyday  
Matthew 10:22

## 5 Minute Bible Study

Can you spare five minutes to study God’s Word? Please read the Scripture references and write in the answers to the questions.

**Romans 3:23** - \_\_\_\_\_ have sinned. Does this include you and me? \_\_\_\_\_

**Romans 6:23** -The wages of sin is eternal \_\_\_\_\_.

**John 3:16** - God \_\_\_\_\_ the world. God sent His \_\_\_\_\_ for us to believe in.

**Colossians 1:13-14** - Through God’s Son, we have \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Romans 1:16** - The \_\_\_\_\_ is the power of God unto salvation.

**1 Corinthians 15:1-5** - The Gospel is the death, \_\_\_\_\_ and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**Mark 16:15, 16** - In obeying the Gospel, we must \_\_\_\_\_ and be \_\_\_\_\_.

**Romans 10:10** - With the mouth we make \_\_\_\_\_ unto salvation.

**Acts 2:38** - We must repent (turn) and be baptized for the \_\_\_\_\_.

**Acts 2:47** - When we are baptized, the Lord adds us to His \_\_\_\_\_.

“What must I do to be saved?” is the question that was posed long ago to Paul and Silas (Acts 16:30), and has been asked untold millions of times since. Perhaps you have asked *yourself* the very same question. The correct answer to this vital question will not be found in a catechism, prayer book or creed book. Those are all written by fallible human beings and each give conflicting answers. Only by looking into the New Testament can we find God’s answer to that all-important question.

If you are interested in studying God’s word, we can help! We can send you either a Bible correspondence course or a series of Bible lessons on DVD, both free of charge! Maybe you’d prefer a free, no obligation in-home Bible study? If we can assist you in any way, please contact Michael Willey!

### **Nobody Made It?**

Sir Issac Newton once had an exact replica of the solar system made in miniature. At its center was a large golden ball representing the sun, and revolving around it were small spheres attached at the ends of rods of varying lengths. They represented Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, and the other planets. These were all geared together by cogs and belts to make them move around the "sun" in perfect harmony.

One day as Newton was studying the model, a friend who did not believe in the biblical account of creation stopped by for a visit. Marveling at the device and watching as the scientist made the heavenly bodies move on their orbits, the man exclaimed, "My, Newton, what an exquisite thing! Who made it for you?" Without looking up, Sir Isaac replied, "Nobody." "Nobody?" his friend asked. "That's right! All of these balls and cogs and belts and gears just happened to come together, and wonder of wonders, by chance they began revolving in their set orbits and with perfect timing."

The friend got the message. It was foolish to suppose that the model merely happened (Psalm 14:1), but it was even more senseless to accept the theory that the earth and the vast universe came into being by chance. How much more logical to believe what the Bible says, "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

---reprinted from *House to House/Heart to Heart*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Jacksonville church of Christ, 329 Nesbit St. NW (Hwy. 204), P.O. Box 520, Jacksonville, AL 36265

### **What is Meant in Being a Christian** **Joe Nichols**

Perhaps we take for granted that every converted person knows what is meant in being a Christian. However, if one observes and listens he soon realizes that it is certainly not the truth. Such results when there is a deficiency in our teaching. Jesus said, "Teaching them to observe all things..." (Matthew 28:20). We must be careful to do this which takes time as well as opportunity.

Being a Christian involves obligation (making Christianity the vocation of life) and responsibility (learning to practice the will of God). These two points should be especially impressed upon young people who are making the decision to become Christians. (The days of sleeping on the church pew are over.)

Paul says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ he IS a new creature..." (II Corinthians 5:17). He illustrates this newness as being achieved an one in the likeness of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection dies to love of sin and puts off the old man of sin in baptism (Romans 6). When we through the faith are "baptized into Christ," we therefore "put on Christ." Paul describes this metamorphosis in Galatians 2:20 - "I have been crucified with Christ: and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me."

### **THE CHRISTIAN'S OBLIGATION AND RESPONSIBILITY ARE NOTED IN THE FOLLOWING:**

1. *Every Christian is a Disciple (learner).* We are to "let the word of Christ dwell in us richly; in all wisdom..." (Colossians 3:16). In order to have such knowledge and wisdom, we must practice self-denial - "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). Jesus further states, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my DISCIPLE" (John 8:31). To be a successful Christian, one must be a learner.
2. *Every Christian is a Saint.* Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them in thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). As one is sanctified, made holy, he is a saint of God. We are "called to be saints" (Romans 1:7). This sanctification comes through, as James says, "Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, RECEIVE WITH MEEKNESS THE IMPLANTED (ENGRAFTED) WORD, which is able to save your souls. But be ye DOERS OF THE WORD, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves" (James 1:22, 23).
3. *Every Christian is a priest (regular worshiper).* Peter says, "Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, TO BE A HOLY PRIESTHOOD, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (I Peter 2:5).

4. *Every Christian is a Soldier (involved in warfare and conflict)*. As Christians, we are to “put on the whole armor of God” (Ephesians 6:11). As soldiers we “contend for the faith” (Jude 3). Paul states, “For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God, casting down strongholds” (II Corinthians 10:4). We as Christians must ever battle to maintain purity in faith and practice; nothing else is acceptable!

5. *Every Christian is an Heir (blessed inheritance through spiritual birth)*. This is the blessing of being born of God - “For ye are all the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of us as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ...for ye are all Christ’s...HEIRS according to the promise” (Galatians 3:26-29). Heaven is the goal of every Christian - “For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory” (Philippians 3:20, 21). Jesus is our example of how Christians should conduct themselves (I Peter 2:21).

The seriousness in becoming a Christian cannot be over-emphasized. God commands “all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). But a more serious consequence is realized in one falling away from the prescribed Christian life - “For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, THAN, AFTER KNOWING IT, TURN BACK FROM THE HOLY COMMANDMENT DELIVERED UNTO THEM” (II Peter 2:21).

As is evident we must be diligent and careful to teach new converts to “observe all things” commanded, since those who fail to live up to the Christian standard and fall away will pay dearly with heavier punishment!

### **If There is a God, Why is There Evil? by Michael Willey**

Tragic events often cause many people to question the existence of God. But God is and He is eternal. The very first verse of the Bible confirms the eternal nature of God. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Before the creation, God was. He is eternal. When God spoke with Moses from the burning bush, Moses asked God what he should tell the children of Israel if they asked him for God’s name. “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM”

(Exodus 3:13-14). That is a statement of deity and eternity. God is, has always been, and always will be. The Psalmist phrased it this way, “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalms 90:2). Do not doubt, dear reader. God is on His throne, and nothing will ever change that.

But then the question is often asked, “If there is a loving God in Heaven why is there evil in the world?” That question implies that God is somehow responsible for the evil that men do. The responsibility for sin lies squarely with men and women and the choices they make, not with God. When God created mankind, He gave us free moral agency, the ability to choose between right and wrong, between good and evil. God told Adam and Eve not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17; 3:3). Implicit in God’s instructions was a choice Adam and Eve had to make. They could choose to obey God or they could choose to disobey God. The free moral agency of mankind is also seen in Moses’ charge to the Israelites:

Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known (Deut. 11:26-28).

Joshua told the Israelites, “Choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Joshua 24:15). From the beginning of creation to the present day, mankind has been given a choice -- obey the true and living God or turn from Him. Each person is a free moral agent and must choose to either obey God or not.

When a person exercises their free moral agency and rebels against God, there are often far reaching consequences. None of us live in a vacuum; we touch other lives by our choices and decisions. Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and the result of their choice was the entry of sin and death into the world (1 Corinthians 15:21). A man robs a bank and kills a security guard in the process. That man’s decision to sin against God impacts not only the life of his victim, but also the lives of the guard’s family, friends and coworkers. A group of terrorists decided to rebel against God, commandeered airplanes and attack and kill innocent people. Their

decision touched the lives of every American and untold millions around the world. The suffering that exists in this world is not God's fault, nor is it proof that God does not exist. It is the byproduct of a decision to live in rebellion against God.

A decision to live in rebellion against God also has eternal consequences. As one gospel preacher has phrased it, "What we go after here determines where we go in the hereafter." The words of Jesus make it clear that only those who do the will of God in this life will enter the kingdom of Heaven in the life that is to come (Matthew 7:21). Everyone will stand before God in judgment and give account of their lives to God (Romans 14:12). "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). Those who lived in rebellion against God "shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46).

Evil exists in the world, not because there is no God, but because God gave mankind the ability to choose between good and evil. God is and He is a "rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6), but He will take vengeance on those who do not know Him and have not obeyed the Gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:8). In the day of judgment, will you be rewarded or punished? It all depends on you.

### Bible Name Game - Answers

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu, kept people looking so hard for the facts, and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to the numbers of readers. To others, it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. **YES, THERE WILL BE SOME REALLY EASY ONES TO SPOT.** Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit that it usually takes a minister to find one of them and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. One little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. **Relax** now for there are really sixteen names of the books of the Bible in this story.

**Remember to forward *The Good Tidings* to all your email contacts! And, if you can, help spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ by printing out copies of *The Good Tidings* for your friends and neighbors who do not have access to email!**

**Also, if your email address changes, please notify us so we can update our email list.**

**Thanks!**

### Suggested New Year's Resolutions For 2007

by Mike Riley - via [www.preachersfiles.com](http://www.preachersfiles.com)

The following are some suggested biblical New Year's resolutions that we as Christians might consider in 2007:

- 1) Sincerely and humbly praise the Lord (Psalm 42:5; Psalm 43:5; Psalm 71:14; Psalm 89:1).
- 2) Look forward to attending every worship service (Psalm 26:8; Psalm 27:4; Psalm 122:1; Hebrews 10:25).
- 3) Love our brothers and sisters in Christ with an unfeigned love (Rom. 12:10; Heb. 13:1; 1 Peter 1:22).
- 4) Be more diligent in Bible study and be ready to give an answer to every man that asks for the reason of the hope within us (Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Peter 3:15).
- 5) Gladly bring our offerings to the Lord without grudging or stinginess (Deut. 15:7-10; 2 Cor. 9:7).
- 6) Use kind words when dealing with our fellow man (Prov. 15:1; 31:26; cf. Gen. 50:14-21; 2 Chron. 10:6-7).
- 7) Pray more often (Mark 14:38; Luke 18:1; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17).
- 8) Send some cards or perhaps prepare a dish to carry to the sick and lonely (Matthew 25:35-36).
- 9) Buffet (discipline - ESV) our bodies (1 Cor. 9:27).
- 10) Bring captive **every thought** to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).
- 11) Confess our faults one to another and help one

another conquer them through Christ (James 5:16; Gal. 6:1-2; Philippians 4:13).

**12) Develop whatever talents God has given us for His glory (Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Corinthians 10:31).**

If we as Christians will put these suggested (and challenging) resolutions into practice in 2007, not only will we as members become more useful in the Lord's church but we will experience spiritual growth as well (2 Tim. 2:19-21; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18).

**“Forgive, and be Forgiven”  
by Darrell Powell**

It hurts when others wrong us. Many times we are wronged and the guilty party doesn't even seek our forgiveness. Surely they deserve any inconvenience that may befall them. Could they possibly deserve our forgiveness? Well, the answer is an unmistakable YES!

First of all, we must forgive in order to be forgiven. Jesus made this very clear when He said, *“But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses”* (Matt. 6:15). It is clear that all men need forgiveness because all have sinned (Rom. 3:23), and the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). We must be willing to put pride and hurt feelings aside and forgive all men when they do evil to us.

We must practice true forgiveness, not halfway forgiveness. True forgiveness is not placing the one who has wronged us on a type of probation where we discuss to everyone just how wrong their actions were, and then promising to forget as long as they never wrong us again. If this were the way God forgave, we would all be lost. When God forgives, He removes the offense from His record (Acts 3:19). He forgets what we've done, putting it out of His memory (Heb. 8:12). And, He treats us just like He did before we sinned (Luke 15:20-24). When we can forgive in this manner, then we will have truly forgiven.

You say, “It's easy to see how we are to forgive, but how can I bring myself to do so?” You'll find it easier to forgive when you realize that your unforgiveness is hurting you just as much as it is your offender. The time you spend harboring ill-will towards this person is taking away from your happiness. You'll find it easier to forgive when you sincerely ask for God's help. Pray that God will help you find the ability to forgive, and then pray for your offender. God will answer your prayer. You'll find it easier to forgive when you work to develop understanding (Prov. 8:5).

Forgive someone today. You'll be glad you did!

**Live Faithfully  
by Dale Grissom**

There continues to be the problem of unfaithfulness among members of the Lord's church. Each year many in the brotherhood grow weak in faith and slip back into the world. Satan is so powerful; he has the ability to tempt Christians in just the right areas, and he succeeds in drawing many back into a life of sin.

If we will only go to our Bibles we will find the encouragement we need to resist Satan and his temptations. We read one such passage in I Corinthians 10:13: “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

Brethren, we must be aware that temptation is out there and it is real. The Lord will help us overcome temptation if we will obey Him and abide in His Word. And, by doing this, we will also grow and mature in Christ. We will become stronger and stronger in our faith and we will produce the kind of fruit that is pleasing to our Lord. Peter tells us in II Peter 1:4-11: “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” We are admonished again in I Corinthians 10:12: “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

Our journey on this earth is short. Let's be faithful to our Lord so that heaven will be our home for eternity.

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Eph 3:20-21 - Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.