

Volume Ten
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On Good Ground



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The Price He Paid

Although Resurrection Sunday has officially passed, for believers the celebration and appreciation continues. How could it not, given God's amazing grace and love for us? As the Scriptures say, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Once given, the Son paid a tremendous price to reconcile sinful man to a Most Holy God.

If you have not accepted God's free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, then without hesitation or further delay, you should do it now. Today, this moment, invite Jesus into your heart and into your life as Lord and Savior. It would be, without question, the best decision you will ever make.

If you are already a born-again believer, then make sure you continue taking time to reflect on the inexpressible joy of God's wonderful salvation. Don't let the passing of Easter divert your focus from the tremendous sacrifice Jesus made on Calvary's cross. Jesus left the glory of heaven (John 17:5), took on the form of man, humbled Himself and willingly suffered in our place in total obedience to the Father (Philippians 2:9). And the Bible tells us, in graphic detail, how steep a price He willingly paid for us.

First of all, Jesus was betrayed by one of His closest disciples, Judas Iscariot, with a kiss and unlawfully taken into custody (Luke 22:47-48). He was then brought before the Jewish council, where a bevy of unscrupulous men stood in line for the opportunity to speak lies against Him (Mark 14:56-59). Then, Peter, one of His most trusted disciples, denied Him three times (Matthew 26:69-75). And this was only the beginning.

After the high priest accused Jesus of blasphemy, the assembled crowd spit in His face, pummeled Him about the body, mocked Him, blindfolded Him and struck Him repeatedly in the face, all the while saying, "Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?" (Matthew 26:67-68; Luke 22:63-64). He was then taken before Pontius Pilate, who ordered Jesus to be scourged, which meant Jesus was tied to a post and beaten with leather whips fitted with bones and spikes.

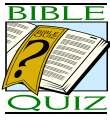
After the scourging, the soldiers stripped Him of His robe, placed a scarlet robe upon Him, plaited a crown of thorns upon His head, put a staff in His hand, and mockingly bowed before Him saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" (Matthew 27:26-29).

After they were done making fun of Him, they spit on Him some more, snatched the staff out of His hand, and struck Him over the head with it (Matthew 27:30). Along the way, the crazed mob viciously plucked the hair from His beard (Isaiah 50:6).

He was then led away to be crucified. Once on Golgotha's Hill, Jesus was nailed to a wooden cross and left to hang until he died. While He hung there in agony, passersby, the chief priests and even the two thieves who were crucified at His side, mocked Him and challenged Him to save Himself (Mark 15:29-32). Others threw dice to see who would get His clothes (Matthew 27:35). After Jesus finally breathed His last, one of the soldiers thrust a spear into His side, releasing a torrent of blood and water (John 19:30-34).

Jesus willingly endured the pain, agony and humiliation because of His love for the Father and His love for us. As the writer of Hebrews says, "For the joy that was set before him [Jesus] endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2). And it is at God's right hand that Jesus continually intercedes for us (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25).

Given all that Jesus has done and is doing for us, how can we not give him our best? How can we not live lives of obedience and honor unto Him? We really should not countenance any excuses for failing to give Jesus our all – He paid too high of a price for us to even think about shortchanging Him. How do we so honor Jesus? Well, we should follow the instructions of His mother Mary at the wedding feast many years ago, who told His disciples, "Whatever He says to you, do it" (John 2:5 NKJV). That would be the purest and most effective way to acknowledge and honor the price Jesus paid for our salvation – not only at Easter time, but all throughout the year. Why don't you start today?



TRUE AND FALSE. This quiz comes from the Book of Exodus, where God delivered His people from the hand of Pharaoh. How much do you about the Exodus from Egypt? (And don't forget to be sure to identify the chapter and the verse, Bible Scholars).

1. Pharaoh's daughter raised Moses after he was weaned.
 True False
2. Moses' father-in-law was a priest of Gershom.
 True False
3. Aaron's rod swallowed the magician's rods.
 True False
4. God brought 12 plagues upon Egypt.
 True False
5. Pharaoh's army was destroyed trying to cross the Red Sea.
 True False
6. The children of Israel ate Manna forty years.
 True False
7. Three years after leaving Egypt, the children of Israel arrived in Sinai.
 True False
8. God gave Moses the 10 Commandments on Mount Sinai.
 True False
9. Aaron made a bronze calf while the people waited for Moses.
 True False
10. Fire hovered above the tabernacle day and night.
 True False

(Answers on next page)



GRACE AND PEACE, READERS!

Was this newsletter passed on to you? If so, would you like to receive your own copy? Maybe you know someone who might want a copy. How about members of your church or customers in your store? Would you like to distribute it? Whatever the case, let us know. We'd love to include you in our mailing. IT'S FREE! Just log onto: www.ongoodground.org We'll be waiting!



A MOMENT WITH GOD

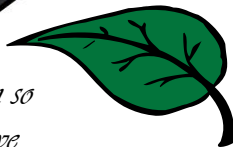
"Holy Spirit, convict me!"



THE WISDOM OF GOD

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

- 1 Corinthians 15:22 NKJV



Joy for the Spirit

"A merry heart does good, like medicine" - Proverbs 17:22

A Tap on the Shoulder

A long time ago when my full grown children were still 'children' I saw something that still brings a burst of joy to my heart whenever I think about it. My youngest son who was still a toddler at the time was very attached to his big sister. When she first started going to school he would stand by the window waiting every day for her bus to bring her home. And when I would walk her up the hill to our house he would be waiting at the door to hug her. One day, however, after a particularly nasty diaper incident his Mom needed to give him a quick bath right when the bus was scheduled to arrive. When his sister and I made it to the door then he was still in the tub. His sister went into her room to put her coat up and as soon as she shut the door out toddled her brother from the bathroom right to the window. His internal clock knew that his sister should be home any second. I smiled as I watched him looking intently out the window while his sister emerged from her room. Quietly she snuck up behind him and ever so gently tapped him on the shoulder. The look on his face when he turned around and saw his big sis was one I have rarely seen in this life. It was pure bliss, pure joy, and pure love. His big eyes shined with delight, his toothless smile took up most of his face, and his tiny arms opened up to give his sister a very big hug. I realized a while ago that I had spent far too much of my own life looking out a window waiting for something or someone to bring me what I wanted in this life. It took me a long time to finally feel the gentle tapping on my own shoulder. When I turned around there was God ready to take me in His arms and fill me with His love. I saw then that everything I had ever needed: love, joy, peace, and oneness with God had been with me all along. I had just been looking the wrong way. - Joseph J. Mazella

God is tapping at our shoulder, every day. Let's turn around and see Him.



SELAH.
Pause and calmly think about these.



REFLECTION

...As a man thinketh, so is He.

We get as good as we give.

If we would listen to God, precisely as He said, we would have exactly what He said. A good counterfeit always resembles the original. Anger is not directed toward a problem, it is a directed at a preference. God cannot heal a hurt that we keep covering up.

The people who yell for help, get help!

We are tired because we are doing things in our own strength. God will speak to us in our cave but He will not anoint us there. Our scars are the best proof that we have that we are in relationship with God.

Jesus is our friend but we are not His, if we don't keep God's commandments.

The Prayer of Salvation

God, I come to You in the name of Jesus. You said that all have fallen short of the glory of God. You sent Your Son that I would be saved. Forgive me of my sins, Lord. I confess with my mouth and believe in my heart that Jesus died for me and You raised Him from the dead. I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and believe that I have been born again. Thank You for loving me, for forgiving me and coming into my heart. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

Where Is Your God?

In Psalm 42, the psalmist reflected on being mocked by his enemies, who continually provoked him, asking "Where is thy God?" (vv. 3, 10). Today, many believers can relate to the writer's dilemma. For although we know God is real and that His love for us is real, there are many in society who, in various ways, ask us the same sneering question.

Unfortunately, one of the main reasons that this question is being asked is because of the way many believers are living their lives. When we get divorced as often as the rest of society, when we gossip as much, when we goof off at work like our lazy co-workers, when we blow our stack at minor inconveniences, we invite the question, "Where is your God?"

When we cheat on our taxes, tell "little white lies," turn a blind eye to the poor and needy, while dressing and driving to the nines, how are others supposed to see the Holy God we serve?

When the our neighbors fret over the economy and we're right there with them, when Hollywood continues to churn out all kinds of garbage and we're sitting in the front row of the theater, when others designate Sunday mornings for fun and recreational pursuits for themselves and their children and we happily join in the action, how can anyone see our God?

We cannot get mad when "they" take prayer out of schools, when we are taking God out of our churches. If we would rather be politically correct and give a nod to new wave "marriages" and "alternative lifestyles," instead of being Biblically correct and calling things as God says they are, then we must take responsibility for our actions.

This is not a new phenomenon. For centuries, it is God's people who have disgraced God's name the most. In the book of Romans, the Apostle Paul admonished the church, saying, "As it is written, God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you" (Romans 2:24 NIV). How does this happen? By abandoning God and His Word.

In Ezekiel chapter 20, God said, "Therefore, son of man, speak to the people of Israel and say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: In this also your fathers blasphemed me by forsaking me.'" (Ezekiel 20:27 NIV).

We need to reverse this trend right away. It is not up to others, it's up to us. It is up to us to reject worldly dictates and to live by Kingdom principles. It is up to us to say no to society's shameless forms and fashions and choose instead to be clothed in humility and righteousness. It is up to us stop hiding our light behind society's norms and to let it shine brightly for all men to see so that they will give God the glory he deserves (Matthew 5:14-16).

Where is our God? He's in you, He's in me, and He's in every born-again believer. But if we do not allow Him to be revealed in everything we do, say and think, then God will go missing and we will be the culprits.

Take a stand and show the world exactly where God is and exactly what He's all about.

"And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8).



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Tiffany Johnson
Sally Kelly
Jim Livesey
Debbie Orrico
Mrs. Pyllos
Tanya Shelton and family
Donna Walter

Answer Key

**BIBLE
QUIZ**

10F 40:38
9F 32:14
8T 24:12-18
7F 19:1
6T 16:35
5T 14:1-27
4F 7:14
3T 7:12
2F 3:1
1T 2:6-10

GET OFF
THE FENCE

"But the ones that fell on good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience." - Luke 8:15

Have you shared the Good News yet?



A FREE Christian Newsletter distributed by
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May the Lord God bless you in astonishing ways!
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FLOOD PROTECTION

Believers must always remain vigilant. When you think about it, this is what Jesus was trying to tell Peter in the garden of Gethsemane when He told him, *"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation"* (Matthew 26:41). Peter obviously got the message, because in his writings to the church he cautioned, *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour"* (1 Peter 5:8). Yes, the devil is always on the prowl, seeking to tempt us, trick us and ultimately defeat us. He will stop at nothing to get the job done, but praise be to God, we've got the victory! The Bible tells us, *"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him and put him to flight [for He will come like a rushing stream which the breath of the Lord drives]"* (Isaiah 59:19 AMP). Jesus, our Savior-King, is our protection against the floodwaters of the enemy. That ol' Satan may try to drown you in sorrow, debt, pain and despair, but Jesus knows how to drive him out! So right where you are, rejoice and be glad. You shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord! (Psalm 118:17). God is not through with you yet!