



Exalting Christ among the Deaf

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MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE

2000
SPECIAL ISSUE
FOR THE
WHOLE YEAR

JULY
AUGUST
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NOVEMBER
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Exalting Christ among the Deaf

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2000
Issue

Billy Leavell,
Editor

PRINTED IN THE
U.S.A.



Billy Leavell

You may be surprised to see such a large issue this time. The reason is simple: We are so far behind schedule; our last issue for 1999 was sent out last summer! We realized that we could never catch up for the year 2000, so we decided to print just one issue for this year, but to make it larger than usual to make up for the three other issues we would have printed. In 2001 we should be back on schedule.

In this issue you should see three different comic strips. The first, *Four Corners*, is by yours truly; the second, *Baptize*, is by Zalvin Coveyou; and the third, *Three Stories of God's Love*, is divided between yours truly and Zalvin. We believe that all these three comic strips will help you understand the Bible's teachings better.

Also in this issue, are the four lessons from a summer at Christian Camp for the Deaf all edited and put together. We think it will also help you understand your Bible's teachings.

The rest are articles we have culled from church bulletins written by our brothers in Christ who write for the deaf. We thought they would be of help to you.

Write and let us know if we have been of help to you in your spiritual walk. We love you in the Lord!

With the love of Christ,

Billy Leavell
Billy Leavell, Editor

The Four Corners

THIS STORY FROM MARK 2:1-12, LUKE 5:17-26



HE WAS PARALYZED.
HE *COULDN'T* MOVE.

FRIENDS HAD TO
HELP HIM-- FEED
HIM, CHANGE HIS
CLOTHES, CLEAN
HIS BODILY WASTES,
AND CARRY HIM
ABOUT.

THIS CHANGED ONE DAY IN
CAPERNAUM WHEN THE WORD
WAS SPREAD THAT--

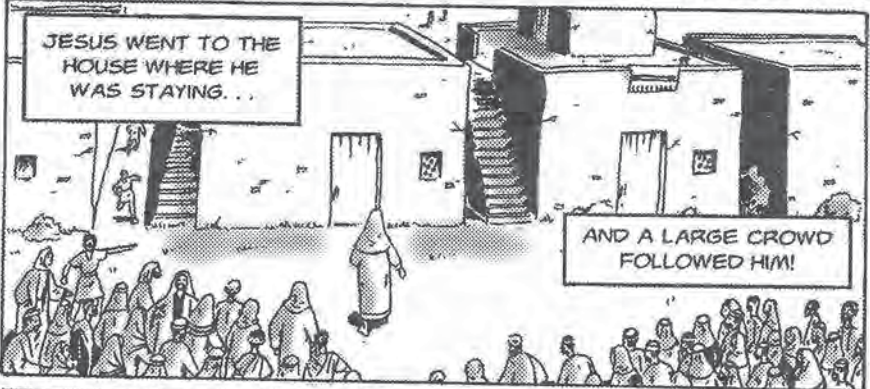




THE PERSON COMING HOME WAS *JESUS*-- WHO HAD MADE CAPERNAUM HIS HOME TOWN.

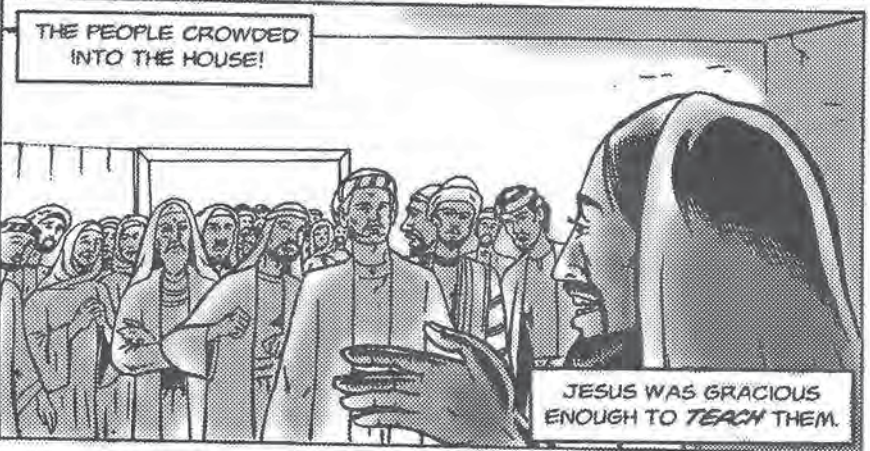


THE PEOPLE WERE EXCITED!



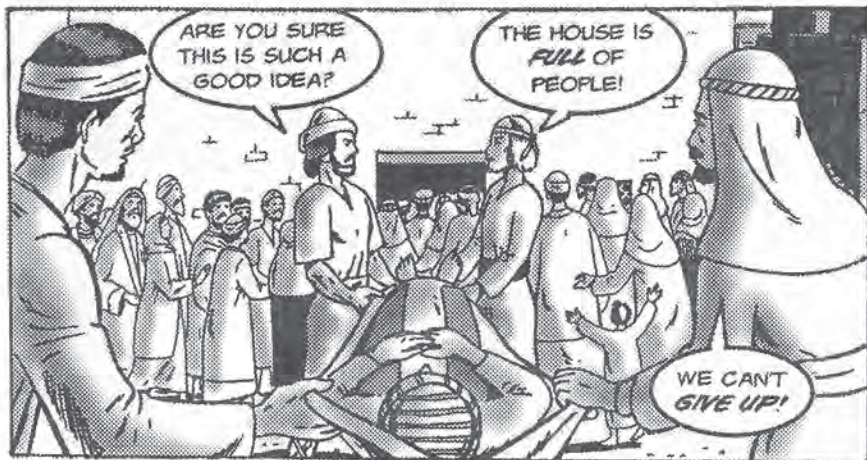
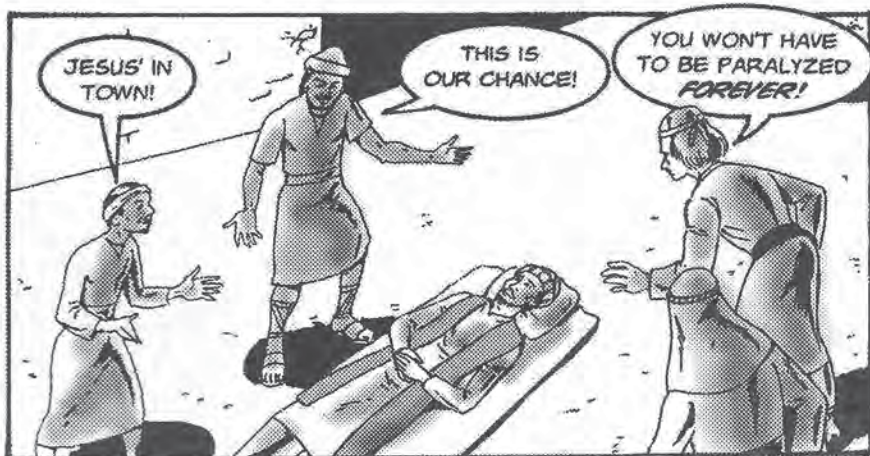
JESUS WENT TO THE HOUSE WHERE HE WAS STAYING . . .

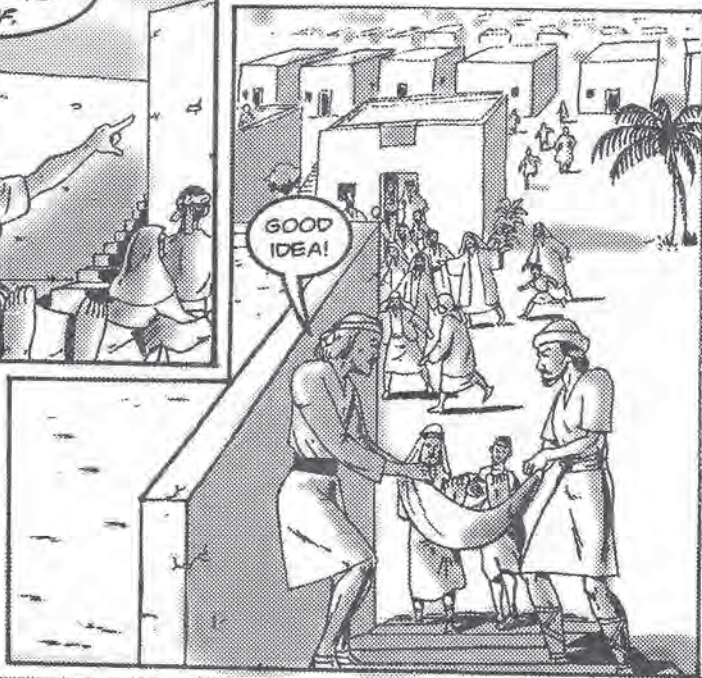
AND A LARGE CROWD FOLLOWED HIM!



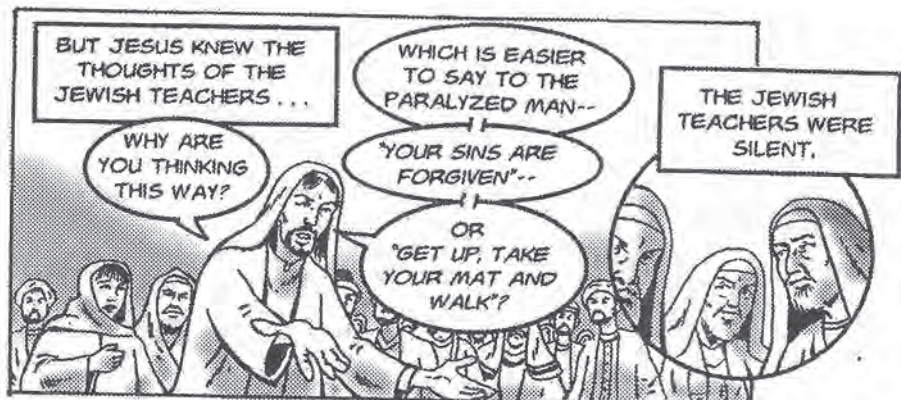
THE PEOPLE CROWDED INTO THE HOUSE!

JESUS WAS GRACIOUS ENOUGH TO *TEACH* THEM.









WILL YOU CONFESS TOO LATE?

by Mike Helms



Confession is the acknowledgement of something we need to show in our lives. It is important, we need to show it in our lives. It is important not only to salvation, but also to the daily life of a Christian's righteousness.

We are to confess our sins. God promised the blessing of forgiveness of sins to his children who will confess them (1 John 1:9). James said *"If you have sinned, you should tell each other what you have done. Then you can pray for one another and be healed. The prayer of an innocent person is powerful, and it can help a lot,"* **James 5:16**. Spiritual healing comes by confession.

We are to confess Jesus for whom He is. Great men and women always confess. Peter said, *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,"* **Matthew 16:16**. Five confessions are found in the gospel of John. Nathaniel confessed, *"Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel"* **John 1:49**. The Samaritan woman confessed, *"Is not this the Christ?"* **John 4:29**. Peter again confessed, *"And we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"* **John 6:69**. Martha confessed, *"I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world"* **John 11:27**. Thomas confessed, *"My Lord and my God"* after his doubts were erased, **John 20:28**. The Ethiopian eunuch confessed prior to his baptism, *"I believe that*

Jesus Christ is the Son of God," Acts 8:37. Confession is repeated in the scriptures as necessary for our salvation. **Romans 10:9-10; 1 John 2:23; 4:23,15; 2 John 7.**

Confession is not always easy. Even after Peter confessed Jesus twice, he later denied Jesus when the situation was different. John the Immerser confessed Jesus even in the face of the Pharisees (**John 1:15,18,29; Matthew 3:7**). Eventually the Pharisees agreed to cast out any Jew caught confessing Jesus (**John 9:22; 12:42-43**). Confession of sins is also difficult. People have a hard time admitting, *"I have sinned."* Yet God requires it to be pleasing to Him (**1 John 1:8**). The confession of the prodigal son is a perfect example by Christ to show the heart of the confessor: see **Luke 15:18-19**. He saw his sin, confessed it and acted in a way that showed his repentance.

In direct contrast, notice the example of Achan. When Joshua lost the battle with Ai, God told him it was due to sin in the camp. So Joshua gathered the people and began to divide by tribe, family, household, and man. Achan had the opportunity to confess during this time, but did not confess his sin until it was too late. *"That at the name of Jesus every name should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,"* **Philippians 2:10- 11.**

Will you confess him too late?

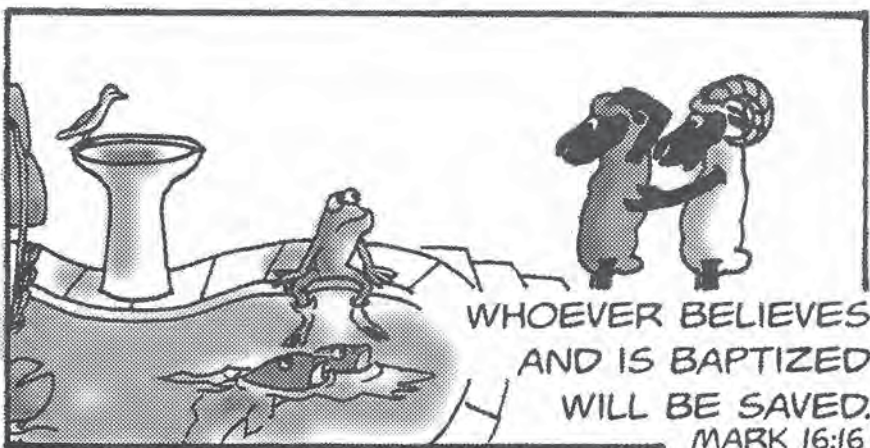
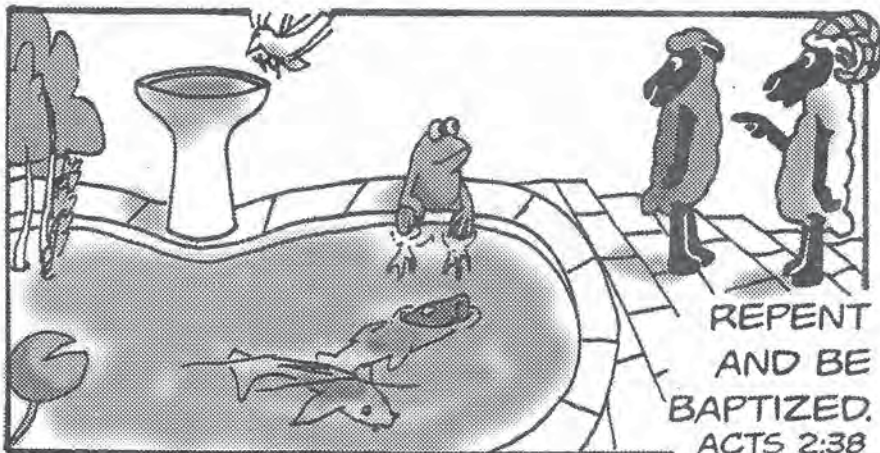
That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

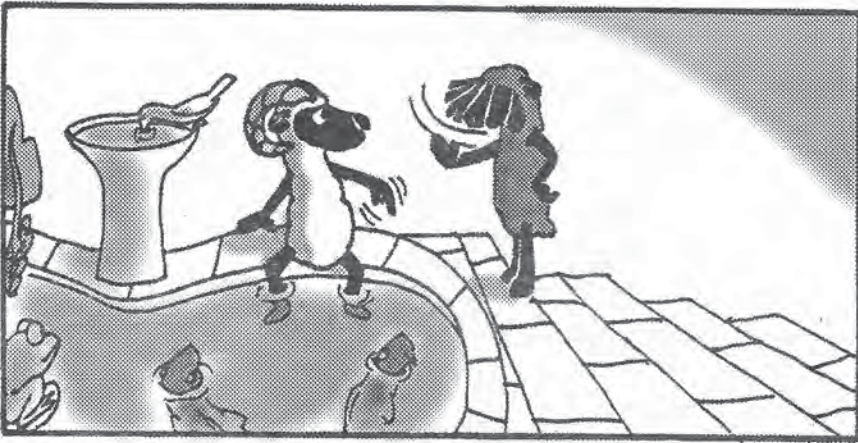
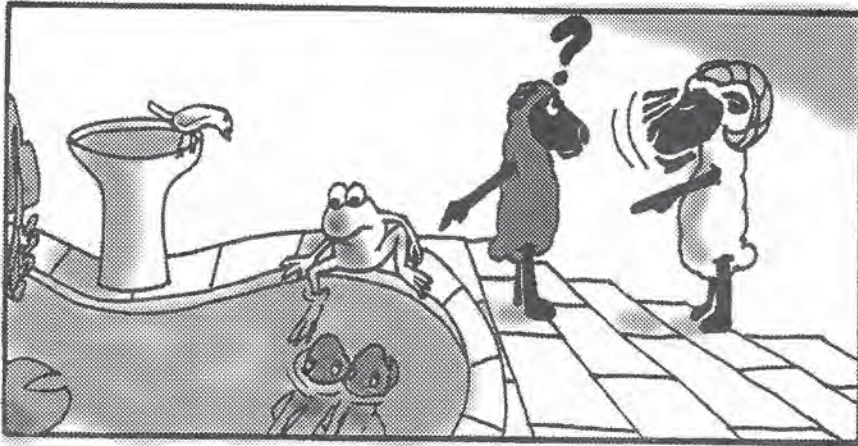
Romans 10:9,10, NIV

BAPTIZE BAPTIZE

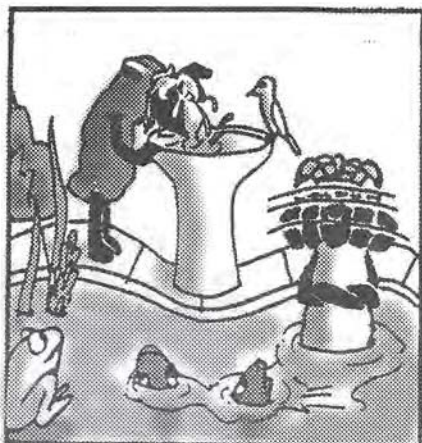
BY ZALVIN COVEYOU

BELIEVE IN THE
LORD JESUS?
ACTS 16:31





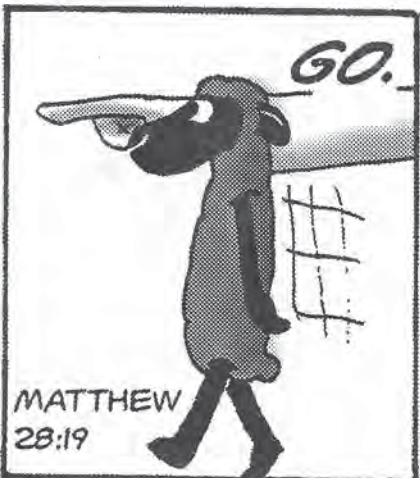
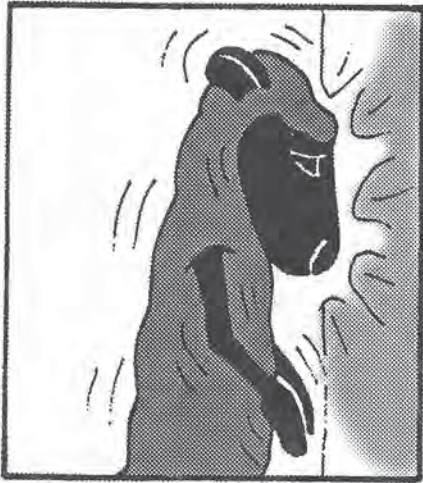
...WHO DISOBEYED LONG AGO WHEN GOD WAITED PATIENTLY IN THE DAYS OF NOAH WHILE THE ARK WAS BEING BUILT. IN IT ONLY A FEW PEOPLE, EIGHT IN ALL, WERE SAVED THROUGH WATER, AND THIS WATER SYMBOLIZES BAPTISM THAT NOW SAVES YOU ALSO-- NOT THE REMOVAL OF DIRT FROM THE BODY BUT THE PLEDGE OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE TOWARD GOD. IT SAVES YOU BY THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST. 1 PETER 3:20-21

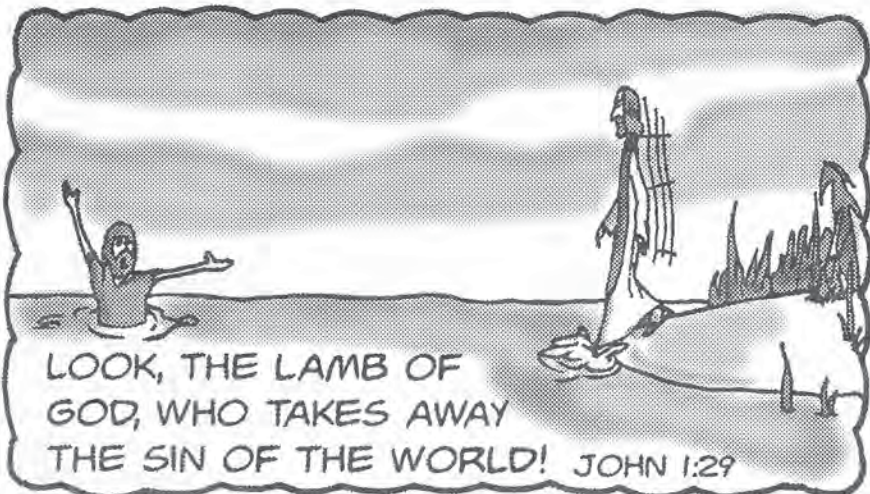


THE WORD
"BAPTIZE" COMES
FROM THE GREEK
WORD BAPTIZO
MEANING TO *DIP* OR
TO *IMMERSE* IN WATER.



NAAMAN WAS A COMMANDER OF THE ARAMIAN ARMY WHO HAD LEPROSY (2 KINGS 5:1-14). ELISHA TOLD NAAMAN TO WASH HIMSELF SEVEN TIMES IN THE JORDAN. BUT NAAMAN THOUGHT ELISHA SHOULD JUST WAVE HIS HAND OVER HIS BODY AND CURE HIS LEPROSY. NAAMAN PREFERRED THE RIVERS OF DAMASCUS THAN THE RIVERS OF ISRAEL! BUT FINALLY NAAMAN WENT DOWN AND DIPPED HIMSELF IN THE JORDAN RIVER 7 TIMES. . . AND HIS FLESH BECAME CLEAN LIKE THAT OF A YOUNG BOY.

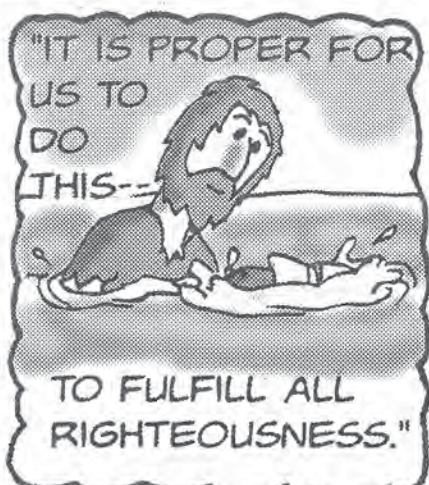




LOOK, THE LAMB OF GOD, WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD! JOHN 1:29

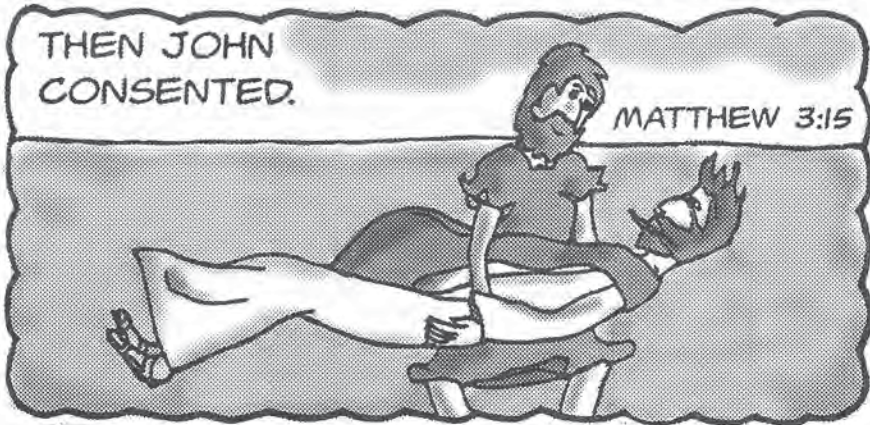


JESUS REPLIED, "LET IT BE SO NOW ..."



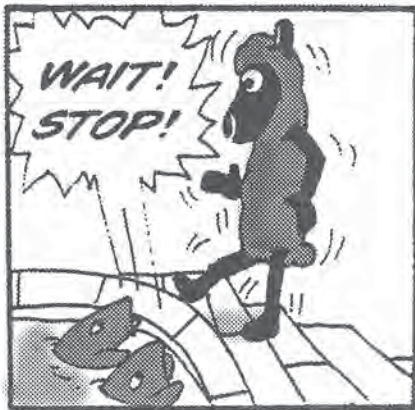
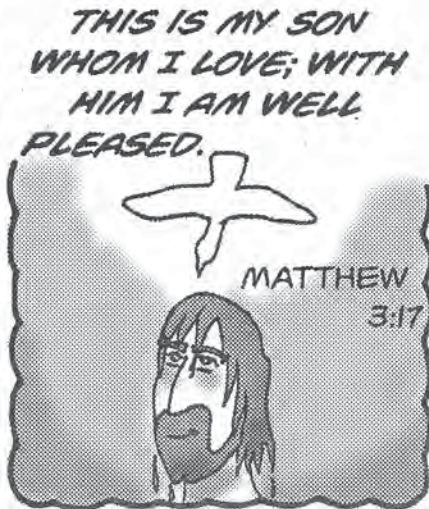
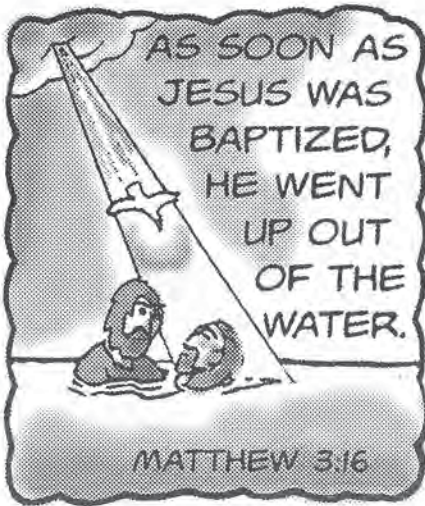
"IT IS PROPER FOR US TO DO THIS--"

TO FULFILL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS."

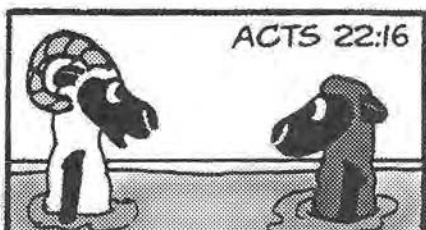


THEN JOHN CONSENTED.

MATTHEW 3:15



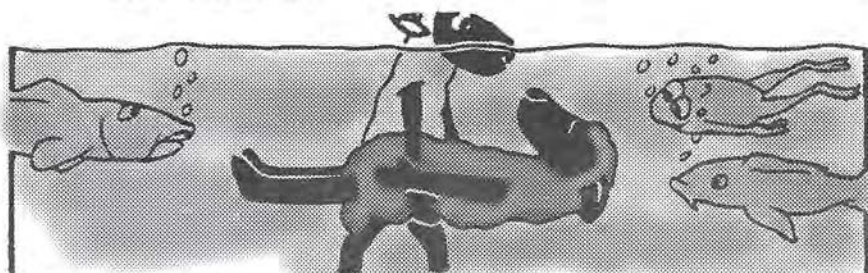
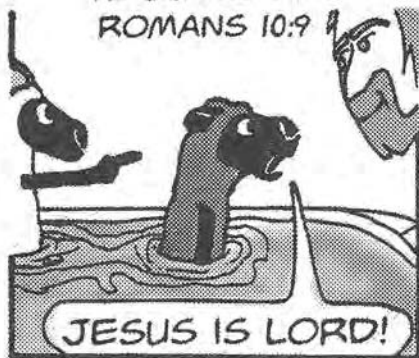
THE WIND BLOWS WHEREVER IT PLEASES. YOU HEAR ITS SOUND, BUT YOU CANNOT TELL WHERE IT COMES FROM OR WHERE IT IS GOING. SO IT IS WITH EVERYONE BORN OF THE SPIRIT.



ACTS 22:16

AND NOW WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? GET UP, BE BAPTIZED AND WASH YOUR SINS AWAY, CALLING ON HIS NAME.

CONFESS WITH YOUR MOUTH "JESUS IS LORD ..."
ROMANS 10:9

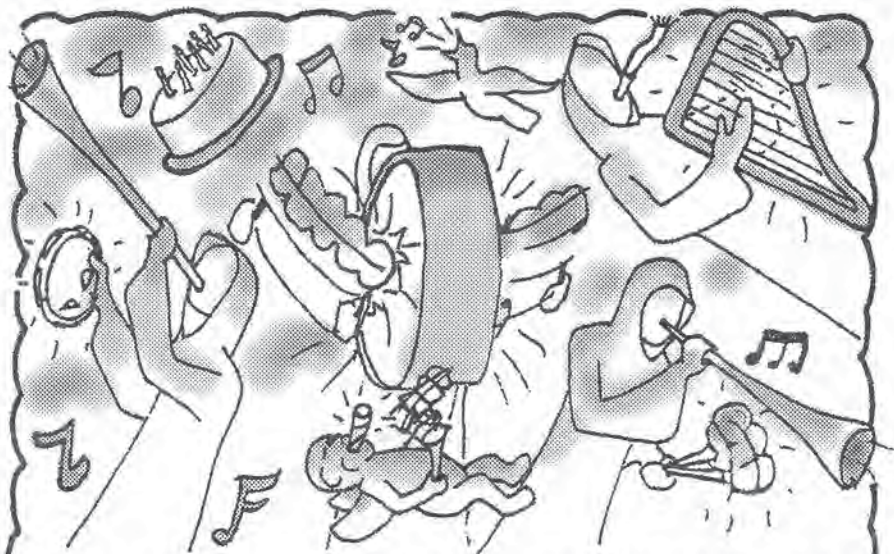


WE WERE THEREFORE BURIED WITH HIM THROUGH BAPTISM INTO BAPTISM IN ORDER THAT, JUST AS CHRIST WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD THROUGH THE GLORY OF THE FATHER--



WE, TOO, MAY LIVE A NEW LIFE. ROMANS 6:4





"REJOICE WITH ME, I HAVE FOUND MY
LOST SHEEP!"

I TELL YOU THAT IN THE SAME WAY
THERE WILL BE MORE REJOICING IN
HEAVEN OVER ONE SINNER WHO
REPENTS THAN OVER NINETY-

NINE
RIGHTEOUS
PERSONS WHO
DO NOT NEED
TO RE-
PENT.
LUKE
15:6-7



RUN TO WIN!

by Billy Leavell

In the summer of 1996 these lessons were presented at the Christian Camp for the Deaf in Guntersville, Alabama. We thought that by adapting them in these pages, you would benefit from them also.

You know that in a race all the runners run. But only one runner gets the prize. So run like that. Run to win! All people that compete in the games use strict training. They do this so that they can win a crown (reward). That crown is an earthly thing that lasts only a short time. But our crown (reward) will continue forever. So I am like a person that has a goal. I fight like a boxer that is hitting something-- not just the air. It is my own body that I hit. I make it my slave. I do this so that I myself will not be rejected (thrown out by God) after I preached to other people.

--1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-27, EVD

RUN TO WIN!



Maybe you've seen marathon races like the one in Boston, Massachusetts. There are hundreds of runners running like crazy, but only **one** will win the first prize!

The Christian Race is different. In the Christian Race, **everyone** wins! That's what the apostle Paul means in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.

If you're going to join in a marathon race, what do you do? You must have a goal! That means **self control!** You must eat and drink the right things! You must exercise regularly! You must run every day! Then you will be ready for the big race!

You know how in the Olympics they grant the gold medals, the silver medals and the bronze medals. But in

Paul's time they didn't give medals. They gave crowns of leaves to the winners. These crowns of leaves lasted only a short time. They wilted and became good for nothing except to throw away! But the reward given to all people who finish the Christian Race is **Life Forever**. It is a "crown" that will never fade away.

So when Paul prepared for the Christian Race, he announced he had a goal. He really aimed at this goal. He did not "shadow-box" (hitting the air). He controlled his own body. "It is my own body that I hit. I make it my slave." Why? "So that I myself will not be rejected (thrown out)".



Are you just "shadow-boxing"?



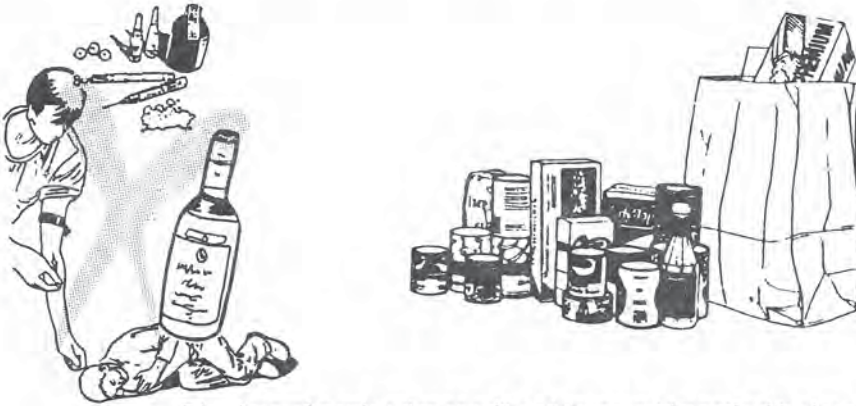
Or do you really mean business?

If an Olympic athlete was caught drinking alcohol or taking drugs, he would be thrown out. He would not be allowed to participate in the games.

So when you yourself think about running the Christian Race, remember you must:

- (1) Have a goal.
- (2) Have self-control.

The Lord is waiting to give you a glorious crown at the end of the Christian Race. Will you keep running?



The true olympic winner will not involve himself with drugs or alcohol or anything that harms his body. He will eat a balanced diet and keep his body healthy!



Exercising regularly keeps your body healthy and strong. The same is true for your soul!



TAKE AWAY WHAT STOPS US!

We have those many people of faith around us. Their lives tell us what faith means. So we should be like them. We too should run the race that is before us and never stop trying. We should take away from our lives anything that would stop us. And we should take away the sin that so easily catches us. We should always follow the example of Jesus. Jesus is the leader in our faith.

Hebrews 12:1-2, EVD

Do you know why Olympic athletes are tested for drugs? It is to stop them from cheating. If a person is found to be taking drugs, he will be disqualified. He will not be permitted to take part in the contests. You will see how important this is to our lesson today.



Some things that can destroy an athlete's chance of making the Olympic team!

The 11th chapter of Hebrews tells about many Old Testament people who lived in faith. The stories of these people are good lessons for us. They tell us how to live in faith, and they tell us God will reward us for our faith. When the writer of Hebrews finishes with

the stories of the many different people in Hebrews 11, he moves on to Hebrews 12:1-2, our Bible reading for today. Go back and re-read what this passage says.

Did you notice that the EVD translation of our Bible passage points out that the lives of the faithful people in Hebrews 11 tell us "what faith means"? People do not understand about "faith". They think "faith" means just going to church services and sitting listening to a dull sermon.



Christians need to continue their faith in their lives.

But in Hebrews 11:3 we are told what "faith" means: *"Faith means being sure of the things we hope for. And faith means knowing that something is real even if we don't see it"* . We know God and Jesus are real, even if we can't see them right now. And we know we have a home in eternity waiting for us!

That's why the writer of Hebrews warns us to take away from our lives anything that would stop us. Is it a movie or TV show that shows too much of the evil side of life? Is it the wrong kind of companionship we keep? Is it alcohol? Or drugs? Etc., etc.

The writer of Hebrews also says we should take away the sin that *so easily catches us*. Many of us have



A 'pet sin' of some people: watching TV shows that Christians shouldn't watch.

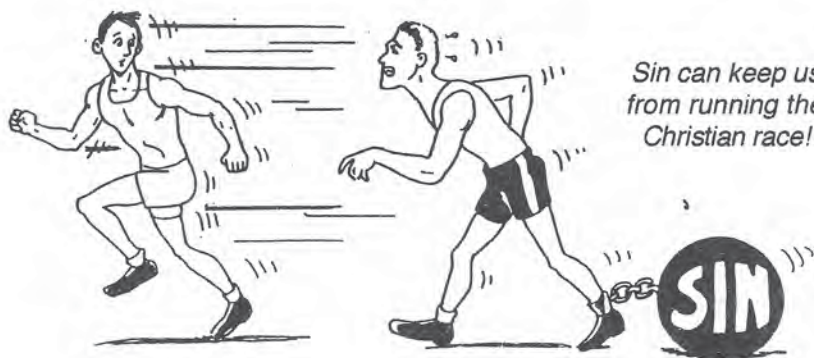
"pet sins". One person would not be bothered by friends trying to tempt him to drink beer. But that same person might be bothered by the temptation to steal. We should know what our "pet sins" are and stay away from them!



*Christians need to always look to **Jesus Christ**.*

Finally, the writer of Hebrew points us to **Jesus**. He is the leader of our faith! Jesus gave us a good example

in His life on earth. He is waiting for us to finish running the race so He can give us the Crown of Life!



WHICH WAY? THE CHOICE IS YOURS!

DON'T LET YOUR RUNNING BE FOR NOTHING!

We have those many people of faith around us. Their lives tell us what faith means. So we should be like them. We too should run the race that is before us and never stop trying. We should take away from our lives anything that would stop us. And we should take away the sin that so easily catches us. We should always follow the example of Jesus. Jesus is the leader in our faith.

Hebrews 12:1-2, EVD

Paul was happy because he ran in the race and won.

Do you know any friend who quit the Christian Race? Do you know any person who quit church? Do you know any person who left Jesus Christ? That person is a loser.

It is sad when a person thinks there is too much trouble to be a Christian any longer. So they give up and go into the world and enjoy its sinful pleasures. But



The Christian race is not easy to run!

Paul said he was happy. Why? Because his work was **not** wasted! He stayed faithful to the Lord all the way to his death.

Paul also said, "Do everything **without** complaining or arguing. Then you will be **innocent** and **without anything wrong** in you. You will be God's children without fault. But you are living with evil people all around you who have become very bad. Among those people you **shine like lights in the dark world**.

You offer those people the



Don't let the world bury you in its problems!

teaching that gives life" (Philippians 2:14-16). That is why he was happy, his teaching and life were not for nothing, they **influenced** other people to follow Christ!



Let your light shine before the world!

Maybe you won't be a great teacher like Paul or even Jesus. But the way you live is the way you teach other people to live! People will **watch** the way you live. Some may learn from

your life! So be careful how you live!

Paul suffered many things. You might want to read 2 Corinthians 11:25-28 to learn about the many terrible things Paul suffered just because he believed in, and preached, Jesus Christ. But he was not a loser. He was a **winner**. Why? Because he succeeded in **finishing the race**. He was ready to die and go be with Christ.



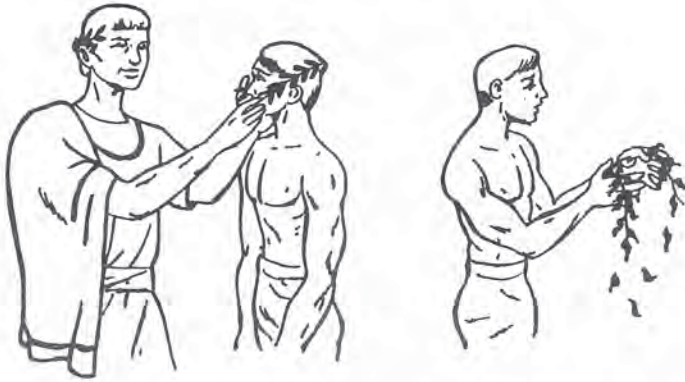
Are you afraid to let people know about your faith?

feat us" (Romans 8:31).

Maybe you won't die for your faith someday. But friends might laugh at you because you believe in God and Jesus Christ. They might laugh at you because you go to church services and worship God. They might laugh at you because you take the Lord's supper. But you are not a loser. You are a **winner**. Paul says, *"If God is with us, then no person can de-*

Will you brave the insults and mockings of people who do not believe in God and Jesus' church?

Will you stay faithful to Christ until the end (Matthew 10:22)? Then your running will not be for nothing! You will be a **winner**!



The olympic winner in Paul's time received only a crown of leaves. The leaves shortly after wilted and died. You certainly couldn't hang it on your wall in your room!



But the crown that Jesus is waiting to give us at the end of our "race" will last forever and ever! Read 1 Corinthians 9:25 and 2 Timothy 4:18.

I HAVE FINISHED THE RACE!



The time has come for me to leave this life here. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith.
2 Timothy 4:7, EVD

Paul was near the end of his life. He was kept as a prisoner by the Romans. While he was in prison, he wrote a letter to his faithful helper Timothy. That is when Paul told Timothy the words of our Bible reading.

Without doubt Timothy felt sad because he knew Paul would die soon. In his letter Paul begged Timothy to hurry and see him before winter (2 Timothy 4:21). Winter was a bad time for sea travel then. The ships would stay in their harbors. They would not sail. We do not know if Timothy succeeded in going to see Paul in prison before the Romans killed him. Nothing in the Bible or even in history tells us what Timothy did. But we think there was one thing that made Timothy happy. He was happy because Paul said, "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith." Paul

was *faithful!* He did not leave the Lord. He stayed faithful to the Lord. He stayed faithful even when that led him to death. So, since Paul fought the good fight, finished the race, and kept the faith, Timothy knew he would see Paul again in heaven.

Jesus said, *"But the person that continues strong to the end will be saved"* (Matthew 24:13). He later told another apostle, John, *"But be faithful, even if you have to die. If you continue faithful, then I will give you the crown of life"* (Revelation 2:10).

And as the time for his death came near, Paul said, "Now, a crown (reward) is waiting for me. I will get that crown for being right with God. The Lord is the Judge who judges rightly. He will give me the crown on that Day. Yes! He will give that crown to me. He will give that crown to all people who have wanted Him to come again and have waited for Him" (2 Timothy 4:8).

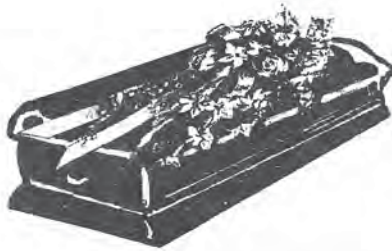
Can you be confident you will have a Crown of Life waiting for you at the end of the Christian Race? Will you stay faithful to the Lord all the way to the end of your life? It is up to you! And it will be worth it!



*Let's continue running
until you win the race!*

Will We Be Conscious After We Die?

by Mike Atteberry



Will we lose consciousness at the moment of death? Will our souls live on after we die? Have you ever wondered where our souls would go after we die? There are those in the denominational world that believe that our souls will sleep in the grave until Jesus comes again and will awaken us from our slumber. But Jesus taught just the opposite to His disciples about what would happen right after death.

Jesus is the only One who can give us some help on this subject. In Luke 16:19-31, He used the example of the Rich Man and Lazarus to show that they were fully conscious and aware of what was happening to them right after they died. The rich man went to a place of suffering (torment or tartarus) and Lazarus to a place of comfort (paradise) with Abraham. You will note in this story that there is a "Great Gulf" separating paradise from torment.

In torment the rich man was in pain and cried out to Abraham for a little water to cool his tongue. Remember Jesus promised the thief on the cross next to him that he would be with Him in paradise that very day after he died (see Luke 23:43). Moses was fully conscious when he and Elijah spoke with Jesus on the Mount of the Transfiguration, even though he had died many centuries before (Matthew 17:3). (Elijah did not really die; he was taken up to heaven, see 2 Kings

2:11.) Enoch was also taken to be with God, see Genesis 5:24. In Revelation 6:9-11, the souls of those who had been martyred (killed) during the tribulation (during the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70) were conscious in heaven and speaking to God.

In Luke 20:38, Jesus says that *"He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to Him all are alive."* Our God has often told His people that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which means that He is the God of the living, not of the dead! Therefore Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are alive, fully conscious and with God. God's Word is very clear that the souls of both believers and unbelievers are fully conscious from death until the time Jesus returns. For further study on this subject see the following verses: Ecclesiastes 12:7; Matthew 10:28; John 11:26; Philipians 1:23; 1 Thesalonians 4:17.

And as it is appointed for men to die once,
but after this the judgment.

Hebrews 9:27

What man can live and not see death?
Can he deliver his life from the power of
the grave?

Psalms 89:48

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

2 Corinthians 5:10

Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Psalms 90:12

ALL THE ABOVE SCRIPTURES FROM THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION.

The Ten Virgins

by Gary Chadwick



A study of Matthew 25:1-13

If we are to understand the full meaning of the story of the ten virgins, then we must go back to Matthew 24 where Jesus was teaching His followers about the importance of getting ready.

He was teaching His followers on the Mount of Olives on His way to Bethany (Matthew 24:3; 26:6). Jesus knew that there was not much time left in the final week of His earthly ministry. He saw the great need for teaching this very important lesson as the only way to help His followers to deal with future problems. He was telling His followers to be ready when terrible things are going to happen in their lifetime.



He warned them that they will suffer many things until the city of Jerusalem is destroyed (Matthew 24:1-25). But He promised them that they will see SIGNS of the coming of the Son of Man (meaning His coming judgment against the city of Jerusalem, Matthew 24:26-35).

Then He talked about His Second Coming and the Final Judgment of the whole world (Mat-

thew 24:36-51). He warned all of His followers to be ready at all times because there will be NO SIGNS given of His Second Coming. He used the story of the ten virgins to make His lesson clear.

Jesus' warning is given in Matthew 25:13 as follows: "So always be ready. You don't know the day or the time when the Son of Man will come." The story in His teaching is about the ten virgins waiting at night for the coming of the bridegroom to receive the bride. From this story we learn:



1. That Christ Is Coming.

He is the bridegroom--the One that we will meet. He will come at midnight--a time when we do not expect His coming (1 Thessalonians 5:1 -3). But He puts off His coming for two reasons: (1) That all of us may be ready (2 Peter 3:9), and (2) That all things may be restored (Acts 3:21).

2. That we should be ready.

This does not mean for us to watch constantly for Jesus' coming through the clouds (Acts 1:10-12). Neither does it mean that we must give up our jobs and wait for His coming (2 Thessalonians 3:11-12). Again, we should not get excited over what people say, like when they talked about the "Y2K crash"; they thought that when January 1, 2000 came around, many things would go wrong. People think that these are the signs of His coming. But the Bible makes it clear that there will be no sign of His coming and that there will be no exact dates and times of His coming (2 Thessalonians 2:1-2). Matthew 24:36 says, "No person knows when that day or time will be. The Son and the angels in heaven don't know when that day or time will be. Only the Father knows."

However, we need to be ready for two reasons: (1) The word "oil" inside the lamps and vessels represents our *faith* (Mark 11:22; Hebrews 11:6). (2) These lamps and vessels

are necessary to hold oil. What good can oil do without lamps and vessels? In the same way, faith must reside *inside* us, the vessels of God. The Christian life is a life of action, showing faith rather than doing nothing (Galatians 5:6; James 2:17).

3. Why we should be ready.

Jesus says that we “don’t know the day or the time” when He comes again. Jesus may come later than some expect, or earlier than others expect. Warning: people gave false predictions that Jesus would come again in the year 2000. If you study church history, you will find that these false predictions are not new. For example, people thought that Jesus would come in the year 1000, but nothing happened! Life went on as usual for the next 1,000 years!



Jesus' coming will show if the ten virgins are ready or not. Will they have enough oil in their lamps and vessels? Will His sudden, unexpected coming surprise and catch them unprepared for eternity? Until the groom arrived, all ten girls looked the same—all ten girls were virgins, all of them had lamps and vessels, all of them were waiting for His coming. But when the groom came, all the differences appeared. The same will be true when Jesus comes (1 Corinthians 4:5)!

The five wise girls could not help the other five foolish girls. Oil is a personal thing that cannot be passed from one person to another person—something that cannot be exchanged between these virgins. After Jesus arrives, these five foolish girls will not be able to find the time to get ready. There comes a time in life after which it is impossible to change. The door of opportunity will be shut once for all time.

Let us consider how the door may be shut: (1) Through

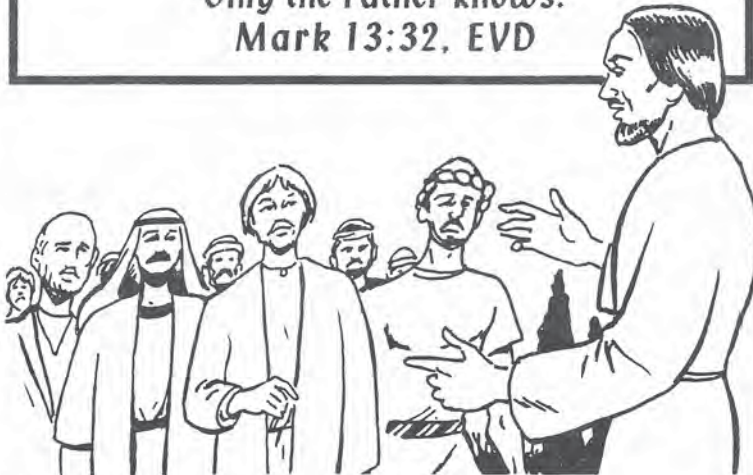
death—"Every person must die once. After a person dies he is judged" (Hebrews 9:27). (2) Beyond a person's ability to repent (1 John 5:16-17). (3) By the Lord's Second Coming. When Jesus comes, it will be too late to repent or to obey the gospel!

What does the closed door mean to the ten virgins? To the five wise girls, it means security and peace. To the five foolish girls, it means sadness and feelings of no hope.

Christians are like the ten virgins waiting for Christ's coming in a long night of feeling not sure when He will ever come. We cannot depend on Y2K or any other times to predict His coming. Jesus' point in His parable of the ten virgins is that those Christians who claim to be Jesus' followers should *always* be faithful, waiting, and ready to receive Him when He comes. don't wait till His coming to make ready! Those Christians who are not ready will hear the Lord reply, "I tell you the truth. I don't know you" (Matthew 25:12).

Ready or not, think about this!

No person knows when that day or time will be. The Son and the angels in heaven don't know when that day or time will be. Only the Father knows.
Mark 13:32, EVD

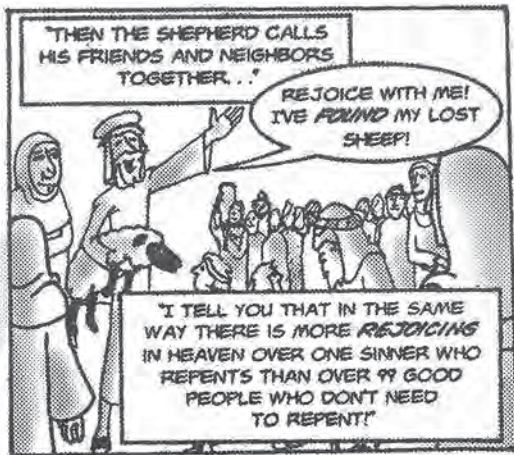
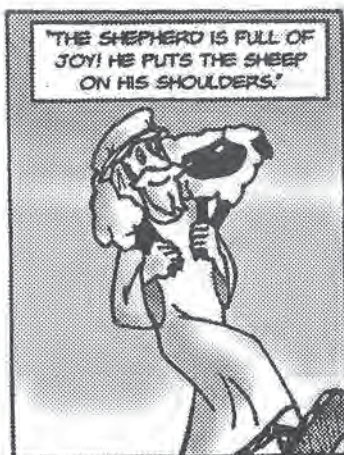
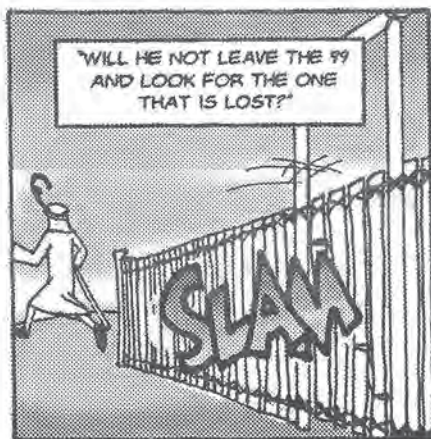


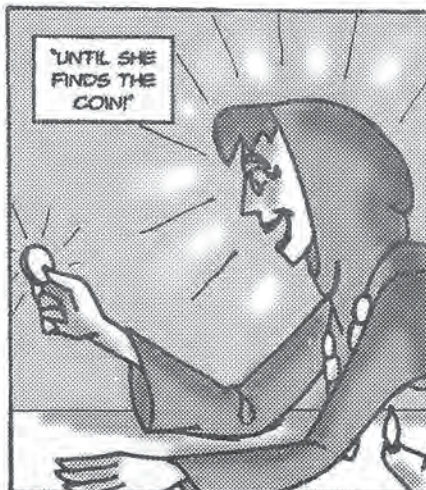
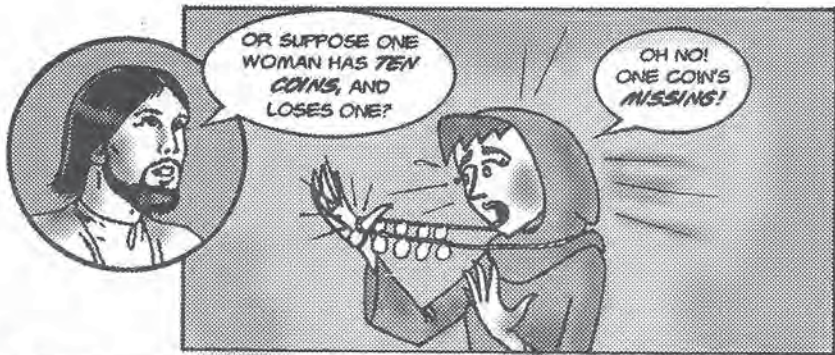
Three Stories of GOD'S LOVE

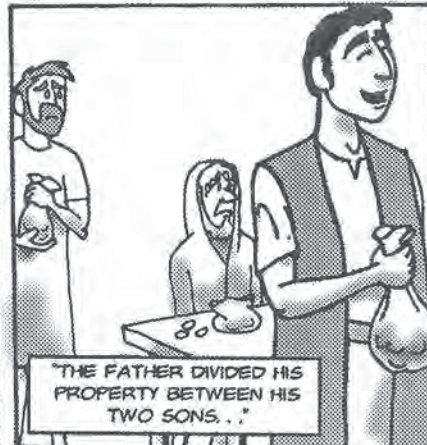
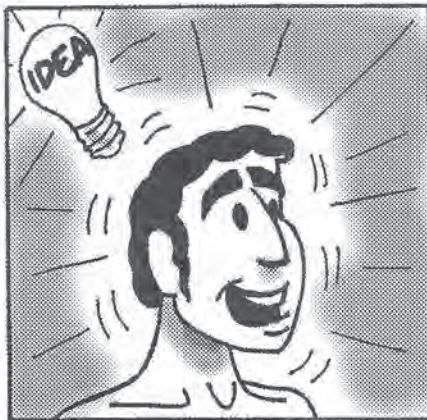


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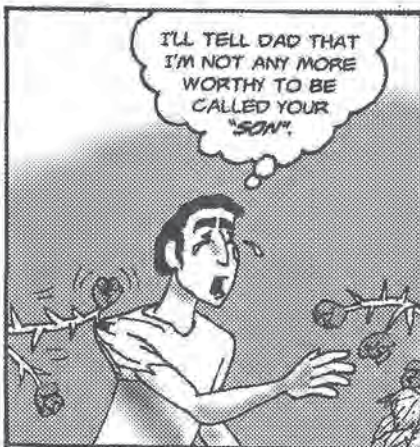
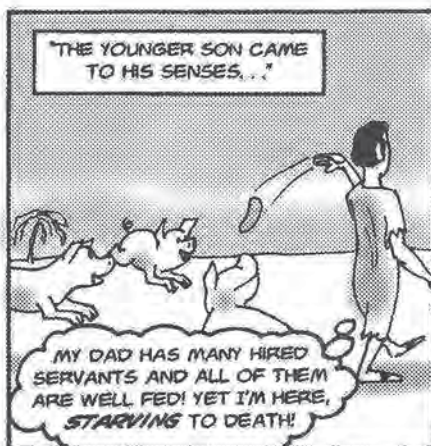
Based on Luke 15

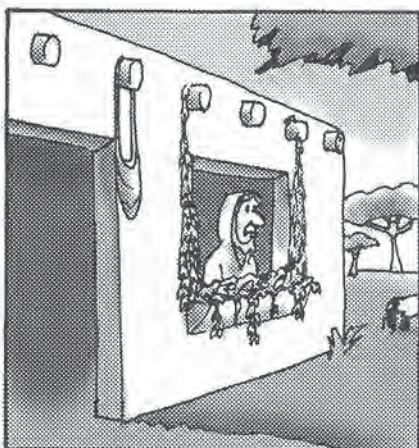








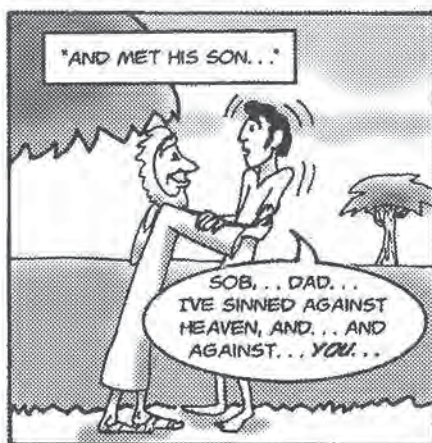




"WHILE THE SON WAS STILL A LONG WAY OFF, HIS FATHER SAW HIM..."



"THE FATHER RAN OUT..."



"AND MET HIS SON..."

SOB... DAD...
I'VE SINNED AGAINST
HEAVEN, AND... AND
AGAINST... YOU...



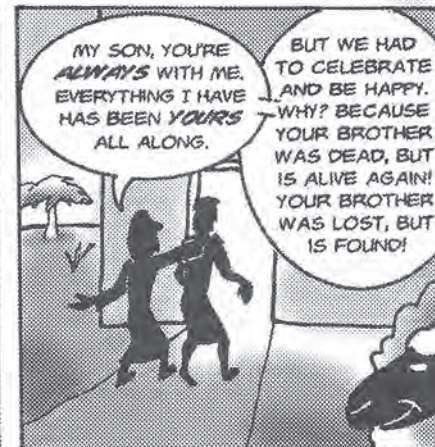
"THE FATHER THREW HIS ARMS
AROUND HIM AND KISSED HIM."

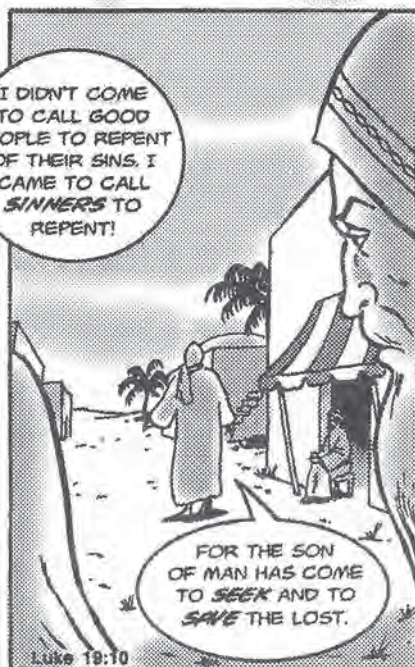
I-- I'M NOT WORTHY
ANY MORE TO BE CALLED
YOU-- YOUR SON--



QUICK! BRING THE
BEST ROBE AND PUT
IT ON MY SON!







Questions & Answers

The Answers in this column are the responsibility of the Editor. Please send your questions to: **Light for the Deaf**, 1106 Colonial Road, Memphis, TN 38117. You may also email to WLeavell@aol.com or fax to (901) 761-2019.

The Bible verse Rev. 22:1-4, tree of life, bare twelve manner of fruits and yielded fruit every month. Does that mean in heaven we will need food? Will we drink living water there?

The book of Revelation is full of *figurative language*, or "cartoon" language. The "cartoons" have meanings, much like our editorial cartoons in our newspapers today. When we see a cartoon of an elephant and a donkey fighting, we understand it means the Republicans and Democrats are racing each other for election. When we see a cartoon of a tall, thin man with a white goatee and a tall hat and striped pants, we know it represents "Uncle Sam", which in turn represents the U.S. government. Some people misunderstand many passages in the book of Revelation, and think they are *literal* (real). But they are figurative (full of "cartoons"), not literal (real). The strong angel, the chain, the bottomless pit, the red dragon, etc., all in Revelation 20, are "cartoons".

So the passage you ask me about-- the tree of life growing twelve kinds of fruits every month-- is also *figurative*, or "cartoon" language. Revelation 22:1-5 reads:

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life. The river was bright like crystal. The river flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. It flows down the middle of the street of the city. The tree of life was on each side of the river. The tree of life makes fruit twelve times a year. It gives fruit every month. The leaves of the tree are for healing all the people. Nothing that God judges guilty will be there in that city. The throne of God and the Lamb (Jesus) will be in the city. God's servants will worship him.

They will see his face. God's name will be written on their foreheads. There will never be night again. People will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun. The Lord God will give them light. And they will rule like kings forever and ever. (EVD)

Can you imagine real, genuine water flowing from God's throne? Would the water flowing down the middle of the street mean it is a divider much like the concrete dividers of our highways? It is obvious these are not meant to be *literal* (real), but *symbols*, or *cartoons*.

Also, many people reading this passage think this is a description of heaven. A careful study of this passage shows it is not at all talking about heaven! It is talking about the Christian life! Some of our readers may be upset with us. But again, read carefully.

Notice that while Jesus was on the Earth, He said, "If a person believes in Me, rivers of living water will flow out from his heart..." (John 7:38). The next verse makes it clear: "Jesus was talking about the Holy Spirit. The Spirit had not yet been given to people, because Jesus had not yet died and been raised to glory. But later, those people that believed in Jesus would receive the Spirit."

So the "water" flowing from God's Throne probably represents the Holy Spirit that He is continually giving to all His people who continually obey Him (Acts 5:32). The brightness like a crystal means the clearness and purity of the "water", or Holy Spirit. The Tree of Life, sitting on each side of the river represents Eternal Life that God gives to us. When the Bible says it grows fruit twelve months a year, the meaning is that Eternal Life is not limited to a short time. The "city" means the church. If a person is in Christ, then God does not judge him guilty (see Romans 8:1). People who have accepted Christ as their Savior now "rule on the earth" (see Revelation 5:10).

Remember to send us your change of address... it helps us so much when you do! Also please send your old address so we can see where to change.

He set for us an example!

ART BY EMMA FARMER



For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps. **1 Peter 2:21**

But Jesus answered and said to him [*John the Baptist*], "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. **Matthew 3:15**

Jesus never sinned. He never did anything wrong against His Father. But He asked John the Baptist to baptize Him so He could show us an example. We should listen to His example.

*If you have not done so already, turn to Jesus today. He is the only way for you to go to the Father in heaven! (Read John 14:6.) **Believe in Jesus** (Acts 16:31), **repent** of your sins (Acts 2:38), **confess** your faith in Jesus (Romans 10:9-10) and **be baptized** for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38).*

ALL SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS FROM THE NEW KING JAMES BIBLE.

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