

**Happy
New
Year!**

2006

Truth For Teens

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January 2006 begins a new year; each day we wake up begins a new day; each birth begins a new life; each marriage begins a new partnership. As we work through the days and years, each undertaking we involve ourselves in begins a new action whether it is in a job, at home, at school [a new paper, a new math problem, a new science project, a new friendship], or at play [a new game, a new idea].

God put into motion a new beginning when He created all that is in our world, Genesis 1:1. From that verse forward we have the greatest direction for life that has ever or ever will be developed. It is our responsibility and a privileged opportunity to use that pattern for each new day and each new year that we are given.

It is a tradition at the beginning of a new year to resolve to change habits toward better things. The most common resolution is for a healthier and more prosperous life. God gives us ways to reach these goals and, if we do as He wills, He has promised a hope of salvation for an eternal life of rest and peace with Him in heaven. There is no better exposure to this "good life" than by His guidance through study of the Bible. How do we get His guidance? How can we be steadfast in keeping our resolution? By beginning "new" habits! Replace old habits with new godly ones.

Begin Each New Day With Prayer – 1 Thessalonians 5:17 – *Pray without ceasing.* In Luke 11:9-10, Jesus speaks to His disciples: *And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.* The important message is that Jesus was speaking to His "disciples." To be a "disciple," we must know and obey His Word, John 8:12; *If ye love me keep my commandments,* John 14:15.

God knows what we need. The action word is by our "asking" we are acknowledging our faith in His power to provide our needs. A prayer of thanksgiving each morning for the new day will provide an energized outlook on the blessing of life, *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,* Ephesians 5:20.

Begin A New Study – *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth,* 2 Timothy 2:15. The Bible is all we need for our doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

Maybe you are already going to Sunday School! Begin attending Wednesday evening study with your congregation. Begin a study with a friend or relative that is not a Christian or is not following God's commandments. Jesus exhorted His disciples to "go and teach all nations," Matthew 28:19. What better way to begin than on a one-on-one program!

Forsake Not the Assembly - *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching,* Hebrews 10:25.

Along with the memorial service of the Lord's Supper, praying, praising our God in song, and studying His Word on the first day of the week, strong leaders schedule periods of study on Sunday and midweek evenings for an opportunity to learn more about being a Christian example. Fellowship with those of the same mind [God's family] protects us from choosing worldly things. Lean on your Christian family when encouragement is needed.

There are many resolutions that can be made to replace our slipshod habits. These should top your priority list. By accomplishing these, dealing with other resolutions will be easier.

Prayer can change things! Begin this New Year, 2006, and each new day with loving communication with God in prayer.

**A PUBLICATION
FOR
TODAY'S TEENS IN TOMORROW'S WORLD**

* * *

“TRUTH FOR TEENS” – OUR MISSION

Truth For Teens is a publication with a circulation of over 500 to youth throughout the United States. This is possible because a group of men and women feel a need to provide healthy, helpful information to our youth as they deal with daily situations.

This publication is supported and funded by contributions of individuals and congregations of area churches of Christ. By their support we are able to continue the publication and mailing without charge to our youth. This missionary program is non-profit and tax deductible. All contributions are used appropriately for the printing and mailing of the issues. Financial help from those who would like to join in this outreach program to our youth will allow us to continue publication. Most important are the prayers of Christians for the success of this endeavor.

An account has been set up in the name of Truth for Teens Publication. Checks can be made to that account and mailed to P. O. Box 581, Manor, Texas 78653. This is a non-profit publication.

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Editor's note: We reserve the right to exclude items we deem unacceptable, using God's Word as our guide.

- - - CHECK IT OUT - - -

www.truthforteens.org

Bible Search – Book of John, Chapter 6

Circle correct answers.

1. Why did the multitude follow Jesus?
He did miracles He told them to He was handsome
2. Where did Jesus sit with His disciples?
synagogue living Room mountain
3. What did Jesus ask Phillip?
for a drink of water where to buy food His name
4. What did Andrew tell Jesus?
go to the store a boy had food there was no food
5. How many were fed that day?
thirteen 5,000 150
6. What food did they have?
manna bread & fish pizza
7. How much food was left over?
a couple of bags 12 baskets None
8. What did the people want to do with Jesus?
make Him king send Him to Nazareth shake His hand
9. Where did Jesus go?
to the mountain home with Phillip
10. What food did they eat?
3 large pizzas baskets of manna 5 loaves and 2 fish

Questions and Answers

Question: How can we teach without appearing self-righteous?

Answer: For those who inquire without a sincere desire for truth, there may be no way to accomplish this task in their eyes. Some are only interested in starting an argument (1 Timothy 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 2:23-24).

The easiest way I know to accomplish this is to eliminate oneself from the discussion. This can be done by saying, “The Bible says ...,” thus removing the focus from self and placing it on the Bible where it belongs. There were several times in Jesus’ ministry where He used this approach (cf. Matthew 12:3-5; 19:4). Jesus also asked others what they read in the scriptures (Luke 10:25-28 – though this was an insincere questioner).

In recent months, I have been approached several times by sincere individuals asking various Bible questions. Usually they started by saying, “What do you believe about ...?” or “What do you think about ...?”

I always respond, “The Bible says” They appreciated this approach, and even said so after a number of encounters. I believe this approach also helps gain the confidence of the inquisitor.

It is always good and right to point people to the scriptures. We must “be ready to give a defense” (1 Peter 3:15), and at the same time speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), having our speech seasoned with salt, so that we may know how we ought to answer every man (Colossians 4:6). Todd Clippard, Preacher, Burleson church of Christ, Hamilton, Alabama

HOW DO YOU “WORSHIP”?

²³ *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*

²⁴ *God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*
John 4:23-24

Faith - belief and trust in and loyalty to God

Worship - reverence offered a divine being: an act of expressing such reverence

Spirit – man’s moral, religious, or emotional nature; courage; vigor, liveliness; enthusiasm and loyalty; a special attitude or frame of mind

Truth - the body of real things, events, and facts; conformity to fact or actuality

What frame of mind or attitude do you have on the Lord’s Day? Do you have an emotion, a desire to worship God? After all, He is the one that made the day available for you. Genesis 1:1. Or is there a bit of vacillating with thoughts of other things you would rather do?

These are questions that are important and should be answered within your heart. Our mode of worship to the Heavenly Father must encompass the statement that Jesus cited above.

A prayer of thanksgiving for freedom that allows us to worship without fear would be a good start for building the proper attitude toward worship. If you think on these things – of things honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report – you will have a better attitude toward attending church, Philippians 4:9.

We must not forget the admonishment to “study to show yourself approved,” 2 Timothy 2:15. A desire to know more of God’s word should surround you in worship and classes. Leave the social pleasures of fellowship with friends to a time not designated as a time to worship and study. We must not pilfer time from God to please ourselves. *Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,* 1 Chronicles 16:29. Take the initiative to illuminate your study and participation in worship. Be an example; children follow in footsteps of their peers. Remember what Paul said – *“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,”* Philippians 3:14. Think beyond today – toward eternal life which is the whole substance of the Gospel.

Did Christ give His life for our entertainment? Fellowship and interaction with friends is good. Ask your friends to worship with you, giving them an insight of your priority to be a Christian, giving God the glory. Plan to socialize and enjoy bowling, games, movies, home parties, eating together, etc. at times after classes or worship or during the week. Participate in the youth activities at your congregation. Take the initiative in planning social activities; involve your parents.

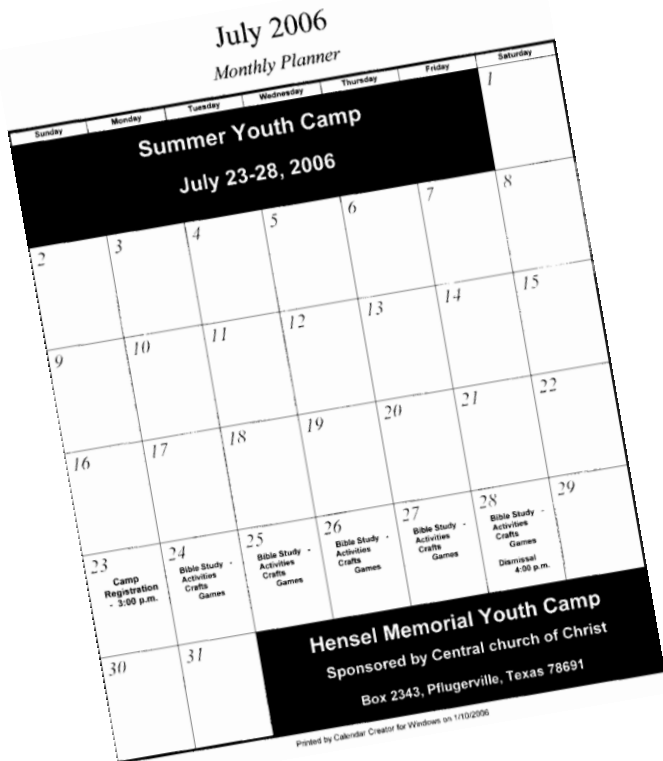
The New Testament church was not established for entertainment, or to be a social event. To worship “in spirit” means to offer “spiritual” worship, not physical or fleshly. Hebrews 9:1-10 teaches that Old Testament worship consisted of fleshly ordinances, e.g. a physical structure, special clothing for priests, burning of incense, instruments of music, all appealing to physical senses. The church Christ established is focused toward the spiritual side: God’s temple is spiritual, made up of Christians, 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:19-22; all Christians are priests, offering up spiritual sacrifices, 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Romans 12:1; Hebrews 13:15; prayers are as sweet incense, Revelation 5:8.

The church at Corinth was admonished to do things “decently” [in a seemly manner] and fitting for the occasion [glorifying God], 1 Corinthians 14:40; and “in order,” following a fixed arrangement and contributing to peace, not confusion, 1 Corinthians 14:33. Worship of the early church was done in spirit and truth, decently and in order, for the purpose of edification. Doctrines of man are vain worship, Matthew 15:7-9, Isaiah 29:13.

When denominations and weak or erring congregations embrace practices outside these realms, there is a suggestion of entertainment and vain personal satisfaction. Worship in the early church was simple and spiritual, designed to encourage the worship of God with the inner man, not to make an impression on the outer man with man-made ordinances. Many think that to become more “spiritual” requires change, such as mechanical instruments, clapping, burning of incense, theatrical productions. Such things appeal to the fleshly side of man rather than to his spiritual side. If they look to the Old Testament for this kind of worship they are taking a step backward, not forward to true spirituality.

Some grumble that simple singing and worship is outdated and boring, but practices of the Old Testament are “older” than the “spiritual worship” of the New Testament! Is it outdated, or simply challenging to those seeking to be entertained? We cannot add or take away from the pattern of the early church, Revelation 1-19.

We must worship as God demands, John 4:23-24.



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By What Standard of Authority?

*By what authority doest thou these things?
And who gave thee this authority?*

By what authority do you and I practice the things we do in religion? Let us observe the following questions: Is **the majority** the correct standard of authority? Surely not. Through time the majority has been wrong. Where was the majority in the flood? What about Sodom and Gomorrah? Jesus said many travel the broad way that leads to destruction [Matthew 7:13, 14].

Are **kinsmen** the correct standard of authority? Surely not. If they were, then every religion, even those that deny the divinity of Christ and reject the Bible as the infallible guide in matters of religion, would be all right if such was accepted by kinsmen.

Are the **creeds of men** the correct standard of authority? Surely not. They are contradictory to the inspired and infallible Word of God. They contain the doctrines and commandments of men, concerning which Jesus said, "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men [Matthew 15:9].

Is "**I think**" the correct standard of authority? Surely not. Jeremiah wrote, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" [Jeremiah 10:23]. Also observe: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" [Proverbs 14:12].

Christ and His testament is the correct standard of authority. All authority in heaven and in earth has been given unto Christ [Matthew 28:18]. His testament is complete, final, and all-sufficient [John 16:13; Jude 3]. Religious practices are to be based on His Word. Peter wrote, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" [1 Peter 4:11]. In view of this, can you give book, chapter, and verse for what you practice in religion? Wendell Winkler, minister, deceased.

My Appearance

I go to see a girlfriend;
My clothes are nice and neat.
I comb the hair on my head
And shine the shoes on my feet.

My best friend is getting married;
He's asked me to be "best man."
I want to make his wedding great,
So I dress the best I can.

I'll attend a funeral tomorrow;
I will look my very best
A brand new shirt and tie,
Plus a new suit and vest.

Now it's Sunday morning;
I will worship God today.
My clothes won't be too tidy,
And my hair in disarray.

My shirt will be open,
To show the hair on my chest ...
And I'm not really too concerned,
Whether or not my pants are pressed.

Why is it when before mere men
I want to look my best,
But when I come to worship God,
I don't care how I'm dressed?
Anon

A WEEK OF GOOD THOUGHTS

Suppose we start this very day
To live our lives in a different way;
Suppose we vowed and constantly tried
To help those in trouble on life's wayside;
If we showed by our deeds a hint of His love
Wouldn't earth be a bit more like heaven above?

ON MONDAY: Look for a smile today and return it with one of your own. Give someone faith and hope, it's such a beautiful loan.

ON TUESDAY: Gather a thought that's kind, one that's sincere and deep. Be sure to pass it along for such are too precious to keep.

ON WEDNESDAY: Forget yesterday's sorrows, mistakes, sadness, and pain. Lift your heart with hope as flowers to sun and rain.

ON THURSDAY: Offer a word of comfort and prayer to help someone in need. A little thoughtful gift, some flowers, or a smile makes us all rich indeed.

ON FRIDAY: You shall not pass this way again, so do any good you can do. Don't put it off till tomorrow or the chance may be lost for you.

ON SATURDAY: Today will soon be a memory so don't let it come to an end, without a smile, without a song, or just a word from a friend.

ON SUNDAY: Don't let worry and care depress you, or brush your joy away. But arise and give thanks to God above, for His love and another "Blest Day."

"...let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Philippians 2:3, 4). House to House – Heart to Heart

Not Necessarily Safe!

Someone has observed, "People are certainly peculiar – they want the front of the bus, the back of the church and the middle of the road." [source: calendar quote]

Are either of these three places really safe? The front of the bus may not be safe if the driver slams on the breaks too quickly or if the bus is involved in a head-on collision. The back of the church building may provide too easy a place to drift off to sleep and miss some of the benefit of the teaching and worship. And taking a MIDDLE OF THE ROAD stance could place one in a position to be opposed by both sides since it may be unclear where one really stands. Perhaps this last one is the most dangerous place of the three.

What do the Scriptures reveal regarding the danger of seeking the MIDDLE OF THE ROAD?

Jesus stated: "Whoever is NOT WITH ME IS AGAINST ME, and whoever does NOT GATHER WITH ME SCATTERS." [Luke 11:23 ESV]

It appears there is a decision which must be made. What does our life reveal with regard to Jesus' statement?

Jesus had John record the following warning to the church in Laodicea: "(15) 'I know your works: YOU ARE NEITHER COLD NOR HOT. Would that you were either cold or hot! (16) So, because YOU ARE LUKEWARM, and NEITHER HOT NOR COLD, I will spit you out of my mouth.'" [Revelation 3:15-16 ESV]

There are choices we must make. To make no choice in an attempt to remain neutral or MIDDLE OF THE ROAD is a decision in itself. Jesus indicated it is not a safe decision. In fact, to Him it is the most unpalatable choice we could make.

Children are taught at an early age that it is not safe to play in the MIDDLE OF THE ROAD. Perhaps it is wise advice for every age. Are we heeding it? teEN-MAIL

Lessons Learned

- I've learned – that you cannot make someone love you. All you can do is to be someone who can be loved. The rest is up to them.
- I've learned – that no matter how much I care, some people just don't care back.
- I've learned – that it's not what you have in your life but who you have in your life that counts.
- I've learned – that you can get by on charm for about fifteen minutes. After that, you'd better know something.
- I've learned – that you can do something in an instant that will give you heartache for life.
- I've learned – that it's taking me a long time to become the person I want to be.
- I've learned – you should always leave loved ones with loving words. It may be the last time you see them.
- I've learned – that you can keep going long after you think you can't.
- I've learned – that either you control your attitude or it controls you.
- I've learned – that regardless of how hot and steamy a relationship is at first, the passion fades, and there had better be something else to take its place.
- I've learned – that heroes are the people who do what has to be done when it needs to be done, regardless of the consequences.
- I've learned – that sometimes the people you expect to kick you when you're down will be the ones to help you get back up.
- I've learned – that sometimes when I'm angry I have the right to be angry, but that doesn't give me the right to be cruel.
- I've learned – that just because someone doesn't love you the way you want them to doesn't mean they don't love you with all they have.
- I've learned – that it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others. Sometimes you have to learn to forgive yourself.
- I've learned – that just because two people argue, it doesn't mean they don't love each other. And just because they don't argue, it doesn't mean they do.
- I've learned – that you shouldn't be so eager to find out a secret. It could change your life forever.
- I've learned – that your life can be changed in a matter of hours by people who don't even know you. – By Maggie Anderson

USE OF ALCOHOL EQUALS DEVASTATION



An incident at the University of Texas at Austin before the holidays was the death of a fraternity member at a party at the campus fraternity house. The name of the fraternity doesn't matter, the name of the campus doesn't matter, but the particulars do matter. The death was caused by the use of alcohol! The victim was eighteen years old, his first year at college. A college student doesn't have to be in a fraternity to be at risk. We would be like the ostrich with our head in the sand not to recognize that parties, drinking alcohol, etc.

occur in collegiate settings everywhere, as well as at middle and high school age parties. Because of an event promising "fun," it wasn't fun at all when it concluded with a devastating result. A person lost his life, a family lost a child, an organization lost its place, and someone, the provider of the alcohol or the person who allowed the serving of alcohol to a minor, will pay. The practice of drinking is too prevalent among the youth. It happens in all ages, all races, all backgrounds, and in every society. In our society today, consuming alcohol goes hand-in-hand with celebrations.

That isn't the only incident of death involving alcohol that occurred in 2005. It isn't being underage that makes drinking alcohol wrong. God tells us it is wrong! For some who think it isn't wrong to drink alcohol, that it's only a sin to get drunk, there are more examples to rebut this thinking than this article will have space for. One way that Satan has been able to deceive millions of people – including many Christians – is whitewashing the sin of drunkenness as a "disease" of alcoholism, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Romans 13:12-14; Luke 21:34-36; 1 Peter 4:3-5. Some like to ignore the fact that the path to "drunkenness" begins with the first drink of alcohol! The attitude is that they can "control" their drinking.

The problems that alcohol brings range from sad to wretched: crime, violence, family breakdowns, bringing shame on Christianity, causing harm to innocent people, allowing a person to lose control of the mind, serious health problems such as liver damage and shrinkage of the brain. We don't need just God's wisdom to know the dangers of alcohol. Results of drinking are on the news every day:

- 5% of all deaths from diseases of the circulatory system are attributed to alcohol.
- 15% of all deaths from diseases of the respiratory system are attributed to alcohol.
- 30% of all deaths from accidents caused by fire and flames are attributed to alcohol.
- 30% of all accidental drownings are attributed to alcohol.
- 30% of all suicides are attributed to alcohol.
- 40% of all deaths due to accidental falls are attributed to alcohol.
- 45% of all deaths in automobile accidents are attributed to alcohol.
- 60% of all homicides are attributed to alcohol.

(Sources: [NIDA Report](#), [the Scientific American](#) and [Addiction Research Foundation of Ontario](#).) Also see [Alcohol Consumption and Mortality](#), [Alcohol poisoning deaths](#), CDC report, a fact sheet dated December 2004.

Do these figures present a suggestion of "having fun? A web site that lists photos of young people who have consumed alcohol to the point of drunkenness is http://lizditz.typepad.com/i_speak_of_dreams/2005/05/alcohol_deaths_.html. It's not a pretty sight.

Drunkenness is against the law – a person cannot get drunk unless he/she drinks alcohol. Underage drinking is a public health and safety problem of major proportions for young people and society. According to the Centers for Disease Control, alcohol is a key factor in the three leading causes of death among young people in America: traffic crashes, homicides, and suicides. Alcohol (beer in particular) is by far the number one drug of choice for youth, and it kills six times more young people than all illicit drugs combined. Listed are specific effects of drinking:

Drinking and Driving – According to J. A. Grunbaum et al (June 28, 2002), 38.3% of Latinos, 30.3% of whites, and 27.6% of African Americans in the 9th to 12th grades rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol. And 14.7% of whites, 13.1% of Latinos, and 7.7% of African Americans admitted to driving a car after drinking alcohol, and less likely to wear a safety belt.

Homicide, Suicide and Crime – Alcohol has been reported to be involved in 36% of homicides, 12% of male suicides, and 8% of female suicides involving people under 21, a total of about 1500 homicides and 300 suicides in 2002. Individuals under the age of 21 commit 45% of rapes, 44% of robberies, and 37% of other assaults, D. Levy, T. Miller, and K. Cox, *Costs of Underage Drinking*. On college campuses 95% of all violent crime and 90% of college rapes involve the use of alcohol by the assailant, victim or both, National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, *Rethinking Rites of Passage: Substance Abuse on America's Campuses*.

Sexual Activity – More than 70,000 students aged 18-24 are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape, R. Hingson et al., "Magnitude of Alcohol-Related Mortality and Morbidity among U.S. College Students Ages 18-24," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 63, no. 2 (March 2002). Young people seem to be aware that using alcohol influences their decisions about sexual behavior, The Henry J. Kaiser Foundation, "Substance Use and Risky Sexual Behavior: Attitudes and Practices Among Adolescents and Young Adults," *Survey Snapshot* (February 2002).

Effects on the Adolescent Brain – New research on adolescent brain development suggests that early heavy alcohol use may also have negative effects on the actual physical development of brain structure, A. Brown and S. F. Tapert, "Health Consequences of Adolescent Alcohol Use," in *Reducing Underage Drinking: Issues and Interventions*.

These statistics are two to five years old. We can only pray that the numbers are much reduced in newer studies. Even though alcohol is legal, sin, though approved by society and allowed by civil law, is no less sin before God, the consequence of which is spiritual [and oftentimes physical] death, Romans 6:23.

Jesus, the Recruiter

Most college coaches recruit in about the same manner. They write letters and make calls and visits. They send overnight packages. They bring good players in for a visit and show them the advantages of coming to their particular school. They may also point out why they shouldn't go to other schools. Jesus Christ once ran a "school," and, of course, He had to recruit students. He was the most unusual recruiter who ever lived.

- ✦ He was unusual in that He wanted only twelve men [Matthew 10:1]. He did not want a hundred or thousand.
- ✦ He was unusual because He did not look at physical size or speed or prior experience. He looked at the heart [John 2:25].
- ✦ He was unusual because He recruited not for four years, but for a lifetime. He asked each to give the rest of his life to His cause [Luke 9:62].
- ✦ He was unusual because He recruited men that no one else seemed to want. The world could not see the value in these men [Acts 4:13].
- ✦ He was unusual because when He invited them for a visit it was a lowly place – not some grand facility [John 1:39].
- ✦ He was unusual because He chose men in spite of their flaws and their weaknesses. He wanted to teach and train them [John 1:42].
- ✦ He was an unusual recruiter because of what He offered them. Jesus said, "the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head" [Matthew 8:20]. Ultimately, He told them they would have eternal life.
- ✦ He was unusual in that He told the twelve the truth. Most coaches have to promise they are going to be there for years. Jesus told them that He would have to die and they would have to carry on [John 12:32-33]. He told them there would be hardships and persecutions [Mark 13:9].
- ✦ He was unusual because of what He recruited them to do – to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature [Mark 16:15].
- ✦ He was unusual in that He told them He would be with them until the end of the world [Matthew 28:20]. Many coaches are pretty well through with players when they graduate.
- ✦ He was an unusual recruiter in that no team ever achieved such success and became immortalized in the process [Colossians 1:23].

House To House – Heart To Heart

Answers to Bible Search- Book of John, 5:1-15: (1) He did miracles, v. 2; (2) mountain, v. 3; (3) where to buy food, v. 5; (4) a boy had food, v. 9; (5) 5000, v. 10; (6) bread & fish, v. 9; (7) 12 baskets, v. 13; (8) make Him king, v. 15; (9) to the mountain, v. 15; (10) 5 loaves & 5 fishes, v. 9.

Double Puzzle: true, faithful, write, throne, words, behold, new – Revelation 21:5, *And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.*

**WISHING
YOU A
PROSPEROUS
YEAR**

Number & Math Play Answer: $8^{88/88} = 9$.
[The numerals read "eight and eighty-eight eighty eighths," or "eight and one," which equals nine.]

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