

REACHING THE LOST

FROM THE CHURCH OF CHRIST TO YOUR COMMUNITY



EVANGELISM

HOW TO GET INTO A BIBLE STUDY

We know we must go and teach the gospel to every creature (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15).

Over the years, great and wonderful tools have been produced to help us conduct Bible studies, including the *Jule Miller Film Strips*, the *John Hurt Series*, *Back to the Bible*, *Fishers of Men*, *Evangelism Made Simple*, the *Open Bible Study*, and *Circles of Truth*.

The dilemma for many Christians lies in how to get into a Bible study. There is no magic formula, gimmick, or gadget that will answer this question. It is a rare occurrence when you meet a complete stranger who agrees to study the Bible. I am certainly not dismissing these random meetings, but I am just stating the obvious. During the last twenty years, the majority of our Bible studies have budded from relationships.

Shortly after the establishment of the church on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), a rapid growth occurred that filled the whole world with the message of Christ. In Acts 2:41, there were about three thousand souls. In Acts 4:4, there were about five thou-

sand men. In Acts 5, Luke records, "Believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women" (5:14).

What enabled such growth? The Bible says, "Praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47). Many preachers focus on the word "added," and rightly so. Knowing that our denominational friends believe you can join a church, we remind audiences that the Lord "adds" those being saved to His church.

Perhaps we have overlooked another important teaching. Luke also says the church enjoyed "favor with all the people." According to *Vine's Expository Dictionary*, the word *favor* means "grace on the part of the giver, kindness . . . acceptable." Brethren, everyone wants to be accepted, and who does not love kindness?

Most Bible studies occur because you have developed a relationship and secured the favor of the prospect. It is the ultimate form of selflessness to love your neighbor as yourself. John

Continued on page 4



The deadline to send in materials for the July HTH issue is

May 22!

(Send NOW if possible)

When will I get the May issue?

The May issue is currently printing and mailing. Most churches' HTH should arrive between May 15 and June 15. Dated materials will be given priority.

What events go in the July issue?

Any event dated between July 8 – September 15 should go in the July issue.

249,359,970

All-time copies of
House to House/Heart to Heart

343,917 copies of the April Issue

141 congregations

1,926,389 copies of the May issue

887 congregations

De Casa a Casa (Spanish HTH)

8,296 copies in March/April to

15 congregations

15,115 copies so far in 2019

All-time Spanish copies: **153,427**

New Movers Edition

4,574 copies in March and April

for **124** congregations.

65,393 all-time New Movers copies

Contact us to learn how you can get involved (call 877.338.3397, info@housetohouse.com, or visit get.housetohouse.com).

Free HTH Websites

361 congregations (call us for yours)

We are happy to provide a free basic website for any congregation participating in the HTH program. Please contact us to get your free website.

HTH has generated **70** studies that we know about in 2019. Email info@housetohouse.com to let us know about an ongoing study.



Send us YOUR success stories.

We hear all the time, "Oh, I was going to write you, but I never got around to it. We had a baptism from HTH. We have a study going on. A member was restored. We added a family." Be sure to share with others in the program so all can be encouraged and be praying for success. Please call or email us your stories.

Good News Back from the Field!

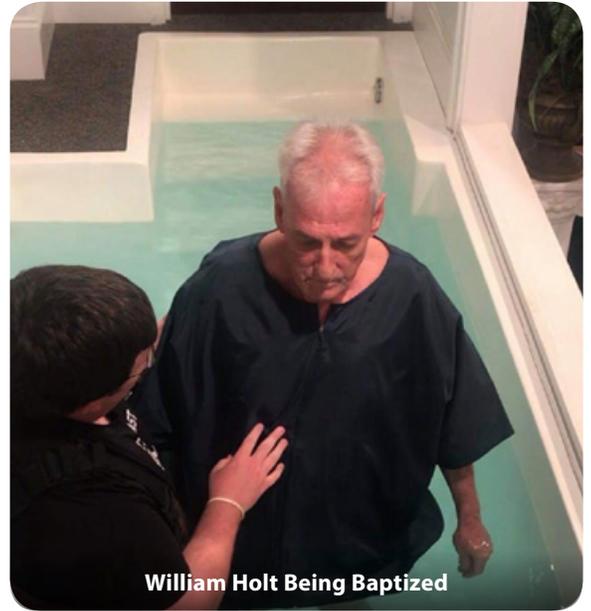
Large Impact from BTB and HTH

Last year Sarah Brooks, one of the workers at HTH, was able to study with her friend Dakota Sams. He grew up unchurched and really knew very little about the Bible, but he was hungry to learn. Sarah asked her Dad, Stevie Brooks, to assist with a study and they went through all three of the *Back to the Bible* studies in one night because Dakota wanted to keep going whenever they got to the end of a book. He was baptized into Christ at 1:30 A.M.

Dakota and Sarah are engaged to be married in just a couple of weeks.

This young convert is already bearing fruit. Conversations with Dakota's friend Wyatt Jones and Wyatt's girlfriend Savannah Clay led to another Bible study using *Back to the Bible*. After much study and many tears, Savannah put on Christ in baptism on a Saturday night. Two days later, Wyatt also obeyed the gospel. Although they each work third shift, they are faithfully attending the Heflin (AL) church of Christ, and continue to grow in Christ.

One of the beautiful things about the *Back to the Bible* study is that once you have been through it, it is very easy to go through it with someone else.



William Holt Being Baptized

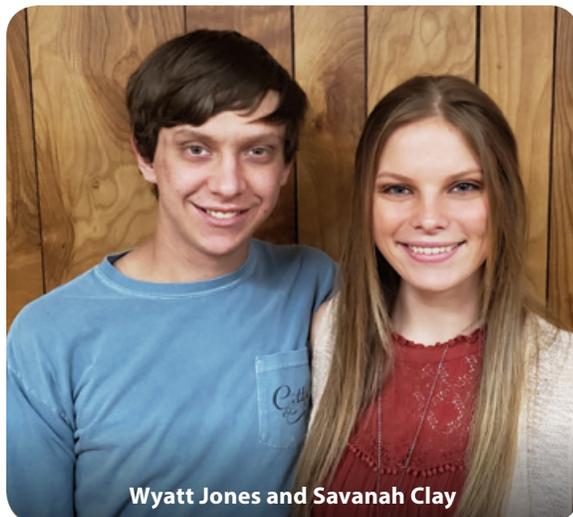
The gospel is not complicated, and we all need to be out winning souls for our Lord.

Plant, Water, Grow

HTH is an active program, not a passive one, as this report from Dalton, Georgia shows.

Austin Fowler from the Riverbend church of Christ in Dalton, Georgia, says, "His name is William Holt. He called the church a little over a month ago because he got something in the mail from us (HTH). My grandfather followed up on his phone call. He gave him some DVDs to watch and study. He studied them and said he was doubting his salvation because of what he learned. My grandfather studied with him some more over the past few weeks. He is disabled and cannot work because of his back. Tonight we met before church and I just went though the conversion accounts in Acts and compared them to what he did. And he was baptized tonight! To God be the glory."

HTH is a great resource for generating "hot" contacts—people who are ready to study the Bible and hear the good news.



Wyatt Jones and Savannah Clay



First Issue, First Visitor!

Had our first visitor at church Sunday who came from the HTH delivered to his home. Before he left, he said he would see us Wednesday and that he thinks he has found his new church home.

Thanks for all you do.

Ray Wallace
Pine Valley Church of Christ
Bayfield, Colorado

Encouraging Letter

We usually have more reports than we can include in these pages, but we always want more. This was sent to us and was an encouragement to all of HTH workers. Several said, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if every congregation could read this?" So we decided to include it:

My name is Eric Bonner. I am the minister for the McDonald Drive Church of Christ in Knoxville, Tennessee. I've served here a little over six years now.

My purpose for writing is to attest to how much our congregation has benefitted from our relationship with *House to House/Heart to Heart*. Our partnership with the publication began a little over two years ago, and I could write volumes about how supportive and encouraging the publishing staff has been from the very beginning.

What I really want to speak to, however, is how we have gotten literal responses from the mailers that have been distributed in our congregation's name. I actually come from a mass media background, and I immediately identified the *House to House* concept as being analogous, in principle, to what is referred to in the secular world as "co-operative advertising."

In short, co-op ads give local businesses the backing of larger corporate infrastructure, enabling the small enterprise to function (as least in regard to their ad campaigns) on a much larger scale. In other words, *House to House* gives congregations our size the opportunity to do something we otherwise could never do on our own.

The presentation is so impressive and professional-looking and is a source of pride for our members that we are associated with something that looks so fresh and nice.

Beyond that, however, (and of ultimate importance) is the most vital issue of effectiveness and bottom-line results. Otherwise stated: Does

House to House reach people? Do those who receive it actually read it and respond to it? Well, obviously, I'm just one man and we're just one congregation, so I can only speak for us . . . and our experience (and answer to those questions) is yes; a thousand times yes. And I would imagine that our results are anecdotal, and that most every other congregation that avails itself of *House to House* has, and has had, similar success.

I can tell you in quantifiable terms that *House to House* has generated between 15–20 Bible studies for us, four of which are currently ongoing. The best news is that two people have obeyed the gospel through the leads produced by *House to House*, and a third person was also baptized into Christ (he didn't receive the mailer, but he is best friends with one of the aforementioned two converts who did), so I also link him to our *House to House* campaign, to be sure.

I will draw this to a close. I simply had to let it be known how grateful and thankful we are for this innovative ministry and the blessing it has been to us. It is so encouraging to see this degree of intentionality, and if I can be so candid, it has pushed me to be a better minister in terms of evangelism and outreach. Sometimes we tell ourselves that "the market is saturated" and that "everyone has made up their mind in regard to Christianity so that mission efforts, especially in this country, are a fruitless waste of time." Nothing could be further from the truth. That's just the lazy part of us trying to avoid the work, in my humble opinion. If *House to House* has proved nothing else to me, it has demonstrated in the strongest of terms that the fields are still ready to be harvested.



World-Wide Outreach

In addition to the English and Spanish editions of HTH, we are now producing a French version with churches in seven countries so far, and we direct mailed three issues into French-speaking households in Nashville. We have also helped print several issues in Chinese. The tract, "What Must I Do to Be Saved," has been printed in Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Chinese.



94 countries have received HTH in print!



God's Plan for Saving Man

Divine Love

John 3:16

God's Grace

Ephesians 2:8

Christ's Blood

Romans 5:9

Holy Spirit's Word

Romans 1:16

Sinner's Faith

Acts 16:31

Sinner's Repentance

Luke 13:3

Sinner's Confession

Romans 10:10

Sinner's Baptism

Acts 22:16

Christian's Love

Matthew 22:37

Christian's Work

James 2:24

Christian's Hope

Romans 8:24

Christian's Endurance

Revelation 2:10

How to Get Into a Bible Study

Continued from page 1

Maxwell wrote, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

No one knew this better than our Lord. Luke says, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52). Jesus was and still is the Master Personal Evangelist. His ability to gain the favor of His fellow man was a key to His success.

In our world of fast food kitchens and drive-through windows, we rarely take time to secure the favor of others. Basic communication skills are being lost to texting and instant messaging. Our social groups have been reduced to Facebook and Twitter. Perhaps there has never been a society with a greater thirst for favor than ours.

God created man as a social being. The Bible states, "The Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone'" (Genesis 2:18). Many are longing to find that first century favor from churches today, but sadly, in too many places, it is just not there. Could it be that the lack of Bible studies by Christians today is linked to a lack of favor?

The following are some suggestions on how to show favor to others. I must warn you up front that this will take both time and a commitment on your part. Moreover, you will experience disappointments, hurt feelings, and downright discouragement, but the Lord promises the reward is worth it all!

1. Home: "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it" (Psalm 127:1). Have we forgotten that our homes are mission outposts? Christ should be woven throughout their borders. The mat in front of too many Christian doors reads "Come Back Later" instead of "Welcome." Open homes equal open hearts. Our first century brethren had open homes. They were eating together, praying together, and studying together (Acts 2:46; 5:42; 20:20).

2. Hospitality: I am afraid that this Christian attribute is almost lost in modern America. Hospitality is defined as "love of strangers." The Greek word is used in Hebrews 13:2: "Do not forget to **entertain strangers**, for by so doing





some have unwittingly entertained angels." All Christians are commanded to display hospitality, and elders are to be proven in this qualification (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8).

Our hospitality to others should never be the reason behind their gospel obedience, but the lack thereof could be the reason they do not obey. It is time we unlock our deadbolts and stop worrying about the cobwebs and dirt. Jesus said, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:41–42).

3. Hearken: Everyone wants to be heard. James said, "So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:19). Spend a lot of time asking others about their family, hobbies, past experiences, and the things they enjoy. This is a time to find common ground and to develop friendship and trust. As you listen, take mental notes of things that may need emphasis during a study. Have they been divorced? Do they have any religious background? Do they have family who are devout in a particular religion? Does their speech reveal any Calvinistic beliefs?

4. Hesitate: It is very important as you listen to hesitate and deflect. This is not the time to refute, reprove, rebuke, or instruct, regardless

of what is said. Remember, you are building a relationship.

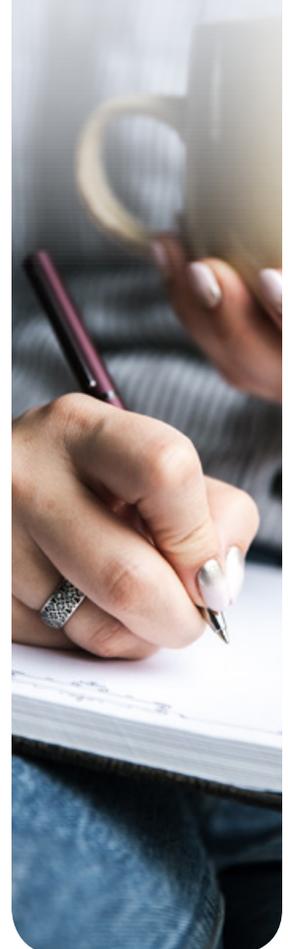
Further, do not answer all questions. I know this is a strange suggestion and may even seem rude. Believe me, it has taken a long time to understand the power of hesitation (deflection). If we truly respect the power of the Word, we must stop telling everyone what we think and how we feel, and show them the truth in the Scriptures. The quicker we get people into the Bible, the sooner God can begin working on their hearts. Someone may ask, "Why don't you use a piano in worship?" You need to say, "That is a great question; let me show you." Hence, the Bible study!

The psalmist said, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple" (Psalm 19:7). We must never forget our goal is to get people into an organized Bible study. Conversations and chats do not save people. If all Christians opened their homes, extended hospitality, hearkened to the prospect, and hesitated to give their opinions, we would have more Bible studies than we could ever hope to conduct. Luke recorded, "And daily in the temple, and in **every house**, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ" (Acts 5:42). —**Rob L. Whitacre**



Things to remember in all written communication with contacts:

1. A friendly greeting is the equivalent of a smile in print.
2. A sincere message of thanks for their willingness to study the Bible.
3. Contact information, including email, phone, and mailing address.
4. An invitation to services, including the physical address and service times.





Helpful Resources

Check out these websites for study materials!



housetohouse.com



evangelism.house-to-house.com



365.polishingthepulpit.com

The Campaign Trail

The campaign trail is designed to share news about our travel experiences. We learn a lot from our sister congregations as we meet with their elders, eat in their homes, and talk with the members before and after each lesson. It is one of the greatest blessings of our work and one we like to share with our readers. You may read about your congregation or about something we learned during our visit together.

Is it possible that congregations of our Lord are beginning to awaken after an evangelistic slumber of nearly two generations? It may be too early to say definitively, but if the responses we are witnessing from congregations where we are conducting these seminars is any indication, good things are on the horizon. There seems to be a greater interest in good old-fashioned Bible studies than I have ever seen before. I hope the following will give you a small glimpse into what we are witnessing!

The month of February took us to the great state of Virginia. Two congregations hosted a Personal Evangelism Seminar/Campaign and dozens more attended. Our first stop was in Lynchburg, where Mike Glenn serves as their preacher. We did the full campaign, which includes a total of nine lessons. The congregation responded with amazing zeal. After the last amen of the last prayer, an elder walked forward and asked the congregation to meet in the fellowship hall. As we later walked into that room, it was full of Christians passing around cards to begin the Compassion Card program. This work is designed to create contacts for personal Bible studies and has proven to be very effective.

It was truly amazing! We could not wait to receive our one-month report to see how it was working. Below is what Chris Donavant, one of their deacons, sent us.



Starting the compassion card program at Lynchburg.

“Hey brother, I’m sorry I didn’t respond sooner, I’ve just been busy as a beaver chewing wood. Thought I’d send you this message, but we’ve got a study going with one lady from the card writing, and two more that are serious prospects (you know the kind, the ones that you get the feeling on”).

Our second trip took us to the Timberville church of Christ, where Elliot Asbury serves as preacher. When we walked in the door, we could immediately see an evangelistic emphasis. A table sat just outside the auditorium full of evangelistic materials and *Back to the Bible* studies. This might seem an unusual observation, but it is rare to find a congregation that has evangelism materials openly available for church members to utilize. Normally, if a congregation has any at all, it is buried in the preacher’s office or a cabinet in a closet. Brethren, we cannot expect church members to conduct Bible studies if the tools are not available.

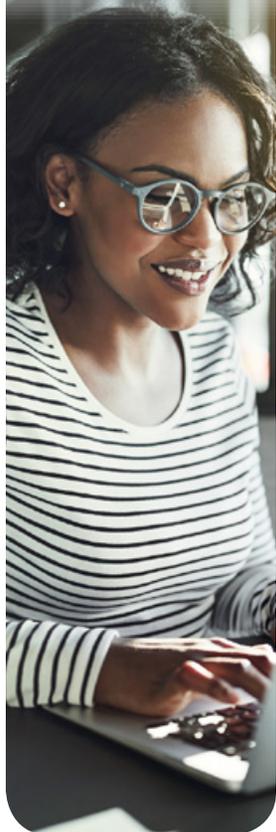
The interest level during this seminar was very high. In fact, during the application session (a round table discussion with elders and church leaders where we present a plan to refocus the congregation on evangelism), so many attended that we literally ran out of room and materials.

Recently I heard from Glenn Fann, a member of the Mid-Way congregation where we conducted a Personal Evangelism Campaign almost two years ago. He said his father, Freddie Fann, a non-Christian, had attended, and was challenged by what he learned. In April (2019) he told Glenn, “I keep thinking about those lessons I learned from *Back to the Bible*, and it is time for me to be baptized.” God’s Word never stops working, and we should never give up or lose hope.

House to House/Heart to Heart School of Evangelism is working! We ask for your prayers that our Father will light an evangelistic fire in churches of Christ all across America. You can visit our website and see our schedule by going to evangelism.house-to-house.com/



The leadership from several congregations, ready to get busy on evangelism.



Soul Saving Strategies



CONTACTS

GET.HOUSETOHOUSE.COM

House to House/Heart to Heart is an active publication, not a passive one. One of the main purposes of the program is to generate contacts in your community.

Here are some of the things you can expect, and how you can follow up with them.

Bible Quiz: On page five of HTH, there is always a Bible quiz. People fill this out and send it in to you. You can grade the quiz and send them back a bookmark, which comes with your box of extras. Better yet, hand deliver it, along with a goodie basket. Invite them to worship, and start building a relationship to pursue a Bible study.

Free Material Request: On page six, people can request additional material. The tracts and booklets are in your box of extras. For Bible studies, you can use what you have on hand or purchase material to send them.

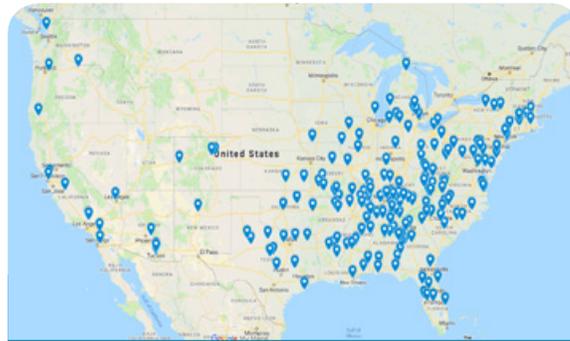
Free Back Page Material: Some issues of HTH include a giveaway item, such as a poster. A supply of these comes in your box of extras. Hand deliver it to their door for better results.

Website Contacts: People may come to your website or the HTH site to make a request. If they come to the HTH site, we send what they ask for and pass that contact on to you through our new

contact system. The system includes a map and a basic how-to video.

Emails, Phone Calls, Visitors: Be friendly, inviting, and ready for people who contact you. Always greet people with a smile (even on the phone; it comes through in your voice), and let them know that they have found the place where Christ's people dwell.

Bible Study Request: Our favorite contact is when people let us know that they would like some kind of a Bible study. If they contact us, we will get with the local contact and pass that study on to you. —**Luke Griffin**



Our new map showing the past 60 days of contacts.

Upcoming Workshops

May

May 10–12 Personal Evangelism Seminar at Morgantown, GA

May 17–18, Personal Evangelism Seminar 7B Lecture-ship, Adamsville, AL

May 23–25 Advanced Personal Evangelism Seminar – MSOP

June

June 7–8 Personal Evangelism Seminar – Looxahoma, MS

June 21–22 Gilt Edge church of Christ

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUIZZES

March

How Much Do You Know about King David? 1. Keeper of the sheep (1 Samuel 16:11); 2. Samuel (1 Samuel 16:13); 3. Armorbearer and musician (1 Samuel 16:21–23); 4. Saul (1 Samuel 18:11, 19:1–2); 5. Goliath (1 Samuel 17:4, 50); 6. 33 years (2 Samuel 5:5); 7. The Jebusites (2 Samuel 5:6); 8. Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:2–3); 9. Put Uriah in the front of the hottest battle and retreat, so he would be killed (2 Samuel 11:15); 10. Hebron (2 Samuel 5:3); 11. 30 years old (2 Samuel 5:4); 12. Saul's daughter Michal (1 Samuel 18:27); 13.

Absalom (2 Samuel 15:10); 14. Nabal (1 Samuel 25:5–38); 15. Saul (1 Samuel 19:1, 10–11); 16. Nathan (2 Samuel 12:1–7); 17. The child born to him and Bathsheba died (2 Samuel 12:9–14); 18. Amasa (2 Samuel 17:25); 19. He was hanged when his hair got caught in a tree and Joab thrust three spears through his heart and his armorbearers struck and killed him (2 Samuel 18:9–15); 20. Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:6–7).

April

I Stand Amazed (Miracles of Christ) 1. Water made into

wine (John 2:1–11) 2. Feeding the 5,000 (John 6:1–14; Matthew 14:15–21; Mark 6:35–44; Luke 9:12–17) 3. Walked on water (Matthew 14:22–33) 4. He calmed the storm (Matthew 8:23–27) 5. Leprosy (Matthew 8:1–4) 6. She touched the border of Jesus' garment (Luke 8:43–44) 7. His mother-in-law (Luke 4:38–39) 8. A man who was blind from birth (John 9:1–41) 9. Malchus (John 18:10–11) 10. They said He casts out devils by Beelzebub (Luke 11:14–15) 11. He said, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" (Luke 4:33–35) 12. 12 years old (Mark 5:22–24,

35–42) 13. Jesus said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." So he who was dead sat up and began to speak" (Luke 7:11–17).

May

Revelation: God's Final Words 1. John (Revelation 1:1) 2. Patmos (Revelation 1:9) 3. Seven stars (Revelation 1:16) 4. Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7–11) 5. Ephesus (Revelation 2:1–4) 6. 24 (Revelation 4:4) 7. 4 (Revelation 4:6) 8. The 4 creatures with 6 wings and eyes all around (Revelation 4:8) 9. 7 (Revelation 5:1) 10. Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David (Revelation

5:5) 11. 4 (Revelation 6:1–8) 12. Pale (Revelation 6:8) 13. Wormwood (Revelation 8:11) 14. He ate it (Revelation 10:10) 15. A garland of 12 stars (Revelation 12:1) 16. 1,000 years (Revelation 20:2) 17. Into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:15)

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they can learn more about Jesus!

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