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NEW TESTAMENT



New Living
Translation®
SECOND EDITION

Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.
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INDEX

THE LIFE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED

THE dictionary defines the word *abundant* as meaning *more than adequate, richly supplied, plentiful*. Jesus said, “My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.” (John 10:10). So the abundant life is one that is richly supplied with what we need, a life that is available because Jesus came to provide it.

But perhaps we should talk about what the abundant life is *not*. It isn't necessarily a life of wealth, comfort, leisure, or freedom from pain. It's not the “good life” we hear about on TV.

But it is a life of access to untold divine resources, the provision God has made for us to live whole, healthy, and hopeful lives. We have everything we need to live the abundant life, the life we were created by God to enjoy. The secret to the abundant life is a close relationship with God as we follow the truths of Scripture.

HOW DO YOU LIVE THE ABUNDANT LIFE?

Life requires certain elements to sustain it and provide for growth—nourishment, air, and water. If any of these ingredients is in short supply, the living organism will shrivel, weaken, and even die.

The Bible is the nourishment you need to live the abundant life. Jesus is the Bread of Life and Living Water necessary for living as a Christian, and he is made known to you through this book.

Although the New Testament was written hundreds of years ago, its message is timeless, personal, and practical because it is from God. As the number one bestseller of all time, the Bible is the most read book in history! Millions of people have discovered in it answers for their deepest needs—and words of comfort, encouragement, hope, inspiration, and guidance.

The New Testament contains the recipe for that which leads to the abundant life: a firm and fulfilling connection to Christ. In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, the apostle Paul reminds Timothy, “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. . . . God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”

But the New Testament is more than an answer book. It is really a library of books filled with inspiring stories, direct messages and instructions for living, and most important of all, the account of God visiting our earth in the person of Jesus Christ.

WHERE DO YOU BEGIN?

If the New Testament is fairly new to you, start your reading in the the book of Mark (page 29). This book will give you a dramatic introduction to the events that changed the world and can open the door to the abundant life. It is a short, fast-moving biography of Jesus Christ, written by a young man who probably witnessed most of Jesus’ three-year ministry. In addition, Mark probably knew Jesus’ disciples well and drew on their memories to help write this book.

Then follow the growth of Christianity by reading the book of Acts (page 98). This picks up where Mark ends and continues the dynamic story of the first Christians and how they spread the Good News of Jesus Christ all over the world.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU READ

Three important steps will help you understand your New Testament as you read.

Observation. The first step is to observe carefully what the author actually wrote. What is he saying? What is the obvious point? It might help if you stop and restate what the passage says in your own words. Or you can underline the key phrase that sums up what the author is saying. You can then try to understand what he means.

Interpretation. The second step is to try to interpret what the author meant when he wrote the passage. Why did he write what he did? What did it mean to him when he wrote it? For instance, in the book of John, the author says there were a lot of other things he could have written, “But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name” (John 20:31). As you read John 5, you might wonder why John included the story of the healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda. This requires the use of your imagination.

You will find a short background summary for each New Testament book at the end of this Abundant Life Index in the Overview of the New Testament Books section. The book summaries provide helpful perspective about the author and context of each book. A Bible commentary and Bible dictionary will also be helpful as you try to imagine what was going through the author’s mind as he wrote the passage. If this step of interpretation is difficult for you, be patient. Take your time and reread the passage until its meaning becomes clear.

Application. The third step involves applying the meaning of the passage to your life. Ask the questions, *So what?* and *What difference does this passage make in my life?* When you apply the meaning of the New Testament to your life, you will find that it’s purpose is to “teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right” (2 Timothy 3:16). To help you with your application, take a

look at the topical verse listings in the following index. This will help you find verses that relate to your personal needs.

Also take a look at the various lists of important New Testament readings. Take a look at the list of *Great Chapters of the New Testament*, and try to read and understand one of these chapters at least every month. Read each one repeatedly, and really work on understanding how they apply to your life. You will also find helpful the list of *Great Stories of the New Testament* for finding inspiring stories of how God relates to people. Also make use of the list of *Great Verses of the New Testament to Memorize*, which lists verses really worth committing to memory. At the end of these various lists, you'll also find a step-by-step plan to begin a personal relationship with Jesus Christ—the real key to an abundant life.

Don't be afraid to underline key statements in your New Testament or to make notes. This will help you locate passages that hold special meaning for you. To further your understanding, join a Bible study and share with others interested in knowing more about the Bible.

FROM RELIGION TO RELATIONSHIP

The word *religion* can sound cold and stifling, like a bunch of rules that stop us from enjoying life. But God wants much more with you than stiff adherence to a long list of laws and regulations. He wants you to have an abundant life found not in *religion*, but in a *relationship* with him through his son Jesus Christ and the power of his Spirit. Here are some Bible verses that will show you how much God wants to know and be known by you.

GOD'S LOVE FOR YOU

What is the price of five sparrows—two copper coins? Yet God does not forget a single one of them. And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows. Luke 12:6-7

God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir. Galatians 4:7

This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other.

1 John 4:10-11

GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Listen! We are here to proclaim that through this man Jesus there is forgiveness for your sins. Everyone who believes in him is declared right with God. Acts 13:38-39

Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. . . . And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. Romans 5:1, 9

Because of his grace he declared us righteous and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. Titus 3:7

But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. 1 John 1:9

GOD'S PROMISE OF HEAVEN

Jesus called a little child to him and put the child among them. Then he said, "I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven. So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven." Matthew 18:2-4

They will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life. Matthew 25:46

There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going. John 14:2-4

He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.

Revelation 21:4

GOD'S SON, JESUS CHRIST

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. John 1:1-5

He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God. So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. John 1:10-14

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. Colossians 1:15-17

The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven.

Hebrews 1:3

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Hebrews 13:8

GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT

If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize

him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. John 14:15-17

But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you. John 14:26

But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. Romans 8:9-11

The Spirit is God’s guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him. Ephesians 1:14

PRAYER—THE GREAT CONVERSATION

A conversation is a two-way event. You speak and you listen. That’s how prayer works as well. We tell God our thoughts, our needs, our hopes, and then we listen to him speak to us through his Word and his spirit. One way to pray is to say Scripture to God, inserting your name in the verse. For example, you might say, “For God loved *Julie* so much that he gave his one and only son, so that if *Julie* believes in him *she* will not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16, personalized). The following verses will help you understand something of what it means to communicate with God, along with some of the benefits.

TALKING WITH GOD

But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. When you pray, don’t babble on and

on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! Matthew 6:6-8

Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Matthew 7:7-8

Then Jesus said to the disciples, "Have faith in God. I tell you the truth, you can say to this mountain, 'May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and it will happen. But you must really believe it will happen and have no doubt in your heart. I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you've received it, it will be yours." Mark 11:22-24

Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. Luke 6:28
I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. 1 Timothy 2:1

Let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most. Hebrews 4:16

Confess your sins to each other, and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. James 5:16

THANKING GOD

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:20

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! Philippians 4:4
But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. James 1:6

LISTENING TO GOD

Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Matthew 7:24

Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.

Colossians 3:16

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. James 1:5

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge.

2 Peter 1:3-5

CHOOSING JOY AND FINDING PEACE

The abundant life is a life of joy and peace, no matter what your circumstances. It's not a life that's problem-free, but even in the midst of trouble, God is still there for us. He makes joy and peace available, but we must access them through right thinking, right attitudes, and right actions. These Bible verses will help you find the pathway to joy and peace.

RIGHT ATTITUDES

God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth. . . . God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy. God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God. Matthew 5:5, 7-8

Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other,

tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. Ephesians 4:31-32

Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord's return.

Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen.

You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near. James 5:7-8

HEALTHY THINKING

God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God. Matthew 5:9

It is what comes from inside that defiles you. For from within, out of a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you. Mark 7:20-23

Jesus said, "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food to eat or enough clothes to wear. For life is more than food, and your body more than clothing. Look at the ravens. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for God feeds them. And you are far more valuable to him than any birds! Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? And if worry can't accomplish a little thing like that, what's the use of worrying over bigger things?" Luke 12:22-26

I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid. John 14:27

I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives—especially the ability to prophesy.

1 Corinthians 14:1

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Galatians 5:22-23

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can under-

stand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7

You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.

James 1:19-20

Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.

1 Peter 5:7

ABUNDANT LIVING

The abundant life is life as God meant it to be. Of course, this side of heaven, we won't experience perfection or an end to difficulty. But by drawing on the endless supply of God's resources made available to us in Christ, we can have what we need for any and every situation. We can live life to its fullest by living it with God. These verses will guide you in accessing God's plentiful resources.

A LIFE OF PURPOSE

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. Romans 12:1-2

In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.

Romans 12:6-10

Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord

rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free.

Ephesians 6:7-8

Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ. Colossians 3:23-24

Dear friend, you are being faithful to God when you care for the traveling teachers who pass through, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church here of your loving friendship. Please continue providing for such teachers in a manner that pleases God. 3 John 1:5-6

A LIFE OF FAITH AND WISDOM

Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. But anyone who hears my teaching and ignores it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.

Matthew 7:24-27

Then Jesus told them, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and don't doubt, you can do things like this and much more. You can even say to this mountain, 'May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and it will happen. You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it." Matthew 21:21-22

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Ephesians 2:8-10

So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days.

Ephesians 5:15-16

Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness. Colossians 2:7

For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ.

Hebrews 3:14

So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. "For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. And my righteous ones will live by faith. But I will take no pleasure in anyone who turns away."

Hebrews 10:35-38

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. James 1:5-7

If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. James 3:13-17

LIFE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.

Ephesians 4:2

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Philippians 2:3-5

But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. Put on

your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him. Colossians 3:8-10

But those who won't care for their relatives, especially those in their own household, have denied the true faith. Such people are worse than unbelievers. 1 Timothy 5:8

Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters. Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it! Remember those in prison, as if you were there yourself. Remember also those being mistreated, as if you felt their pain in your own bodies. Hebrews 13:1-3

For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.

James 3:16-18

Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak evil against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. Remember, it is better to suffer for doing good, if that is what God wants, than to suffer for doing wrong! Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the Spirit. 1 Peter 3:16-18

A LIFE WITH RIGHT PRIORITIES

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. Matthew 6:33

Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Ephesians 5:16-17

Make it your goal to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we instructed you before. Then people who are not Christians will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others. 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

Await the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will bring you eternal life. In this way, you will keep yourselves safe in God's love.

Jude 1:21

A LIFE OF SERVING OTHERS

Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow. Matthew 5:42

Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me."

Matthew 25:34-36

Do to others as you would like them to do to you. If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them! And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? Even sinners do that much! And if you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other sinners for a full return. Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate. Luke 6:31-36

Invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. Then at the resurrection of the righteous, God will reward you for inviting those who could not repay you. Luke 14:13-14

If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.

Romans 12:8-10

So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever wasted. 1 Corinthians 15:58

So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith. Galatians 6:9-10

Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. Philippians 2:4

I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. Philippians 4:11-12

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.

Colossians 3:12-15

I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ. Your love has given me much joy and comfort, my brother, for your kindness has often refreshed the hearts of God's people. Philemon 1:6-7

And don't forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God. Hebrews 13:16

Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. 1 Peter 3:8

If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person? 1 John 3:17



OVERVIEW OF NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

MATTHEW

Author: Matthew (Levi)

Date: A.D. 60–65

Summary: This Gospel was written with the Jew in mind and therefore has many references to Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled by Jesus. It contains at least 129 quotations or allusions to the Old Testament. Matthew's objective was to show the Jewish people that Jesus was indeed their long-awaited Messiah.

MARK

Author: John Mark

Date: A.D. 55–65

Summary: The Gospel of Mark is the account of the life, ministry, miracles, and words of Jesus Christ. In contrast to Matthew, who primarily presents Jesus as the "Messiah," Mark emphasizes the servanthood of the Lord.

LUKE

Author: Luke

Date: Around A.D. 60

Summary: Luke was a Gentile who put his faith in Jesus Christ. His purpose for writing an account of Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection was to make the message of salvation understandable to those outside of the Jewish faith and culture.

JOHN

Author: John

Date: Around A.D. 90

Summary: While the emphasis in the other three Gospels centers around the description of the events in the life of Jesus, John often focuses upon the meaning of those events. For instance, while all four Gospels record the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, only John gives us Jesus'

message on the “Bread of life” that followed that miracle.

ACTS

Author: Luke

Date: A.D. 63–70

Summary: This book shows the church’s early development and rapid growth. It reveals how the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit transformed a diverse group of fishermen, tax collectors, and other ordinary folk into people who turned their world upside-down with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

ROMANS

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 58

Summary: This epistle contains some of the prime secrets of the Christian life. It is a hard-hitting diagnosis of the primary source of man’s problems: sin. It also shows the futility of thinking that the answers to our problems lie within our own selves.

1 CORINTHIANS

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 56

Summary: Paul wrote this epistle in response to certain situations that had arisen in the Corinthian church. He straightforwardly deals with many of the errors that were being believed and practiced by the people of this church. Among the pitfalls were sins of immorality, false teachings, problems regarding marriage, and lawsuits.

2 CORINTHIANS

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 57

Summary: Some of the Corinthians who were still living in sin after Paul’s first letter began denying Paul’s authority. Paul wrote this second letter to deal with the problems that persisted within the Corinthian church.

GALATIANS

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 49

Summary: Galatians is a foundational study that shows how complete the work of Jesus’ death on the cross was for our salvation. Nothing needs to be added to that work—nor does it need to be improved upon—for you can’t improve upon perfection.

EPHESIANS

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 61

Summary: The book of Ephesians shows us our rightful position as children of God “in the heavenlies” with Jesus Christ. It tells us of all that God has done for us, as well as how to fully appreciate and implement it practically in our lives.

PHILIPPIANS

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 61

Summary: This book explains the mind-set, attitude, and outlook the believer must have if he or she is going to experience the joy of the Lord in a troubled world.

COLOSSIANS

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 61

Summary: Paul wrote this epistle to refute certain false teachings that had found their way into the church. A common theme of this book is the superiority of Jesus Christ.

1 THESSALONIANS

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 51

Summary: The theme of this book focuses upon living a godly and holy life as we await the return of Jesus Christ. Paul also offers words of comfort concerning Christian loved ones who have died.

2 THESSALONIANS

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 51

Summary: This letter offers encouragement to the believers who were facing persecution. It also offers correct teaching on the subject of “the day of the Lord,” a confusing matter for some of the Thessalonian believers. In addition, some were not living as they should in light of the return of the Lord, so Paul addresses that issue as well.

1 TIMOTHY

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 64

Summary: Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, lays out what the conduct of the church and its leaders should be. Though Timothy himself was a pastor, these words apply to all who want to be used by God and have their lives make a difference.

2 TIMOTHY

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 67

Summary: Paul wrote this second letter to Timothy to encourage him to be faithful to Christ. Paul also included a glimpse of what the last days would look like.

TITUS

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 64

Summary: Paul wrote this letter to address the challenges facing Titus as an overseer of the churches on the island of Crete. He included criteria for qualifications of leadership, sound teaching, and good works.

PHILEMON

Author: Paul

Date: Around A.D. 61

Summary: This short but profound epistle contains a wonderful story of

the importance of forgiveness among Christians.

HEBREWS

Author: Uncertain; perhaps Paul, Barnabas, Apollos, Priscilla, Luke, or someone else

Date: Around A.D. 68

Summary: The book of Hebrews was written for the Jews who had accepted Jesus as their Messiah. They were in danger of slipping back into the traditions of Judaism because they had not put their roots down in the soil of Christianity.

JAMES

Author: James, Jesus’ half-brother

Date: Around A.D. 49

Summary: James speaks a lot about faith in his book, with an emphasis on results! He stresses the need to live a practical, seven-day-a-week working faith.

1 PETER

Author: Peter

Date: Around A.D. 63

Summary: The theme of Peter’s first epistle is suffering. He brings inspired words of comfort to those who suffer under persecution.

2 PETER

Author: Peter

Date: Around A.D. 67

Summary: In this epistle, Peter wants to remind the believers of certain important spiritual truths. Peter also warns of false teachers and speaks of the hope of the coming of the Lord.

1 JOHN

Author: John

Date: A.D. 85–90

Summary: In this letter, John points out that a person either is or is not a child of God. There is no middle ground. John clearly emphasizes that

if one is really a child of God, it will become evident in one's habitual behavior.

2 JOHN

Author: John

Date: Around A.D. 90

Summary: In this letter John points out that true Christian love involves more than just an emotional feeling. It is grounded in what is true. John also warns of false teachers, urging the believers not to receive them.

3 JOHN

Author: John

Date: Around A.D. 90

Summary: John wrote this letter to commend a believer named Gaius for

the hospitality he showed to traveling teachers of the gospel.

JUDE

Author: Jude, Jesus' half-brother

Date: Around A.D. 65

Summary: The book of Jude is one of the shortest books in the New Testament. Its theme centers around the great apostasy, or falling away from the faith, that will happen on earth before the return of Jesus Christ.

REVELATION

Author: John

Date: Around A.D. 95

Summary: In this great book, we learn of the return of Jesus Christ to the earth, as well as the events preceding that climactic moment.

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HOW TO KNOW JESUS PERSONALLY

GOD WANTS each of us to experience an abundant life filled with meaning, direction, love, and peace. God makes this kind of life possible through a personal relationship with his Son, Jesus Christ. You can start this relationship by accepting Jesus as your Savior and inviting him into your life. But before doing that, here are five truths that will help you understand God's desire for you:

1. God has a plan for your life. “No one can receive anything unless God gives it from heaven” (John 3:27). God created you and has good plans for your life. To know those plans, you must know God personally.

2. God's plan gives meaning. “Jesus replied, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty’” (John 6:35). Many people seek meaning and purpose for their life. But they never find it because they look for meaning in the wrong things and the wrong people. When you follow God's plans for your life, the most important of which is to

know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you will find meaning and purpose in all that you do.

3. *God's plan gives direction.* "Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, 'I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.'" (John 8:12). Without God's direction, you may not know what to do with your life. You may try a lot of things, hoping to find meaning in each one. But if you have God in your life, he will lead you and show you how to make your life count for him and his Kingdom.

4. *God's plan brings peace.* "I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid" (John 14:27). When you follow Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you will be at peace with God. You will also be filled with God's peace. So when troubles come, you will be able to have peace as you endure hardships.

5. *God's plan is for you to live with him in heaven.* "For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Before Adam and Eve sinned, they had a good relationship with God. Therefore, they were not ashamed to come into God's presence. But after they sinned, their relationship with God changed, and they were ashamed to come into God's physical presence. Sin had separated them and the entire human race—including you—from God. But God did not want sin to keep people from having a relationship with him. So he provided a way in which people could be cleansed of their sins and live with him in heaven forever. He gave his only Son, Jesus, as the perfect payment for everyone's sins.

Here are three things you must do in order to know Jesus personally as your Lord and Savior:

1. *Recognize that you are a sinner.* "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard" (Romans 3:23). "As the Scriptures say, 'No one is righteous—not even one'" (Romans 3:10). Because everyone is a sinner, no one deserves eternal life with God in heaven. In addition, no one can work hard enough to *earn* this life.

Instead, God gives eternal life to everyone who believes that Jesus Christ is his Son. Before you can appreciate what Jesus has done for you, you need to recognize that you are a sinner in need of God's forgiveness. If you never acknowledge this, you will never receive God's forgiveness for your sins. And you will never enter into heaven.

2. *Ask Jesus to forgive you.* "Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault" (Colossians 1:22). If you recognize that you are sinner, then you may be ready to ask Jesus to forgive you. Do you believe that Jesus is the eternal Son of God, who died to pay for your sins? If you do and you have never thanked Christ for dying for you, thank him right now in a simple prayer. Pray, "Lord, I thank you for paying for the sins I have committed. I give my life to you. Teach me the right way to live. Amen."

If you have believed in Christ now for the first time, write your name and today's date on the blank lines as a record of the time of your salvation.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

3. *Turn away from your sins.* "Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life is in them. So they can't keep on sinning, because they are children of God" (1 John 3:9). As a Christian, you may sin from time to time. But you should not continue to live a sinful lifestyle. Putting your faith in Jesus means that you are willingly turning away from your old sinful nature. It also means that you are living to please God. You can live to please God by obeying the commands he has given everyone in the Bible. If you obey God, you can be sure that you are a Christian and will one day have eternal life in heaven.

Matthew

The Ancestors of Jesus the Messiah

1 This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of David* and of Abraham:

- ² Abraham was the father of Isaac.
Isaac was the father of Jacob.
Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers.
- ³ Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (whose mother was Tamar).
Perez was the father of Hezron.
Hezron was the father of Ram.*
- ⁴ Ram was the father of Amminadab.
Amminadab was the father of Nahshon.
Nahshon was the father of Salmon.
- ⁵ Salmon was the father of Boaz (whose mother was Rahab).
Boaz was the father of Obed (whose mother was Ruth).
Obed was the father of Jesse.
- ⁶ Jesse was the father of King David.
David was the father of Solomon (whose mother was Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah).
- ⁷ Solomon was the father of Rehoboam.
Rehoboam was the father of Abijah.
Abijah was the father of Asa.*
- ⁸ Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat.
Jehoshaphat was the father of Jehoram.*
Jehoram was the father* of Uzziah.
- ⁹ Uzziah was the father of Jotham.
Jotham was the father of Ahaz.
Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah.
- ¹⁰ Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh.
Manasseh was the father of Amon.*
Amon was the father of Josiah.
- ¹¹ Josiah was the father of Jehoiachin* and his brothers (born at the time of the exile to Babylon).
- ¹² After the Babylonian exile:
Jehoiachin was the father of Shealtiel.
Shealtiel was the father of Zerubbabel.
- ¹³ Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud.
Abiud was the father of Eliakim.

Eliakim was the father of Azor.

- ¹⁴ Azor was the father of Zadok.
Zadok was the father of Akim.
Akim was the father of Eliud.
- ¹⁵ Eliud was the father of Eleazar.
Eleazar was the father of Matthan.
Matthan was the father of Jacob.
- ¹⁶ Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary.
Mary gave birth to Jesus, who is called the Messiah.

¹⁷All those listed above include fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the Babylonian exile, and fourteen from the Babylonian exile to the Messiah.

The Birth of Jesus the Messiah

¹⁸This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Joseph, her fiancé, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement* quietly.

²⁰As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. ²¹And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus,* for he will save his people from their sins."

²²All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet:

- ²³ "Look! The virgin will conceive a child!
She will give birth to a son,
and they will call him Immanuel,*
which means 'God is with us.'"

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife. ²⁵But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.

1:1 Greek *Jesus the Messiah, son of David*. **1:3** Greek *Aram*, a variant spelling of Ram; also in 1:4. See 1 Chr 2:9-10. **1:7** Greek *Asaph*, a variant spelling of Asa; also in 1:8. See 1 Chr 3:10. **1:8a** Greek *Joram*, a variant spelling of Jehoram; also in 1:8b. See 1 Kgs 22:50 and note at 1 Chr 3:11. **1:8b** Or *ancestor*; also in 1:11. **1:10** Greek *Amos*, a variant spelling of Amon; also in 1:10b. See 1 Chr 3:14. **1:11** Greek *Jeconiah*, a variant spelling of Jehoiachin; also in 1:12. See 2 Kgs 24:6 and note at 1 Chr 3:16. **1:19** Greek *to divorce her*. **1:21** *Jesus* means "The LORD saves." **1:23** Isa 7:14; 8:8, 10 (Greek version).

Visitors from the East

2 Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men* from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, ²“Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose,* and we have come to worship him.”

³King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. ⁴He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?”

⁵“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they said, “for this is what the prophet wrote:

⁶ ‘And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities* of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.’”

⁷Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. ⁸Then he told them, “Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!”

⁹After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! ¹¹They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹²When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

The Escape to Egypt

¹³After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother,” the angel said. “Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

¹⁴That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, ¹⁵and they stayed there until Herod’s death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: “I called my Son out of Egypt.”*

¹⁶Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men’s report of the star’s first ap-

pearance. ¹⁷Herod’s brutal action fulfilled what God had spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸ “A cry was heard in Ramah— weeping and great mourning. Rachel weeps for her children, refusing to be comforted, for they are dead.”*

The Return to Nazareth

¹⁹When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. ²⁰“Get up!” the angel said. “Take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel, because those who were trying to kill the child are dead.”

²¹So Joseph got up and returned to the land of Israel with Jesus and his mother. ²²But when he learned that the new ruler of Judea was Herod’s son Archelaus, he was afraid to go there. Then, after being warned in a dream, he left for the region of Galilee. ²³So the family went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what the prophets had said: “He will be called a Nazarene.”

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

3 In those days John the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness and began preaching. His message was, ²“Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.*” ³The prophet Isaiah was speaking about John when he said,

“He is a voice shouting in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the LORD’s coming! Clear the road for him!’”*

⁴John’s clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁵People from Jerusalem and from all of Judea and all over the Jordan Valley went out to see and hear John. ⁶And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

⁷But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to watch him baptize,* he denounced them. “You brood of snakes!” he exclaimed. “Who warned you to flee God’s coming wrath? ⁸Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God. ⁹Don’t just say to each other, ‘We’re safe, for we are descendants of Abraham.’ That means nothing, for I tell you, God can create children of Abraham from these very stones. ¹⁰Even now the ax of God’s judgment is poised, ready to sever the roots of the trees. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹“I baptize with* water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is com-

2:1 Or royal astrologers; Greek reads magi; also in 2:7, 16. 2:2 Or star in the east. 2:6a Greek the rulers. 2:6b Mic 5:2; 2 Sam 5:2. 2:15 Hos 11:1. 2:18 Jer 31:15. 3:2 Or has come, or is coming soon. 3:3 Isa 40:3 (Greek version). 3:7 Or coming to be baptized. 3:11a Or in.

ing soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.* ¹²He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire."

The Baptism of Jesus

¹³Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. ¹⁴But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptized by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?"

¹⁵But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires.*" So John agreed to baptize him.

¹⁶After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened* and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."

The Temptation of Jesus

4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. ²For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry.

³During that time the devil* came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread."

⁴But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say,
'People do not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the
mouth of God.'*"

⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, ⁶and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say,

'He will order his angels to protect you.
And they will hold you up with their hands
so you won't even hurt your foot on a
stone.'*"

⁷Jesus responded, "The Scriptures also say, 'You must not test the LORD your God.'*"

⁸Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him the kingdoms of the world and all their glory. ⁹"I will give it all to you," he said, "if you will kneel down and worship me."

¹⁰"Get out of here, Satan," Jesus told him. "For the Scriptures say,

'You must worship the LORD your God
and serve only him.'*"

¹¹Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.

The Ministry of Jesus Begins

¹²When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he left Judea and returned to Galilee. ¹³He went first to Nazareth, then left there and moved to Capernaum, beside the Sea of Galilee, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴This fulfilled what God said through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁵ "In the land of Zebulun and of Naphtali,
beside the sea, beyond the Jordan River,
in Galilee where so many Gentiles live,
¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light.
And for those who lived in the land where
death casts its shadow,
a light has shined."*

¹⁷From then on Jesus began to preach, "Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.*"

The First Disciples

¹⁸One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. ¹⁹Jesus called out to them, "Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!" ²⁰And they left their nets at once and followed him.

²¹A little farther up the shore he saw two other brothers, James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, repairing their nets. And he called them to come, too. ²²They immediately followed him, leaving the boat and their father behind.

Crowds Follow Jesus

²³Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. ²⁴News about him spread as far as Syria, and people soon began bringing to him all who were sick. And whatever their sickness or disease, or if they were demon-possessed or epileptic or paralyzed—he healed them all. ²⁵Large crowds followed him wherever he went—people from Galilee, the Ten Towns,* Jerusalem, from all over Judea, and from east of the Jordan River.

The Sermon on the Mount

5 One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, ²and he began to teach them.

3:11b Or in the Holy Spirit and in fire. 3:15 Or for we must fulfill all righteousness. 3:16 Some manuscripts read opened to him. 4:3 Greek the tempter. 4:4 Deut 8:3. 4:6 Ps 91:11-12. 4:7 Deut 6:16. 4:10 Deut 6:13. 4:15-16 Isa 9:1-2 (Greek version). 4:17 Or has come, or is coming soon. 4:25 Greek Decapolis.

The Beatitudes

- ³ "God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him,*
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
⁴ God blesses those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
⁵ God blesses those who are humble,
for they will inherit the whole earth.
⁶ God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice,*
for they will be satisfied.
⁷ God blesses those who are merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
⁸ God blesses those whose hearts are pure,
for they will see God.
⁹ God blesses those who work for peace,
for they will be called the children of God.
¹⁰ God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

¹¹"God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you* and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. ¹²Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

Teaching about Salt and Light

¹³"You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

¹⁴"You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. ¹⁵No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

Teaching about the Law

¹⁷"Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. ¹⁸I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. ¹⁹So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God's laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

²⁰"But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

Teaching about Anger

²¹"You have heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.*' ²²But I say, if you are even angry with someone,* you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot,* you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone,* you are in danger of the fires of hell.*

²³"So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, ²⁴leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

²⁵"When you are on the way to court with your adversary, settle your differences quickly. Otherwise, your accuser may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to an officer, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶And if that happens, you surely won't be free again until you have paid the last penny.*

Teaching about Adultery

²⁷"You have heard the commandment that says, 'You must not commit adultery.*' ²⁸But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹So if your eye—even your good eye*—causes you to lust, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰And if your hand—even your stronger hand*—causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

Teaching about Divorce

³¹"You have heard the law that says, 'A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a written notice of divorce.*' ³²But I say that a man who divorces his wife, unless she has been unfaithful, causes her to commit adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman also commits adultery.

Teaching about Vows

³³"You have also heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not break your vows; you must carry out the vows you make to the Lord.*' ³⁴But I say, do not make any vows! Do not say, 'By heaven!' because heaven is God's throne. ³⁵And do not say, 'By the earth!' because the earth is his footstool. And do not say, 'By Jerusalem!' for Jerusalem is the city of the great King. ³⁶Do not even say, 'By my head!' for you can't turn one hair white or black. ³⁷Just say a simple, 'Yes, I will,' or 'No, I won't.' Anything beyond this is from the evil one.

5:3 Greek *poor in spirit*. 5:6 Or for *righteousness*. 5:11 Some manuscripts omit *and lie about you*. 5:21 Exod 20:13; Deut 5:17. 5:22a Some manuscripts add *without cause*. 5:22b Greek uses an Aramaic term of contempt: *If you say to your brother, 'Raca.'* 5:22c Greek *if you say, 'You fool.'* 5:22d Greek *Gehenna*; also in 5:29, 30. 5:26 Greek *the last kodrantes* [i.e., quadrans]. 5:27 Exod 20:14; Deut 5:18. 5:29 Greek *your right eye*. 5:30 Greek *your right hand*. 5:31 Deut 24:1. 5:33 Num 30:2.

Teaching about Revenge

³⁸“You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’³⁸ But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. ⁴⁰If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. ⁴¹If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile,⁴⁰ carry it two miles. ⁴²Give to those who ask, and don’t turn away from those who want to borrow.

Teaching about Love for Enemies

⁴³“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’⁴³ and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴But I say, love your enemies!⁴⁴ Pray for those who persecute you! ⁴⁵In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. ⁴⁶If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. ⁴⁷If you are kind only to your friends,⁴⁶ how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. ⁴⁸But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Teaching about Giving to the Needy

6 “Watch out! Don’t do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. ²When you give to someone in need, don’t do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. ³But when you give to someone in need, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. ⁴Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Teaching about Prayer and Fasting

⁵“When you pray, don’t be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ⁶But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

⁷“When you pray, don’t babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!⁷ Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
may your name be kept holy.

¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon.
May your will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today the food we need,^{*}

¹² and forgive us our sins,
as we have forgiven those who sin
against us.

¹³ And don’t let us yield to temptation,^{*}
but rescue us from the evil one.^{*}

¹⁴If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. ¹⁵But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

¹⁶And when you fast, don’t make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. ¹⁷But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. ¹⁸Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Teaching about Money and Possessions

¹⁹“Don’t store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

²²“Your eye is a lamp that provides light for your body. When your eye is good, your whole body is filled with light. ²³But when your eye is bad, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

²⁴“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

²⁵“That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing? ²⁶Look at the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren’t you far more valuable to him than they are? ²⁷Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

²⁸“And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing,²⁸ yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as

5:38 Greek the law that says: ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ Exod 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21. 5:41 Greek million (4,854 feet or 1,478 meters). 5:43 Lev 19:18. 5:44 Some manuscripts add Bless those who curse you. Do good to those who hate you. Compare Luke 6:27-28. 5:47 Greek your brothers. 6:11 Or Give us today our food for the day; or Give us today our food for tomorrow. 6:13a Or And keep us from being tested. 6:13b Or from evil. Some manuscripts add For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

they are. ³⁰And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

³¹“So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ ³²These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. ³³Seek the Kingdom of God* above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

³⁴“So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

Do Not Judge Others

7 “Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. ²For you will be treated as you treat others.* The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.*

³“And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye* when you have a log in your own? ⁴How can you think of saying to your friend,* ‘Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can’t see past the log in your own eye? ⁵Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend’s eye.

⁶“Don’t waste what is holy on people who are unholy.* Don’t throw your pearls to pigs! They will trample the pearls, then turn and attack you.

Effective Prayer

⁷“Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

⁹“You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? ¹⁰Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! ¹¹So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.

The Golden Rule

¹²“Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.

The Narrow Gate

¹³“You can enter God’s Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell* is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. ¹⁴But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.

6:33 Some manuscripts do not include of God. 7:2a Or For God will judge you as you judge others. 7:2b Or The measure you give will be the measure you get back. 7:3 Greek your brother’s eye; also in 7:5. 7:4 Greek your brother. 7:6 Greek Don’t give the sacred to dogs. 7:13 Greek The road that leads to destruction. 8:4 See Lev 14:2-32. 8:5 Greek a centurion; similarly in 8:8, 13.

The Tree and Its Fruit

¹⁵“Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. ¹⁶You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree can’t produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can’t produce good fruit. ¹⁹So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.

True Disciples

²¹“Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. ²²On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ ²³But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’

Building on a Solid Foundation

²⁴“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. ²⁶But anyone who hears my teaching and ignores it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. ²⁷When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

²⁸When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹for he taught with real authority—quite unlike their teachers of religious law.

Jesus Heals a Man with Leprosy

8 Large crowds followed Jesus as he came down the mountainside. ²Suddenly, a man with leprosy approached him and knelt before him. “Lord,” the man said, “if you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean.”

³Jesus reached out and touched him. “I am willing,” he said. “Be healed!” And instantly the leprosy disappeared. ⁴Then Jesus said to him, “Don’t tell anyone about this. Instead, go to the priest and let him examine you. Take along the offering required in the law of Moses for those who have been healed of leprosy.* This will be a public testimony that you have been cleansed.”

The Faith of a Roman Officer

⁵When Jesus returned to Capernaum, a Roman officer* came and pleaded with him, ⁶“Lord, my

young servant* lies in bed, paralyzed and in terrible pain."

⁷Jesus said, "I will come and heal him."

⁸But the officer said, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come into my home. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed. ⁹I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, 'Go,' and they go, or 'Come,' and they come. And if I say to my slaves, 'Do this,' they do it."

¹⁰When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, "I tell you the truth, I haven't seen faith like this in all Israel! ¹¹And I tell you this, that many Gentiles will come from all over the world—from east and west—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven. ¹²But many Israelites—those for whom the Kingdom was prepared—will be thrown into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

¹³Then Jesus said to the Roman officer, "Go back home. Because you believed, it has happened." And the young servant was healed that same hour.

Jesus Heals Many People

¹⁴When Jesus arrived at Peter's house, Peter's mother-in-law was sick in bed with a high fever. ¹⁵But when Jesus touched her hand, the fever left her. Then she got up and prepared a meal for him.

¹⁶That evening many demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. He cast out the evil spirits with a simple command, and he healed all the sick. ¹⁷This fulfilled the word of the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, who said,

"He took our sicknesses
and removed our diseases."^{*}

The Cost of Following Jesus

¹⁸When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he instructed his disciples to cross to the other side of the lake.

¹⁹Then one of the teachers of religious law said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

²⁰But Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man* has no place even to lay his head."

²¹Another of his disciples said, "Lord, first let me return home and bury my father."

²²But Jesus told him, "Follow me now. Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead."^{*}

Jesus Calms the Storm

²³Then Jesus got into the boat and started across the lake with his disciples. ²⁴Suddenly, a fierce

storm struck the lake, with waves breaking into the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. ²⁵The disciples went and woke him up, shouting, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

²⁶Jesus responded, "Why are you afraid? You have so little faith!" Then he got up and rebuked the wind and waves, and suddenly all was calm.

²⁷The disciples were amazed. "Who is this man?" they asked. "Even the winds and waves obey him!"

Jesus Heals Two Demon-Possessed Men

²⁸When Jesus arrived on the other side of the lake, in the region of the Gadarenes,* two men who were possessed by demons met him. They lived in a cemetery and were so violent that no one could go through that area.

²⁹They began screaming at him, "Why are you interfering with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torture us before God's appointed time?"

³⁰There happened to be a large herd of pigs feeding in the distance. ³¹So the demons begged, "If you cast us out, send us into that herd of pigs."

³²"All right, go!" Jesus commanded them. So the demons came out of the men and entered the pigs, and the whole herd plunged down the steep hillside into the lake and drowned in the water.

³³The herdsmen fled to the nearby town, telling everyone what happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴Then the entire town came out to meet Jesus, but they begged him to go away and leave them alone.

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

9 Jesus climbed into a boat and went back across the lake to his own town. ²Some people brought to him a paralyzed man on a mat. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Be encouraged, my child! Your sins are forgiven."

³But some of the teachers of religious law said to themselves, "That's blasphemy! Does he think he's God?"

⁴Jesus knew* what they were thinking, so he asked them, "Why do you have such evil thoughts in your hearts? ⁵Is it easier to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or 'Stand up and walk'?" ⁶So I will prove to you that the Son of Man* has the authority on earth to forgive sins." Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!"

⁷And the man jumped up and went home! ⁸Fear swept through the crowd as they saw this happen. And they praised God for sending a man with such great authority.*

Jesus Calls Matthew

⁹As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's

8:6 Or child; also in 8:13. 8:17 Isa 53:4. 8:20 "Son of Man" is a title Jesus used for himself. 8:22 Greek *Let the dead bury their own dead.* 8:28 Other manuscripts read *Gerasenes*; still others read *Gergesenes*. Compare Mark 5:1; Luke 8:26. 9:4 Some manuscripts read *saw.* 9:6 "Son of Man" is a title Jesus used for himself. 9:8 Greek *for giving such authority to human beings.*

booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him.

¹⁰Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. ¹¹But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with such scum?*"

¹²When Jesus heard this, he said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do."

¹³Then he added, "Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.*' For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners."

A Discussion about Fasting

¹⁴One day the disciples of John the Baptist came to Jesus and asked him, "Why don't your disciples fast* like we do and the Pharisees do?"

¹⁵Jesus replied, "Do wedding guests mourn while celebrating with the groom? Of course not. But someday the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

¹⁶Besides, who would patch old clothing with new cloth? For the new patch would shrink and rip away from the old cloth, leaving an even bigger tear than before.

¹⁷"And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. For the old skins would burst from the pressure, spilling the wine and ruining the skins. New wine is stored in new wineskins so that both are preserved."

Jesus Heals in Response to Faith

¹⁸As Jesus was saying this, the leader of a synagogue came and knelt before him. "My daughter has just died," he said, "but you can bring her back to life again if you just come and lay your hand on her."

¹⁹So Jesus and his disciples got up and went with him. ²⁰Just then a woman who had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding came up behind him. She touched the fringe of his robe, ²¹for she thought, "If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed."

²²Jesus turned around, and when he saw her he said, "Daughter, be encouraged! Your faith has made you well." And the woman was healed at that moment.

²³When Jesus arrived at the official's home, he saw the noisy crowd and heard the funeral music. ²⁴"Get out!" he told them. "The girl isn't dead; she's only asleep." But the crowd laughed at him. ²⁵After the crowd was put outside, however, Jesus went in and took the girl by the hand, and she stood up! ²⁶The report of this miracle swept through the entire countryside.

Jesus Heals the Blind

²⁷After Jesus left the girl's home, two blind men followed along behind him, shouting, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"

²⁸They went right into the house where he was staying, and Jesus asked them, "Do you believe I can make you see?"

"Yes, Lord," they told him, "we do."

²⁹Then he touched their eyes and said, "Because of your faith, it will happen." ³⁰Then their eyes were opened, and they could see! Jesus sternly warned them, "Don't tell anyone about this." ³¹But instead, they went out and spread his fame all over the region.

³²When they left, a demon-possessed man who couldn't speak was brought to Jesus. ³³So Jesus cast out the demon, and then the man began to speak. The crowds were amazed. "Nothing like this has ever happened in Israel!" they exclaimed.

³⁴But the Pharisees said, "He can cast out demons because he is empowered by the prince of demons."

The Need for Workers

³⁵Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. ³⁸So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields."

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Apostles

10 Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to cast out evil* spirits and to heal every kind of disease and illness. ²Here are the names of the twelve apostles:

first, Simon (also called Peter),
then Andrew (Peter's brother),
James (son of Zebedee),
John (James's brother),

³ Philip,
Bartholomew,
Thomas,
Matthew (the tax collector),
James (son of Alphaeus),
Thaddaeus,*

⁴ Simon (the zealot*),
Judas Iscariot (who later betrayed him).

⁵Jesus sent out the twelve apostles with these instructions: "Don't go to the Gentiles or the Samaritans, ⁶but only to the people of Israel—God's lost sheep. ⁷Go and announce to them

9:11 Greek with tax collectors and sinners? 9:13 Hos 6:6 (Greek version). 9:14 Some manuscripts read *fast often*. 10:1 Greek *unclean*. 10:3 Other manuscripts read *Lebbaeus*; still others read *Lebbaeus who is called Thaddaeus*. 10:4 Greek the *Cananean*, an Aramaic term for Jewish nationalists.

that the Kingdom of Heaven is near.* Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received!

⁹Don't take any money in your money belts—no gold, silver, or even copper coins. ¹⁰Don't carry a traveler's bag with a change of clothes and sandals or even a walking stick. Don't hesitate to accept hospitality, because those who work deserve to be fed.

¹¹Whenever you enter a city or village, search for a worthy person and stay in his home until you leave town. ¹²When you enter the home, give it your blessing. ¹³If it turns out to be a worthy home, let your blessing stand; if it is not, take back the blessing. ¹⁴If any household or town refuses to welcome you or listen to your message, shake its dust from your feet as you leave. ¹⁵I tell you the truth, the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah will be better off than such a town on the judgment day.

¹⁶Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and harmless as doves. ¹⁷But beware! For you will be handed over to the courts and will be flogged with whips in the synagogues. ¹⁸You will stand trial before governors and kings because you are my followers. But this will be your opportunity to tell the rulers and other unbelievers about me.* ¹⁹When you are arrested, don't worry about how to respond or what to say. God will give you the right words at the right time. ²⁰For it is not you who will be speaking—it will be the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

²¹A brother will betray his brother to death, a father will betray his own child, and children will rebel against their parents and cause them to be killed. ²²And all nations will hate you because you are my followers.* But everyone who endures to the end will be saved. ²³When you are persecuted in one town, flee to the next. I tell you the truth, the Son of Man* will return before you have reached all the towns of Israel.

²⁴Students* are not greater than their teacher, and slaves are not greater than their master. ²⁵Students are to be like their teacher, and slaves are to be like their master. And since I, the master of the household, have been called the prince of demons,* the members of my household will be called by even worse names!

²⁶But don't be afraid of those who threaten you. For the time is coming when everything that is covered will be revealed, and all that is secret will be made known to all. ²⁷What I tell you now in the darkness, shout abroad when day-break comes. What I whisper in your ear, shout from the housetops for all to hear!

²⁸Don't be afraid of those who want to kill

your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell.* ²⁹What is the price of two sparrows—one copper coin*? But not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it. ³⁰And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. ³¹So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.

³²Everyone who acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. ³³But everyone who denies me here on earth, I will also deny before my Father in heaven.

³⁴Don't imagine that I came to bring peace to the earth! I came not to bring peace, but a sword.

³⁵ I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

³⁶ Your enemies will be right in your own household!*

³⁷If you love your father or mother more than you love me, you are not worthy of being mine; or if you love your son or daughter more than me, you are not worthy of being mine. ³⁸If you refuse to take up your cross and follow me, you are not worthy of being mine. ³⁹If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it.

⁴⁰Anyone who receives you receives me, and anyone who receives me receives the Father who sent me. ⁴¹If you receive a prophet as one who speaks for God,* you will be given the same reward as a prophet. And if you receive righteous people because of their righteousness, you will be given a reward like theirs. ⁴²And if you give even a cup of cold water to one of the least of my followers, you will surely be rewarded."

Jesus and John the Baptist

11 When Jesus had finished giving these instructions to his twelve disciples, he went out to teach and preach in towns throughout the region.

John the Baptist, who was in prison, heard about all the things the Messiah was doing. So he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, ³"Are you the Messiah we've been expecting,* or should we keep looking for someone else?"

Jesus told them, "Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen—⁵the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor. ⁶And tell him, 'God blesses those who do not turn away because of me.*'"

10:7 Or has come, or is coming soon. 10:18 Or But this will be your testimony against the rulers and other unbelievers.

10:22 Greek on account of my name. 10:23 "Son of Man" is a title Jesus used for himself. 10:24 Or Disciples. 10:25 Greek Beelzebul; other manuscripts read Beelzeboul; Latin version reads Beelzebub. 10:28 Greek Gehenna. 10:29 Greek one assarion [i.e., one "as," a Roman coin equal to 1/16 of a denarius]. 10:35-36 Mic 7:6. 10:41 Greek receive a prophet in the name of a prophet.

11:3 Greek Are you the one who is coming? 11:6 Or who are not offended by me.

⁷As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began talking about him to the crowds. "What kind of man did you go into the wilderness to see? Was he a weak reed, swayed by every breath of wind? ⁸Or were you expecting to see a man dressed in expensive clothes? No, people with expensive clothes live in palaces. ⁹Were you looking for a prophet? Yes, and he is more than a prophet. ¹⁰John is the man to whom the Scriptures refer when they say,

'Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
and he will prepare your way before you.*

¹¹"I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist. Yet even the least person in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he is! ¹²And from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing, and violent people are attacking it.* ¹³For before John came, all the prophets and the law of Moses looked forward to this present time. ¹⁴And if you are willing to accept what I say, he is Elijah, the one the prophets said would come.* ¹⁵Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!

¹⁶"To what can I compare this generation? It is like children playing a game in the public square. They complain to their friends,

¹⁷'We played wedding songs,
and you didn't dance,
so we played funeral songs,
and you didn't mourn.'

¹⁸For John didn't spend his time eating and drinking, and you say, 'He's possessed by a demon.' ¹⁹The Son of Man,* on the other hand, feasts and drinks, and you say, 'He's a glutton and a drunkard, and a friend of tax collectors and other sinners!' But wisdom is shown to be right by its results."

Judgment for the Unbelievers

²⁰Then Jesus began to denounce the towns where he had done so many of his miracles, because they hadn't repented of their sins and turned to God. ²¹"What sorrow awaits you, Korazin and Bethsaida! For if the miracles I did in you had been done in wicked Tyre and Sidon, their people would have repented of their sins long ago, clothing themselves in burlap and throwing ashes on their heads to show their remorse. ²²I tell you, Tyre and Sidon will be better off on judgment day than you.

²³"And you people of Capernaum, will you be honored in heaven? No, you will go down to the place of the dead.* For if the miracles I did for you had been done in wicked Sodom, it would

still be here today. ²⁴I tell you, even Sodom will be better off on judgment day than you."

Jesus' Prayer of Thanksgiving

²⁵At that time Jesus prayed this prayer: "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike. ²⁶Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way!

²⁷"My Father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

²⁸Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

A Discussion about the Sabbath

12 At about that time Jesus was walking through some grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, so they began breaking off some heads of grain and eating them. ²But some Pharisees saw them do it and protested, "Look, your disciples are breaking the law by harvesting grain on the Sabbath."

³Jesus said to them, "Haven't you read in the Scriptures what David did when he and his companions were hungry? ⁴He went into the house of God, and they broke the law by eating the sacred loaves of bread that only the priests are allowed to eat. ⁵And haven't you read in the law of Moses that the priests on duty in the Temple may work on the Sabbath? ⁶I tell you, there is one here who is even greater than the Temple! ⁷But you would not have condemned my innocent disciples if you knew the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.*' ⁸For the Son of Man* is Lord, even over the Sabbath!"

Jesus Heals on the Sabbath

⁹Then Jesus went over to their synagogue, ¹⁰where he noticed a man with a deformed hand. The Pharisees asked Jesus, "Does the law permit a person to work by healing on the Sabbath?" (They were hoping he would say yes, so they could bring charges against him.)

¹¹And he answered, "If you had a sheep that fell into a well on the Sabbath, wouldn't you work to pull it out? Of course you would. ¹²And how much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Yes, the law permits a person to do good on the Sabbath."

¹³Then he said to the man, "Hold out your

11:10 Mal 3:1. 11:12 Or until now, eager multitudes have been pressing into the Kingdom of Heaven. 11:14 See Mal 4:5.

11:19 "Son of Man" is a title Jesus used for himself. 11:23 Greek to Hades. 12:7 Hos 6:6 (Greek version). 12:8 "Son of Man" is a title Jesus used for himself.