

Q U I E T S T R E N G T H
NEW TESTAMENT
with Psalms and Proverbs

QUIET STRENGTH

NEW TESTAMENT

with Psalms and Proverbs



New Living
Translation®

SECOND EDITION

Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.
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A Letter from Tony Dungy

As a professional football coach, I spend a lot of time meeting with our team's players to help them improve. The number one teaching aid we coaches have for them is our playbook. It includes all the information they'll need to do their jobs and be successful on the field. We refer to the playbook in our meetings and also encourage them to take it home to study because the book is filled with information to make playing the game much easier. As coaches, we want our players to know the playbook inside and out *before* they go out on the field.

The Bible is God's playbook for us. It has the information we need to enjoy life and to do his will. We would benefit from reading God's playbook before we hit the field, too, but we don't always do that. Often we go to the Bible only after we've gotten into a tough situation. This is like a player trying to read his playbook once we've gotten behind or after the game is over. It may help, but not as much as knowing what to do beforehand, so he can make the right decisions during the game.

Often when we have a player who isn't playing up to his potential, it's because he's not sure exactly what to do on the field. We always encourage those players to "get in their book." While they are studying, the coaches are always there to answer questions they might have.

You may not be enjoying life as much as you could or be living up to your potential for the Lord. Getting into his book, the Bible, is the best way to improve your life. And like a good head coach, God is always there—through prayer—to answer questions about those things in his Word that we might not understand. I encourage you to read the Bible and to pray, communicating with God daily. That's the best way to be successful in the game of life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tony Dungy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

A Life of Quiet Strength

How can we live a life of quiet strength in a world of constant change? Many people around us are basing important decisions on the latest fads and marketing slogans, but these shift and change as quickly as the clock ticks. Where do we find the solid foundation that we need to stand strong as the earth rocks and trembles beneath our feet?

An ancient Hebrew songwriter wrote these words: “God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. So we will not fear when earthquakes come and the mountains crumble into the sea. Let the oceans roar and foam. Let the mountains tremble as the waters surge!” (Psalm 46:1-3). This writer knew a truth about God that we need to take to heart. No matter what is happening around us, no matter how tough things get, God doesn’t change and the principles and truths he has defined for life don’t change either. If we can get in line with God’s principles, practices, and priorities, staying in sync with his plan for us, we will stand strong no matter what life throws at us.

WHERE DO YOU BEGIN?

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, or even die. God’s Word in the Bible is the nourishment you need to live a life of quiet strength. Although the Bible 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, it 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.

If the New Testament is fairly new to you, start your reading in the book of Mark (page 31). 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 100). 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 a 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 the Quiet Strength Verse Finder 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 its 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 verse finder. This will help you find verses that relate to your personal needs.

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.

Quiet Strength Verse Finder

So how and where do we get a handle on God's principles, practices, and priorities? Though we all may have a conscience of some sort, most of us don't walk around with a divine voice in our head. Even so, God has left us with his Word in the Scriptures, where he paints a realistic picture of our human brokenness, while also unfolding his plan for our help and healing through a relationship with him. This verse finder is a great place to begin this search for the truth necessary to stand firm in a shifting, broken world. Take a look at the Scriptures associated with the principles, practices, and priorities listed here and prayerfully consider what God might be saying you.

I. **PRINCIPLES** of a Winning Life

➤ **APPEARANCES**

Don't be concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. You should clothe yourselves instead with the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God. *1 Peter 3:3-4*

Beauty begins inside a person. We should spend more of our time cultivating our character than worrying about our outward appearance.

Appearances can be deceiving. . . . *Matthew 23:27, page 24*

Beauty comes in many different forms. . . . *1 Corinthians 15:41, page 150*

Inner beauty should be our priority. . . . *1 Timothy 2:9-10, page 180*

Do not judge people by their outward appearance. . . . *James 2:2-4, page 200*

➤ **ASSURANCE**

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 8:38-39*

The Bible is packed with promises of God's everlasting love for those who trust him. In times of doubt, we can cling to these promises.

God will not refuse any who come to him. . . . *John 6:37-40, page 84*

No one can take us away from God. . . . *John 10:27-29, page 89*

Christians have peace with God. . . . *Romans 5:1-5, page 130*

Salvation cannot be canceled. . . . *Romans 11:29, page 136*

Our salvation was guaranteed before Creation. . . . *Ephesians 1:4-5, page 165*

Assurance comes from faith. . . . *Ephesians 3:12, page 166*

God will guard those entrusted to him. . . . *2 Timothy 1:12, page 184*

➤ **CHANGE**

God also bound himself with an oath, so that those who received the promise could be perfectly sure that he would never change his mind. *Hebrews 6:17*

God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. So we will not fear when earthquakes come and the mountains crumble into the sea. Let the oceans roar and foam. Let the mountains tremble as the waters surge! *Psalms 46:1-3*

In the midst of unsettling change in your life, remember that God never changes.

Wisdom for dealing with change. . . . *2 Timothy 1:13-14, page 184*

Jesus is changeless. . . . *Hebrews 1:10-12, page 190*

Our eternal hope in heaven is not subject to decay. . . . *1 Peter 1:4, page 204*

God will never fail or change. . . . *Psalms 59:9-10, page 259*

➤ **COMFORT**

God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted. *Matthew 5:4*

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. For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. *2 Corinthians 1:3-5*

God's comfort is sure and gentle, and meets our deepest needs. And it is available to all who come to him.

God's Holy Spirit is our Comforter. . . . *John 14:16, page 93*

Jesus has overcome the world's troubles. . . . *John 16:33, page 95*

God comforts those who are hurting. . . . *2 Corinthians 1:3-11, page 152*

Christians should comfort each other. . . . *1 Thessalonians 4:18, page 176*

At Christ's return, all pain will end. . . . *Revelation 21:3-4, page 231*

➤ **COMMUNITY**

Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. *Philippians 2:1-2*

How wonderful and pleasant it is when brothers live together in harmony! *Psalms 133:1*

God doesn't want his people to live in isolation. The church is a spiritual community that can support us and help us grow in knowledge and faith.

Christians should not live in isolation. . . . *John 17:11, page 95*

We should bear one another's joys and burdens. . . . *Romans 12:9-16, page 136*

Believers must seek unity in all essentials. . . . *1 Corinthians 1:10, page 140*

There can be great unity even in great diversity. . . . *Ephesians 4:3-13, page 167*

Christ's love should bring unity among believers. . . . *Philippians 1:3-11, page 169*

Overview of the New Testament Books

MATTHEW

Author: Matthew (Levi)

Date: A.D. 60–65

Genre: Gospel narrative

Summary: This Gospel was written with Jewish people in mind and therefore has many references to Old Testament prophecies that Jesus fulfilled. 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

Genre: Gospel narrative

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

LUKE

Author: Luke

Date: Around A.D. 60

Genre: Gospel narrative

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

Genre: Gospel narrative

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

Overview of Psalms and Proverbs

PSALMS

Authors: David, Asaph, the sons of Korah, Solomon, Heman, Ethan, and Moses

Date: 1440-586 B.C.

Genre: Poetry

Summary: The book of Psalms is from the Old Testament but is included in this New Testament because its poetry speaks meaningfully to almost every area of life. The central theme is the praise and worship of our sovereign and loving God. Besides being a source of comfort and worship, the book of Psalms also contains prophetic statements about Jesus Christ.

PROVERBS

Authors: Solomon, Agur, and Lemuel

Date: Around 900 B.C.

Genre: Wisdom Literature

Summary: The book of Proverbs is from the Old Testament but is included in this New Testament because of its practical wisdom. Proverbs was compiled and written by a man famous for his wisdom, King Solomon. It contains God's divine wisdom for every area of life, such as choosing friends, handling temptation, raising children, and knowing God.

A Note to Readers

The *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, was first published in 1996. It quickly became one of the most popular Bible translations in the English-speaking world. While the NLT's influence was rapidly growing, the Bible Translation Committee determined that an additional investment in scholarly review and text refinement could make it even better. So shortly after its initial publication, the committee began an eight-year process with the purpose of increasing the level of the NLT's precision without sacrificing its easy-to-understand quality. This second-generation text was completed in 2004 and is reflected in this edition of the New Living Translation. An additional update with minor changes was subsequently introduced in 2007.

The goal of any Bible translation is to convey the meaning and content of the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts as accurately as possible to contemporary readers. The challenge for our translators was to create a text that would communicate as clearly and powerfully to today's readers as the original texts did to readers and listeners in the ancient biblical world. The resulting translation is easy to read and understand, while also accurately communicating the meaning and content of the original biblical texts. The NLT is a general-purpose text especially good for study, devotional reading, and reading aloud in worship services.

We believe that the New Living Translation—which combines the latest biblical scholarship with a clear, dynamic writing style—will communicate God's word powerfully to all who read it. We publish it with the prayer that God will use it to speak his timeless truth to the church and the world in a fresh, new way.

The Publishers
October 2007

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, ^{2a}“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, ^{2a}“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 all the kingdoms of the world and 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 do not include *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. 5:23 Greek *gift*; also in 5:24. 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.”³⁹But 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,* 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’* and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴But I say, love your enemies!* 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,* 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! ⁹Pray 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.*

¹⁴“If 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.

¹⁶“And 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.

²²Your 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, ²⁹yet 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.*

Psalms

BOOK ONE (Psalms 1–41)

1 Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers.

2 But they delight in the law of the LORD, meditating on it day and night.

3 They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.

4 But not the wicked! They are like worthless chaff, scattered by the wind.

5 They will be condemned at the time of judgment. Sinners will have no place among the godly.

6 For the LORD watches over the path of the godly, but the path of the wicked leads to destruction.

2 **1** Why are the nations so angry? Why do they waste their time with futile plans?

2 The kings of the earth prepare for battle; the rulers plot together against the LORD and against his anointed one.

3 "Let us break their chains," they cry, "and free ourselves from slavery to God."

4 But the one who rules in heaven laughs. The Lord scoffs at them.

5 Then in anger he rebukes them, terrifying them with his fierce fury.

6 For the Lord declares, "I have placed my chosen king on the throne in Jerusalem,* on my holy mountain."

7 The king proclaims the LORD's decree: "The LORD said to me, 'You are my son.*

Today I have become your Father.*

8 Only ask, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, the whole earth as your possession.

9 You will break* them with an iron rod and smash them like clay pots."

10 Now then, you kings, act wisely! Be warned, you rulers of the earth!

11 Serve the LORD with reverent fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Submit to God's royal son,* or he will become angry, and you will be destroyed in the midst of all your activities—

for his anger flares up in an instant. But what joy for all who take refuge in him!

3 *A psalm of David, regarding the time David fled from his son Absalom.*

1 O LORD, I have so many enemies; so many are against me.

2 So many are saying, "God will never rescue him!"

*Interlude**

3 But you, O LORD, are a shield around me; you are my glory, the one who holds my head high.

4 I cried out to the LORD, and he answered me from his holy mountain.

Interlude

5 I lay down and slept, yet I woke up in safety, for the LORD was watching over me.

6 I am not afraid of ten thousand enemies who surround me on every side.

7 Arise, O LORD! Rescue me, my God! Slap all my enemies in the face! Shatter the teeth of the wicked!

8 Victory comes from you, O LORD. May you bless your people.

Interlude

2:6 Hebrew on Zion. **2:7a** Or Son; also in 2:12. **2:7b** Or Today I reveal you as my son. **2:9** Greek version reads rule. Compare Rev 2:27. **2:12** The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. **3:2** Hebrew Selah. The meaning of this word is uncertain, though it is probably a musical or literary term. It is rendered *Interlude* throughout the Psalms.

4 For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be accompanied by stringed instruments.

¹ Answer me when I call to you,
O God who declares me innocent.
Free me from my troubles.
Have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

² How long will you people ruin my
reputation?
How long will you make groundless
accusations?
How long will you continue your lies?

Interlude

³ You can be sure of this:
The LORD set apart the godly for himself.
The LORD will answer when I call to him.

⁴ Don't sin by letting anger control you.
Think about it overnight and remain
silent.

Interlude

⁵ Offer sacrifices in the right spirit,
and trust the LORD.

⁶ Many people say, "Who will show us better
times?"
Let your face smile on us, LORD.

⁷ You have given me greater joy
than those who have abundant harvests of
grain and new wine.

⁸ In peace I will lie down and sleep,
for you alone, O LORD, will keep me safe.

5 For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be accompanied by the flute.

¹ O LORD, hear me as I pray;
pay attention to my groaning.

² Listen to my cry for help, my King and my
God,
for I pray to no one but you.

³ Listen to my voice in the morning, LORD.
Each morning I bring my requests to you
and wait expectantly.

⁴ O God, you take no pleasure in wickedness;
you cannot tolerate the sins of the
wicked.

⁵ Therefore, the proud may not stand in your
presence,
for you hate all who do evil.

⁶ You will destroy those who tell lies.
The LORD detests murderers and
deceivers.

⁷ Because of your unfailing love, I can enter
your house;
I will worship at your Temple with deepest
awe.

⁸ Lead me in the right path, O LORD,
or my enemies will conquer me.
Make your way plain for me to follow.

⁹ My enemies cannot speak a truthful word.
Their deepest desire is to destroy others.
Their talk is foul, like the stench from an
open grave.

Their tongues are filled with flattery.*

¹⁰ O God, declare them guilty.
Let them be caught in their own traps.
Drive them away because of their many sins,
for they have rebelled against you.

¹¹ But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;
let them sing joyful praises forever.
Spread your protection over them,
that all who love your name may be filled
with joy.

¹² For you bless the godly, O LORD;
you surround them with your shield of
love.

6 For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be accompanied by an eight-stringed instrument.*

¹ O LORD, don't rebuke me in your anger
or discipline me in your rage.

² Have compassion on me, LORD, for I am
weak.

Heal me, LORD, for my bones are in agony.

³ I am sick at heart.

How long, O LORD, until you restore me?

⁴ Return, O LORD, and rescue me.
Save me because of your unfailing love.

⁵ For the dead do not remember you.
Who can praise you from the grave?*

⁶ I am worn out from sobbing.
All night I flood my bed with weeping,
drenching it with my tears.

⁷ My vision is blurred by grief;
my eyes are worn out because of all my
enemies.

⁸ Go away, all you who do evil,
for the LORD has heard my weeping.

⁹ The LORD has heard my plea;
the LORD will answer my prayer.

¹⁰ May all my enemies be disgraced and
terrified.
May they suddenly turn back in shame.

7 A psalm of David, which he sang to the LORD concerning Cush of the tribe of Benjamin.

¹ I come to you for protection, O LORD my God.
Save me from my persecutors—rescue me!

² If you don't, they will maul me like a lion,
tearing me to pieces with no one to
rescue me.

³ O LORD my God, if I have done wrong
or am guilty of injustice,

⁴ if I have betrayed a friend
or plundered my enemy without cause,

⁵ then let my enemies capture me.

Let them trample me into the ground
and drag my honor in the dust.

Interlude

6 Arise, O LORD, in anger!
Stand up against the fury of my enemies!
Wake up, my God, and bring justice!
7 Gather the nations before you.
Rule over them from on high.
8 The LORD judges the nations.
Declare me righteous, O LORD,
for I am innocent, O Most High!
9 End the evil of those who are wicked,
and defend the righteous.
For you look deep within the mind and
heart,
O righteous God.

10 God is my shield,
saving those whose hearts are true and
right.
11 God is an honest judge.
He is angry with the wicked every day.
12 If a person does not repent,
God* will sharpen his sword;
he will bend and string his bow.
13 He will prepare his deadly weapons
and shoot his flaming arrows.
14 The wicked conceive evil;
they are pregnant with trouble
and give birth to lies.
15 They dig a deep pit to trap others,
then fall into it themselves.
16 The trouble they make for others backfires
on them.
The violence they plan falls on their own
heads.
17 I will thank the LORD because he is just;
I will sing praise to the name of the LORD
Most High.

8 *For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be
accompanied by a stringed instrument.**

1 O LORD, our Lord, your majestic name fills
the earth!
Your glory is higher than the heavens.
2 You have taught children and infants
to tell of your strength,*
silencing your enemies
and all who oppose you.
3 When I look at the night sky and see the
work of your fingers—
the moon and the stars you set in place—
4 what are mere mortals that you should think
about them,
human beings that you should care for
them?*

5 Yet you made them only a little lower than
God*
and crowned them* with glory and
honor.
6 You gave them charge of everything you
made,
putting all things under their authority—
7 the flocks and the herds
and all the wild animals,
8 the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea,
and everything that swims the ocean
currents.
9 O LORD, our Lord, your majestic name fills
the earth!

9 *For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be
sung to the tune "Death of the Son."*

1 I will praise you, LORD, with all my heart;
I will tell of all the marvelous things you
have done.
2 I will be filled with joy because of you.
I will sing praises to your name, O Most
High.
3 My enemies retreated;
they staggered and died when you
appeared.
4 For you have judged in my favor;
from your throne you have judged with
fairness.
5 You have rebuked the nations and destroyed
the wicked;
you have erased their names forever.
6 The enemy is finished, in endless ruins;
the cities you uprooted are now forgotten.
7 But the LORD reigns forever,
executing judgment from his throne.
8 He will judge the world with justice
and rule the nations with fairness.
9 The LORD is a shelter for the oppressed,
a refuge in times of trouble.
10 Those who know your name trust in you,
for you, O LORD, do not abandon those who
search for you.
11 Sing praises to the LORD who reigns in
Jerusalem.*
Tell the world about his unforgettable
deeds.
12 For he who avenges murder cares for the
helpless.
He does not ignore the cries of those
who suffer.
13 LORD, have mercy on me.
See how my enemies torment me.
Snatch me back from the jaws of death.

7:12 Hebrew *he*. 8: TITLE Hebrew *according to the gittith*. 8:2 Greek version reads *to give you praise*. Compare Matt 21:16.

8:4 Hebrew *what is man that you should think of him, / the son of man that you should care for him?* 8:5a Or *Yet you made them only a little lower than the angels*; Hebrew reads *Yet you made him* [i.e., man] *a little lower than Elohim*. 8:5b Hebrew *him* [i.e., man]; similarly in 8:6. 9:11 Hebrew *Zion*; also in 9:14.

14 Save me so I can praise you publicly at
Jerusalem's gates,
so I can rejoice that you have rescued me.

15 The nations have fallen into the pit they dug
for others.
Their own feet have been caught in the
trap they set.

16 The LORD is known for his justice.
The wicked are trapped by their own
deeds. *Quiet Interlude**

17 The wicked will go down to the grave.*
This is the fate of all the nations who
ignore God.

18 But the needy will not be ignored forever;
the hopes of the poor will not always be
crushed.

19 Arise, O LORD!
Do not let mere mortals defy you!
Judge the nations!

20 Make them tremble in fear, O LORD.
Let the nations know they are merely
human. *Interlude*

10 ¹ O LORD, why do you stand so far away?
Why do you hide when I am in
trouble?

² The wicked arrogantly hunt down the poor.
Let them be caught in the evil they plan for
others.

³ For they brag about their evil desires;
they praise the greedy and curse the LORD.

⁴ The wicked are too proud to seek God.
They seem to think that God is dead.

⁵ Yet they succeed in everything they do.
They do not see your punishment awaiting
them.

They sneer at all their enemies.
⁶ They think, "Nothing bad will ever happen
to us!
We will be free of trouble forever!"

⁷ Their mouths are full of cursing, lies, and
threats.*
Trouble and evil are on the tips of their
tongues.

⁸ They lurk in ambush in the villages,
waiting to murder innocent people.
They are always searching for helpless
victims.

⁹ Like lions crouched in hiding,
they wait to pounce on the helpless.
Like hunters they capture the helpless
and drag them away in nets.

¹⁰ Their helpless victims are crushed;
they fall beneath the strength of the
wicked.

¹¹ The wicked think, "God isn't watching us!"

He has closed his eyes and won't even see
what we do!"

¹² Arise, O LORD!
Punish the wicked, O God!
Do not ignore the helpless!

¹³ Why do the wicked get away with despising
God?
They think, "God will never call us to
account."

¹⁴ But you see the trouble and grief they cause.
You take note of it and punish them.
The helpless put their trust in you.
You defend the orphans.

¹⁵ Break the arms of these wicked, evil people!
Go after them until the last one is
destroyed.

¹⁶ The LORD is king forever and ever!
The godless nations will vanish from the
land.

¹⁷ LORD, you know the hopes of the helpless.
Surely you will hear their cries and
comfort them.

¹⁸ You will bring justice to the orphans and the
oppressed,
so mere people can no longer terrify them.

11 *For the choir director: A psalm of David.*

¹ I trust in the LORD for protection.
So why do you say to me,
"Fly like a bird to the mountains for safety!"

² The wicked are stringing their bows
and fitting their arrows on the bowstrings.
They shoot from the shadows
at those whose hearts are right.

³ The foundations of law and order have
collapsed.
What can the righteous do?"

⁴ But the LORD is in his holy Temple;
the LORD still rules from heaven.
He watches everyone closely,
examining every person on earth.

⁵ The LORD examines both the righteous and
the wicked.
He hates those who love violence.

⁶ He will rain down blazing coals and burning
sulfur on the wicked,
punishing them with scorching winds.

⁷ For the righteous LORD loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.

12 *For the choir director: A psalm of David,
to be accompanied by an eight-stringed
instrument.**

¹ Help, O LORD, for the godly are fast
disappearing!
The faithful have vanished from the earth!